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## LANGUAGE COMMITTEE, 13.10.16

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**Present:** Councillor Eirwyn Williams (Chairman)  
Councillor Charles Jones (Vice-chairman)

**Councillors:** Craig ab Iago, Elwyn Edwards, Tom Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Alwyn Gruffydd, Eric M. Jones, Elfed Williams, Hefin Williams, and Owain Williams

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn (Cabinet Member - Welsh Language).

**Officers:** Debbie Anne Jones (Welsh Language Officer), Gwenllian Williams (Language Development Officer), Garem Jackson (Welsh Area Education Officer) and Ann Roberts (Member Support Officer).

**Apologies:** Councillor Gweno Glyn and John Wyn Williams.

### 1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

### 2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 5 July 2016, as a true record.

### 3. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER - THE WELSH LANGUAGE

Submitted – the verbal report of the Cabinet Member - the Welsh Language, detailing recent developments in the field, including:-

- Language Audit and the action plan. The meeting of four Heads of Departments - Economy and Community Department, Regulatory Department, Adults, Health and Well-being Department and Consultancy Department to emphasise the importance of the Welsh language, asking them to programme work to respond to the issues raised.
- A meeting was attempted with Cabinet Members of nearby Councils to discuss how they intended on responding to the requirements of the Language Standards, but that attempt was a complete fail. After a very beneficial meeting with the Language Officer of Conwy County Borough Council, it was agreed to hold a joint meeting in January with all of the Language Officers to discuss the Language Standards.
- A beneficial meeting had been held with an officer from the Language Commissioner's Office to share information.
- A Hunaniaith Strategic Group meeting had been held, and there it was agreed to invite members from the Hunaniaith Workplaces Group and representation from Anglesey Language Forum to the next meeting in order to discuss the Public Services Board.
- The launch of Popdy - Bangor's Language Centre tomorrow with Alun Davies AM, the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language, Welsh Government.
- Alun Davies AM visited Ysgol Abercaseg and Ysgol Pen-y-bryn, Bethesda today. There, a discussion was held with Bethan Webb, Deputy Director of Welsh Language, Welsh Government who was responsible for Language Initiatives and

there would be a further opportunity to discuss successes along with issues that were unsuccessful in being met in a meeting that was yet to be arranged.

It was asked whether preparations were in place for the thousands of people that would be moving to the area due to the Horizon development. It was reported that the Horizon company had arranged a series of meetings with the services of Gwynedd Council next week.

**RESOLVED to note the content of the report.**

#### **4. CONSULTATION ON A WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY**

The Cabinet Member's draft response to the consultation document was submitted: A million Welsh speakers by 2050. It was noted that the Government's previous Language Strategy had moved forward by this Strategy in order to concentrate entirely, more or less, on education and growth in Welsh language education as the medium for realising the million Welsh speakers by 2050.

It was reported that there was a need to

- Give more referral to strongholds of the Welsh language and how it was intended to strengthen the Welsh language in those areas that nurture the Welsh language completely naturally
- Refer to community planning
- Have real commitment that would penetrate into all of Welsh Government's work

The following observations were expressed on the draft response

- It was noted that there was no direction on how it was intended to realise the Strategy and where the resources would come from to ensure its success
- Further Education and Higher Education was referred to. A member's concern was noted regarding the financial support given to the students of Wales to go to universities of their choice
- The need was noted for clarity in referring to bilingual education
- A member suggested that specific Welsh areas needed to be established
- Economic value needed to be given to the Welsh language and planning acts needed to be used to protect the Welsh language
- It was noted that there was a need to attempt to persuade Welsh people to use the Welsh language
- Jobs needed to be given consideration in the Strategy
- The need to ensure that it would not be possible to misinterpret the draft response under development field 3: Education, and a definition of Gwynedd Council's education language policy needed to be included

It was reported that the draft response was to be introduced to the Leadership Team before the end of the month with the consultation period coming to an end on 31 October 2016.

Members were thanked for their comments and it was reported that it was also possible for members to respond directly to the consultation.

**RESOLVED to incorporate the additional comments in the response to the consultation document on behalf of Gwynedd Council.**

## 5. WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN - DRAFT

A verbal report was received from the Gwynedd Area Education Officer, explaining that the 2017-20 Plan was being continued with five of the 2010 plan's outcomes. The intention to set ambitious but achievable targets due to the Council having to review progress against those targets was reported.

The original intention to submit a draft response to the Language Committee was explained, but due to the substantial changes in the plan's template, it had not been possible. In addition, it was reported that the Welsh Government's consultation sessions across the North had not finished until last week, with the final session in Llandudno.

The three Departments and the outcomes, along with the draft targets that Gwynedd Council intended to put in the action plan to respond to the requirements was reported on. It was noted that Estyn's framework asked the question regarding the way that Gwynedd Council purposefully plans, and that would need to be showed.

The key timetable as follows was noted:-

24 October 2016	Local authorities to launch a statutory consultation for eight weeks
Mid November	Send <i>Mudiad Meithrin</i> data to the authorities
20 December 2016	Authorities would submit the Welsh in Education 2017-20 Strategic Plan to the Government.

It was noted that, although the timetable was tight, it was possible that the document would be prepared on time.

It was reported that Welsh Government commissioned Estyn every year to inspect based on themes, and one of the fields of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan was inspected. Gwynedd and Flintshire had been chosen to be inspected. It was noted that Estyn's final report was on their website by now and paragraph 49 noted as follows:

'There are a few good examples where expertise is used effectively to develop provision across local authorities, in co-operation with regional consortia and regional networks. An example is the development of the 'Siarter Iaith' in Gwynedd. This language charter aims to provide a framework to promote and increase the use of Welsh by pupils in a social context. There are early indications that the 'Siarter' is beginning to impact positively on increasing the social use of Welsh by pupils in Gwynedd schools. The 'Siarter' is currently being introduced in schools across Wales.'

The need to ensure that pupils following courses through the medium of Welsh in the Schools could then follow the courses in Welsh in the Colleges was noted.

**RESOLVED to hold a special meeting to discuss a draft of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20 during the consultation period.**

## 6. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LANGUAGE STANDARDS

The report of the Workplace Language Development Officer was submitted.

It was noted that the work with Adults Service focused on understanding the relationship of Language Standards and More than Words, and ensuring that any interventions planned met the operational requirements of More than Words and the internal Language Audit. The input that was given in the training sessions on the Adults Service's Language Awareness for new social workers was explained.

It was noted that the emphasis in the previous period had been on raising awareness of staff and teams on the requirements of the Language Standards, and that a communication plan would be developed to spread messages on good practice.

It was also reported that a discussion had been held with the Learning and Development team to look at possible changes to language skills development training.

## **7. LANGUAGE COMPLAINTS**

Submitted – the report of the Welsh Language Development Officer detailing the latest single complaint to hand and the response.

**RESOLVED to note the content of the report.**

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and concluded at 3.25pm.