

Assessing the Impact on Protected Characteristics, the Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Disadvantage

For help to complete this form see the *How to Undertake an Equality Impact Assessment* leaflet. You are also welcome to contact Delyth Gadlys Williams, Policy and Equality Officer on ext. 32708 or DelythGadlysWilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru for further assistance.

The Council's is required (under the Equality Act 2010) to consider the effect any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), has on people with protected equality characteristics. The Council also has a general duty to ensure fairness and foster good relations. A timely Equality Impact Assessment must be undertaken before making any decision on any relevant change (i.e. which has an effect on people with protected characteristics).

The Council is also required, under the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011) to consider the effect of a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), in its opportunities for people to use Welsh and to ensure that Welsh is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions protect and promote the use of the Welsh language.

From April 1st 2021 the Council has a duty to have due regard to tackling socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.

1) Details

1.1. What is the name of the policy / service in question?

Invest £1.1 million to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of the County's primary Language Centres.

1.2 What is the purpose of the policy / service that is being created or amended? What changes are being considered?

A historic decision which is a prelude to what we seek today:

On 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved a new vision for an Immersion Education System in Gwynedd towards 2032 and beyond. As part of this vision, and as a result of receiving £1.1m from the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant funding we are in the process of establishing two completely new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county, and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. We are also in the process of improving the resources at the Porthmadog

immersion education site, which is again strategically located in the middle of the county. These three sites will provide immersion education for learners in years 5-9 in a first-class learning environment.

In addition, we also have three primary sites that provide immersion education to years 2-4. These immersion sites have not received any capital investment as part of the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant funding.

An opportunity was therefore seen to submit an application for a second phase of the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant in order to harmonise capacity and improve the learning environment in the three immersion education sites that did not receive investment in the first phase.

Through the proposal, the Education Department is keen to incorporate the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales and offer cross-curricular experiences to all learners. It is also intended to ensure a strategic location for each of the immersion education sites which will be a medium to extend experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to the area to use their Welsh outside the classroom by having them located within easy reach of facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, there will be an opportunity to expand the learners' experiences as they benefit from experiences that bring the Welsh language to life.

Since its establishment in the 1980s, the immersion provision in Gwynedd has pioneered the field, and the System will have a new look due to the modernisation of the provision, the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, all the capital investment and the best facilities which will continue to innovate now and into the future.

Maesincla Language Centre

The Maesincla Language Centre is located within the Maesincla School building in Caernarfon. The space that the Maesincla Language Centre has is limited (namely two classes of different sizes, with one being very small) impairing the quality of the experience for the learners. The Language Centre's space is also not convenient for presenting a Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

When considering that Maesincla Language Centre will mainly provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the medium of a Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, therefore, it is intended to extend and modify the current space of the Maesincla Language Centre in order to improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with suitable space for visitors.

Dolgellau Language Centre

The Dolgellau Language Centre is currently located in a building between Ysgol Bro Idris primary site, Dolgellau, and the Council's offices in Penarlâg, Dolgellau. The Dolgellau Language Centre currently only has a space for one class and that for a total of between 8-12

learners, and the Centre shares playtime and lunchtime facilities with Ysgol Bro Idris primary site. Based on the demand for immersion education in the area, there is demand to increase the capacity of Dolgellau Language Centre and to harmonise the numbers of learners admitted to each site across the Immersion Education System. The space in the Language Centre is also not convenient for presenting a Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

When considering that the Dolgellau Language Centre will mainly provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the means of a Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant therefore, it is intended to relocate the current site of the Dolgellau Language Centre to an alternative site at Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau in order to increase the capacity of the Centre and improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with a suitable space for visitors.

