

Meeting	Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Panel
Date	22 March 2018
Title	Preparing for Consultation
Brief Description	<p>Report by the Gwynedd Scrutiny Working Group – Planning and the Welsh Language.</p> <p>The Working Group is supporting the Panel to develop the Maintaining and Creating Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Guidance</p> <p>Here are the First Set of Recommendations to support your work</p>
Chairman	Councillor Gruffydd Williams
Working Group Members	Councillors Gruffydd Williams, Simon Glyn and Aled Evans
Officers	Gareth James – Members Manager – Support and Scrutiny Lowri Haf Evans – Member Support Officer

Could you respond to the following Recommendations please by 6 April 2018:

- 1A That a clear statement is required in the Guidance that the Developer is required to go to public consultation on every development of 10 or more dwellings in an urban area and 5 or more dwellings in a village/rural area.
- 1B That a clear statement is required in the Guidance that the Developer is required to present a Welsh Language Statement and a Welsh Language Impact Assessment for every development that goes to public consultation.
- 2 That Panel Members receive advice and guidance from independent specialists in the field of Language Planning when preparing the new Supplementary Planning Guidance before consulting on the new draft Guidance.
- 3 That Panel Members receive advice and guidance from independent specialists in the field of Research and Analytics when preparing the new Supplementary Planning Guidance before consulting on the new draft Guidance.
- 4 That Panel Members receive advice and guidance from independent specialists in the field of Engagement and Consultation when preparing the new Supplementary Planning Guidance before consulting on the new draft Guidance.
- 5 That Panel Members request to extend the Timetable if required in order to produce work of the highest possible standard.

1 Welsh Language Speakers

Mae Increasing the number and percentage of Welsh language speakers and communities is an important priority for Gwynedd residents and Gwynedd Council

Recommendations

- 1A That a clear statement is required in the Guidance that the Developer is required to go to public consultation on every development of 10 or more dwellings in an urban area and 5 or more dwellings in a village/rural area.**
 - 1B That a clear statement is required in the Guidance that the Developer is required to present a Welsh Language Statement and a Welsh Language Impact Assessment for every development that goes to public consultation.**
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- 1.1 The *Well-being Assessment for Gwynedd and Môn* states that there has been an 11% decrease in Welsh language speakers in Gwynedd between 1981 and 2011.**
 - 1.2 The reduction in Gwynedd is greater than the level for the whole of Wales, where there was no reduction at all during the same period.**
 - 1.3 The *Gwynedd Council Plan for 2018-2023* states that one unique feature of the County is its Welshness.**
 - 1.4 One of the Plan's priorities notes the Council's commitment to operate through the medium of Welsh; but states that this is not sufficient if we are to keep the unique nature of the County alive.**
 - 1.5 One of the key results of the *Gwynedd and Anglesey Development Plan 2011-2026* is to aim to create more communities with a higher percentage than 70% Welsh speakers.**
 - 1.6 The *Welsh Government's Planning Directorate* says that there is a need to hold a consultation on every major development of 10 houses or more. It does not matter whether or not they are allocated in the Local Development Plan. This means that the developer needs to hold a consultation for all applications for 10 houses or more.**

2 Language Planning

Ensuring specialist and independent input from the field of Language Planning is essential in order to secure the credibility of the new Guidance.

Recommendation

- 2 That Panel Members receive advice and guidance from independent specialists in the field of Language Planning when preparing the new Supplementary Planning Guidance before consulting on the new draft Guidance.**
- 2.1 The *Manual on Local Development Plans – second edition – August 2015* states, ‘...*It will be more efficient if the Supplementary Planning Guidance are produced jointly with other Local Planning Authorities (LPA) where possible. Another way would be for groups of LPAs to share examples of good and tailored to the local circumstances.*’
- 2.2 During 2005, 16 planning authorities (including Gwynedd and Anglesey), Welsh Language Board, House Builders Federation and Welsh Assembly Government worked together and in December 2005 produced a document *Planning and the Welsh Language: Way Forward*.
- 2.3 Consideration was given to this document when developing the current Supplementary Planning Guidance for Gwynedd, *Supplementary Planning Guidance: Planning and the Welsh Language (November 2009)*.
- 2.4 Although the 2005 publication is useful, it is quite dated by now and there is a need to hold a more up to date specialist work so that a Guidance can be produced that will benefit more recent and specialist language planning information.
- 2.5 The 2005 publication states (Appendix C 3.11), ‘...*The matter of stipulating the connotation of ‘high’, ‘moderate’ or ‘low’ in terms of language importance is at the discretion of the local planning authority, and this is decided on the basis of the location of the prospective development and based on the results of the Language Profile exercise.*’
- 2.6 Members of the Working Group are of the opinion that every one of the Communities in Gwynedd are designated as ‘high’ level in terms of language importance.
- 2.7 It is not expected that Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils possess the kind of resources and specialism required for this essential element of the work.
- 2.8 It is suggested that this should be considered as a priority as part of the preparation for consultation.

