

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

08.07.21

Subject: Welsh in Education Strategic Planning

Purpose: To present the first draft of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-31

Recommendations / key decisions required:

Summary of steer sought by ECS Scrutiny:

- The document is submitted for comment on the first draft of the new 10-year WESP (2022-2031)
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Reasons: To receive comments as a part of the discussion on the new WESP, prior to the formal public consultation (Autumn Term 2021)

Exec. Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr. Glynog Davies

Education and Children Directorate

Name of Head of Service:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

08.07.21

Welsh in Education Strategic Planning

1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

- The new 10-year WESP is set to commence in September 2022
- This paper builds upon inaugural discussions held in various corporate fora in recent months.
- Colleagues may be especially interested in the following aspects:
 - How the stated aim of moving all schools along the language continuum can be further developed over the next decade, including the level of challenge set by each of the WESP criteria for our schools from their current starting points
 - The renewed emphasis on attaining bilingual acquisition in the early years and its implications for schools and learning
 - Evolving a sustainable training model to increase workforce capacity
 - The proposed corporate and democratic timescale

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

Also powerpoint presentation at onset of item

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: *J. Aeron Rees*

Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Wales School Standards and Organisation Act (2013) became law on 4 March 2013. The Act places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which needs to be monitored.

Carmarthenshire is lauded nationally as being innovative and proactive with respect to this agenda. Positive support with the proposals outlined in the papers will galvanise the perceived proactivity of the county as we move further towards the 2031 census and towards the national goal of delivering a million Welsh speakers by 2050 – an aim referenced in Welsh Government's Programme of Government released on 15.6.21.

The developments outlined in the paper build upon corporate priorities identified in Carmarthenshire's Corporate Strategy (2018-23), namely Well Being Objectives 3 and 14. The proposals also support the work of the County working group established after the 2011 Census, where a decline in the number of Welsh speakers in the County caused some concern, leading to remedial action.

2. Legal

Appropriate consultation will need to be undertaken and views from consultees considered. This will include a range of statutory consultees and be subject to an 8-week public consultation. This is currently earmarked for October-November 2021, and will aim to draw responses from key stakeholders, including pupils, parents and school Governors. A consultation report will be produced for corporate perusal in advance of the strategy's progress through its latter stages.

3. Finance

As noted in the Census Working Group's recommendations, sufficient support and resources are required to successfully implement and promote and extend Welsh medium education in Carmarthenshire. The training demand to realise the vision being scoped out for the new WESP strategy will require further support. There is no direct funding from Welsh Government announced to date for the 10(11)-year strategy and we are always striving to secure regional funding.

Work has been undertaken to calculate how many teachers and teaching assistants we need to upskill to meet the emerging vision for the new strategy. Ballpark data and figures regarding expressions of interest from staff are offered below, which will be refined as more information from the detailed staffing audit becomes available, cross-referenced to the strategy's aims.

Sector	No. of staff showing interest in linguistic support (as of June '21)	Notes
Secondary Sector	593	
Primary Sector	791	Initially, the strategy will concentrate upon Foundation Phase staff, who have shown good potential to develop, as a cohort, to the levels of competence required
RUNNING TOTAL	1384	Many staff are seeking gloywi support

Linguistic Training can be offered at all levels:

- Entry, Foundation, Intermediate, Proficiency, Refresher
- The internal training model will consider:
 - Use of classroom language / Pedagogy for teachers
 - Aftercare and on-going support
 - A Self-Study route, with tutor support – currently at Entry level

Remote learning to upskill teachers to equip them to teach through the medium of Welsh and promote a Welsh ethos in schools has recently attracted impressive numbers to courses and is proving to be an efficient mode of delivery, which curtails travel, venue and substance costs

In arriving at the resource demand of the training model, **there are a number of variables which will condition the final costs required of CCC.**

