Conwy County Borough Council

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Monitoring Report

2018 - 2019

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of

Comisiynydd y Gymraeg
Welsh Language Commissioner

April 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conwy County Borough Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, it will not treat the Welsh language any less favourably than the English language.

1.2 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 establishes a legal framework to impose a duty on the Council, amongst other organisations, to comply with Standards of conduct on the Welsh Language. The Council have had 167 Standards to comply with in the following areas:

- Service Delivery
- Operational
- Policy Making
- Promotion
- Record Keeping

1.3 The duties which derive from the Standards mean that organizations should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language, together with promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in everyday life).

1.4 Standards will:

- provide greater clarity to organizations on their duties on the Welsh language
- provide greater clarity to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh
- ensure more consistency of Welsh language services and improve their quality.

1.5 The Welsh Standards supersedes the Council's Welsh Language Scheme first approved by the Welsh Language Board on 23rd July, 1997, which was revised on 14th May, 2004 and then on 23rd April 2009.

1.6 Although the Council already complied with most of the Welsh Language Standards as part of our previous Welsh Language Scheme, the Standards have provided an opportunity to reinforce the requirements to ensure conformance.

1.7 This report is available to the public at the Council's public offices and on its website. The report is also circulated to all the individual services by way of the Welsh Language Scheme Link Officers and in addition, information about the general monitoring report, along with the recommendations, is published on the intranet, and disseminated via the internal postmaster messaging system, the Team Brief and the Staff Newsletter. A link to this document will be shared with reception staff and we will also inform Conwy residents about the report.

1.8 This monitoring report reflects progress against actions and targets from the Welsh Language Standards. The information included in this report was collated on a continuous basis as the Council undertook the monitoring of its Services.

2.0   SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

2.1   Several initiatives have meant an increase in the amount of opportunities for staff to use their Welsh language skills in the workplace and to make it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in everyday life. Please find a summary below:

2.1.1   **Welsh Lessons** – during 2018-19, 73 members of staff and 2 Councillors attended Welsh lessons through a scheme called Work Welsh by the National Learning Welsh Centre. The lessons were held between September and March. This is a free scheme which provides intensive, weekly Welsh lessons to Council staff and Councillors. Many staff had shown an interest in the course, which is very encouraging, and it was unfortunate that there weren't enough spaces for all to attend due to the numbers specified by the Learning Welsh Centre. This initial period was very successful, and it has led on to more good news as the National Learning Welsh Centre will be financing even more lessons for us in 2019-20.

2.1.2   **Welsh Language Skills** – By now, the Welsh language skills of all services are monitored every six months in the Service Performance Review meetings for individual services. The Heads of Service and Managers are also informed about the employees in their services' Welsh Language Skills, and any weak areas are discussed with the Language Services Manager.

2.1.3   **Welsh version of the Flexi Time System –** We are pleased to report that a Welsh version of the Flexi Time System is available by now, which is excellent news. This is due to the perseverance of our colleagues in the Human Resources Services ensuring that this system was published in Welsh as well.

2.1.4   **Complaints** – No complaints were received in relation to the Welsh language this year.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT / FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

3.1   These are the main areas which we feel need to be focused on next year:

3.1.1   **Promoting Welsh Strategy** – The Council has a Promoting Welsh Strategy in place already, however, we hope to be able to develop it significantly and see the Welsh language thrive even more so in Conwy, and placing the county at the heart of the Welsh Government's strategy and objective of creating or ensuring 1 million of Welsh speakers by 2050 and ensure Conwy is a county where the Welsh culture is viable and lively and where the Welsh language thrive and develops. Due to this, a new, draft version of the Strategy will be presented to the Committee in May, which will be much more ambitious, with more focussed areas, which are, in our opinion, fundamental to the success of the Strategy. Those areas will be The Workplace, The School, The Home, The Community, External Factors and The Growth of The Lifelong Learning Welsh Area.

3.1.2   **Welsh Language Lessons and Improving Welsh sessions** – We will be monitoring the Welsh Language lessons delivered through Work Welsh during 2019-20 very carefully to ensure that everyone benefits from the scheme and in order to increase the use of the Welsh language in the Council.

4.0. RECORD KEEPING

4.1 **Complaints** – No complaints were received in relation to the Welsh language during 2018-19.

4.2 **Investigations by the Welsh Language Commissioner** – No investigations were held about Failing to Comply by the Welsh Language Commissioner this year.

5.0 BILINGUAL WORKPLACE

5.1 **Welsh version of the Flexi Time System** – We are pleased to report that a Welsh version of the Flexi Time System is available by now, which is excellent news. This is due to the perseverance of our colleagues in the Human Resources Services ensuring that this system was published in Welsh as well.