Llangybi Language Centre

The Llangybi Language Centre is currently located as part of the Ysgol Llangybi building. The Language Centre in Llangybi is not located in a strategic location in the county, and the current location of the Centre limits the experiences available to the learners in order to enrich their learning experiences. The space in the Language Centre is not suitable for presenting a Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners. When considering that the Llangybi Language Centre will mainly provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

By means of the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, therefore, it is intended to relocate the current site of the Llangybi Language Centre to a strategic location on the Ysgol Cymerau site in Pwllheli. This will be a means to improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with a suitable space for visitors. By relocating to Pwllheli, it will also ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

Relocating the Language Centre in Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi from a social hub point of view. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre's space will be available for the purpose of the school.

This investment would lead to improving the experiences, resources and learning environment for intensive immersion for learners in years 2-4 in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, together

with enabling the Authority to provide immersion education to more learners in line with the increasing demand on the service.

At the moment the number of learner capacity in the immersion education settings is limited to 72 learners each term, however, the *phase 1* capital investment together with the *phase 2* capital investment means; that the number of learners who would be able to be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners each term.

Ensuring further capital investment in our immersion education system in Gwynedd will therefore be a means of ensuring growth in the number of learners who benefit from Welsh and bilingual education in the county, together with ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language together in formal and informal context, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Debbie Jones (Education Corporate Services Manager)

1.4 When did you commence the assessment? Which version is this?

June 2022 (version 1)

2) Action

2.1 Who are the stakeholders or partners you need to work with to undertake this assessment?

In May 2021 we consulted with stakeholders in order to gather their views on our new vision for the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd.

Our intention at that time was to ask for the views of all stakeholders on the vision and the proposal to invest capital grant money from the Welsh Government in our Immersion Education System.

The Cabinet approved the new vision on 6 July 2021.

See below a list of the consultees we consulted with in the context of our new vision for the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd:

- Staff of Gwynedd Language Centres
- Representatives of Teachers' and Assistants' Unions

- Headteachers of Gwynedd Primary and Secondary Schools
- Schools Budget Forum
- Forum of Unions
- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
- Language Committee
- Learners

2.2 What measures have you taken to engage with people with equality characteristics, regarding the Welsh language or with communities (either of place or of need) that live with socio-economic disadvantage?

We have communicated with the head teachers of the schools that have Language Centres located on their sites to let them know our intentions.

We have also contacted the heads of the proposed sites that are part of our plans for the future to inform them of our intentions.

Depending on the decision of the Cabinet, the next step will be to engage more widely with the key stakeholder regarding the intention and joint planning.

Historic consultations (May 2021):

The Education Department held a period of engagement with key stakeholders on the new vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond, back in May 2021.

As part of this engagement, a meeting was held to present the new vision with the Teachers' and Assistants' Unions together with a special meeting with the staff of the Language Centres on 27 May 2021, with an opportunity for the staff to consider the vision and submit comments by 21 June 2021.

As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 10 June 2021, together with the Language Committee on 22 June 2021 in order to receive the views of the elected members on the vision, together with an opportunity to scrutinise on it. The vision and plan to invest £1.1 million at that time received unanimous support for the proposal.

As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the head teachers of all Gwynedd secondary schools on 16 June 2021, together with all the head teachers of Gwynedd primary schools on 17 June 2021 in order to receive their comments.

As part of the engagement, 2 focus groups were held with learners of the immersion education system in our Language Centres on 22 June 2021 in order to ascertain their opinion as users of the service on the new vision.

As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the Schools Budget Forum for the purpose of consulting them on the new system of funding the new vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.

2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

A summary of all the comments we received as part of the engagement back in Summer 2021 can be seen [here](#). But briefly here are some headlines from the engagement:

Comments from Gwynedd Language Centres Staff

A presentation on the new vision was given to staff of the Gwynedd Language Centres on 27 May 2021, with an opportunity for them to submit comments by 21 June 2021.

