

Committee: **Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **22nd October 2021**

Report Subject: **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr N Daniels, Leader / Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Emma Scherptong, Professional Lead for Engagement, Equality & Welsh Language**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	30.09.21	12.10.21			22.10.21	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the Report is to set out the intentions for developing the Council’s second Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27, in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (2015) (Standard 145).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Council is required to develop and publish the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 by the 31st March 2022.
- 2.2 This report outlines the key policy development stages and timeframes required for successfully meeting these statutory requirements.
- 2.3 The Welsh Language Standards (2015) states we must review the existing strategy (Standard 146) and produce and publish a 5-year strategy that sets out how the Welsh language will be promoted, and its use encouraged across Blaenau Gwent. It must include (amongst other matters):
 - A target for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in Blaenau Gwent (3%, 70 additional Welsh speakers per year, in-line with Welsh Government’s *A Million Speakers by 2050*).
 - A statement setting out how you intend to reach the target (objectives and action plan).

2.4 Proposed policy development timeframe:

Undertake research, including a review of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22.	October 2021
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Involvement and engagement of key stakeholders, including all Council Elected Members	October – November 2021 (8 weeks)
Drafting of Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22 (objectives) for formal consultation	November 2021
Formal consultation on objectives and proposed Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22 approach.	November – December 2021 (8 weeks)
Review of feedback received <i>(Including Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 10-year Plan consultation findings)</i>	January 2022
Final Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 (objectives and action plan) developed	January 2022
Professional and political route for adoption by Council (including Scrutiny and Executive)	February – March 2022
Publication & promotion	31 st March 2022

3. Options for Recommendation

Option 1

- I. Consider the proposed approach for developing the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 and provide comments where appropriate.

Option 2

- I. Consider and agree the proposed approach for developing the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

The development of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22 is a key strategic document which contributes towards aspects of the Corporate Plan, Statutory Responsibilities, and the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan.

5. Implications against each option

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

There are no direct financial implications as a consequence of this report. The publication and translation of the strategy, on behalf of the Council, is met within the existing budget of Governance and Partnerships.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

Failure to effectively project manage and set out appropriate arrangements for developing a new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 may lead to the increased risk of the Council failing to comply with its statutory requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (Standard 45).

5.3 Legal

The remit of this report has no direct legal consequences. However, the report outlines that the Council has a legal obligation to develop and publish a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 by 31st March 2022. Failure to fulfil these requirements would result in reputational and financial consequences.

5.4 Human Resources

There is a duty across the organisation to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and proactively support the implementation of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. The Policy and Partnerships Team will oversee this responsibility via the Professional Lead for Engagement, Equalities & Welsh Language, and will work collaboratively with specific service areas such as Education (Welsh in Education Strategy) and Communications etc.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

The Council's first [Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22](#) has three objectives:

- Objective 1 –** To promote and encourage the use of the Welsh language within families and the community.
- Objective 2 –** To increase the provision of Welsh Language education and informal activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language.
- Objective 3 –** To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace.

How the Council delivers against each of the objectives is set out in its Action Plan. The plan is monitored and reviewed with progress against the objectives being published annually via the [Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20](#) and [Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020-21](#).

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage, and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

Fundamental to the development of the SEP will be the involvement of

- People who speak Welsh (via 3 sessions delivered in Welsh working collaboratively with Menter Iaith to engage local communities, clubs & groups on the strategy's assessment and planning);
- Professional engagement via the Corporate Leadership Team;
- Political engagement via Corporate Overview and *all* Members;
- Internal and external stakeholders (for example, Welsh in Education Forum and the involvement of wider community and partnership networks).

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The report sets out short-term proposals for taking forward the policy development for the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. The strategy will outline the Council's intentions for meeting its requirements over a five-year-period (2022-27).

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 makes provision regarding promoting and increasing the use of the Welsh language. Therefore, ensuring that Welsh is not treated no less favourably than the English language in Wales.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22 will be developed with the involvement of key stakeholders from across the Council and by working in partnership with a range of external stakeholders.

It specifically aligns with current work being undertaken to review and develop a 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 will set out a corporate approach across the organisation to deliver against the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

All consultation activities will be facilitated online, therefore reducing carbon emissions derived from participants dependent on carbon reliant transport.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

The report includes “strategic decisions” as defined by the Socio-economic Duty.

The report has a positive impact on the Socio-Economic Duty Themes (*Please refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Template attached as an appendices*).

6.9b ***Equality Impact Assessment***

The report is conducive to having a positive impact on Equalities for citizens, staff and wider stakeholders (*Please refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Template attached as an appendices*)

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Progress and performance of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27 will be monitored via the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Annual Report which are signed off professionally by Corporate Leadership Team and will be included on Corporate Overview Information Pack.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Integrated Impact Assessment – Screening Template*
- [Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-22](#)
- [Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20](#)
- [Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2020-21](#)