5.2 **Working Welsh Lanyards** – The demand for Working Welsh lanyards has increased again this year, with more and more staff and the public requesting them. All members of fluent Welsh speaking staff now wear Working Welsh lanyards or badge. A large number of staff have been in contact during the year to say that they have started many more conversations in Welsh as all Welsh speakers wear the lanyard by now and also mentioned that they hadn't realised that some members of staff spoke Welsh before they started wearing the lanyards, therefore this has been very useful internally as well as with members of the public. Information about the lanyards have been placed on the New Employee Induction Form as well, and is also part of the information given during the Corporate Induction for all new members of staff.

5.3 **Lanyards for Welsh Learners** – The Lanyards for Welsh Learners continue to be very popular and the demand for the lanyards have increased this year as well. Feedback was received from Welsh learners over the last few years, saying they didn't feel comfortable wearing the Working Welsh lanyards as they felt that they were for fluent Welsh speakers, therefore we purchased lanyards for Welsh Learners which has the word 'Dysgwr' (Welsh for Learner) on them and a vast number of staff wear them daily. We had additional feedback this year noting that the public and staff are a lot more patient with staff who learn Welsh and who wish to practise their skills and some have started offering services in Welsh when dealing with the public for the first time due to this.

5.4 **Language Skills Tool and E-mail Messages** – This tool has now been in place for over two years and it continues to be very successful. With Information Technology's assistance, the Language Skills Tool is connected to the staff list who have an e-mail account. So, if a member of staff writes an e-mail to another staff member, and he/she speaks Welsh, then a message appears above his/her name saying:
Rydw i'n siarad Cymraeg / I can speak Welsh.

We had very positive feedback about this as it has been a great help to staff when communicating with others as it makes it much easier to know what staff's language skills are and makes it easier to start e-mail conversations in Welsh. Over the last year, many members of staff have contacted us to say how useful this tool has been to help them and noted that they've started many more e-mail conversations in Welsh since the tool was first introduced. We also had feedback during a Corporate Induction session from new staff who noted they were delighted with the tool and that it was very useful especially as they hardly knew anyone yet.

5.5 **Working Welsh Logo at the bottom of e-mails** – Staff who can speak Welsh include a logo at the bottom of their e-mail signature to let customers and colleagues know that they can speak Welsh. We have also developed a logo for Welsh learners noting 'Dw i'n dysgu Cymraeg' (I'm learning Welsh). A large number of Welsh learners include this logo at the bottom of their e-mail signatures.

5.6 **Main reception** - The Council's main receptions/switchboard are located at the Council's main offices in Bodlondeb, Conwy and Coed Pella, Colwyn Bay. Each one of the main reception areas/switchboard posts have been designated Welsh essential and every member of staff (15 members of staff = 100%) who work there are bilingual and have Welsh language skills at level 4 or higher.

5.7 **Staff's Welsh Language Skills**

    5.7.1 Since developing the tool with the Information Technology Service, which appears on everyone's PCs to collect information about the Welsh language skills of staff, there has been a massive progress in the accuracy of staff's Welsh language skills. By now, all members of staff can use this tool, and we have, with the Information Technology Service's assistance, been able to collect information about all members of staff by now, including those who don't have access to the intranet. With the exception of schools, the authority employs 2,028 members of permanent staff. Below are the details for the 2,028 members of staff who have provided information about their Welsh Language skills:

Staff's Welsh Language Skills:

Listening / Speaking				Reading / Understanding				Writing			
Lefel		No. of staff	%	Lefel		No. of staff	%	Lefel		No. of staff	%
Level 0		524	26	Level 0		578	28	Level 0		664	33
Level 1	LEARNER	545	27	Level 1	LEARNER	505	25	Level 1	LEARNER	490	24
Level 2		180	9	Level 2		206	10	Level 2		165	8
Level 3		189	9	Level 3		148	7	Level 3		163	8
Level 4	FLUENT	202	10	Level 4	FLUENT	214	11	Level 4	FLUENT	185	9
Level 5		388	19	Level 5		377	19	Level 5		361	18
TOTAL		2,028		TOTAL		2,028		TOTAL		2,028	

    5.7.2. Council staff have used the tool on the intranet to note their Welsh Language Skills by using the table found in the Language Skills Strategy. Above are the language skills of all members of staff who have answered the questions on the intranet.

    5.7.3 Above, it can be seen that 29% of staff have noted that they are fluent Welsh speakers (Level 4 and 5). This is consistent with 30% of staff who noted they were fluent Welsh speakers in 2017-18 and 31.5% who noted that they were fluent Welsh speakers during 2016-17.