In response to the new vision, the staff submitted the following comments

- The capital investment of £1.1m was welcomed in order to ensure a first-class learning environment, together with an increase in the number of immersion education sites.
- The intention to appoint a head and deputy for the service was welcomed, which would lead to a much more effective and efficient service, as well as ensuring the consistency of the service. It will also be a medium to ensure a close partnership between the system and the schools, being able to respond positively and efficiently to the needs of the schools. Nevertheless, it was noted that staffing each site with a teacher and an assistant would cause concern.
- Concerns were noted about reducing the length of the primary immersion course from 12 weeks to between 8-10 weeks, together with reducing the number of days from 5 days to 4 days per week, from the point of view of the impact of that on the linguistic progress of the learners.
- Concern was noted about the challenge of ensuring appropriate support for the learners when attending school for 1 day each week, although the staff agree with the purpose of this 1 day to enable learners to keep in touch with their local school, their peers and ensure their well-being.
- Although blended learning offers a number of possibilities, it was noted that blended learning brings with it a number of challenges also from the point of view of the technology itself, dedicated and suitable space in the schools, setting a timetable, together with inconsistency in the learners' situation. Collective learning is not equivalent to the experience of face-to-face learning, especially when practicing spoken language and gesture.
- Concern was noted about the age range of merging primary and secondary learners from years 5-9.
- It was also noted the need for more detail on some elements of the vision, and that it would be beneficial for the staff to receive clarity soon on some of these issues.

Headteachers of Gwynedd Primary and Secondary Schools

A presentation on the new vision was given to Gwynedd secondary headteachers on 16 June 2021, and to primary headteachers on 17 June 2021. In response to the new vision, the headteachers presented the following comments:

- We recognised the challenge of striking the right balance between ensuring intensive immersion in order to enable the learners to acquire the Welsh language as quickly as possible, together with enabling newcomers to settle and continue in their new school and create peers.
- It was noted that there is an opportunity for the Language Coordinators and Heads of Welsh Departments of the secondary schools to contribute their expertise in

developing the detail for realising the vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.

- The intention to unite primary and secondary learners from years 5-9 on 3 of the immersion sites was welcomed.
- The vision and investment were welcomed by the primary headteachers, and in particular the intention to establish new immersion education sites in Tywyn and Bangor.
- The intention to co-finance the new system was supported, emphasising that this should not happen at the expense of resources in the schools.

Learners

2 focus groups were held with the current learners of the Language Centres on 22 June 2021. A representation from year 5 and 6 of the Cefn Coch Language Centre and a group of learners from the Secondary Language Centre contributed brilliantly in a session which discussed a series of questions in response to receiving presentation on the new vision for the Immersion Education System towards 2032 and beyond.

All the learners (15 of them) made a valuable contribution to the conversation, and it is important to note that their linguistic ability is a credit to the current Language Centres.

Agree with the vision or not

- Of all the learners (primary and secondary), 8 of the learners indicated that they agreed with the vision. 5 of the secondary schools stated a neutral opinion, with only 1 disagreeing with the new vision.
- One learner specifically noted that there were good elements to the idea of attending the immersion site for 4 days a week, and then 1 day each week at the local school, but the idea of feeling 'overwhelmed' with strange work on the same school day causing her concern.
- Another learner pointed out that technology helps to learn a language, but that investing in hard resources such as books and games remains a good idea.

2.4 On the basis of what other evidence are you operating?

We are able to summarise the main cause for change and the need for a new vision for the Gwynedd Immersion Education System into the following areas, and how the proposal has an impact on them is elaborated on below:

1. Put the learner's needs at the centre
2. Contemporary and modernise the provision
3. Working in partnership
4. An opportunity to create a first-class learning environment
5. New opportunities arising from COVID-19
6. Lessons learned as a result of the Pilot Scheme implemented at the request of the Cabinet.

In order to achieve the vision, the purpose, the aim and the objectives, our intention as a result of receiving the grant money (aspect 1 and 2) is to invest a total of £2.2m in our Immersion Education System in Gwynedd, in order to ensure an environment first class learning, and fully modern facilities for 21st century learners and educators.

Our intention is to continuously ensure that the well-being, experience and needs of the learners are central to our plans. The new vision and our intention to invest in our Immersion Education System once again is an example of this commitment.