3 Research and Analytics

Robust information and data is required on the strengths and weaknesses of the current Guidance in order to produce a new Guidance that will address any weaknesses and build on any strengths.

Recommendation

- 3 That Panel Members receive advice and guidance from independent specialists in the field of Research and Analytics when preparing the new Supplementary Planning Guidance before consulting on the new draft Guidance.**

- 3.1 A joint survey was commissioned by Gwynedd Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council and Snowdonia National Park Authority from Gwynedd Council's Research and Analytics Service in 2014.
- 3.2 A report was published in July 2014 called the *Gwynedd and Anglesey Housing and Language Survey*.
- 3.3 One example of the key findings was that '*in-migration weakens the Welsh language situation....'*(1.6.6)
- 3.4 It is not clear whether or not consideration was given to this report by Panel Members when you prepared the new draft Guidance and how the guidance addresses this issue.
- 3.5 Appendix 3 of the new draft Guidance lists 19 documents that it would be beneficial to the Developer to use as a basis for preparing the Language Statement and Language Assessment.
- 3.6 It is not clear to Working Group Members what is the exact relevance of these documents and how much influence was afforded to them by Panel Members when producing the new draft Guidance.
- 3.7 It is not clear to Working Group Members which data and background information was considered when forming the draft Guidance.

4 Engagement and Consultation

In order to maximise the value from Engagement and Consultation it would be beneficial to receive independent and specialist support.

Recommendation

4 That Panel Members receive advice and guidance from independent specialists in the field of Engagement and Consultation when preparing the new Supplementary Planning Guidance before consulting on the new draft Guidance.

4.1 The *Manual on Local Development Plans* gives guidance on consulting on Supplementary Planning Guidance

- '*Local Planning Authorities should review the effectiveness and relevance of their current Supplementary Planning Guidance at the beginning of the process of preparing the Local Development Plan.*' (7.3.2)
- '*When Supplementary Planning Guidance relate to the obligations of the plan or specific policy (key SPGs), and that they would help in understanding them, they should be prepared and consulted upon jointly with the Local Development Plan.*' (7.3.6)

4.2 It is not clear to Working Group Members whether a detailed review of the current Guidance was held at the start of the process of preparing the Local Development Plan.

4.3 If it was not undertaken it should be noted with an explanation for the reason of the decision taken.

4.4 If a detailed review was undertaken, the details should be noted as part of the consultation documents on the new Guidance..

4.6 It is not clear to Working Group Members why the Supplementary Planning Guidance and Local Development Plan were not jointly prepared and consulted upon at the same time.

4.7 The reason for this should be explained in the consultation documents.

4.8 The Joint Planning Policy Unit held an Engagement Exercise during the summer of 2016.

4.9 Before preparing the new Planning Guidance the Unit was '*eager to seek the views of various stake holders who have had experience of using the current SPG and/or who are interested in what kind of guidance should be included in the new SPG.*' .

- 4.10 A brief report was presented by the Unit to the Panel on 1 February 2018.
- 4.11 Working Group Members are of the view that there is useful qualitative information in the detail and it would be worthwhile for you to consider it in full as you prepare the draft Guidelines for consultation.
- 4.12 Here are the main elements that it would be worth looking at in detail:
- How does the new Guidance help the public and the developer to understand how a development can contribute towards maintaining and increasing the number of communities that have 70% and over of the population who speak Welsh?
 - How can the Guidance be made clear and unambiguous?
 - How can a professional and consistent standard be set for preparing and judging the Language Statements and Assessments?
 - How will you clearly explain the methodology?
 - How will you know if the Guidance is successful or not?
- 4.13 Working Group Members suggest that including examples of developments would help to clarify some elements of the Guidance.
- 4.14 Participation Cymru is a national organisation that gives guidance on matters relating to engagement and consultation. Gwynedd Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council are committed to maintaining the standards of the *National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales*.

Appendix

[**Communities Scrutiny Committee Report 22.2.18**](#)

List of useful documents

Well-being Assessment Gwynedd and Môn 2017

Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023

Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan 2011-2026

Manual on Local Development Plans (August 2015)

Planning and the Welsh Language: Way Forward (2005)

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Planning and the Welsh Language (2009)

Gwynedd and Anglesey Housing and Language Survey (2014)

National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales

Engagement Summary 2016