



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

**STATUTORY CONSULTATION REPORT – PROPOSED WELSH IN  
EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION  
SERVICES**

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Services**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1 Present the proposed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) following the feedback received through the statutory consultation.
- 1.2 Provide Members with the opportunity to adopt the proposed WESP for the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider the comments of the statutory consultation and determine if any amendments are required to the proposed WESP, in addition to the amendments undertaken to original draft WESP.
- 2.2 Note the comments and observations of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group which considered the draft WESP on [19<sup>th</sup> July 2021](#) and the proposed WESP on the [8<sup>th</sup> December 2021](#), following the statutory consultation.
- 2.3 Note the comments and observations of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which provided feedback as part of the statutory consultation of the draft WESP on the [13<sup>th</sup> October 2021](#) and pre-scrutiny of the proposed WESP on the [8<sup>th</sup> December 2021](#), following the statutory consultation.

- 2.4 Subject to 2.1 to 2.3 above, adopt the proposed WESP as the strategy that underpins the Local Authority's approach to achieve the ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the proposed WESP for the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Following the Cabinet meeting of the [20<sup>th</sup> July 2021](#), the need to provide Members with the statutory consultation findings undertaken in respect of the draft WESP and to provide feedback from the pre-scrutiny undertaken by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the comments and consideration of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group.
- 3.2 To adopt the proposed WESP as the official strategy that underpins the Local Authority's approach to achieve the ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the proposed WESP for the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will be aware that the Local Authority has set an ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. The Proposed WESP, attached as Appendix Two, sets out the actions the Local Authority will take over the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032, to make progress towards the achievement of this target.
- 4.2 In order to meet this target by 2032, the Local Authority, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively. The Local Authority, therefore, welcomed the opportunity to consult and engage with a wide range of stakeholders to seek their views on the achievement of this ambitious target.
- 4.3 At the Cabinet meeting on the [20<sup>th</sup> July 2021](#), Cabinet endorsed the proposal to undertake a statutory consultation in respect of the draft WESP and to receive the results of the statutory consultation prior to adoption of the WESP.
- 4.4 The statutory consultation provided the Local Authority's stakeholders with an opportunity to give their feedback on the draft WESP. A comprehensive public statutory consultation was undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders for an eight week period between Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
- 4.5 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee also formed part of the consultation process, following consideration of the draft WESP at its meeting on the [13<sup>th</sup> October 2021](#). In addition, the draft WESP was

considered by the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group on [19<sup>th</sup> July 2021](#).

- 4.6 An overview of the feedback provided via the statutory consultation is incorporated into a Statutory Consultation Report, attached as Appendix One, alongside the Proposed WESP, attached as Appendix Two, which is presented to Cabinet for adoption as the official strategy that underpins the Local Authority's approach to achieve the ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the proposed WESP for the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032.
- 4.7 Prior to formal consideration by the Cabinet (as per point 4.5), the Local Authority's Cabinet Welsh Language Steering Group and Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee undertook pre-scrutiny on the proposed WESP, both meetings were held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021. These comments and observations will be presented to the Cabinet by the Director of Education and Inclusion Services in advance of Cabinet's determination.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (with Social-Economic Duty) for the proposed WESP is attached as Appendix Three to the Cabinet Report.
- 5.2 The Review Panel meeting, held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021, agreed the information contained within the Equality Impact Assessment (with Social-Economic Duty) for the proposed WESP. The text in the paragraphs that follows is the Stage Six – Summary of Impacts for the proposed WESP.
- 5.3 In summary, this Equality and Socio Economic Impact Assessment identifies both positive and neutral impacts, and no negative impacts upon the protected characteristics.
- 5.4 The proposal will have a positive impact on children and young people of all ages, parents / carers and the workforce. As a result of the WESP, the Council is expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education and increase the number of learners in Welsh medium education, which in turn could provide increased choice for parents / carers and more opportunities for the workforce.
- 5.5 The Council will show clear leadership and commitment in its vision for Welsh medium education and, as such, our target is to:

*Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.*

- 5.6 Under the 'Socio-economic Disadvantage' category of Section 3, information has been provided about Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) demonstrating the positive impact the work of the WESP will have on learners residing within these areas. The Council's ambitious Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme, alongside funding directly from the Council, will invest in Welsh medium primary and secondary schools located in some of the most deprived areas in Wales, according to the most deprived 10.0% of LSOA in Wales. These projects will create additional learner places, increasing the capacity of Welsh medium primary schools and improving the quality of the learning environment.
- 5.7 In addition, information has been provided about programmes targeted at disadvantaged children, families and communities that can make a vital and positive contribution to the tackling poverty agenda, and ensure all children across Wales, regardless of their background or where they live, have the opportunity to become confident Welsh speakers through the Local Authority's Flying Start Programme (FSP). One of the aims of the FSP is to provide at least 25.0% of all FSP childcare places through the medium of Welsh. In addition, enhanced marketing of Welsh medium FSP childcare and early years settings will be used to actively encourage parents / carers to consider them as an option for their child.
- 5.8 The achievement of this target will require a multifaceted approach. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.
- 5.9 Recognising the importance of Cymraeg 2050, and how essential the education system is to achieve its vision, the WESP sets out the Council's ten year plan for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education. It builds on the work of the previous WESP for the period between 2017 to 2022 and sets out a workplan which demonstrates how the Council intends to achieve its ten year vision.
- 5.10 In developing this WESP, all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans have been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education, including the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Socioeconomic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans that impact upon Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

## **6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment for the proposed WESP is attached as Appendix Four to the Cabinet Report.
- 6.2 The Review Panel meeting, held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021, agreed the information contained within the Welsh Language Impact Assessment for the proposed WESP. The text in the paragraphs that follows is the Stage Six – Summary of Impacts for the proposed WESP.
- 6.3 As the Council looks to the future, it wants to build on what it has achieved to date and make sure that every town and community in the County Borough is a great place to live, work and play. The Council's ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all priority areas.
- 6.4 Integral to achieving this ambition is the vision:
- To inspire and support excellent leadership and professional practice so that all learners in Rhondda Cynon Taf make good progress and become ambitious, capable, creative and ethically informed'.*
- 6.5 The Council will deliver this vision by supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years' system, supporting families through the childcare offer and by investing in new and significantly improved school and community facilities through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme.
- 6.6 The Council will show clear leadership and commitment in its vision for Welsh medium education and, as such, our target is to:
- Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.*
- 6.7 The achievement of this target will require a multifaceted approach. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.
- 6.8 Recognising the importance of Cymraeg 2050, and how essential the education system is to achieving its vision, the WESP sets out the Council's ten year plan for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education. It builds on the work of the previous WESP for the period between 2017 to 2022 and

sets out a workplan which demonstrates how the Council intends to achieve its ten year vision.

## **7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

7.1 The proposed WESP was subject to a comprehensive public statutory consultation with a wide range of stakeholders for an eight week period between Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in line with guidance outlined with in the Welsh Government Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP Guidance).

7.2 Of the statutory consultees listed within the WESP Guidance, the following organisations submitted timely responses. Their full responses (English and Welsh) are attached as annexes to the Statutory Consultation Report:

- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.
- Estyn.
- Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG).
- Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru.
- Welsh Language Commissioner.

7.3 These organisations responded generally to the draft WESP consultation process and, where applicable, their responses are included in the Statutory Consultation Report. Their responses have also been incorporated into the proposed WESP and will form part of the proposed WESPs Annual Work Plan, which is intended to be a practical working document to help keep track of progress in the short term and will be utilised by the WESP Strategic Group to track progress of the proposed WESP.

7.4 In addition, the draft and proposed WESP was considered by the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group on [19<sup>th</sup> July 2021](#) and the [8<sup>th</sup> December 2021](#). The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee provided a Committee response to the Consultation at its meeting on the [13<sup>th</sup> October 2021](#) and undertook pre-scrutiny of the proposed WESP at its meeting on the [8<sup>th</sup> December 2021](#).

7.5 An online survey was designed and made available via the Local Authority's consultation webpage.

7.6 Current circumstances inevitably limited the opportunity for face to face engagement, however, the Local Authority made the best use of the variety of social media, remote meetings and digital tools to engage with stakeholders.

7.7 In total, 38 responses to the online survey were received. The results are outlined in this Statutory Consultation Report.

