

Appendix 2:

Welsh in the

Workplace Policy

Using the
Welsh Language Internally



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council



Prepared in accordance with the requirements of
The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

Version	Key Changes	Approved by
July 2023		

The policy applies to all Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council employees and will support the Council in meeting its statutory duties as set out in the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice.

The Welsh language is an integral part of Blaenau Gwent’s cultural identity, it helps shape our heritage and our future. The Welsh language is also recognised within the Council’s Corporate Plan 2022/27 as a key performance measure which looks to support the vision of ‘Blaenau Gwent – a place that is fair, open, and welcoming to all by working with and for our communities’.

Therefore, providing opportunities for our staff to use Welsh within the workplace is of great importance to the Council. Increasing the use of Welsh within the workplace furthermore strengthens the quality of service we provide to our residents through the medium of Welsh.

Internally the Council is committed to considering the Welsh language standards in all areas of our authority’s work. We thrive to contribute to the Government’s strategy to reach 1 million speakers by 2050, using our 5-year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27 as a framework.

The purpose of this policy is as follows:

- a) To encourage a positive attitude towards the Welsh language that embraces Welsh culture with pride and respect.
- b) Increase the number of staff with Welsh language skills by providing opportunities for employees to learn or improve their linguistic ability.
- c) Ensure the Welsh Language Measure 2011 is upheld on an organisation-wide level.

The policy applies to employees, volunteers and elected Members.

We will promote positive attitudes which encourage our workforce to take pride in the Welsh language and culture

- Welsh language guidance, in relation to meeting our Welsh Language Standards is made available to staff via the Intranet. The information provided is monitored and updated regularly.
- Saint David's Day (Dydd Gwyl Dewi) and Welsh Language Rights Day (Diwrnod Hawliau'r Gymraeg), including other events in the Welsh calendar will be celebrated at work and promoted in the community.
- We will celebrate the achievements of our Welsh learners with internal and public communications work.
- Working with the Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network we will identify and promote opportunities, with our staff and the wider community, where the Welsh language can be used locally.
- Good practice surrounding the Welsh language standards will be noted within our Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report.
- Council reception areas will display the Iaith Gwaith signs encouraging the use of Welsh.

We aim to increase the number of staff with Welsh language skills by providing opportunities for employees to learn or improve their linguistic ability.

Recruitment

- Welsh language requirements for all new or existing roles will be assessed in-line with our Recruitment & Selection policies. This assessment will shape the job advert description and subsequent interview process.
- It is the Council's policy that all posts advertised, internally and externally must note Welsh as a 'desirable' skill as a minimum requirement.
- All job vacancies will be advertised bilingually.
- Applicants will be able to apply through the medium of Welsh and be interviewed through the Welsh language should they wish too.
- Language preference for correspondence surrounding individuals' application is established within the initial application form and recorded appropriately.

New Employees

- Our corporate induction process, for new starters, considers the importance of the use of the Welsh language and Welsh Language Standards as part of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, alongside the 9 protected characteristics noted by the Equality Act (2010).

- New employees will be provided with Blaenau Gwent's Corporate Induction Booklet that establishes the Council's ethos of respect and equality surrounding the Welsh language.
- Managers must direct new employees to the Welsh language guidance section in the Intranet.
- All employees are encouraged to report their Welsh language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding via the iTrent system which is managed by Organisation Development. This information will be used to better understand the Welsh language skills needs across our different directorates.

Increasing the linguistic ability of existing staff

- Welsh language training opportunities and services will be regularly communicated to staff.
- In-house training slides for beginners to learn conversational workplace Welsh are available to all staff via the intranet, these slides offer guidance on how where to access further training.
- Slides surrounding the following are accessible for all staff via the Council's [Intranet](#) :
 - Bilingual Greetings and Key words
 - Useful phrases
 - Out of office templates
- Microsoft Teams backgrounds that display the Work Welsh logo for Welsh speakers and learners are available and will be promoted to encourage staff to use via online meetings. Therefore, promoting and encouraging business to be conducted through the medium of Welsh.
- Work Welsh lanyards and badges are made available for all staff (including lanyards for Welsh language learners).
- The Welsh language training procedure guide will be monitored and updated accordingly to reflect the current provision in place.
- Welsh in the workplace signs will be displayed within Council buildings to promote the use and practice of the Welsh language.

