



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

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COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welsh Language Standards Compliance Report

2020 – 2021

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

April 2021

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INTRODUCTION: Welsh Language Standards

Rhondda Cynon Taf received its final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30th September 2015, which outlined the Council's duty to meet 171 of the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. An application to challenge 14 of the Standards was presented to the Commissioner on 29 March 2016. Following consolidation and further consultation, the Welsh Language Commissioner determined that no action should be applied to 9 of the Standards which were subject to challenge and a variation should be applied to 5 of the Standards, which were subject to challenge. The amended Compliance Notice was presented to RCTCBC on 9th September 2016 and may be viewed in full [here](#)

Vision

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is committed to creating an environment which encourages its residents to use Welsh in their interaction with the Council and supporting staff to use Welsh in the workplace. In addition to working towards full compliance of the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, the Council will aim to ensure that it delivers services in line with all key Welsh Government policies and strategies in relation to the Welsh language.

Governance and accountability

In 2014, the Council established a Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group as a sub-committee of the Council's Cabinet. It is a cross-party group with community representation. The Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group oversees strategic developments, considers reports from relevant departments on Welsh language issues, makes recommendations to the Council's Cabinet and monitors Council-wide developments. It has responsibility for assessing the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan and monitoring the Council's progress as it seeks to meet the Welsh Language Standards.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Council's commitments under the Welsh Language Standards are integrated into the authority's main organisational documents including the Corporate Plan (Making a Difference) and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). In addition, internal policies, such as HR policies, also mainstream Welsh language issues, which is more effective than preparing stand-alone policies to address Welsh language matters. The Council's priorities are also informed by legislation including the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Care and Well-being Act 2016 that place responsibility on the Council to strengthen the Welsh language. The former Act requires public bodies to work towards seven well-being goals, one of which is 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language,' while the latter requires public service organisations to consider and respond to the linguistic needs of their users when providing care and support services.

Reporting

This year has been the fifth full year of implementing the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

This report will be published by 30 June in compliance with Standards 158 and 164 and details how the Council has complied with the following Supplementary Standards:

- Service Delivery Standards
- Operational Standards

- Policy Making Standards

The report also presents data on the required indicators as follows:

- number of staff who have Welsh language skills (Standard 151)
- number of staff who attended training courses listed in Standard 128 if offered in Welsh (Standards 152)
- percentage of the total number of staff who attended any courses listed in Standard 128 (Standards 152)
- number of new and vacant posts that were advertised during the year which were categorised as (i) Welsh language skills essential (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post (iii) Welsh language skills desirable (iv) Welsh language skills not necessary
- the number of complaints received

Welsh Language Services Unit

The Council recognises that the Welsh Language Standards are to be given a high priority due to the risks involved in terms of non-compliance and also because of its commitment to creating an environment that encourages its residents to use Welsh in their interaction with the Council, supporting staff to use Welsh in the workplace. It recognises whole Council support is needed in order to offer and promote Welsh language services from the first point of contact.

The Council invests in an 18 strong Welsh Language Services Unit which undertakes to support all services and to provide the following:

- advice and support for all service areas on their statutory responsibilities under the Standards
- translation of public facing documents
- in-house Welsh language tutoring
- identification of areas of potential non-compliance
- recording of customer complaints
- reporting on developments to the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group
- simultaneous translation at full Council and at other meetings which are open to Members (e.g. scrutiny committees)
- simultaneous translation support to all other service areas such as legal services, human resources
- attendance at the Fforwm Iaith
- liaison with Welsh-medium community organisations as appropriate
- representing the Council at external meetings and be the main point of contact with the Welsh Language Commissioner and relevant Welsh Government Departments
- Cross-departmental support for general promotion of the Welsh language
- Co-ordination and liaison regarding matters pertaining the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
- Dedicated support for the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales due to be held in RCT in 2024

The Council invests in a Unit as a pro-active response to the new statutory environment and the type of work that needs to be undertaken to try to support all Council services to meet the Standards in a more cost effective manner.

A Compliance Officer now monitors the performance of services across the Council and their compliance against the Welsh Language Standards that are relevant to them. Consequently, the role affords the Council the opportunity to give further mitigating support to service areas on identifying any possible weaknesses about delivering the requirements of the Standards, in addition

to continuing with some of the more traditional duties of the former Welsh language officer role. The Welsh Language Commissioner's Officer has been generous in its positive feedback on the way Rhondda Cynon Taf Council Borough Council exercises its duties with regards to the Standards. This positive partnership has encouraged more open, constructive dialogue when if it feels the Council has fallen short on occasions.