7.8 39.5% (15) responses were submitted through the medium of Welsh and 60.5% (23) responses were submitted through the medium of English.

## 8. **FINDINGS**

- 8.1 The feedback provided via the statutory consultation is incorporated into a Statutory Consultation Report, attached as Appendix One. The findings outlined in the following text provide a brief summary of the feedback received along with action the Local Authority is currently taking.
- 8.2 Respondents were asked to give their views on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve the WESP target and each of the seven outcomes.

### **OUTCOME 1: MORE NURSERY / THREE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH**

- 8.3 Of the responses received, 73.7% agreed, 7.9% disagreed and 18.4% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.
- 8.4 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *we must ensure that the quality and the facilities in Welsh medium schools are of the highest standard* (21.6%), *must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language* (15.7%) and *provision must be local* (11.8%).
- 8.5 Investment has been made across a number Welsh medium primary schools over the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020. This has provided additional Welsh medium primary school learner places, creating improved accommodation for learners. This has been achieved through the Local Authority's Capital Programme which includes a combination of refurbishments, remodels, demolitions and new builds. Over the same timeframe, the Local Authority's Planned Minor Capital Works Programme, which includes an on-going rolling programme of investment in schools, has invested approximately £1.2 million in Welsh medium primary schools.
- 8.6 The Local Authority's ambitious Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects, with the inclusion of a number of projects that propose to increase the capacity of Welsh medium primary schools. During the first five years of this WESP, the Local Authority's ambitious Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme will have been completed. This, alongside funding directly from the Local Authority, will:
- Amend the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language primary school to a Welsh medium primary school (following the opening of Hirwaun Primary School). The catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended.
  - Deliver an extension to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar.

- Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn.
  - Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school in the Rhydyfelin area, to accommodate learners currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium learners attending the dual language Heol y Celyn Primary School.
  - Deliver a new all through Welsh medium school for the Rhondda area.
  - Deliver significant investment to improve the facilities in Ysgol Llanhari. It is considered that this will have a positive impact in attracting parents / carers to this significantly improved all through Welsh medium school. (We haven't decided what the scope of this project will be yet).
  - Deliver a new dual language primary school, in the first instance, as an extension to the dual language primary school Dolau Primary School, as part an extensive housing development.
- 8.7 These projects will create additional learner places, increasing the capacity of Welsh medium primary schools and improving the quality of the learning environment.
- 8.8 The Local Authority will establish a Marketing and Promotion Sub Group, comprised of officers from the Local Authority, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations. The Sub Group will develop a Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language. Alongside this, the Local Authority will utilise national and regional marketing and promotion strategies developed and provided by the Welsh Government and the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service to promote Welsh medium and Welsh language education. In addition, the Local Authority will develop local marketing and promotion strategies to promote Welsh medium and Welsh language education.
- 8.9 The Local Authority will continue to work in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to ensure Welsh medium childcare and early years settings are available and are easily accessible, whilst ensuring a continuum of Welsh language education provision. In addition, the Local Authority will continue to progress and deliver the remaining projects funded via the Welsh Government Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme and where and when possible, we will submit further expression of interests / bids to maximise the grant funding available to deliver additional projects.
- 8.10 In recent years, the Local Authority has committed to increasing the quality and availability of early years Welsh medium provision co-located on primary school sites by securing £4 million of Welsh Government investment to spend on the projects listed below. A further bid for investment to continue the growth in this area has been submitted to the Welsh Government, the outcome of which is still awaited:



- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Abercynon – Creation and establishment of a new childcare setting into dedicated premises on the school site to expand identified need in the community.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar – Construction of a four classroom extension to increase capacity, car parking provision and the creation of a dedicated Cylch Meithrin, to expand identified need in the community delivering additional fee paying childcare services for the area.
- Ysgol Llanhari – Location of a modular building on the school site to provide dedicated, suitable premises for Flying Start and fee paying childcare services.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James – Refurbish and remodel the interior layout to create dedicated, suitable premises for fee paying childcare services
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen – Location of a modular building on the school site to provide dedicated, suitable premises for fee paying childcare services.
- Ysgol Gynradd Dolau/Dolau Primary School – Creation and establishment of a dedicated childcare facility on the school site to expand identified need in the community.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llantrisant – Location of a modular building on the school site to provide additional capacity for early years and childcare.

