



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL WELSH LANGUAGE CABINET STEERING GROUP
Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group meeting held
on Wednesday, 6 October 2021 at 10.00 am.

**County Borough Councillors - Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group Members in
attendance:-**

Councillor G Hopkins (Chair)

Councillor R Bevan Councillor R Lewis
Councillor J Rosser

Officers in attendance

Ms A Richards, Service Director - 21st Century Schools and Transformation
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services
Mr S Gealy, Welsh Language Services Manager
Mrs S Handy – Members Researcher & Scrutiny Officer
Amy Mason – Senior Translator
Mr T Jones - Senior Welsh Language Compliance And Policy Officer
Mr S Thomas – Project Officer for the Eisteddfod
Ms K Hall – Eisteddfod RCT Project Officer
Ms B Moses – Eisteddfod Chief Executive
Ms G Carr – Eisteddfod Head of Communications
Ms Nia Davies – Nico Officer

Others in attendance:

Menter Iaith Representative – Einir Sion
Lois Roberts – Translator Assessor

8 Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group and Officers and Members were asked to introduce themselves.

9 Apologies

Apologies of absence were received from County Borough Councillors J. Rosser and L. Hooper.

10 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

11 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 19th July 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting

12 An update on the National Eisteddfod in RCT

With the aid of a power point presentation, the Eisteddfod Chief Executive provided Members with an update on the Eisteddfod 2024 to be held in Rhondda Cynon Taf. She provided background information to the Eisteddfod highlighting that it is the biggest cultural festival to be held in Europe attracting over 175,000 visitors annually. She outlined the aims of the Eisteddfod today to celebrate Welsh language and culture as part of a vibrant and welcoming event. The Chief Executive outlined the importance of having local influences on the Eisteddfod and the opportunity for Rhondda Cynon Taf to put its own stamp on the event. She highlighted the importance of working together with the Local Authority to ensure the inclusion of all communities and to achieve the desired outcomes of encouraging both local residents and visitors to the Eisteddfod. She provided Members with the detail of seven legacies that can be achieved through the Eisteddfod, including Community, Culture, Linguistic, Economy, Digital, Inclusivity and Volunteering.

The Eisteddfod Head of Communications continued the presentation outlining to Members details of the Eisteddfod Community Project including welcoming a dedicated Project Officer from Rhondda Cynon Taf. She informed Members of the strategic plan to create a community forum and work with groups in the local area to provide a taste of the Eisteddfod. Details of the 2 phases of work were provided to Members outlining the steps that will be taken to engage with groups county wide.

The Chair thanked the Eisteddfod for providing the Group with such a detailed presentation and noted that the Eisteddfod is a great opportunity for RCT. The Chair praised the legacies that can be achieved through the Eisteddfod and made reference to his own journey of learning Welsh inspired by the Eisteddfod.

The Director of Prosperity and Development praised the presentation and noted that even though the Eisteddfod had been effected by the Pandemic it was still going to be a huge success and a great opportunity

for the County Borough.

Discussion continued and a Member emphasised the need to make the Eisteddfod as inclusive and diverse as possible. The Member noted that there has been a significant investment in schools in RCT and that young people will be taking the lead in the Eisteddfod. The Member noted the responsibility on young people to get older generations involved and the generation legacy aspect of the Eisteddfod that is so important in our communities.

Another Member noted the importance of getting non-Welsh speakers involved in the Eisteddfod and praised the work of the Communication Forums in achieving this.

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation offered the Eisteddfod any help in respect of schools in the County Borough and noted the exciting opportunities that the Eisteddfod will bring. The Chair agreed and noted the importance of getting non Welsh speaking schools involved in the Eisteddfod as well.

The Menter Iaith Representative, Einir Sion, praised the presentation from the Eisteddfod and noted two points. The first was to offer the support of Menter Iaith and to note the great work of the Communication Forums and the positive changes that it brings to the way we work in our local communities. The second point was to query whether RCT'S new 5 year strategy will be relevant to the time after the Eisteddfod and include steps to embed the legacy of the Eisteddfod.. The Service Manager – Welsh Language Services noted that the current 5 year strategy's success and weaknesses will be considered and the new strategy should include actions to support the legacy of the Eisteddfod in RCT.

Discussions continued and the Chair noted that the delay caused to the Eisteddfod by the Pandemic will make the Eisteddfod even more of a success as it has given officers even more time to prepare.

The Service Director – Community Services noted that the legacy of the Eisteddfod in RCT will be considered across all departments in the Council and will be relevant in action plans for all services.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to note the update from the National Eisteddfod in RCT.

13 WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION STRATEGY - ASSESSMENT

Members were provided with an assessment of the Council's performance against the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, as required under Standard 146 of the Compliance Notice issued to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Following this overview, Nia Davies from NICO provided Members of the Steering Group with a presentation covering a review of the 5 year strategy. Members were informed that the 3 main messages from the review include the importance of language transmission, Meithrin/Nurseries and post 16 pathways. The recommendations of the review include that the 5 year plan should respond to the 2021 Census, to look at the opportunities coming from the language forum and from shared partners and to measure outcomes and to look towards the 2024 National Eisteddfod and lessons learned.

Following the presentation, the Chair thanked officers for providing the Steering Group with such a detailed overview and noted that the Steering Group has been tasked with ensuring that the Council complies with its targets.

Discussions ensued and the Menter Iaith Representative, Einir Sion, noted that the process of promoting the strategy has been very constructive and that we are all able to learn lessons from the process. It was noted that the review provides us with an opportunity to look at relationships with partners and to include this in our future strategy. The Menter Iaith Representative noted the importance of the use of the Welsh language in the post 16 area and the importance of using volunteers to help with this demand. The Representative also noted the importance of developing services and creating partnerships to a continuation beyond the National Eisteddfod.

Discussions continued and a Member noted that the priorities within the 5 year plan are aligned with the National vision and noted the opportunities within our communities to increase our Welsh speakers.

The Service Manager – Welsh Language Services wished to place on record his thanks to Einir Sion as a partner in developing the 5 year strategy. The Chair echoed these sentiments.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to note the content of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy report and assessment.

14 Urgent Business

The Chair informed the Steering Group that the Menter Iaith Representative, Einir Sion, will be leaving her post and that this was her last meeting of the Steering Group. The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to Einir Sion for being a tremendous support to the Group. The Chair wished to congratulate Einir Sion on her new post and to wish her every success in the future. Members of the Steering Group echoed these sentiments.

15 Date of Next Meeting

The Chair noted the date of the next meeting as the 8th December 2021.

This meeting closed at 11.25 am

**Cllr G Hopkins
Chairman.**