

<b>MEETING</b>	Language Committee
<b>DATE</b>	22.06.21
<b>TITLE</b>	Report of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To present information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in order to present information to the Language Committee on the contribution of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to the Language Policy.
- 1.2 The Council's Language Policy is embedded in all of the Department's work and we will highlight in this report the opportunities that are available to improve the provision for our residents, and acknowledging the challenges facing the field.
- 1.3 Following recent work done to identify the language designations of all jobs in the Department, we can report that 79% of the Department's staff meet the language requirements. It should be noted that the situation differs when we look at specific services.
- 1.4 Although, on first glance, that the percentage seems low in comparison with the Council as a whole (91%), it must be realised that the fact that individuals are unable to meet the language requirements of the post does not mean that they are unable to speak Welsh and offer a Welsh service to the customer. The training opportunities available are extensive and are positive and continuous examples of individuals in the Department looking to develop and improve their language skills.
- 1.5 In 2016, the 'Follow-on Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care (More than just Words)' was launched. The Framework sets expectations on local councils and health boards to provide Welsh medium services and to make an "Active Offer" to all Welsh speakers. Being able to provide the "Active Offer" means that nobody in Wales should have to make a request for a Welsh service, as the service should be available to them in Welsh without them having to ask for it.
- 1.6 The framework supports the Council's Language Policy and we as a Council have committed to More Than Just Words from the outset when it was published in 2012, and we have welcomed the principles of the Follow up Strategic Framework published in 2016. The clear advantage of the framework is that it is a national framework that ensures consistency across the country, and across organisations in the field. The Council's officers contribute regularly to the Regional forum that has been established by Morwena Edwards, Gwynedd Council Corporate Director, to collaborate and share good practice.

