



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

WELSH LANGUAGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

29 APRIL 2019

UPDATE - LIST OF STANDARDISED WELSH PLACE-NAMES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR G. HOPKINS

AUTHORS: Steffan Gealy, Service Manager, Welsh Language Services (01443 570002)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Welsh Language Steering Group with an update relating to the Council's response in relation to the Welsh Language Commissioner's [List of Standardised Welsh Place-names](#) as published in July 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the decision taken by the Cabinet Member, Adult Community Services and the Welsh Language in respect of the list.
- 2.2 Note the Council's current position in respect of the Welsh Language Commissioner's proposed list of Standardised Place Names.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need for the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group to be aware of the Council's current position in relation to the utilisation of the Welsh Language Commissioner's List of Standardised Place Names which was published in July, 2018
- 3.2 Although the Welsh Language Commissioner aims to ensure orthographic consistency and accuracy throughout Wales and the List of Standardised Welsh Place-names has been produced to support this, it is important to highlight that local authorities are ultimately responsible for deciding on the forms they use for place-names within their geographical area.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Welsh Language Commissioner is responsible for providing advice on the standard forms of Welsh place-names to individuals and organisations and to emphasise the importance of adopting standard forms for public administration, maps signage and online search engines.
- 4.2 The Welsh Language Commissioner wrote to the Chief Executive of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council in July, drawing attention to the List of Standardised Welsh Place-names as published on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website, expressing the wish that the Council adopt this list.
- 4.3 The Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group met on the 10th October, 2018 where they considered the recommendations made by the Welsh Language Commissioner in respect of the adoption of place-names relevant to Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 4.4 Following a lengthy discussion on the complexities surrounding the adoption of the Welsh Language Commissioner's list of standardised place-names, the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group resolved, with the agreement of Cabinet that the Chair of the Steering Group seek written confirmation from the Welsh Language Commissioner to establish the rationale of the list prior to any consultation taking place with local communities.
- 4.5 In the interim, officers from the Welsh Language Commissioner visited the Council which afforded our officers the opportunity to explain the Council's position at that time together with the complexities and impact of any amendments to place-names on the administration of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council business.

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 In response to the letter of the Chair of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group, the Welsh Language Commissioner's office requested that the Council postpone any consultation process as there was a further need to revisit the recommendations outlined within the list in respect of RCT.
- 5.2 As the Council have a recognised good working relationship with the Welsh Language Commissioner, Council Officers have since provided a bi-lingual list of place-names currently used in the administration of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council business. As the appropriate Cabinet Member and Chair of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group, County Borough Councillor G Hopkins has since written to the Commissioner's office to request that the published list of Standardised Place Names therefore be amended accordingly.
- 5.3 Should the Welsh Language Commissioner wish to make any revisions to the bi-lingual list of place-names currently used in the administration of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, it is requested that further correspondence

be provided to the Steering Group in respect of the rationale prior to any consultation taking place with local communities.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 Local Members received written confirmation of any initial proposed changes and were invited to respond with their comments for consideration.

7.2 Further consultation at this juncture will not be progressed.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

9. LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 regulates this area of work.

9.2 As such, when the Council formulates a new policy, due regard must be given to ensure that any decision would have increased positive effects on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh Language and that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

10.1 The Welsh language is a cross-cutting theme in the Corporate Plan and underpins all corporate priorities as the Council is required to comply with the amended Compliance Notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner in September 2016 under the Welsh Language (Wales) 2011 Measure in addition to Strategies regarding the Welsh Language published by the Welsh Government.

10.2 This subject under discussion in this report is particularly relevant to goal six of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 - a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. It is designed to ensure that the Welsh language has equal status to the English language in Wales and it also serves to protect the heritage of Wales by ensuring that Welsh place-names are preserved.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 The Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group met on the 10th October, 2018 to discuss the advice provided to Rhondda Cynon Taf (along with other Local Authorities in Wales) by the Welsh Language Commissioner to adopt the List of Standardised Welsh Place-names.

- 11.2 A further report was presented to Cabinet which sought approval seek written confirmation from the Welsh Language Commissioner to establish the rationale of the list prior to any consultation taking place with local communities.
- 11.3 Following correspondence with the Commissioner's office which requested that the Council put any consultation process on hold, the Chair of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group responded to the Welsh Language Commissioner agreeing that it will be inadvisable to progress with any consultation based on the published list at this juncture and requested that a revised list submitted by Council be published in its place.