See from the new vision that we aim to contemporary and modernise the provision to respond to the needs of the learners and the new curriculum. But the need to invest in the infrastructure for the system including digital resources was also identified.

At the moment the number of learner capacity in the immersion education settings is limited to 72 learners each term, however, the *phase 1* capital investment together with the *phase 2* capital investment means; that the number of learners who would be able to be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners each term. Ensuring further capital investment in our immersion education system in Gwynedd will therefore be a means of ensuring growth in the number of learners who benefit from Welsh and bilingual education in the county, together with ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language together formal and informal texts, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Recently as part of our new vision we have appointed a Head of the organisation who has responsibility for the strategic direction of the service, and we are currently in the process of appointing a deputy to the service. These managerial layers are a recent investment in the staffing structure of the Immersion Education System to match the vision.

In addition, we learned a lot during the pandemic on how to maintain learners' connection and access to education, and this is also true from the point of view of our immersion education provision as the staff innovated as they moved to live learning through the medium of Microsoft TEAMS at the start of the lockdown periods. Although there have been clear successes from having to move the language learning experience from the centres to a virtual medium we are also convinced that the centre as the main location of the immersion provision is key if we want to give learners a safe space to build confidence and language skills. And so our vision deliberately proposes that the centre itself as a building remains central to the experience. However, the new vision sets a new weekly timetable which proposes that learners return to their mother school once a week in order to ensure their well-being and contact with peers.

The 3 sites that are part of the phase 2 investment will continue to provide immersion education to years 2-4 of the primary schools, and relocating the Dolgellau Language Centre to a larger site will enable us to offer the provision to more children in the area Meirionnydd.

In order to see more information about the vision and structure of the new system, the document can be read in its entirety [here](#).

2.5 Are there any gaps in the evidence that needs to be collected?

Not at the moment.

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must give due regard to the effect any changes will have on people with the equality characteristics noted below. What impact will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics?

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	Positive	From a race perspective, the intended capital investment will improve the Maesincla Language Centre learning environment, and the relocation of Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres to strategic locations will have a positive effect on this feature, as it will be a means to improve the service and the learning environment for learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd, with those learners often from outside the borders of Gwynedd, Wales, and the UK. It is anticipated that the proposal will therefore create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language among these learners and the schools that the Language Centres serve.
Disability	Positive	As a result of the capital investment from the first and second phase, each of Gwynedd's Immersion Education sites will be fully accessible and have a first-class learning environment. This will benefit all learners including disabled learners.
Sex	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature.
Age	None	As a result of the capital investment from the second phase, more primary age learners will be able to access the service each term. It is however recognised that the relocation of Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres to strategic locations in the county, this will lead to slightly more travel for some primary age learners, and slightly less travel for other learners due to the fact that the new location is more convenient for them.
Sexual orientation	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature.

		The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Gender reassignment	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Pregnancy and maternity	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Marriage and civil partnership	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
The Welsh language	Positive	<p>Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd.</p> <p>The main aim of the Immersion Education System is to support learners to acquire the Welsh language and create new Welsh speakers. The proposal therefore contributes to the Welsh Language <i>Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23 by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers."</i> The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd</p>

		Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Positive	<p>By investing £1.1 million of Government capital grant money each Language Centre would receive an equal investment. This is an economic advantage and keeps professional quality jobs locally.</p> <p>Our phase 1 and 2 investment plans ensure that all Centres are strategically located across the county, and by opening two new language centres in key parts of the county and increasing capacity at the same time, there will be an opportunity for learners benefit from a more local immersion provision for them.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre in Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi in terms of the number of learners on the school site. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre's space will be available for the purpose of the school. Relocating the immersion provision to Ysgol Cymerau will ensure that the same number or more newcomers continue to have access to the service.</p>

