

<b>MEETING</b>	Language Committee
<b>DATE</b>	7 April 2022
<b>TITLE</b>	Economy and Community Department Report
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To present information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Sioned E. Williams, Head of Economy and Community Department

## 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report was prepared in response to the Language Committee's request for information on the Economy and Community Department's contribution to Gwynedd Council's Language Policy. The report focuses on the progress made over the last year and a copy of the 2021 report is attached for information - [Language Committee Report 29 April 2021](#)
- 1.2 In 2022, 96.3% of the Economy and Community Department staff have achieved the language designation for their post; compared to 97% in 2021. Despite the small reduction in the percentage, this reflects the increase in temporary staff appointed over the last year in response to the COVID pandemic. There is only a small number of staff who do not meet the designation and there is encouragement and support available to them to develop their skills.
- 1.3 The following table was created in response to the Committee's specific questions and examples we wish to highlight of the Departments services have been included.

## 2. RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS

Matter that the members wish to discuss:	Question 1:
<p>Boosting and Promoting - 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>Can you highlight any projects within your department that contribute to one of the Council's language strategy priorities, namely the Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd?</p>
<p>I consider the following to be good examples in the Department of projects and services that have contributed over the past year to the Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd:</p> <p><b>Libraries Service:</b> The activities we organise through the Library and in partnerships with others, provide opportunities for people, adults and children and families to hear Welsh being used and is an opportunity to take part in Welsh activities and learn from good practice from this experience. For example, sessions for infants (new parents), story times for children, a cuppa and a conversation for Welsh learners, sessions with Cymraeg for Kids, Adult and Community Learning courses. Gwynedd also leads nationally on the scheme for Large Print Books in Welsh, and facilitates the availability of audio e-books for adults and children. Projects with Early Years and the Fusion Programme provide bilingual packages to the parents of young children, where emphasis is put on enjoying stories through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p><b>Archives Service:</b> The Archives and Museums Education Service provides materials and activities for school across Gwynedd in order for them to understand their communities, the importance of the Welsh language and local identity.</p> <p><b>Museums and Arts Service:</b> We are working with many partners in order to ensure that we are reaching out to communities throughout the county as much as possible. The nature of our work is reaching out with health and well-being; learning; training projects etc. and also providing access and context to our culture and language in our museum sites (see more in question 4). For example during the lockdown period it was arranged for creativity kits to be distributed to family homes by collaborating with a number of partners such as charities, food banks, voluntary organisations, homes for the elderly, schools throughout Gwynedd and everyone received a bilingual kit; also our activities through the medium of Welsh such as Craft and Well-being sessions (on-line/physically); Babi a Ni for families; Well-being for Me to support the Well-being of Gwynedd residents and much more.</p>	

**Tourism, Marketing and Events Service:** The Service has been working with the Council Departments and the National Park Authority to develop the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035. One of the agreed principles for the future is to: Celebrate, Respect and Protect our Communities, Language, Culture and Heritage and a priority will be given to promoting local ownership and to developing opportunities to highlight the Welsh Language, in our culture and heritage. Work is proceeding on developing new comprehensive indicators for the visitor economy and discussions have started with Bangor University to identify sensible methods of researching the effect (positive and negative) of the visitor economy on our language in our communities.

<b>Matter that the members wish to discuss:</b>	<b>Question 2:</b>
<p><u>Outsourcing work and awarding third party contracts -</u> How do we ensure that the quality of the bilingual service is maintained when outsourcing work and awarding contracts?</p>	<p>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?</p>
<p>I would like to draw the attention of the Committee specifically to the following contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Library Service</b> - ensure that websites and apps are available bilingually e.g. Borrowbox website and app (third party - language conditions in the tender), browsing app (compliance with the language requirements is expected from the start)</li> <li>• <b>Museums and Arts Service</b> - ensure that our needs meet the Welsh Language requirements with conditions in the tender (website/ on-line reservations/interpretation/ commissions requesting individuals who have ability in the language e.g. Art on Prescription. When allocating strategic grants we have a clause requesting them to comply with our language policies.</li> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programmes Service:</b> All of the tender documents are bilingual and the tenders note the need to ensure compliance with Gwynedd Council's Language Policy.</li> </ul>	

<b>Matter that the members wish to discuss:</b>	<b>Question 3:</b>
<u>Operating bilingually -</u> How do we manage to act on the requirements of the Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards?	Are there any obstacles that prevent you as a department from offering a full service in Welsh? This could be across the department or in specific services.
There are some obstacles which have been identified in the Department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Library Service</b> - obstacles arise when trying to deliver a service which provides resources in Welsh. We are required to make plans to provide these ourselves as they aren't available commercially e.g. Large Print Welsh Language Books , Welsh Audio Books and Welsh Audio e-books (collaborate in partnership with the North Wales Society for the Blind) and this of course adds to the work load.</li> <li>• <b>Museums and Arts Service</b> - developing a volunteering plan proved challenging and difficult to attract Welsh speakers. Need to encourage learners and attract people to our Welsh 'environment'. Recruiting for jobs/projects/commissions/holding activities is currently difficult and more so in terms of the Welsh Language. Unable to appoint therefore have to re-think how to move forward. In order to draft grant applications in Welsh an English translation is sometimes needed in order to understand or ask to see the translation to ensure accuracy.</li> </ul>	

<b>Matter that the members wish to discuss:</b>	<b>Question 4:</b>
<u>Developing new opportunities</u>	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?
<p>Highlighted below are some fields where I see opportunities for the Department to make a greater contribution to promoting the Welsh language in Gwynedd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Museums and Arts Service</b> - Due to the nature of our work, we promote our culture and provide the context of our area. Our museum collections include materials that inspire, educate, challenge to prompts discussion and learning etc. E.g. items related to well-known people who contributed to our history such as Caradog Pritchard; T H Parry Williams; items from the history of the Language such as the Welsh Not etc. There is an opportunity when creating programmes and activities to use our resources as displays/workshops to identify themes to promote the Welsh Language and raise awareness. We collaborate widely e.g. Menter Iaith, Bangor University, various groups e.g. African Caribbean. We recently organised a St. David's Day march with some of these by sharing our varied cultures and the Welsh Language. We have applied a number of times for a grant from the Arts Council of Wales in partnership with others such as Mudiad Meithrin and various artists to try and create an activity programme to get people to use the language in a natural way through arts and heritage e.g. learning the names of places and for those that have moved here to have the chance to get to know the local area. The application been unsuccessful as of yet but we are very interested in continuing with this.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Economic Development Programme Service</b> - Welsh Government has committed £11m in its budget for the Arfor 2 Programme over the next 3 years. The aim is to learn from the experiences of the Arfor 1 Programme and invest in new programmes which will promote the Welsh Language and create economic enthusiasm across Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. Discussions have already started between Welsh Government and the Local Authorities in order to agree on the work scope and we will proceed over the next few months to develop a pack of new projects based on Welsh language development.</p> </li> </ul>	