A part-time Welsh Language Tutor also organises and delivers Welsh Language courses and sessions for Council staff. In the past, the Council paid external providers (e.g. the University of South Wales's Welsh for Adults Centre) to deliver sessions for internal staff but they lacked the desired success of tailoring the sessions to the relevant service areas. To date (31 March 2021), the internal tutor has tutored **212 members of staff** at all levels. The Council continues to work in partnership with the Welsh Government's Work Welsh project, ensuring that Council staff may access on-line support and tutoring. Additionally, the Council have on a number of occasions supported individuals to undertake week long residential courses at Nantgwytheryn – one of the main centres for intensive learning of Welsh, supported by WG.

In recognition of the priority given to the Welsh language by Democratic Services and the Cabinet Office, the Welsh Language Unit now have dedicated translators at senior level to provide text translation and simultaneous translation support to Members and Senior Officers for and at Council and Committee meetings, going above and beyond what the Standards actually require. In order to ensure best possible outcomes and to support other staff, two members of staff has started a post-graduate course in simultaneous translation.

In addition, 2019-2020 saw the appointment of an Eisteddfod Project Officer, whose key objectives will be to liaise with National Eisteddfod officers and Chair of the Working Committee (Pwyllgor Gwaith) on behalf of the Council with regards to the hosting of the National Eisteddfod (Rhondda Cynon Taf 2024). The Eisteddfod Project Officer will work closely with the Pwyllgor Gwaith and National Eisteddfod Officers, schools, community groups and the private sector as a programme of activities is developed that will support the local authority to reach its given contribution target of £350,000 towards hosting the National Eisteddfod in 2024. The Officer will also link with other council service areas that are contributing to the work and cost of hosting the National Eisteddfod, including contributing to the given target.

Guidance documents and resources continued to be produced and disseminated during 2020-2021 (examples below)

RCT Council Bilingual Street Name and Place Names Register

Following Cabinet's agreement to approve a full list of Welsh and English place names, in collaboration with the Welsh Language Commissioner, a register has been shared with Council officers via our intranet. This work also included the publication of Welsh versions of our street names. Whilst a large project in and of itself, this resource will help standardise the Council's approach and reduce the size of signage moving forward. It will also be used by all council services for correspondence, consultations, maps, publications, certificates and licenses and will be integrated with the Council's gazetteer for use by council used software programmes to ensure consistency.

Corporate Induction Videos

RCT Council have produced 'Corporate Induction Videos' that discuss the standards and their implications for staff in a more interactive way using infographics and animation which now form part of all new staff's mandatory induction programme.

Bod Yn Ddwyieithog

Bod yn Ddwyieithog is the Council's information booklet that encourages parents to choose Welsh medium education for their children. During 2020-2021 this booklet has undergone an extensive re-design to coincide with the Council's new statutory Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). A formal launch will form part of the Council's WESP marketing strategy to be agreed during 2021-2022.

Learn Welsh Campaign

This year saw the first formal, integrated, campaign to encourage staff to learn Welsh at RCT Council. Our poster and information booklet which listed all community and virtual provision was sent to all council staff with the result being that all Council run courses were fully booked in the first few weeks. We intend to launch a similar campaign each year to ensure more people are encouraged to learn – and in a way that they are happy with – online, in a classroom, or independently.

In addition, the Welsh Language Services Unit have led on many successful projects. Of particular note are the following:

Mail-tips

Following the good practice of colleagues in the Welsh Government, RCT Council have deployed the use of mail-tips on users' outlook profiles which let other internal staff know if they are Welsh speakers or learners. The aim of this is to increase the use and confidence of staff to use written Welsh in the workplace.

Online Simultaneous Translation Services

Welsh Language Services have successfully supported ICT and Democratic Services officers to ensure full compliance with the Welsh Language Standards by ensuring members of the public and our Councillors are able to contribute to meetings in Welsh if that is their wish. ICT, through the use of Zoom, have enabled an environment where language channels can be added to Zoom meetings to allow persons to listen in Welsh or the English simultaneous translations depending on their preference.

Culture Campaigns

Welsh Language Services promoted the following Culture Campaigns during 2020-2021.