* Delete as appropriate

3.2 The Council has a duty under the 2010 Equality Act to contribute positively to a fairer society by promoting equality and good relations in its activities regarding the following characteristics – age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, gender reassignment, disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Council must give due attention to the way any change affects these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does it have an impact?*	In what way? What is the evidence?
Abolishing illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes	One of the principles of the new vision is to ensure that it does not have an impact on the availability of the provision for newcomers (i.e. That the same number or more learners have access to the service). Through the capital investment more learners will have access to the service, and will have the opportunity to acquire the Welsh language in order to enable them to assimilate into the bilingual society in Gwynedd, and take full

		<p>advantage of educational provision and experiences in accordance with the Education Language Policy.</p>
<p>Promoting equal opportunities</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Through the capital investment more learners will have access to the service, and will have the opportunity to acquire the Welsh language in order to enable them to assimilate into the bilingual society in Gwynedd, and take full advantage of educational provision and experiences in accordance with the Education Language Policy.</p> <p>It was noted in the previous consultation on the restructuring of the Language Centres in Gwynedd that there will be a loss of a specialist job that pays well for women (in the previous context), replacing them with jobs that pay less in have a negative impact on women. The new vision does not detail the staffing procedure of the new system at this point.</p> <p>But it can be assumed that the opening of two new sites in Tywyn and Bangor enables an opportunity to create new specialist jobs. In addition to this, the new vision would be an investment in strategic and linguistically challenging parts of the county.</p> <p>Investing in each of the immersion education sites is a means of ensuring consistency in the experience, resources and learning environment across the system. Our aim by applying for phase 2 capital funding was to ensure that all sites offer the same equal opportunities when acquiring the Welsh language within our immersion system here in Gwynedd.</p>
<p>Encouraging good relationships</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>One of the principles of the new vision is to ensure that it does not have an impact on the availability of the provision for newcomers (i.e. That the same number or more learners have access to the service). The change would therefore not have a detrimental effect, as there would still be equal opportunity for all learners who are newcomers.</p> <p>Relocating Dolgellau to be part of the Ysgol Bro Idris site would be a means of ensuring that more learners have access to the service and have the opportunity to acquire the Welsh language in order to enable them to assimilate into the bilingual society in Gwynedd, and take full advantage of provision and educational experiences in accordance with the Education Language Policy. Enabling the latecomers to acquire the Welsh language would ensure that they are able to foster good</p>

		<p>relationships with peers and the bilingual community in Gwynedd.</p> <p>Relocating to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will also be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a move to a model where the new arrivals spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school has a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers and build good relationships.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.</p>
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* to be deleted as appropriate

3.3 How does your proposal ensure that you work in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English and that you seize every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing services bilingually) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

The proposal shows the long-term commitment of the Department of Education and the Council to provide contemporary, innovative and high-quality immersion education in a 21C learning environment for learners who are new arrivals in Gwynedd.

Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd. The proposal therefore contributes to the *Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23 by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers."* The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050.

The relocation of the Dolgellau Language Centre to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a

move to a model where the newcomers spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school having a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers, foster good relationships, and take advantage of various opportunities and experiences to use the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English, taking advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community.

3.4 What other measures or changes could you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice in order to have a positive impact on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language, and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy / practice may have on the Welsh language?

Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd.

The main aim of the Immersion Education System is to support learners to acquire the Welsh language and create new Welsh speakers. The proposal therefore contributes to the *Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23* by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers." The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

The new weekly timetable is deliberately set to offer better transition opportunities and maintain contact with peers in the school, as the learners return to the school for 1 day each

week, which will be a means of ensuring the continuity of their support to acquire the Welsh language at school.

3.5 How does the proposal show that you have had due regard to the need to address inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this is about closing inequality gaps rather than just improving outcomes for everyone)?

The proposal shows the long-term commitment of the Department of Education and the Council to provide contemporary, innovative and high-quality immersion education in a 21C learning environment for learners who are new arrivals in Gwynedd.

Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create consistency across the System, and ensure equal opportunity for all learners to benefit from the very best conditions to acquire the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Dolgellau Language Centre to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a move to a model where the newcomers spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school having a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers, foster good relationships, and take advantage of various opportunities and experiences to use the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

3.6 What other measures or changes might you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice to show that you have had due regard to the need to reduce disproportionate outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, in accordance with the Socio-Economic Act?

It is believed that increasing capacity and investing in each of Gwynedd's immersion education sites to ensure a first-class learning environment will ensure the same opportunities for all learners without discrimination to acquire the Welsh language.

4) Analysing the Results

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, positive impact on any of the above and what is the reason for this?

We believe that the additional investment of £1.1 million and the new wider vision is likely to have a positive impact on any of the equality features or the Universal Duty, due to the fact that the availability of the provision for the learners may improve or stay the same.

Our intention is to reconcile the obvious differences that would result from the achievement of capital financial investment phase 1 of the Welsh in Education grant. By committing to spend phase 2 capital money of the grant on the rest of those Centres that have not received investment to date, learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd will benefit from a first-class learning environment and consistent learning experiences across the system.

Our most important principle is to ensure that the welfare of the learners is central to everything. And so investing and securing better resources that improve the experience of all learners, opening new sites and changing the weekly learning schedule is an effort to improve the learning environment and the learning experience of Welsh for the latecomers here to Gwynedd, whatever it may be their background, age, ability, gender, race and nationality.

4.2 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, negative impact on any of the above and what is the reason for this?

Investing £1.1 million more in the Immersion Education System and the new vision which the Cabinet approved last year is not likely to have a negative impact on any of the equality features or the Universal Duty, due to the fact that the availability of the provision for the learners is improving.

The relocation of the Dolgellau Language Centre to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a move to a model where the newcomers spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school having a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers, foster good relationships, and take advantage of various opportunities and experiences to use the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre in Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi in terms of the number of learners on the school site. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre's space will be available for the purpose of the school. Relocating the immersion provision to Ysgol Cymerau will ensure that the same number or more newcomers continue to have access to the service.

Our intention is to see learners settle, root and acquire the Welsh language here in Gwynedd. Investing further in the Immersion System makes the environment and locations fit for purpose, with the Headteacher and staff owning the learners' well-being and education in partnership with the Education System more widely. It is key that the Immersion System continues to be at the forefront nationally and pioneers in giving newcomers the best start in acquiring the Welsh they demand in our bilingual education system.

4.3 What should be done?

Choose one of the following:

Continue with the policy / service as it is robust	✓
Adapt the policy to delete any barriers	
Suspend and delete the policy as the detrimental impacts are too big	
Continue with the policy as any detrimental impact can be justified	
No further action at this time because it is too soon to decide, or there is insufficient evidence	

4.4 If continuing with the project, what steps will you take to reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

There was an extensive period of engagement on the new vision and the intention to invest £1.1 million of capital money from phase 1 of the Welsh in Education grant back in 2021. An obvious result of the engagement with the staff and the unions, together with engaging with wider stakeholders was that there is historical praise towards the success of the Language Centres over the past decades to ensure that learners acquire the Welsh language.

The new vision was supported with a unanimous vote in its favour by the Cabinet and before that in a meeting of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Language Committee. A core part of the vision is to make purposeful use of the 100% Welsh Government capital money to ensure that the system is equal, fit for purpose and a resource

that helps newcomers acquire the Welsh language successfully through the immersion provision.

By investing an additional £1.1 million of capital money to improve the learning environment of the primary immersion education sites, along with locating them in strategic areas of the county in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, we hope to see better collaboration throughout the school term between the new system and the schools which together are key to supporting newcomers to acquire the Welsh language successfully and confidently.

4.5 If you are not taking any further action to delete or reduce the negative impacts, explain why here.

No negative effects have been identified.

5) Monitoring

5.1 What steps will you take to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy or service (action plan)?

We will monitor the impact of any change to ensure that the outcomes are positive and do not have any negative impact.