

# CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



## Report to a meeting of the Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 28 March 2023  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Menna Jones  
**Contact Officer:** Gwenllian Williams and Llywela Haf Owain  
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**Title of Item:** Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023

### THE DECISION SOUGHT

1. Approve the decision to hold a public consultation on the draft language strategy.
2. Delegate responsibility to the Corporate Support Head, in consultation with the Corporate Support Cabinet Member, to prepare and undertake the consultation process.

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### REASONS FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

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The next language strategy for Gwynedd is expected to be published by the end of 2023. In order to meet the timetable, a public consultation must be held on the draft strategy at the beginning of April.

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This draft strategy has been created as a continuation of the work of the current strategy (Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd 2018-23) in order to reflect the Council's commitment to promote the language across the county and to meet the statutory requirements set within the Welsh Language Standards. The vision is to create an inclusive strategy that increases the use of the Welsh language in various contexts. During January, sessions were held with Cabinet members, Language Committee members and members of the Gwynedd Language Forum, in order to gain their input regarding the possible content of the draft strategy.

## 1.2 Action areas

The draft strategy is a follow-up to the existing strategy, which also shows how we intend to work in line with the priorities of Cymraeg 2050, and therefore the following priority areas have been included:

- **Increase the number of speakers**
- **Increasing the use as a Language of the family**
- **Increasing the use as a Language of Learning**
- **Increasing the use as a Language of the community**
- **Increasing the use as a Language of work and services**
- **Developing Research and Technology**

The draft strategy includes information about specific plans that the Council has to respond to these areas, and possible future actions.

## 1.2 Length of the next strategy

It was decided that it would make sense to adopt a 10 year strategy. This means that the strategy's period will correspond with the publication of census data, providing us with a more efficient measuring method.

## 1.3 Target

**Standard 145** requires us to set a target in the strategy for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh-speakers in the county. This is the wording of the target in the draft strategy:

***We will set a general target to see an increase in the regular use of Welsh. We also want to see 100% of Gwynedd children receiving the opportunity to speak Welsh and to use the language regularly.***

## 1.4 Scope of the strategy

The draft strategy sets a vision to increase the use of Welsh across the whole county, but the schemes or projects that are proposed focus on those areas where the Council has the power and influence to take action. We will continue to

work with other partners within the county that have also made commitments to promote the Welsh language.

## **1.5 Monitoring and measuring**

The strategy will be reviewed regularly, and formally at the end of the fifth year. This will give us an opportunity to adapt and add projects and respond to circumstances and needs that may arise. The proposed measures are:

### **Measures**

#### Increase the number of speakers

- Number of children receiving Welsh-medium education.
- Number of children receiving support through the immersion system of the education department.
- Number of Council employees receiving Learn Welsh lessons.

#### Increase the use of the Welsh language

##### *Language of the early years action area*

- The reach data of WESP in terms of the number of childcare settings and the number of children receiving Welsh-medium education.
- Number of Ti a Fi groups, Parent and Child groups that are supported/maintained.
- Number of activities specifically targeted towards young families/parents and infants by Council services.
- Number of family activities arranged by the language initiative.
- Number of campaigns to share resources and information.

##### *Language of Learning action areas*

- WESP monitoring statistics
- Number of Council staff receiving training to improve skills
- Number of apprenticeships being offered by the Council
- Number of training/accreditation opportunities being offered by the youth service.

#### *The Language of Work and Services action area*

- Number of businesses that have received financial support through the Arfor Scheme
- Number of staff that have received support to learn Welsh or develop skills
- Number of staff participating in buddy schemes

#### *Language of the Community action area*

- Number of activities held by Council services and the language enterprise for different groups
- Number of community enterprises supported by means of Regeneration and Economy schemes

#### *Technology and Research action area*

- Number of research projects undertaken by the Council, or commissioned by the Council

### **1.5 Funding to implement the strategy**

The Welsh Language Commissioner has stated that they expects to see projects or activities that derive directly from the priorities that have been identified in the strategy. The existing commitments in relation to project funding will end at the end of 2024, as will the funding to employ a project officer. The Council's contribution to the menter Iaith/language initiative (by funding a chief Officer) will also end in 2026. There will need to be a considered about what commitment will be made to ensure that sufficient resources are available to effectively implement the strategy.

## **2. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION**

- 2.1 Prior to any further work on the strategy, we are eager to seek the views of others, particularly the residents of Gwynedd, on the draft strategy and to consider their observations.

### **3. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

- 3.1 If the Cabinet gives its approval to the public consultation, it is intended to undertake it between 4 April and 14 May. The next step will be to submit an analysis of the consultation outcomes to the Language Committee to be held on 27 June, and request their input to help form a recommendation for the Cabinet on the final Strategy. It is hoped that the final strategy will be submitted to a Cabinet meeting in October, and then to the full Council for final adoption on 7 December.

#### **Impact Assessment**

An initial impact assessment has been written for the strategy which identifies a positive effect on the people of Gwynedd. The assessment acknowledges the possibility that some resident might feel that they are proving a negative effect, particularly relating to race and disability characteristics, and it also notes how the strategy tries to ensure an equal opportunity for all residents of Gwynedd to see, learn and use the Welsh language. The assessment notes that there are some gaps in the evidence base, mainly as a result of no impact assessments being available on some of the projects included in the Council Plan, and because the 2021 Census data has not yet been fully analysed. The assessment, and the content of the strategy will be reviewed again to consider any comments that will be received as part of the consultation process, and as a result of strengthening the evidence base.

#### **Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and is globally responsible. The recommendations have been prepared having regard to these requirements and in accordance with the 5 ways of working.

## **Equalities Act 2010**

The Council is subject to public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics and having due regard to the socio economic duty under Section 1 of the Act. An equalities impact assessment has been prepared and is appended at Appendix 1. The Cabinet will need to have regard to its findings when coming to a decision. The assessment does not identify any particular negative impacts stemming from the decision.

## **8. VIEWS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

### **i. The Monitoring Officer:**

I'm satisfied with the propriety of the report and the intention to hold a consultation and report back.

### **ii. Head of Finance Department:**

I have no comment on the content of the Strategy from the perspective of financial propriety.

Paragraph 1.6 of the report refers to the resources available in the future to support the Strategy; specific arrangements are in place at the Council to submit bids for additional resources and I expect that any requests for resources to support the Language Strategy will be submitted in accordance with those arrangements.

## **Appendices attached to this report:**

**Appendix A:** Draft Language Strategy 2023

**Appendix B:** Impact Assessment – March 2023