## **OUTCOME 2: MORE RECEPTION / FIVE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH**

- 8.11 Of the responses received, 68.4% agreed, 7.9% disagreed and 23.7% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.
- 8.12 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *provision must be local* (16.3%), *a Welsh Language Immersion Class would assist in the transition for some learners* (9.3%) and *must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language* (7.0%).
- 8.13 Information in relation to the top response received can be seen in paragraphs 8.5 to 8.7 of this report.
- 8.14 The Local Authority recognises that we must demonstrate to parents / carers that it is never too late to be educated through the medium of Welsh with the use of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers to Welsh medium education. The Local Authority recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English to Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. Although the Local Authority has no Welsh language immersion support classes for late comers in any of our schools at present, schools are encouraged to support learners who are late comers to Welsh medium education as and when the need arises. This

is considered to be working effectively, however, in order to support learners who are late comers to Welsh medium education, the Local Authority has recently successfully obtained funding via the Welsh Government Welsh Language Immersion Support Grant, to pilot the creation of Welsh language immersion support classes for late comers or those learners who require additional support in two Welsh medium primary schools in the County Brough as well as piloting a peripatetic model of Welsh language immersion support across all Welsh medium primary schools in the County Borough. Following this pilot, a report will be submitted to Cabinet in 2022 so that a proposal to establish a permanent Welsh language immersion class in the Local Authority can be given due consideration.

- 8.15 Information in relation to the top third response received can be seen in paragraph 8.8 of this report.

**OUTCOME 3: MORE LEARNERS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WHEN TRANSFERRING FROM ONE STAGE OF THEIR STATUTORY EDUCATION TO ANOTHER**

- 8.16 Of the responses received, 65.8% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 28.9% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

- 8.17 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *provision must be local* (13.3%), *progression routes to Sixth Form / Further Education and thereafter to universities and the world of work need to be addressed* (8.9%) and *there is not enough provision in the north Pontypridd area for this* (6.7%).

- 8.18 Information in relation to the top response received can be seen in paragraphs 8.5 to 8.7 of this report.

- 8.19 In addition, Investment has been made across a number Welsh medium secondary schools over the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020 providing additional Welsh medium secondary school learner places and creating improved accommodation for learners. This has been achieved through the Local Authority's Capital Programme which includes a combination of refurbishments, remodels, demolitions and new builds. Over the same timeframe, the Local Authority's Planned Minor Capital Works Programme, which includes an on-going rolling programme of investment in schools, has invested approximately £3.5 million in Welsh medium secondary schools.

- 8.20 The Local Authority's ambitious Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects, with the inclusion of a number of projects that propose to increase the capacity of Welsh medium secondary schools. During the first five years of this WESP, the Local Authority's ambitious Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme will have been completed. This, alongside funding directly from the Local Authority, will deliver:

- Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun – Due for completion in September 2022, this investment will create improved and extended accommodation by adding additional teaching accommodation along with a new sports facility to compliment the recently completed 3G sports pitch and will provide an additional 187 Welsh medium secondary school learner places. These additions will provide state of the art facilities for both Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun and the local community, increasing opportunities for participation in the wider community.
- All through school for the Rhondda area – A consultation on the development of a new Welsh all through school for the Rhondda area will be undertaken.
- Ysgol Llanhari – modernisation and construction of new teaching blocks to replace the majority of the existing buildings.

8.21 These projects will create additional learner places, increase the capacity of Welsh medium secondary schools, improve the quality of the learning environment, and deliver new community facilities.

8.22 All Welsh medium secondary schools work collaboratively with one another and other providers, including Coleg Y Cymoedd, to provide GCSE, AS and A Level provision. However, collaboration is difficult due to their locations and proximity to one another.

8.23 The Central South Consortium Joint Education Service has engaged significantly with Welsh medium secondary Headteachers across the region, the Welsh Government and Qualifications Wales regarding the significant disparity in the number of accessible qualifications, especially vocational qualifications available through the medium of Welsh in comparison to the offer available to English medium schools and colleges.

