



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**WELSH LANGUAGE CABINET STEERING GROUP**

**14 MAY 2018**

**WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN  
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNCILLOR 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 an update on the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan, as approved on January 25<sup>th</sup> 2017.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report;
- 2.2 Agree a reviewed target for growing the number of people able to speak Welsh in Rhondda Cynon Taf in light of the Welsh Government's Strategy Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers published in July 2017.
- 2.3 Continue to progress with the actions as outlined in the current agreed Action Plan.

**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 to publish the strategy on the Council's website by 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

- 3.2 It was agreed that a report outlining progress on of Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan would be submitted to the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group so that the Committee could monitor progress.
- 3.3 After Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed its strategy to facilitate and promote the Welsh Language in the county in line with the timetable as set out under Standard 145 of the Compliance Notice, the Welsh Government published *Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers*. The ambitious targets included in this latter document requires Rhondda Cynon Taf to review its original target for growing the number of people able to speak Welsh if the county is to contribute appropriately to the Welsh Government's vision of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2020.

#### **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 necessary timescale.
- 4.2 The Strategy and Action Plan (Appendix 1) was developed over the course of 2016 in collaboration with Sbectrwm, an organisation that has extensive experience of language planning; Menter Iaith and members of Fforwm Iaith, Council Services and Elected Members.
- 4.3 Residents were consulted in order to understand what would encourage them to use the Welsh language and which services they felt were most important as a means of promoting the language. They were also invited to highlight the activities they felt would support the use of the language. This consultation took place between April and July 2016.
- 4.4 The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan focuses on:
- growing the number of people able to speak Welsh by 3% (833)
  - 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.

#### **5. CURRENT POSITION AND PROGRESS**

- 5.1 Following the approval of Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan in January 2017, a copy of the final Action Plan was sent to the Chief Executive.
- 5.2. The Council has overall responsibility for the Action Plan although it depends on its Fforwm Iaith partners for support in achieving aspects of the Plan. The actions and targets allocated to Council Services were discussed at a meeting

of the Welsh Language Chief Officer Group at the beginning of July 2016 where it was agreed that it lead officers should be identified for each action to ensure accountability.

- 5.3 Progress against many of these targets is recorded during the Council's service self-evaluation process that ensures consistency across service area plans without adding to the workload for services. This information is then included in the Annual Monitoring Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- 5.4 Progress against targets agreed with partner organisations is reported at Fforwm Iaith meetings or, if they are commissioned by Council services, they are captured through the service self-evaluation reports.
- 5.5 The main progress points are outlined in Appendix 1,
- 5.6 There is a close link between the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which was approved by the Welsh Government on 15 March 2018, one of only 15 plans to be approved.
- 5.7 The improvements made to our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for its re-submission, integral to our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan, has provided a firmer footing to progress and demonstrates a commitment to support growth in Welsh-medium education in line with *Cymraeg 2050*.
- 5.8 Nevertheless, the Welsh Government's strategy, *Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers*, means that the Council needs to review its target for growing the number of people able to speak Welsh in the County, currently set at +3% in 2021, an additional 883 speakers.
- 5.9 *Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers* is the Welsh Government's strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language. It has been prepared in accordance with Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. This strategy supersedes *A living language: a language for living – Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17*, and its associated policy statement, *A living language: a language for living – Moving forward*. The *Cymraeg 2050* Strategy sets out the Welsh Government's long-term approach to achieving the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUzi8OiLMU0>

- 5.10 The Strategy's growth chart targets are as follows:

In numbers:

2011: 562,000	2017: 570,000	2021: 600,000	2026: 630,000
2031: 680,000	2036: 750,000	2041: 830,000	2046: 920,000
2050: 1,000,000			

In compound percentages:

2011: n/a	2017: +1.43%	2021: +5.3%	2026: +5%
2031: +7.9%	2036: +10.3%	2041: +10.7 %	2046: +10.8%
2050: +8.7%			

5.11 In essence, there needs to be a 78% increase in the number of Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. The three themes that will underpin that growth are as follows:

- **Theme 1: Increasing the number of Welsh speakers** • Language transmission in the family • The early years • Statutory education • Post-compulsory education • The education workforce, resources and qualifications
- **Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh** • The workplace • Services • Social use of Welsh
- **Theme 3: Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context** • Community and economy • Culture and media • Wales and the wider world • Digital technology • Linguistic infrastructure • Language planning • Evaluation and research

5.12 Many of these themes sit within the functions of public bodies in Wales and some of these are reflected in Rhondda Cynon Taf's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan.

5.13 In order to mirror the Welsh Government's vision and targets, the Council will need to increase the percentage of Welsh speakers by approximately 1.66% per annum until 2021. In numerical terms, the targets will be:

2018: 28,240 (+461)  
2019: 28,709 (+469)  
2020: 29,185 (+476)  
2121: 29,670 (+485)

The total in numbers:1,891 (target:29,670), an increase of 6.8%.

5.14 In context, Merthyr Tudful County Borough Council have agreed to an additional 177 people in Merthyr Tydfil being able to speak Welsh per year based on current population of 59,000 and Cardiff Council have agreed a to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Cardiff (36,735 according to the 2011 Census) to 42,584, an additional 5,849 or 15%.

## **6. NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 If the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group decides to recommend the amended target in Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan for approval, a revised version of the Action Plan will be immediately disseminated to members of the Chief Officer Group and Fforwm Iaith for consideration.
- 6.2. There are no current plans to review other aspects of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 A consultation process was undertaken before the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan was agreed. Further consultation is not required for this amendment.

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

- 9.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. However, there will be costs and resources as yet not fully ascertained in respect of implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. Non-compliance with a standard could incur financial penalties of up to £5,000.

## **10. LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Statutory Standards 2015 regulate this area of work.

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

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 This report highlights the need to increase the target for Welsh speakers in Rhondda Cynon Taf for the next 5 years in order to be better able to contribute to the Welsh Government's longer-term goal of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. It highlights how the Council works collaboratively with its partners to achieve the required targets and to reduce the likelihood of complaints from residents who wish to access their services in the medium of Welsh. The Action Plan related to the Strategy has been developed after consultation with residents and their involvement has shaped the content.

11.3 The content of this report is directly linked to Goal 6 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. 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.

## 12. **CONCLUSION**

In order to maintain and increase the number of Welsh speakers over the next five years as required by the Welsh Government, the Council and its partners will need to continue to prioritise some key policy areas for action, and work together towards common goals as outlined in the Welsh Language Strategy and Action Plan.

Although the target for growing the number of people able to speak Welsh has increased significantly due to the Welsh Government's strategy *Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers*, the Council is in a good position to meet those targets.

*Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers* is a 32-yr Strategy, with a stepped approach to growing the number of people able to speak Welsh. Consequently, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Strategy and Action Plan will need to be reviewed regularly in order to react to fluctuations in progress.