



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

WELSH LANGUAGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

29 APRIL 2019

**INCREASING THE AWARENESS OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL WELSH
MEDIUM/BILINGUAL EVENTS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**

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

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Welsh Language Steering Group with information relating to the proposed quarterly promotion of national and local Welsh medium/bilingual events via social media as a part of the Council's 5 year Action Plan to Promote the Welsh Language in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the update provided;
- 2.2 Formally approve the campaigns and timetable for implementation as outlined in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2;
- 2.3 Consider whether further information is required.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council is required to produce a Strategy to Facilitate and Promote the Welsh Language in the county under Standard 145 of the Compliance Notice issued under section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, and publish that strategy by 30th October 2016.

- 3.2 The 5 year strategy sets out how Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in the area.
- 3.3 Formally approving the campaigns will reflect the Council's commitment to increasing opportunities to use Welsh through its social media channels as well as showing its commitment to promote the work of partners which is integral to the success of the 5 year strategy.
- 3.4 In addition, this promotional work will complement the Council's preparations to host a successful National Eisteddfod in 2022 as announced by the Council Leader and the National Eisteddfod on 6 March 2019.
- 3.5 Furthermore, due to the educational nature of the campaigns, the Council would respond positively to the Welsh Government's expectation to promote the resources they have already shared with us for use through social media channels.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan was developed under Standard 145 of the Compliance Notice issued under section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and published on the Council's website within the require timescale.
- 4.2 The Strategy and Action Plan was developed over the course of 2016 in collaboration with Sbectrwm, an organisation specialising in language planning; Menter Iaith and members of Fforwm Iaith, Council Services and Elected Members.
- 4.3 The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan focuses on:
 - growing the number of people able to speak Welsh
 - increasing the use of the Welsh language in all aspects of community and public life, and
 - raising awareness of the importance of the Welsh language as an essential part of the cultural identity and character of the South Wales valleys.
- 4.4 In addition, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council recognises the importance and cost effectiveness of social media when engaging with its residents. Social media now directs more traffic to specific

websites than Google therefore it is clear that these platforms are powerful marketing, networking and advertising tools. They can reach a wide audience quickly, simply and effectively, and enable organisations to target and engage with specific audiences.

4.5 As such, Welsh Language Services and Cabinet and PR colleagues have been utilising Council social media platforms to promote Welsh medium-bilingual events for some time. However, there has been no formal process for us to evidence this to the Welsh Language Commissioner as part of our statutory duties.

4.5 After working with officers from the Cabinet and PR, it was agreed that formalising the process would allow us the opportunity to evidence our good work to the Welsh Language Commissioner. It is intended to promote four key events per financial year (one per quarter) initially. The first campaigns would begin in 2019/2020 and focus on the following based on their national importance as recognised festivals in Wales:

- Eisteddfod yr Urdd – Quarter 1
- Diwrnod Owain Glyndŵr – Quarter 2
- Diwrnod Shw'mae – Quarter 3
- St David's Day – Quarter 4

4.6 Details on the proposed campaigns are outlined in Appendix 1.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

6.1 The Action Plan related to the Strategy has been developed after consultation with residents and their involvement has shaped the content.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. Staffing costs and minimal resource costs will be naturally absorbed within existing

service area budgets. Non-compliance with a standard could incur financial penalties of up to £5,000.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015 regulate this area of work.

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

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 This report highlights the need to increase the activity with regards to the promotion of Welsh medium/bilingual events and shows how the Council aims to work collaboratively with its partners to achieve the goals as outlined in the 5 year strategy.
- 9.3 The content of this report is directly linked to Goal 7 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act - a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Implementation of the Strategy will support the normalisation of the Welsh language, ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language and, over time, increase the number of people who can speak Welsh in the county by engaging in Welsh medium/bilingual events. It also contributes to the creation of a more equal Wales by providing opportunities for Welsh speakers to access Council services in the medium of Welsh if they so wish.
- 9.4 The campaign forms part of a longer-term approach adopted by the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy to increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the county and is the result of a collaboration between the Council and other partners with involvement from the community. It will result in the integration of Welsh language activities with wider marketing and event plans and help to engage more Welsh speakers thereby preventing a reduction in language use.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 In line with requirements of the The Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015 the Council and its partners need to prioritise some key policy areas for action, and work together towards common goals as outlined in the Welsh Language Strategy and Action Plan.

10.2 One key area of work is the promotion and facilitation of Welsh medium and bilingual events and the Council could do this efficiently and effectively by utilising social media as a primary platform to engage with residents on such matters. This enables the Council to show its commitment to ensuring that it shares in the Welsh Language Commissioner's vision of creating a Wales where people can use the Welsh language in their everyday lives.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Contact Officer - Wendy Edwards, Head of Community Learning
Steffan Gealy, Service Manager, Welsh Language Services