Dydd Gŵyl Dewi

In collaboration with RCT Arts Service, Welsh Language Services commissioned local artists to produce a song for our schools to learn during 2021-2022 which will be recorded and used to celebrate Dydd Gŵyl Dewi in 2022. This was published as part of the celebrations which also included messages to our communities on our social media platforms and a quiz completed virtually by nearly 500 staff members.

Welsh Language Rights Day

In collaboration with the Welsh Language Commissioner, Welsh Language Services promoted Welsh Language Rights Day by asking all Council services with social media platforms to think of 2 or 3 areas they could highlight where they provide an exceptional Welsh Language service. This resulted in brilliant coverage across Council platforms – of note was our Youth Education and

Participation Services highlighting that 25% of their staff base are Welsh speaking and therefore their provision is available in Welsh at all times.

5 year a strategy to facilitate and promote the Welsh Language

The Unit has continued to lead on the Council's 5 year strategy to facilitate and promote the Welsh Language and focuses on growing the number of people able to speak Welsh by 6.8% to 29,670 by 2021, 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.

A report outlining progress on of Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan is submitted annually to the aforementioned Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group for discussion. During 2021-2022, there will be a formal evaluation before planning and publication of our new 5 year strategy

Welsh Language Buddy Scheme

Welsh Language Services regularly receive feedback that there are very few opportunities afforded to staff to practice using Welsh in the professional workplace, especially those staff on a Level 3 and 4. We've attempted to combat this by establishing a Buddies Scheme where staff meet on a monthly basis, to help encourage more usage and confidence – however more work is needed to re-establish this in light of the pandemic temporarily pausing the meetings.

Other service areas

Previous Annual Reports would include an appendix detailing the steps other service areas have taken to develop services through the medium of Welsh as recorded in their Service Self-Evaluations. Given that the Council is still dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, it was agreed that Service Self-Evaluations would be paused for this year. This should resume next year when we will be able to provide more details from each service area on how they have continued to develop Welsh services and comply with the relevant Standards.

COMPLAINTS: STANDARD 158(2) 164(2) 170(2)(d)

The following complaints were received, or continued to be investigated, during/in 2020-2021:

Complaint Date	Nature	Via	Outcome / Response
May 2019 (Ongoing)	Education Services: Allegation of failure to comply with consultation standards when consulting on the proposed school re-organisation in the Pontypridd area.	Welsh Language Commissioner (CSG548)	The Council have presented appeal papers for the Welsh Language Tribunal to consider as the council does not agree with the Commissioner's findings.
October 2019 (Ongoing)	The Executive: Allegation that decision makers have not considered the requirements of standard 88 and 89 when making decisions regarding re-organisation of schools in the Pontypridd area.	Welsh Language Commissioner (CSG633)	The Council received the proposed Report and Decision notice on the 13th August 2020. It replied to present additional matters for consideration on the 24th September 2020 and the 25th February 2021. The council are awaiting correspondence from the Commissioner's Office.
November 2019 (Ongoing)	Revenues and Benefits: Website provision in English only.	Member of the public.	E-account processes available in English only. Department commit to achieving parity by early 2020 in our response to the customer.
March 2020	Highways & Traffic: Road signage in Pontypridd with incorrect Welsh versions.	Member of the public.	Complaint upheld. All signage reviewed and amended as necessary.
April 2020	Waste Services: English only signage regarding waste bin collection points.	Member of the public.	Complaint upheld. Department to issue new bilingual signage.
April 2020	Parks Services: English only signage regarding parks closures due to Covid-19.	Member of the public.	Complaint upheld. Department later issued new bilingual signage.
April 2020	Communications: English only email concerning Memorial Day.	County Borough Councillor.	Complaint upheld. Department reminded to send bilingually moving forward.