- The possibility of drawing grants from a range of sources eg. regional, WG grants
- Other providers taking up some of the demand on our behalf
- A possibility to explore how Welsh in the Workplace funding could augment the fiscal demand
- Number of staff on refresher (gloywi) courses - which is cheaper to deliver than the other levels (Entry, Foundation, Intermediate, Higher)
- Number of staff from each key stage, and the ratio of Teachers: Teaching Assistants
- Amount of supply cover to pay – full payment v partial payment (and how that might affect enrolment)
- Developments in staff recruitment policy will have an effect to diminish costs
- Further WG developments re initial teacher training leading to diminished costs
- Continue online learning to reduce venue hire and travel costs
- Staff expressing interest in moving up through the linguistic levels
- Adopting a phased approach such as concentrating initially on Foundation Phase and KS3 staff, then moving on to KS2 and KS4 staff
- Encouraging schools to consider how and when staff can enter the training programme in a manner which will best deliver the strategy locally, dovetailing this with a strategic approach to cohort sequencing

Risk Management Issues

Not delivering an aspirational Welsh in Education Strategic Plan could:

- see the County Council failing to meet elevated WG requirements and expectations of Carmarthenshire with respect to the development of Welsh medium education and its WESP targets.
- entail failure to meet two key Corporate Wellbeing priorities

Consultation procedures need to be sufficiently robust to ensure all stakeholder are offered opportunities to respond through various media (currently being considered by ECS Task and Finish Group).

The corporate timetable merits consideration to facilitate the process (Draft timetable below from May '21 onwards):

Date	Meeting/Event
05.05.21	DMT ✓
13.05.21	CMT ✓
01.06.21	PEB ✓
25.6.21	Second Head teacher surgeries (2) ✓
	Fforwm y Gymraeg mewn Addysg / Welsh in Education Forum ✓
30.6.21	PEB ✓
8.7.21	ECS Scrutiny
July-September '21	Adjustments over summer vacation
06.09.21	PEB
October	Possible confirmation of final WG school category proposals
October -November '21 (no later than)	Heads & Governors
	8-week Public Consultation (with Scrutiny perusal of report tbc)
22.11.21	EB (including consultation report)
08.12.21	County Council
31.1.22	Submitted to WG
June-August '22	Approval by Welsh Ministers
1.9.22	New 10-year WESP becomes operational

Scrutiny colleagues may also wish to consider how to engage with other elected members from across the political spectrum over and above the nominal timetable, such as use of specific workshops, seminars and drop-ins.

The proposed timetable may be further challenged if unforeseen events unfold, such as any attendant increase in restrictions as the pandemic evolves into the summer months.

There are also considerations in respect of maintaining an appropriate provision for latecomers moving into the county. This, and the appeals process, requires regular monitoring and can be ameliorated by immersion education and the use of our language centres. By the end of the decade, there will still be linguistic choice available in the system, albeit that all learners should have been bestowed with a higher base level of bilingual acquisition following their primary schooling.

6. Staffing Implications

Maintaining and developing a strong team of TAGG teachers (Tîm Athrawon Gwella'r Gymraeg / Welsh Improvement Teacher Team) is vital for this agenda.

There are key staff training requirements which need to be expedited (see above).

7. Physical Assets

MEP/MIM funding or similar can assist with the restructuring of parts of the system, with capital investment available to support the WESP agenda.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: *J.A. Rees*

Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing

(Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

1. **Scrutiny Committee – 28.01.21; Scrutiny general update 17.03.21**
2. **Welsh in Education Forum – 16.12.20; 25.06.21**
3. **Local Member(s) – of schools identified for re-designation, pending approval to proceed**
4. **Community / Town Council – stakeholder in the public consultation pending approval**
5. **Relevant Partners – anticipated public consultation**
6. **Head Teachers: 21.01.21; 25.06.21**

Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Unions are appraised as required
Formal Public Consultation Autumn Term - general public and statutory partners

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

Include any observations here

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

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

THERE ARE NONE, apart from internal WG guidance documentation

WG: Consultation on New
school Linguistic categories

[consultation](#)

WG: Draft WESP guidelines

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-05/guidance-on-welsh-in-education-strategic-plans.pdf>