    5.7.4 We have sent details per service to all Heads of Service and that breakdown can be seen below.

Service	Total no. of staff	No. of staff who speak Welsh fluently (Levels 4 a 5)	No. of staff who are learning Welsh (Levels 1, 2 and 3)	No. of staff who have no knowledge of Welsh (Level 0)
Human Resources	22	5 (23%)	11 (50%)	6 (27%)
Chief Executive's Department	6	1 (16.5%)	4 (67%)	1 (16.5%)
Education	165	83 (50%)	58 (35%)	24 (15%)
Environment, Roads and Facilities	239	65 (27%)	102 (43%)	72 (30%)
Internal Audit	12	1 (8%)	7 (58.5%)	4 (33.5%)
Corporate Finance Service	37	6 (16%)	20 (54%)	11 (30%)
Community Development Service	270	79 (29%)	145 (54%)	46 (17%)
Corporate Events, Communication, Customers and Marketing	12	3 (25%)	5 (42%)	4 (33%)
Social Services – Adults	622	170 (27%)	279 (45%)	173 (28%)
Social Services – Children	195	37 (19%)	75 (38%)	83 (43%)
Revenue and Benefits	75	22 (29%)	32 (43%)	21 (28%)
Regulatory and Housing	130	25 (19%)	74 (57%)	31 (24%)
Estates and Asset Management	8	2 (25%)	5 (62.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Information Technology and Digital Transformation	72	16 (22%)	36 (50%)	20 (28%)
Theatres and Conference Centre	77	19 (25%)	36 (47%)	22 (28%)
Corporate Improvement and Development Team	11	1 (9%)	8 (73%)	2 (18%)
Law and Governance	75	55 (73%)	17 (23%)	3 (4%)
TOTAL	**2,028**	**590** (29%)	**914** (45%)	**524** (26%)

5.8 **Recruiting – Jobs advertised during the year –** Please find below the number/percentage of jobs advertised during the year where Welsh was essential or desirable, and the number and percentage of posts where Welsh speakers were appointed.

DESIGNATION	NO. AND % BY LANGUAGE CATEGORY	NO. AND % OF POSTS WHERE WELSH SPEAKERS WERE APPOINTED
ESSENTIAL	33% - 138 posts	Of the 127 posts recruited to, Welsh speakers (level 4 and above) were appointed to 127 (100%) of them. To date, no one has been appointed to 11 of these posts as the recruiting process is ongoing.
DESIRABLE	67% - 283 posts	Of the 254 posts recruited to, 104 of the officers spoke Welsh fluently (41%). To date, no one has been appointed to 29 of these posts as the recruiting process is ongoing.
TOTAL IN ALL CATEGORIES	421 posts	Therefore, from the 381 posts recruited to, a total of 231 were fluent Welsh speakers, a percentage of 61%.

5.9 **Welsh Language training completed** – Please find below the information about the number of staff that have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level and the number of staff who have had language awareness training during 2018-19.

5.9.1 **WELSH IN THE WORKPLACE COURSES**

Date/Length of course	Suitable for	Details	Application	Total attendees
Entry (Level 1)	Those wishing to learn Welsh	6 month course for people who wish to learn Welsh	Staff's personal choice	43
Foundation (Level 2)				15
Intermediate (Level 3)				12
Intermediate (Level 3) (Nant Gwrtheyrn)				5
TOTAL NUMBER WHO ATTENDED THE COURSE				**75**

5.9.2 VARIOUS COURSES OFFERED / HELD IN WELSH

Course offered?	How many courses offered in Welsh?	Total attendees
Safe Recruitment For Managers (Standard 128, (a) recruitment and interviewing)	1	The course wasn't held due to insufficient numbers.
PDR – Managing the PDR Process (Standard 128, (b) performance management)	1	The course wasn't held due to insufficient numbers.
Managing the disciplinary process (Standard 128, (c) complaints and disciplinary procedures)	1	The course wasn't held due to insufficient numbers.
Corporate Health & Safety (Standard 128, (dd) health and safety)	1	The course wasn't held due to insufficient numbers.

5.9.3 CORPORATE INDUCTION SESSION / WELSH LANGUAGE AWARENESS

Date/Length of Course	Suitable for	Details	Application	Total who attended
12/5/2017	New members of staff – (Every new member of staff should attend a corporate induction session within 6 months of starting to work for the Council).	During the day, officers are given an introduction to Conwy, are addressed by the Chief Executive, with part of the address in Welsh. Presentations during the day are presented in Welsh, including a presentation from the Welsh Language and Translation Service about implementing the Welsh Language Standards, the help and advice on offer, using Welsh internally and Welsh language awareness. **(Staff from various services of Conwy County Borough Council)**	Compulsory for every new member of staff who starts working for the Council	27
14/7/2017				29
29/9/2017				17
24/11/2017				22
2/2/2019				27
22/3/2019				19
TOTAL NUMBER WHO ATTENDED THE COURSE				**141**

5.9.3.1 From this year's statistics, it can be seen that 141 members of staff have had Welsh awareness information this year.