## 2. RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS

A matter that the members wish to discuss:	Question
<p><u>Boosting and promoting</u></p> <p>How do we go beyond the bilingual provision to increase the opportunities for people to use the Welsh language in the community, to contribute to the national target of creating a Million speakers, and to the Well-being goal of ensuring that the people of Gwynedd are "Able to live in a natural Welsh community"?</p> <p>Gwynedd's Welsh Language Promotion Plan can be seen here: (<a href="https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/cy/Cyngor/Dogfennau-Cyngor/Strategaethau-a-pholisiau/Cynllun-iaith/Cynllun-Hybu'r-Gymraeg-yng-Ngwynedd-2018-2023.pdf">https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/cy/Cyngor/Dogfennau-Cyngor/Strategaethau-a-pholisiau/Cynllun-iaith/Cynllun-Hybu'r-Gymraeg-yng-Ngwynedd-2018-2023.pdf</a>)</p> <p>It sets priorities for the promotion of the Welsh language in five fields:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Language of the family,</li> <li>2. The Language of Learning,</li> <li>3. The Language of Work and Services,</li> <li>4. The Language of the Community</li> <li>5. Research and Technology</li> </ol>	<p><b>1. Can you highlight any projects within your department that contributes to one of the Council's language strategy priorities, namely the Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd?</b></p> <p><b>Community Transformation Programme</b> - Community Resource Teams (CRT) are being set up across Gwynedd. Members of these teams are employed by different organisations, and every organisation has its own Welsh language arrangements and procedures.</p> <p>The range of matters arising from working together in a bilingual environment must be considered, and staff must be given strong guidance. The scope of the CRT extends to include GPs, third sector bodies and providers from different sectors. As things currently stand, firstly there is a need to air the matters arising from integrating the workforce of the Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.</p> <p><b>WCCIS System</b> - A national work stream supports this work to ensure that the WCCIS system, the national care and community health cases recording system, is completely bilingual. There has been some recent delay with the work programme; however, momentum has been raised again recently with new governance arrangements established to develop a programme, including input from the National Information Board. This board is responsible for ensuring that attention is given to matters associated with the Welsh language. Scoping work is currently underway, in the hope of ensuring that the system is available bilingually, anywhere in Wales. This will build on local work done to ensure that members of the public can receive Welsh and English documents from the system in Gwynedd. Another national piece of work that is commencing is the work of standardising terms in the health and care field. Council officers are supporting this project.</p> <p><b>The Department's Improvement Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-designing our Care Services</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the future</li> <li>• The Workforce and Recruitment in the Care Field</li> </ul> <p>These priorities are key in order to improve the service provided to the residents of Gwynedd in the future. When considering the Welsh language promotion priorities and the five specific fields, the obvious interconnection and contribution of the Department's work in the lives of individuals and our communities can be seen.</p>
<p><u>Externalisation of work and awarding third party contracts</u></p> <p>How do we ensure that the quality of the bilingual service is maintained when externalising work and awarding contracts?</p>	<p><b>2. If the department awards work externally on contract, can you refer to any good practice, either when imposing conditions or when monitoring in order to ensure compliance with the linguistic conditions?</b></p> <p>After assessing the individual's needs, the Department is responsible for providing support to the individual directly via our in-house care provision, or by commissioning independent providers to deliver that. By commissioning independent providers to provide care, we clearly note our expectations via our contract documentation, and from there we are able to deliver against the expectation. It should be highlighted that the greatest barrier that prevents providers from delivering the expectations in full is the challenge they face in securing a competent and suitable workforce, whether through recruiting new staff or ensuring that they are able to retain and develop their current experienced staff.</p> <p>Overall, it should be borne in mind that 'providing care' is something local and community in nature. A very substantial number of individuals tend to work in the communities in which they live. It can often be seen that the linguistic profile of care organisations also represent the linguistic profile of our communities.</p> <p>In an attempt to support our independent providers to improve their ability to provide services in Welsh, the following is in progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing and strengthening our expectations that are noted in contracts with providers, adding the need for providers to have a Language Policy in place. This will offer opportunities to identify and work with providers on the aspects that require strengthening.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering the type of market and provisions needed in Gwynedd in the future, e.g. the work currently underway to transform our domiciliary care provision in the County.</li> <li>• Working with providers and partners to understand the actual cost of providing care and contributing to the national discussions required to improve the salaries of front-line staff in the care field.</li> <li>• Improving the image of jobs in the care field and strengthen and better advertise the potential career pathways that exist.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Operating bilingually</u></p> <p>How do we manage to act on the requirements of the Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards?</p>	<p><b>3. Are there any obstructions that prevent you as a department to offer a full service in Welsh?</b></p> <p>Recruiting to some specific roles can also be challenging for us as a Department. The role of the Occupational Therapist is an example of this, where we have found it difficult to fill vacant posts over past years, with a marked shortage of Welsh-speaking applicants. The issue has been highlighted and we are happy to report that the Cabinet has recently agreed to temporary bid funding to invest in Occupational Therapy trainee posts for the coming years. Another excellent example of nurturing talent and skills in-house is the use being made via the apprenticeships scheme.</p> <p>Obvious barriers and issues have been highlighted through the Community Transformation Programme. The barriers that exist derive from the fact that we have staff from two organisations integrating the way they work for the benefit of our residents, and the organisations in question, namely the Council and Health Board, implementing different language policies. These differences are prominent in a broad range of fields, whether it relates to recruiting staff to posts, communication within the teams or recording the conversation held with individuals. In an attempt to understand the length and breadth of these matters, there was an intention prior to the lockdown in March 2020, to map the language skills of all members of the Community Resource Teams across the County. Unfortunately, this is yet to be done but recent conversations have been held with the Health Board to agree to recommence this work. We anticipate that doing this will highlight</p>

	<p>those aspects requiring further attention and agreement between both organisations on the way forward.</p>
<p><u>Developing new opportunities</u></p>	<p><b><i>4. Do you have ideas about new ways we can promote the Welsh language in the county's communities - either in your own services or by collaborating with others?</i></b></p> <p>As a result of the Covid crisis and the need to fill substantial staffing gaps in the field, we have held successful recruitment campaigns that have taken a different form to our usual approach. Since the campaigns, we have recently seen that the numbers who apply for jobs have increased. We will need to consider what has worked over the past year and ensure that we recruit in the most effective ways for the future. The recent period has also shown what is possible in relation to individuals deciding to have a career change. Being able to show positive examples of this is also, without a doubt, helpful when trying to recruit and reach different audiences.</p> <p>Having a constructive relationship with our independent providers was key when developing and improving the service available to the residents in future, taking every possible opportunity to emphasise the importance of promoting the Welsh language in our communities and ensuring everyone's right to have the active offer. We also need the cooperation of our providers, as well as other key partners such as the Health Board. One example of an aspect that we could collaborate and co-develop is to ask providers to develop a language policy for their organisation.</p> <p>We need to acknowledge the matters that exist as part of the Community Transformation Programme and invest time and resources in order to come to understand the situation in full. It is also believed that there is an opportunity here for us to improve our understanding of good practice that exists in Wales and beyond, and consider how they could strengthen the provision we have in Gwynedd.</p>