May 2020	Planning Services: Welsh version of a public notice regarding a planning application had several mistakes.	Member of the public.	Department updated their standard templates to include a correct Welsh version.
May 2020	Highways & Traffic: Temporary road signage with incorrect Welsh version.	Member of the public.	Complaint upheld. New signs erected.
May 2020	Payroll Services: New starter correspondence in English only.	Member of the public.	All forms translated and sent bilingually moving forward, unless language preference is already recorded.
May 2020	Communications: Tweet with incorrect Welsh spelling.	Member of the public.	All new scheduled tweets updated to include new version.
May 2020	Education Services: Email re: HUB provision in English only.	Member of the public.	Department reminded of the need to ensure all information sent to schools is sent bilingually.
May 2020	Communications: Waste Services tweets in English only on corporate social media accounts.	Member of the public.	Following an internal audit the department were reminded of their statutory duties to comply and use the already available resources.
June 2020	Revenues and Benefits: Correspondence being sent in Welsh and English.	Member of the public.	The complainant was informed of our statutory duties to provide all correspondence in Welsh and English when it is being sent to more than one person at a time. We are unable to send in only one language when it is being sent to more than one person at the same time.
June 2020	Education Services: Signage includes an unusual translation for the word 'wipes'.	Member of the public.	It is agreed that <i>clytiau</i> does convey wipes in this context and is ok to continue using.
July 2020	Education Services: Not permitting out of county children to attend their most local education services – which	Member of the public.	Policy amended to reflect the council's commitment to increasing the number of Welsh speakers within Wales as part of the Welsh Governments Cymraeg 2050 policy and our WESP.

	are in RCT boundaries.		
August 2020	Highways & Traffic: Brown Tourism sign does not contain a full Welsh version of the destination.	Member of the public.	Complaint not-upheld. Given the age of the sign, it would have been erected prior to the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards. Customer made aware that upon renewal it will be fully compliant, Welsh first.
August 2020	Public Health and Protection: Fail to provide a Welsh correspondence Service to a member of the Public.	Welsh Language Commissioner (CSG751)	The Council accepted fault but were able to avoid a formal investigation by demonstrating the proactive steps officers have taken to deal with the nature of the complaint and ensure refresher training for all affected staff.
August 2020	Customer Care: Payment line recordings in Welsh are not well pronounced.	Member of the public.	All recordings were re-recorded, and staff tested the new approach.
August 2020	Highways & Traffic: Sign placed by a commissioned partner had an incorrect Welsh version.	2 x Member of the public.	Signs were removed by the contractor. The works were postponed by the Council. Contractor reminded to check with the Council for future notices placed on our behalf.
August 2020	Highways & Traffic: Temporary road signs with incorrect Welsh version.	Member of the public.	Signs were amended and the contractor reminded to check and comply with the Standards at all times.
September 2020	Communications: Incorrect spelling in Welsh tweet.	Member of the public.	Future tweets amended to reflect the required change.
October 2020	Education Services: Email correspondence in English only.	Member of the public.	Department reminded to send all information bilingually moving forward.
October 2020	RCT Arts Service: Tweets on behalf of commissioned Service with incorrect Welsh spelling.	Member of the public.	Artists alerted to the error and replacement issued.
October 2020	Consultation Team: Broken link to Welsh consultation.	County Borough Councillor.	Department updated the link and the Cllr was notified of the change.
October 2020	Creditors:	Member of the public.	Department translated templates and issued bilingually now.

	Email correspondence in English only.		
October 2020	Legal Services: Freedom of Information request response in English only to a bilingual query.	Member of the public.	Complaint Upheld. A formal apology was issued to the member of the public and staff reminded of the need to respond to all Welsh only and bilingual correspondence with a Welsh response. Staff received refresher training and the council's correspondence decision tree for future reference. A copy of the original correspondence was also re-issued in Welsh to the member of the Public.
October 2020 (see similar ongoing issue from November 2019)	Revenues and Benefits: Council tax online Services not available in Welsh.	Member of the public.	E-account processes available in English only. Department commit to achieving parity by early 2020 in our response to the customer. This has now been extended twice to Summer 2021.
November 2020	HR Services: English and Welsh deadline dates different for responses to staff survey.	Member of the public.	Department issued an update email to clarify to all what the correct dates were.
November 2020	Highways & Traffic: Street Name Sign with incorrect Welsh version.	Member of the public.	Member of the public consulted on Welsh version, update added to our database and new sign issued because the old sign needed replacing.
January 2021	Parks Services: Signage with incorrect Welsh version.	Member of the public.	This complaint was for a sign on land rented by a third party. The Council provided the correct Welsh translation as a gesture of good will to our tenant.
January 2021	Public Health and Protection Services: Correspondence with Welsh only address in the envelope window.	Member of the public.	The complainant was informed of our statutory duties to provide all correspondence in Welsh and English when it is being sent to more than one person at a time and not to treat the Welsh language any less favourably than the English language which is why the Welsh address appears first.
January 2021	Children Services: Vaccine for personal carers correspondence in English only.	Member of the public.	Complaint upheld. Department reminded of the need to send all correspondence being sent to more than one person at the same in Welsh and English.
February 2021	Inclusion Services: Response to correspondence in English only.	Member of the public.	Complaint upheld. Full apology provided. Personal record updated to reflect language preference. Correspondence re-issued in Welsh.