5.9.3.2 As well as the above, many members of staff have shown an interest in attending Welsh lessons through a scheme called Work Welsh by the National Learning Welsh Centre. The next lessons will continue / start from May onwards. This is a free scheme which provides intensive, weekly Welsh lessons.

6.0   Actions to Comply with the Welsh Language Standards

6.1   List of actions taken to comply with the Service Delivery Standards

- We have provided communication to staff around responding to correspondence, arranging meetings, telephone answering, social media, recruitment, e-mail messages, signs, and internal communication.
- We have ensured that staff offer people the opportunity to be transferred to a Welsh speaker when contacting the Council (if they aren't Welsh speakers themselves).
- We have provided wording for staff to include in letter templates, offering residents an opportunity to receive correspondence in Welsh in future.
- We have notified staff arranging public meetings that all invites to the meeting should be bilingual, that simultaneous translators should be arranged for public meetings and that organisers of public meetings should remind people at the start of meetings that they can contribute in Welsh.
- All documents produced for public use will be bilingual, including promotional materials and exhibition documentation.
- The interface and menus on every page of our website are bilingual.
- All signage is checked for compliance with the Standards.
- Signs have been placed in main reception areas to state that people may communicate through the medium of Welsh.
- All public notices and adverts are bilingual.
- All grant forms received in Welsh will be responded to in Welsh and any interviews needed will be conducted through the medium of Welsh (with the aid of a simultaneous translator if needed).

6.2   List of actions taken to comply with the Operational Standards
- We have produced a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language and this document has been published on our intranet.
- The interface, menus and every page on every page of our intranet are bilingual.
- We have introduced a HR process where all staff will be asked whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh.
- We ask all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence relating to his or her employment and which is addressed to him/ her personally (in Welsh).
- We ask all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence relating to his or her training needs or requirement in Welsh.
- We ask all staff whether they wish to receive documents that outline their performance objectives in Welsh and we will provide documents in Welsh if that is their wish.
- We ask all staff whether they wish to receive documents that outlines their career plan in Welsh and we will provide documents in Welsh if that is their wish.
- We ask all staff whether they wish to receive forms that record and authorise annual leave, absences from work and flexible working hours in Welsh.
- Staff are able to make complaints in Welsh through the corporate complaints procedure and this has been publicised to staff.
- The Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure already states that staff may make a complaint in Welsh and has the right to respond to a complaint made about him or her in Welsh. Staff have been made aware of that right.

- All staff will be offered an opportunity to host any meetings regarding complaints made against them in Welsh (with or without the use of a translator).
- Any record of decision relating to a complaint against a member of staff will be issued in Welsh (and any subsequent meeting will be conducted in Welsh).
- Our HR policies state that staff can respond in Welsh to any allegations made against them.
- Computer software for checking spelling and grammar has been provided to all staff who speak or learn Welsh and Welsh Language interfaces for software (such as Microsoft Word) is provided in Welsh when staff wish to make use of this interface.
- Our intranet homepage is in Welsh.
- Any pages on the intranet that have corresponding pages in Welsh includes a direct link to the Welsh language page.
- Pages have been created on the intranet which provides services and support material to promote the Welsh language and assist staff in using the Welsh language.
- The interface and menus on the intranet are in Welsh.
- The Council has carried out an assessment of the Welsh language skills of employees through a self-assessment.
- The Council actively promotes opportunities during working hours for employees to receive basic Welsh Language courses.
- The Council provides opportunities for staff wanting to further their basic Welsh training through offering further training.
- The Council has developed an e-learning module, to raise staff's awareness of the Welsh Language.
- Information to raise awareness of the Welsh language is provided to all new staff.
- We have provided wording for staff to use on their e-mail signature, to inform people if they are fluent Welsh speakers or are learners.

6.3   List of actions taken to comply with the Policy Making Standards

- We have informed managers to consider the effects of any new policy (or amendments to policy) on opportunities for people to use the Welsh Language and ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.
- When a new policy is formulated, we will ensure that all managers are aware of the need to consider the effects of policy decisions on the Welsh Language. This will be done through introducing a section on formal Council reports which will demonstrate what kinds of consideration has been given to the Welsh Language.
- If research is commissioned that is intended to assist with policy making, we will ensure that the research considers how the policy decision could be made so that it does not have a negative impact on the Welsh Language.
- We will inform managers to ensure that any consultation on policies offers the opportunity for people to comment on the effects of any new policies on the Welsh Language use.