8.24 In addition, the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service has funded Gyda'n Gilydd (Welsh Medium Secondary Headteachers Association) £30,000 this financial year to develop bespoke provision for the sector. It would be possible for Gyda'n Gilydd to utilise this funding towards the above objective if they decided to do so. In addition, the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service is providing an additional £10,000 funding to Gyda'n Gilydd in order for them to work alongside the WJEC to develop Level Three Welsh medium vocational qualifications.

8.25 The Local Authority have recently been through a statutory school organisation process that covered Welsh medium provision in the Pontypridd area. The Statutory Consultation document and subsequent reports written as part of this process evidence that there is sufficient capacity in this area. Cabinet sought to approve these plans in 2019 and a new Welsh medium 21<sup>st</sup> Century School is being built in the Rhydyfelin area as a result of this positive outcome.

- 8.26 Further analysis and improvement in transition rates from key stage 4 and 5 is required. It is important that we also fully understand the destinations of school leavers from the Welsh medium sector and establish whether they pursue further Welsh medium study in further education and university settings on leaving school. The collation and analysis of this data will assist in informing key strategic developments in the WESP Annual Work Plan aimed at improving key stage 4 and 5 transition rates. Improved careers advice and guidance via the Gatsby model will also be important in ensuring that learners make informed decisions about their destinations and that they are fully aware of the Welsh medium options that are open to them.

#### **OUTCOME 4: MORE LEARNERS STUDY FOR ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS IN WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND SUBJECTS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH**

- 8.27 Of the responses received, 68.4% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 26.3% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.
- 8.28 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *must promote the Welsh medium opportunities available to learners and how this links to the world of work* (12.5%), *provision must be local* (10.0%) and *there is recognition that greater collaboration is needed in order to expand options* (10.0%).
- 8.29 The Local Authority will continue to utilise the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme, which supports secondary schools to develop a wider range of learning pathways for 14 to 19 year old learners in preparation for the world of work, ensuring the early promotion of the professional learning pathway.
- 8.30 Information in relation to the second top response received can be seen in paragraphs 8.19 to 8.21 of this report. A full understanding of the Welsh medium curriculum offer across all secondary schools and in Coleg y Cymoedd will be gathered and opportunities for collaborative arrangements will be significantly strengthened to ensure a broad and balanced local collaborative curriculum offer is made available to learners

#### **OUTCOME 5: MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNERS TO USE WELSH IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS IN SCHOOL**

- 8.31 Of the responses received, 68.4% agreed, 2.6% disagreed and 28.9% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.
- 8.32 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *we need more funding to fund enrichment projects for learners with organisations such as the Urdd and Menter Iaith* (15.4%), *Welsh medium youth workers are needed in the English*

*medium schools as well as in Welsh medium schools (2.6%) and if there is support, then the learner's confidence will grow and encourage the use of the language in wider contexts (2.6%).*

- 8.33 The Local Authority's Youth Engagement and Participation Service has a Service Level Agreement with Menter Iaith, to lead on the development of Welsh Language Youth Forums in each secondary school. The Welsh Language Youth Forums are expected to input into the County Youth Forum to ensure there is sufficient Welsh language representation.
- 8.34 The Urdd provide a range of opportunities for young people over the age of seventeen to gain employment, practical experience and professional qualifications, working alongside stakeholders to develop Welsh medium apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are available within the outdoor activity, sports and youth and community services. Apprentices get the opportunity to learn from experienced staff and lead high quality activities for children and young people whilst gaining accredited qualifications. The Local Authority will work to strengthen links with the Urdd, to provide learners with a wide range of activities through the medium of Welsh within their primary and secondary school.
- 8.35 The Local Authority's Youth Engagement and Participation Service employ Welsh speaking Youth Engagement Officers, located within each Welsh medium secondary school, whose role is to provide a range of activities for learners through the medium of Welsh in different contexts, therefore, normalising the Welsh language and encouraging its use outside of the classroom. The Local Authority's Youth Engagement and Participation Service Team will continue to offer a language choice of English or Welsh to learners. There will continue to be a Welsh speaking Youth Engagement Officer located within each Welsh medium secondary school, as well as a Welsh speaking Youth Engagement Officer in some English medium secondary schools. In addition, the Local Authority's Youth Engagement Officers will continue to offer additional activities to learners, with a Welsh language provider being sourced for learners attending Welsh medium secondary schools wherever possible, with the aim of increasing the number of external providers who can deliver activities through the medium of Welsh.
- 8.36 The school environment provides learners with the opportunity to use the Welsh language within different contexts. A lack of opportunity to use the Welsh language leads to a lack of confidence and the erosion of Welsh language skills. As such, learners, along with parents / carers and the wider community should be supported and encouraged to participate in a wide range of cultural, social and sporting activities through the medium of Welsh within their primary and secondary school in order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language.
- 8.37 In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learners' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts. This has been done through the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith), developed by Gwynedd Council, and various other

