

EXECUTIVE BOARD
19TH SEPTEMBER 2016

Carmarthenshire's 2016/17 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and consultation update.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To consider Officers' response to comments received following consultation on the review of Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
- To consider the adjustments to the plan and comment on the content.
- To accept the revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Reasons:

- The Local Authority is required to review and submit a revised WESP to the Welsh Government on an annual basis.
- To review the modifications to the plan and targets for attainment in Welsh.
- To scrutinize the responses to the consultation on Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Relevant scrutiny committee consulted- YES- June 17th, 2016.

Scrutiny Committee recommendations / comments: In consultation section

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Gareth Jones

Directorate: Education & Children

Name of Head of Service:

Gareth Morgans

Report Author:

Gareth Morgans

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Designations:

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Chief Education Officer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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Carmarthenshire's 2016/17 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and consultation update.

Background

Section 85 of the [Schools Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act](#) requires local authorities to prepare and submit a **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan** (WESP) for approval or modification by Welsh Ministers. These would be 3 year plans and reviewed on an annual basis.

WESPs detail how local authorities will aim to achieve the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in the **Welsh Medium Education Strategy** (WMES).

Policy context

The WMES 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. The aim is to facilitate an increase in the number of people of all ages able to use the Welsh language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace. The WESPs are a key vehicle for creating an improved planning system for Welsh-medium education.

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 the WMES objectives by:

- ensuring that every step of local authority education processes includes full consideration of Welsh-medium education;
- extending provision where a need is identified on the basis of improved planning;
- moving Welsh-language support services gradually away from the traditional roles of *athrawon bro* towards a new training and mentoring service;
- ensuring the delivery of Welsh-medium support services on the basis of consortia in the near future;
- improving standards and extending the use of Welsh by children and young people
- demonstrating progress against the specific targets in the WMES.

The intention of the WESPs is to:

- expect local authorities to be accountable to the Welsh Government for planning Welsh-medium and Welsh-language education provision;
- reflect the aims of the WMES;
- illustrate the current situation, outline appropriate activities and demonstrate improvement;
- be manageable and useful to you as a local authority; and
- demonstrate clear progress over 3-years in each local authority and consortium area towards achieving the WMES targets.

The WESPs focus on the targets in the WMES and LAs are asked to report annually on performance against these targets:

- *more 7 year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh as a % of the Year 2 cohort;*
- *more learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary school to secondary school;*
- *more 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 improved skills in Welsh.*

Carmarthenshire's initial Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-2017 was approved by the County Council and subsequently by Welsh Ministers on the 24th of September, 2014. The WESP reflected the County Council's aspirations and the ambitions of the Welsh Government, as laid out in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy and The Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire report, March 2014 which was endorsed by the County Council. The Plan emphasised the commitment to work together to achieve the best outcomes for all Carmarthenshire's children and young people.

In October 2015 we received a letter reminding us that the *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh-medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013* require a local authority to review its Plan annually which, in effect, means a review of progress against the targets set out in the Plan. The review had to be completed and the amended Plan which emerged from that process had to be submitted to Welsh Ministers **no later than 20th December 2015.**

There was confusion in respect to the requirement to consult on the revised WESP. Officers were of the view, which had been confirmed by Welsh Government officials during the initial training on WESPS, that there was no requirement to consult on revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. Officers had considered the 'The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013' which cited that- 'During the conduct of such a review the local authority must consult such persons as they consider appropriate'. As there had been regular discussions in regard to the WESP with schools, the Council's Welsh Language Advisory Panel and the Welsh in Education Forum officers believed that was appropriate and sufficient.

However, Welsh Government officials subsequently advised us of Part 4 of the *School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* which states that- 'In preparing a Welsh in education strategic plan or revised plan, a local authority must consult.' Once officers were aware of this requirement a consultation was undertaken. The consultation commenced on the 29th March and closed on the 12th May, 2016. A total of 16 responses were received- an analysis is included in the attached report.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES
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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: 

Chief Education Officer

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

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The development of the Welsh Language in Education is an integral part of the 'Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire Report' prepared by the Welsh language Census Group in March 2014. The recommendations, as endorsed by full Council have been incorporated into Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) which is our policy to meet the expectations of the Welsh Government's 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. The aim is to facilitate an increase in the number of people of all ages able to use the Welsh language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace.

The WESPs are a key vehicle for creating an improved planning system for Welsh-medium education. Carmarthenshire's WESP details how the local authorities aims to achieve the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy

Finance

Many of the actions included in Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan have associated costs e.g. lead officer time, resources, language charter, training. Additional budget was secured to allow the Education Department to appoint a lead officer (part time) and develop the actions included in the plan. Using the Welsh in Education Grant and this additional funding has enabled us to realize many of the actions. To ensure further progress the additional funding is required.

Risk Management Issues

Without sufficient resource and County Council support it will be difficult to deliver the agreed actions and improve standards of attainment and increase participation in Welsh medium education. This could lead to challenge from Members and external challenge from Welsh Government officials and ESTYN in respect to progress being achieved.

Staffing Implications

Due to additional central funding we have an officer (part-time) to lead the implementation of the WESP. Without this officer's time it would be challenging to implement the agreed actions. In addition the Welsh Support Teachers (Athrawon Gwella'r Gymraeg a Dwyieithrwydd) are employed utilising the Welsh in Education Grant issued to ERW by the Welsh Government. Any reduction in this grant would have an adverse effect on this team and our capacity to deliver the WESP.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed:



Chief Education Officer

In preparing a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan or revised plan, a local authority must consult-

- a) its neighbouring local authorities;
- b) the head teacher of each school maintained by it;
- c) the governing body of each school maintained by it;
- d) each institution within the further education sector in its area;
- e) in relation to any foundation or voluntary school in its area-

- 1.1. the person who appoints the foundation governors, and
- 1.2. if the school has a religious character, the appropriate religious body;

- f) other prescribed persons.

To meet the requirements of the consultation the Local Authority-

1. Wrote to all Headteachers asking them to forward the consultation to their Governing Body.
2. Wrote to all Headteachers asking them to forward the consultation information to their parents.
3. Wrote to neighbouring authorities and the other bodies noted in **d** and **e** above
4. In respect to F (other prescribed persons) we arranged for information in relation to the consultation to be included in the County Council's website.

1. Scrutiny Committee- Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee was consulted on 17-06-16

Recommendations/Comments:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- The revised Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan be endorsed for consideration by the Executive Board.
- That the Executive Board Member (Education & Children) be requested to lobby the Welsh Government and request that WESPs be incorporated into local authorities' existing corporate strategies, rather than being considered as stand-alone documents.

2. Local Member(s)

The consultation was open to all Members and some responded.

3. Community / Town Council

There was no requirement to directly consult with Community/Town councils

4. Relevant Partners

All statutory consultees were consulted which included schools. Parents, although not a statutory group were also consulted.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Public consultation open to all

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
Revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plan		