

EXECUTIVE BOARD

JANUARY 23RD 2017

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020

Purpose:

- To consider responses to the draft WESP following statutory consultation
- To receive the amended WESP in light of consultation

Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. To receive a report on the statutory consultation exercise.
2. To consider the County Council's response to the consultation.
3. To receive and endorse the final version of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and submit to the Welsh Government.

Reasons:

The Wales School Standards and Organisation Act (2013) places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The Act enables the Government to approve the plan submitted, to approve the Plan with modifications, or reject the Plan and prepare another plan.

Developing the plan requires local authorities to consult with statutory consultees. The statutory consultation process closed on 19.12.16, informing minor amendments to the WESP. The finalised version requires Executive Board approval prior to submission to Welsh Government.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: YES

Education and Children Scrutiny Committee- 22.12.16

Scrutiny Committee recommendations/comments: Draft WESP and update regarding consultation unanimously received

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 23.01.17- to agree final Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: - *Cllr. Gareth Jones*

<p>Directorate-</p> <p>Education and Children's Services</p>	<p>Designations:</p> <p>Interim Director of Education and Children's Services</p>	<p>Tel Nos- 01267 246450</p> <p>E Mail Addresses:</p>
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<p>Gareth Morgans</p> <p>Name of Head of Service:</p> <p>Aeron Rees</p> <p>Report Author:</p> <p>Gareth Morgans, Catrin Griffiths and Aeron Rees</p>	<p>Head of Learner Programmes</p> <p>Interim Director Head of Learner Programmes Challenge Adviser</p>	<p>EDGMorgans@sirgar.gov.uk</p> <p>JARees@sirgar.gov.uk 01267 246532</p> <p>CSGriffiths@sirgar.gov.uk 01267 246641</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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23RD JANUARY 2017

Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20

The Wales School Standards and Organisation Act (2013) places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). WESPs detail how local authority's aim to achieve the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES) which sets out the Welsh Government's vision for an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education.

WESPs also have to reflect the context of the Welsh Government's wider strategy for the Welsh language. The Welsh Government's vision is to see '**A million Welsh speakers by 2050**'. According to the most recent Census in 2011 there were 562,000 Welsh speakers in Wales. On that basis, the aim of the strategy will be to almost double the number of Welsh speakers by the middle of the century.

The Welsh Government recognises that the education system is the main vehicle for ensuring that children are able to develop their Welsh skills, and for creating new speakers. The WESPs will provide the means for the Welsh Government to monitor the way in which local authorities respond and contribute to the implementation of these objectives.

- The Plan should provide the strategic direction for the planning and delivery of Welsh-medium and Welsh-language education in the authority as well as a vision statement.
- The Plan **should be approved by the Executive Board** and signed by the person with the statutory responsibility for education within the authority.
- The Plan needs to be underpinned and informed by Welsh Government's current Welsh-medium Education Strategy (April 2010) and policy statement for 2015-16 (March 2016).
- The Plan needs to reflect the following Welsh Government policies/strategies-
 - Welsh Language Strategy
 - Rewriting the Future
 - Successful Futures
 - Future Generations
 - Aligning with Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme
 - Welsh-medium Education Assessment and Childcare sufficiency assessment

The Plan will need to deliver on the following-

- **more seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh as a percentage of the Year 2 cohort;**
- **more learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary school to secondary school;**

- more 14-16 year old learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh;
- more learners aged 16-19 studying Welsh and subjects through the medium of Welsh; and
- more learners with higher skills in Welsh.

There is a requirement to address standards of attainment in Welsh and Welsh Second Language, Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) and workforce planning and continuing professional development (CPD).

Consultation on the Draft WESP was required for a period of at least 8 weeks (11.10.16 to 19.12.16). A range of stakeholders were invited to respond, including the following statutory consultees-

- neighbouring local authorities
- the headteacher of each school maintained by it
- the governing body of each school maintained by it
- each institution within the further education sector in its area
- other prescribed persons.

“Other prescribed persons” are listed in Regulation 9:

- the Welsh Language Commissioner
- the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- school councils
- Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
- such organisations providing services to children and young people as the local authority considers appropriate
- such other persons or bodies as appear to the local authority to be appropriate.

An oral presentation on the consultation and a copy of the draft WESP was provided to Scrutiny Committee on 22.12.16. **Subsequently, the appended consultation response document has been prepared for Executive Board's perusal.**

In addition, minor amendments have been made to the draft WESP the finalised version of which is also appended for Executive Board's consideration.

Once agreed, the Plan should be published on the local authority’s websites by 1st June 2017 with copies made available in offices and in any other place the local authority considers appropriate.

OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND THEIR PROS AND CONS

Producing and publishing a WESP is required by Welsh Government, to be completed according to detailed guidelines and criteria. Welsh Government are empowered to approve the plan submitted, to approve the Plan with modifications, or reject the Plan and ask us to prepare another plan.

DETAILED REPORTS ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: E.D. Gareth Morgans, Interim Director of Education and Children's Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Organisational Development	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Policy and Crime & Disorder

Developments are consistent with the Local Authority's and Welsh Government's strategies and plans. It complies with Welsh Government statutory requirements.

The County Council is currently developing its policy with respect to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015). Attaining one of the goals, 'A Wales of thriving culture and vibrant Welsh Language' will require significant input from the education sector, as research shows that 4/5 people currently learn Welsh at school.

Welsh Government is underpinning this ideal with its proposals to reach a '**million Welsh speakers by 2050**'. Education is singled by Welsh Government as the prime medium for realising this vision.

The 2011 Census saw a 6.4% decrease in Welsh speakers in Carmarthenshire. The recommendations emanating from the subsequent 'Welsh in Carmarthenshire' report, monitored by the Members' Consultative Panel on the Welsh Language, are currently being incorporated in an updated development plan to 2018, authored by corporate policy colleagues. There are well over 20 recommendations for the Department of Education and Children to administer with implementing the WESP being integral to this overarching strategy.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is being drafted to ensure that there is no discrimination, with respect to various groups with protected characteristics. Completion of the EIA is expected imminently.

2. Legal

Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and views from consultees considered.

3. Finance

As noted in the 'Welsh in Carmarthenshire' report's recommendations, sufficient support and resources are required in order to develop and lead on the strategy to promote and extend Welsh medium education.

5. Risk Management Issues

Not delivering an aspirational Welsh in Education Strategic Plan could see problems being perpetuated and the County Council failing to meet Welsh Government requirements in respect of the development of Welsh medium education. This could also lead to defaulting on other important policy areas, as described in section 1 above

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: EDG Morgans, Interim Director of Education and Children's Services

1. Scrutiny Committee

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee were consulted informally from the 11-10-16 and formally on 22-12-16. The Draft WESP and oral feedback/presentation were unanimously received.

2. Local Member(s)

All Elected Members have had an opportunity to respond to the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. In addition they have the opportunity to respond as members of a Governing Body.

3. Community / Town Council

Not one of the statutory consultees.

4. Relevant Partners

A range of partners have been consulted - list in the report.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

School staff unions have had an opportunity to respond during the formal consultation stage.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Welsh in Education Strategic Plans 2017-2020- Welsh Government Guidance		Education Office, St David's Park
Well Being of Future Generations Act (2015)		http://gov.wales/docs/dsijg/publications/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf http://gov.wales/docs/dsijg/publications/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-cy.pdf