projects, in partnership with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service and the Urdd. These include but are not limited to:

- Implementing the Welsh Language Charter in all Welsh medium primary and secondary schools in order to develop learners' use of the Welsh language.
- Implementing Cymraeg Campus in a number of English medium primary schools and piloting it in some English medium secondary schools.
- Publishing a toolkit for Welsh medium secondary schools to use to embed learners' use of the Welsh language.
- Supporting Welsh medium secondary schools to develop activities to encourage the informal use of the Welsh language.
- Supporting English medium secondary schools to provide informal opportunities to use the Welsh language and intensive Welsh language learning opportunities through the Urdd's Cymraeg Bob Dydd project.

8.38 The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within primary and secondary schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language, across the curriculum and in wider contexts in primary and secondary schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.

#### **OUTCOME 6: AN INCREASE IN THE PROVISION OF WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

8.39 Of the responses received, 65.8% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 28.9% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

8.40 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *provision must be local* (5.1%), *yes, but sometimes English has to be priority* (2.6%), and *this is aspirational, there are not enough staff in the Welsh medium sector with the appropriate skills to assist the numbers of learners with Additional Learning Needs* (2.6%).

8.41 Currently, Welsh medium learners with additional learning needs, who experience difficulties within mainstream primary and secondary schools and require more specialist support, are supported by a specialist peripatetic team – the Welsh Complex Needs Team. The Welsh Complex Needs Team provide support through an inclusive delivery model, whereby learners are provided with specialist support within their mainstream primary and secondary school. Analysis suggests that learners accessing support from the Welsh Complex Needs Team make

progress that is comparable to that of their peers in equivalent English medium primary and secondary school settings. Further analysis suggests that this inclusive model adopted in Welsh medium primary and secondary schools has been very positive.

- 8.42 Following the recent consultation on The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019, which advocates an increase in Welsh medium education provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs, and in accordance with The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, the Local Authority will consult on establishing a Welsh medium Foundation Phase and Key Stage Two Additional Learning Needs provision in the new Welsh medium primary school in the Rhydyfelin area. In addition, there has been investment to establish a Welsh medium Key Stage Three and Key Stage Four Additional Learning Needs provision in Ysgol Garth Olwg for learners with complex needs.
- 8.43 Considerable changes are underway in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of learners with Additional Learning Needs. The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 requires Local Authorities to keep the arrangements for supporting learners between the ages of 0 to 25 with Additional Learning Needs under review and consider whether these arrangements are sufficient. It includes a statutory requirement to take reasonable steps to create a Welsh medium and bilingual system of support for learners with Additional Learning Needs.
- 8.44 In developing the WESP, The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 has been taken into consideration. The Local Authority will endeavour to provide sufficient Additional Learning Needs provision for learners, who request it, through the medium of Welsh along with a workforce of sufficient size and capability.
- 8.45 The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, requires all Local Authorities to use a wide range of quantitative data and qualitative information in order to keep Additional Learning Needs provision under review. Such data and information to be utilised includes but is not limited to:
- The number of Welsh medium learners with Additional Learning Needs.
  - The different types and severity of Additional Learning Needs of Welsh medium learners.
  - The outcomes of Welsh medium learners with Additional Learning Needs.
  - Specialist workforce audits in relation to capacity in delivering support for Welsh medium learners with Additional Learning Needs.
  - Specialist placement capacity.
  - Any local, regional and national performance indicators relating to Additional Learning Needs.

