

<b>MEETING</b>	Language Committee
<b>DATE</b>	28 February 2017
<b>TITLE</b>	Internal Language Audit
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Gwenllian Mair Williams Welsh Language Development Officer
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</b>	Submit a summary of the Language Audit's findings and propose further action

## 1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the Council's Strategic Plan for 2015-17, a commitment was made to undertake an Audit of the situation of the Welsh Language within the Council. The aim was to discover to what extent the Council and its officers are able to implement the Language Policy of the Council and manage to *"normalise the Welsh language in its departments and the services it provides to the county's residents"*.
- 1.2 The second aim of the work is to consider to what extent the Council goes a step further and succeeds in taking advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language through those services that are provided directly to the county's residents, and through third party arrangements and agreements.
- 1.3 Following the survey and initial assessment, 4 departments were prioritised for further attention and to work with them to identify steps which could be taken to improve staff practices and their awareness of what is expected when working in accordance with the Language Policy. The 4 departments in question are:
- Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy
  - Adults, Health and Well-being
  - Economy and Regeneration
  - Regulation

## 2. Update on the Prioritised Department

- 2.1 Initial meetings were held between the Cabinet Member and the heads of the priority Departments in order to identify and agree on initial action steps in order to respond to the Audit's findings.
- 2.2 Following these meetings, draft actions plans were drafted for **Consultancy** and **Adults, Health and Well-being** and these draft plans have been shared with the Heads for their comments.
- 2.3 Some elements of the action plan have already started with **Consultancy**, and six language awareness sessions have been held with the department's staff so far.

An action plan has been drafted for the **Economy and Community** department, but it was agreed to postpone sharing it until the findings of the Investigation into the Visibility of the Welsh Language were final. The reason for this is that it was felt a lot more rational to include any relevant recommendations from the investigation in the audit action plan rather than attempting to address those recommendations separately.

- 2.4 Nevertheless, an individual action plan has been created for the leisure service and agreed with the Head and management team. Work is underway to create materials which will assist swimming coaches to give a prominent place to the Welsh language during lessons and the need to include a target which will address the place of the language in the recruitment and induction processes has been identified, and plans are afoot to reinstate the Language Champions scheme and to hold awareness sessions with four leisure centres in March.
- 2.5 No plan has been agreed with the **Regulatory** Department as yet, but will take place shortly.
- 2.6 In addition to this, meetings will be arranged between the heads of the four services, their relevant cabinet members and the member with responsibility for the Welsh language, in order to ensure that responsibility and accountability for taking action are transferred

### **3. Update on the Corporate Plans**

In addition to the intense work in the four priority Departments, it was also agreed that more general interventions were needed for some of the Audit's findings:

#### **3.1 Language Awareness E-module**

An e-module was developed jointly between the Language Unit and the Learning and Development team and completed in January 2017. It is now live on the learning portal, and several staff have already completed it. It is hoped that the module will be launched officially in March 2017. The module can be seen by clicking on the following link:

<http://gwynedd.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=196#section-1>

#### **3.2 Communication Plan**

A draft communication plan is in the process of being drawn up following a discussion with the Communication Unit and although some further work needs to be done to refine it, the plan will be a way of ensuring that messages of encouragement and positive messages about the importance of promoting the Welsh language in the Council's services are conveyed regularly to front-line staff.

As part of this discussion, the influence of the Chief Executive's message about the Welsh language which was sent via Internal Communication some time ago was highlighted, and it was agreed that regular messages need to be conveyed about the Council's commitment to the Welsh language and for them to be tied-in with Ffordd Gwynedd.

In addition, it has been ensured that *laith Gwaith* signs have been placed in all Siopau Gwynedd in order to highlight the fact that Welsh can be spoken with staff in every one, and so encouraging the public to communicate with the Council in Welsh at every opportunity.

#### **4 Recommendation**

The members are asked to accept the contents of this report.