February 2021	Corporate Estates: Schools no-smoking signage with incorrect Welsh version	Member of the public.	Templates updated and shared with all schools.
March 2021	Highways & Traffic: Temporary road traffic signage in English only.	Member of the Public.	Contractor notified of the need to supply Bilingual versions of all signage erected for the Public.
March 2021	Highways & Traffic: Temporary road traffic signage with incorrect Welsh version.	Member of the Public.	The signs had been removed before we were able to investigate further.
March 2021	The Executive: Email correspondence in English only.	A county Borough Councillor.	Department reminded to send all covering emails as well as attached correspondence in Welsh and English when sending to more than one person (or Cllrs) at the same time.
March 2021	Waste Services: Public signage at a Recycling Centre with incorrect Welsh version.	A County Borough Councillor.	Signs are being amended to include the correct Welsh version.
December 2020 – Ongoing	Adult Social Services: Allegation that a Welsh language service request was refused.	Welsh Language Commissioner	An internal investigation is still ongoing concerning this matter.

STAFF WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS: STANDARD 170(2)(a)

This section outlines the number of employees/post holders who had Welsh language skills at the end of 2019-2020 (March 2020). The figures are based on the records kept in accordance with Standard 151 based on the requirements of Standard 127.

Year	Staff Base *	Staff Type	No Skills **	%
17 - 18	7061	Non-schools based staff	4730	66.99%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools based staff	3871	54.78%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools based staff	3134	43.64%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools based staff	3264	44.40%
Year	Staff Base *	Staff Type	Fluent	%
17 - 18	7061	Non-schools based staff	402	5.69%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools based staff	491	6.95%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools based staff	569	7.92%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools based staff	622	8.46%
Year	Staff Base *	Staff Type	Welsh Language Level 1	%
17 - 18	7061	Non-schools based staff	1562	22.12%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools based staff	2261	31.99%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools based staff	2658	37.01%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools based staff	2914	39.64%

				Welsh Language Level 2	%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools staff	based	315	4.46%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools staff	based	349	4.86%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools staff	based	363	4.93%
				Welsh Language Level 3	%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools staff	based	129	1.83%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools staff	based	137	1.90%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools staff	based	146	1.98%
				Welsh Language Level 4	%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools staff	based	119	1.68%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools staff	based	143	1.99%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools staff	based	162	2.20%
				Welsh Language Level 5	%
18 - 19	7067	Non-schools staff	based	372	5.26%
19 - 20	7181	Non-schools staff	based	426	5.93%
20 – 21	7351	Non-schools staff	based	460	6.25%

*Staff base is not a headcount, it includes multiple employment i.e. An employee will be counted for every post that they hold. The staff bases also include casual employees.

**Figure also includes staff who have yet to reply to the questionnaire.

TRAINING FOR STAFF: STANDARD 170 (2)(b) and (c)

There was no change from the 2019-2020 position with regards to training on Recruitment & Advertising, Performance Management, Complaints and Disciplinary procedures, Induction Dealing with Public and Health and Safety, based on the records kept in accordance with Standard 152 based on the requirements of Standard 128.

RECRUITING TO EMPTY POSTS: STANDARD 170 (ch)

The following figures are kept in accordance with Standard 154 based on the requirements of Standard 136. From September 2017 all new posts are designated Welsh essential Level 1 (basic Welsh) with options for managers to recruit on level 2 to level 5 depending on post. The number of posts at level 1 to 5 are as follows:

Welsh Language Skills	L1	254
Welsh Language Skills	L2	4
Welsh Language Skills	L3	1
Welsh Language Skills	L4	0
Welsh Language Skills	L5	3

Progress in this area has been slow considering last year's figures and the admission by service areas that more Welsh speaking skills are needed. More work needs to be undertaken to raise managers' awareness of the importance of the recruitment assessments as an integral part of workforce planning which is why an audit was recently commissioned to examine this area. Increasing Welsh Language speaking officers will directly mitigate any areas of concern with regards to the delivery of Welsh Language.

Further information:

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