- 8.46 The Local Authority has and will continue to work collaboratively with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service to ensure a shared understanding of high quality, universal and effective Additional Learning Needs provision for learners and will use agreed quality assurance processes to monitor the quality of Welsh medium provision in both mainstream primary and secondary schools and special schools / classes.

**OUTCOME 7: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEACHING STAFF ABLE TO TEACH WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH**

- 8.47 Of the responses received, 73.7% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 21.1% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.
- 8.48 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *dependent on national, as well as, to some extent, regional and local plans (7.7%)*, *we must use our influence in our political system to put pressure on the Welsh Government to prioritise this (7.7%)* and *this is key, as without teachers, the future is looking very fragile (5.1%)*.
- 8.49 Concerns in relation to workforce pressures in the Welsh medium sector have been raised with the Welsh Government. This is a national issue that requires a long term plan aimed at:
- Increasing the number of Welsh and Welsh medium teachers and those who support learning.
  - Supporting the workforce to develop their Welsh language skills to ensure that the Welsh language is used across the curriculum.
  - Develop Welsh medium leadership capacity and provide skills for all leaders to plan the development of the Welsh language strategically within a culture of schools as learning organisations.
- 8.50 The Local Authority will continue to work in partnership, regionally with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service and nationally with the Welsh Government to deliver on these strategic aims.
- 8.51 The Local Authority continue to support the delivery of the Initial Teacher Education programme in alliance with the secondary schools that have formed a partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University, whilst also continuing to support the progression of the current school based workforce in completing their Initial Teacher Education programme.

**UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTIES, THE COUNCIL HAS A LEGAL DUTY TO LOOK AT HOW ITS DECISIONS IMPACT ON PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY MAY HAVE PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTICS. HOW WOULD THE WESP AFFECT YOU?**



- 8.52 Of the responses received, 44.7% commented that the WESP would not affect them and 55.3% gave no response.

**WITH REGARDS TO THE WESP AND THE IMPACT IT MAY HAVE, PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU FEEL IT COULD IMPACT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO USE AND PROMOTE THE WELSH LANGUAGE (POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE) AND IF IN ANY WAY, IT TREATS THE WELSH LANGUAGE LESS FAVOURABLY THAN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE?**

- 8.53 Of the responses received, the table that follows outlines the results to the questions relating to how the WESP could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh language.

<b>HOW THE WESP COULD IMPACT UPON OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO USE AND PROMOTE THE WELSH LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Positive	42.1%
Negative	5.3%
No Response	52.6%

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 9.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 10.1 The following legislation / regulations are aligned to this report:

1. Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
2. The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019.
3. The WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

## **11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

- 11.1 The proposed WESP links to the Local Authorities Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper:
  - Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

- 11.2 The delivery of the WESP will contribute to all seven well-being goals within the Future Generation (Wales) Act. In addition, due regard has been made to the Five Ways of Working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

- 12.1 The Local Authority has set an ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. The proposed WESP sets out the action the Local Authority will take over the forthcoming ten years, by 2032, to make progress towards the achievement of this target.
- 12.2 In order to meet the target by 2032, the Local Authority, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group, need to work collectively. The Local Authority remains committed to ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education, from the initial early years through to primary and secondary education before progressing through to higher and further education, so that all learners whatever their learning needs are able to access Welsh medium provision. This is in line with Welsh Government's vision for one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 as set out in Cymraeg 2050.
- 12.3 The feedback provided via this statutory consultation has been incorporated into the Local Authority's final WESP, and a WESP Annual Work Plan will be developed.
- 12.4 Members are asked to formalise the proposed WESP as the official strategy that underpins the Local Authority's approach to achieve the ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the WESP.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH LOCAL AUTHORITY**

**CABINET**

**13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

**STATUTORY CONSULTATION REPORT – PROPOSED WELSH IN  
EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES**

**Contact Officer:** Grace Zecca-Hanagan.

Background Papers:

1. Appendix One – Statutory Consultation Report
2. Appendix Two A – Proposed WESP (English).
3. Appendix Two B – Proposed WESP (Welsh).
4. Appendix Three – Equality Impact Assessment (with Social-Economic Duty).
5. Appendix Four – Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

**Officer to Contact:**

Grace Zecca-Hanagan, 21<sup>ST</sup> Century Schools Officer.