Ensuring the Welsh Language Measure 2011 is upheld on an organisational wide level.

- As part of the induction process managers must direct staff to the Welsh language guidance on the intranet to ensure all staff are aware of our commitments and work in accordance with the Welsh Language Measure 2011.
- The following guidance will be available to all staff on the [Intranet](#):
 - Welsh Language Standards Overview
 - Translation Procedure
 - Telephone Procedure
 - Training Guidance
- All staff will be provided access to training on how to work in accordance with the Welsh Language Measure 2011 via the e-learning portal. Guidance on finding these resources will be outlined in the Welsh Language Training Procedure available on the intranet.
- Employees can update their Welsh language skills assessment via iTrent accounts. Managers are to encourage staff to update their assessment and remind them of the importance of doing so. Further reminders will be communicated to staff throughout the year.
- Welsh language skills workforce data recorded on the iTrent system will be analysed and reported as part of the Council's Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report.
- The Welsh Language Promotion Strategies objectives are to be included within the Council's business planning arrangements. This is to ensure our organisation-wide progress is captured effectively (see Appendix A for the Welsh in the Workplace promotion strategy objectives)
- The Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network meet 6-weekly to share best practice and monitor the progress of the current Welsh Language Promotion Strategy among our partner organisations and relevant internal staff.

Implementation

The successful implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff, with managers playing a key role in supporting and overseeing the practical application of this policy.

Further information on meeting the Welsh Language Standards in relation to recruitment & selection and service delivery is available on the Intranet.

Monitoring and Review

The Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is consistent with the Welsh Language Standards and current legislation.

Our Welsh Language Compliance commitments will be reported quarterly to the Corporate Leadership Team and will be considered as part of the Forward Work Programme.

How we meet our Welsh Language Standards will also be published via our Welsh Language Annual Monitoring report. This will include:

- The number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as posts where:
 - Welsh language skills were essential
 - Welsh language skills were desirable
 - Welsh language skills must be learnt if appointed
- Welsh language skills data of all staff as presented on the iTrent system.
- Number of employees attending Welsh language skills training by level of training.
- Number and percentage of employees who have completed the Welsh language awareness e-learning training.
- Number of employees who attend courses through the medium of Welsh.
- Reviews and updates of guidance/procedures surrounding the implementation of service delivery, operational, policy making and record keeping standards made throughout the year.

Appendix A: Welsh in the Workplace promotion strategy objectives

Welsh in the Workplace	
Objective 3: <i>To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace</i>	
Indicator(s):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of staff employed by partner organisations who use the Welsh language in the workplace. • The number of staff learning Welsh. • The number of positions advertised encouraging Welsh language skills 'essential', 'desirable' and 'willing to learn'. 	
Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people engage with the Welsh language. • More people attain fluency in the Welsh language. • More Council employees can use Welsh Language. 	
Action Reference	Action
Action 3.1	Increase the number of employees who can use Welsh via training and encourage them to wear the 'Dysgu' badges to help Welsh learners socially and improve their confidence.
Action 3.2	Encourage Welsh-speaking employees to improve their fluency in Welsh via training and encourage them to wear the 'Cymraeg' badges to help promote bilingual services.
Action 3.3	Promote Welsh language awareness and language training courses and encourage more employees to attend these
Action 3.4	Provide a range of guides and support materials to increase engagement with and confidence in the use of Welsh language in the workplace
Action 3.5	Support all departments to effectively implement the Welsh language standards as per the Council's Compliance Notice
Action 3.6	Effectively monitor the jobs within the Council advertised that go through the Welsh language assessment process
Action 3.7	Provide informal opportunities for colleagues to engage with each other in the medium of Welsh
Action 3.8	Increase Welsh language skills of Social Services staff in-line with More than just words 2022/27 strategy
<p>Partners: We will be working with the following partners to achieve this objective:</p> <p>Blaenau County Borough Council employees, Menter Iaith, Coleg Gwent, Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone, Learn Welsh Gwent, Aneurin Leisure Trust, Grŵp Deddf, Corporate Equality Network, all School-based staff, Welsh Language Commissioner's Office</p>	