



Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2024-2025

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Commissioner



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

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This report is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.

Introduction

This annual monitoring report for 2024-2025 covers the four areas required under the regulatory framework and demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to providing bilingual services to the public and staff members.

Detail of Reporting Requirement	Related Standard Number (& sub-clause)
Complaints from the Public - The annual report must include the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the standards with which you were under a duty to comply.	147, 148, 149, 156, 158 (2), 162, 164 (2), 168 (a), 170 (2) (d)
Staff Language Skills - The number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records kept in accordance with standard 151).	170 (2) (a) 151
Welsh Medium Training Provision - The number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152); If a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152).	170 (2) (b) 170 (2) (c) 152
Recruiting to Empty Posts - The number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where: Welsh language skills were essential; Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post; Welsh language skills were desirable; Welsh language skills were not necessary. (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154)	170 (2) (ch) 154

In 2024, the Council adopted a new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028. Six of the seven Strategic Equality Objectives, as listed below, include Welsh language implications:

Equality Objective 1	Access to Services and Information – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services
Equality Objective 2	Education, Skills and Employment – Improve education, skills and employment opportunities for all
Equality Objective 3	Inclusive Communities – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities
Equality Objective 4	Inclusive and Effective Engagement – effectively engage with our communities, overcome barriers to engagement and support and encourage all residents to have their voices heard.
Equality Objective 5	Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements
Equality Objective 6	Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough

The Council's Cabinet and Corporate Management Team have been actively involved in discussions and debates around the implementation of the Welsh language Standards since January 2014. A number of reports and presentations have been presented in order to keep them fully informed of ongoing improvements in the provision of services through the Welsh language.

1. Welsh Language Standards: Compliance Work Programme

Since the Welsh Language Standards were introduced on 30 March 2016, we have developed a Compliance Work Programme to ensure that services we deliver are in accordance with the Standards, that staff are aware of their obligations and that they have the required language skills where possible.

The Compliance Work Programme is summarised below:

Correspondence - Standards 4, 5 & 7

These standards relate to correspondence, which must be bilingual if we do not know language choice or are sending letters out to a number of people regarding the same subject matter. We must ensure that our letterhead is also compliant.

Action taken:

FACTSHEET for staff – General Correspondence.

Bilingual auto-signatures on emails for all staff on email along with the following statement:

Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

Correspondence may be in any language or format. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

Letterhead templates in place as standard.

Telephone – Standards 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21 & 22

These standards relate to how we deal with telephone calls and that a bilingual greeting is given. Staff must be equipped with the relevant language skills to deal with calls in Welsh, and if they are unable, that they know who the Welsh speakers are that are able to deal with the matter, and how to transfer calls. If no Welsh speaker is available to provide the subject specific information the call can be put through to a non-Welsh speaker.

We must state, when we publish main telephone numbers that we welcome calls in Welsh and all our automated telephone systems must be bilingual.

Action taken:

FACTSHEET for staff – Telephone Greetings.

Training delivered to staff to ensure they can give basic greetings and provide reception services in our main locations.

Welcoming Welsh language calls has been published in **Newsline** since June 2017.

Employees provided with desk stands, which are Quick Reference Guides.

Automated telephone messages for service areas recorded bilingually.

Answer machine messages for service areas recorded bilingually.

There are now Welsh speaking staff working in the Contact Centre.

Meetings - Standards 24, 24A, 27, 27A, 27D, 29 & 29A

These standards are about how we invite individuals to meetings and when we must offer them the opportunity to use the Welsh language. If they so wish, we must then arrange simultaneous translation to facilitate that meeting.

If inviting more than one individual to a meeting they must all be asked if they wish to use the Welsh language. However, if at least 10% wish to use Welsh then simultaneous translation must be arranged. If less than 10%, the Welsh speakers must be informed that on this occasion we are not required to fulfil their request to speak Welsh at the meeting.

If the meeting with the individual is regarding their well-being, and they wish to speak Welsh, then simultaneous translation must be provided so that the individual can speak in their language of choice. Well-being meetings must be conducted with simultaneous translation if any attendee has requested that they use Welsh.

Action taken:

FACTSHEET for staff – Meetings with individuals.

When inviting individuals to a meeting, services are required to include a standard sentence asking their language choice and if they wish to use or conduct the meeting through the medium of Welsh.

Using MS Teams for public meetings which now has the simultaneous translation functionality.

Microsoft Teams: Using Human Language Interpretation guidance shared and available on the Digital workspace for reference.

Public Meetings and Events – Standards 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 & 36

Any advert or notice publicising public meetings/events/activities must state that Welsh can be used.

Any invitations to public meetings/events/activities must be sent in Welsh and English and all material displayed at the public meeting must be bilingual, Welsh first.

Any speakers at public meetings/events/activities must be asked if they wish to use Welsh, and if so simultaneous translation must be arranged. All attendees at public meetings /events/activities must be informed orally that they are welcome to use Welsh and that simultaneous translation is available for the non-Welsh speakers.

Action taken:

FACTSHEET for staff – Public Meetings.

FACTSHEET for staff – Event Planning.

Translation and Interpretation Framework in place since May 2017 for simultaneous translation requests. We are currently working on developing a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) allowing greater flexibility to add new providers at any time.

Using MS Teams for public meetings which now has the simultaneous translation functionality.

Microsoft Teams: Using Human Language Interpretation guidance shared and available on the Digital workspace for reference.

We actively ask people to inform us of their language preference, be it BSL, Welsh or another language, in advance of a public meeting or event, so we can arrange for simultaneous translation to be available.

Agendas, minutes and other public documents – Standards 41 & 47

These Standards relate to producing the following documents in Welsh:

- Agendas and minutes for Cabinet.
- Agendas and minutes for Education for Life Scrutiny and Full Council.

In addition, if a document is produced for public use, and is not caught by any other Standard, it must be produced in Welsh, if the subject matter suggests it should be produced in Welsh, or if the anticipated audience and their expectations suggests that it should be produced in Welsh e.g. Reports relating to Welsh medium education or the Welsh language.

Action taken:

Producing agendas and minutes for Cabinet, Education for Life Scrutiny and Full Council in Welsh is current practice.

Welsh Translation Guidance for Staff reviewed, updated and published on the Digital Workspace for reference.

General Publications – Standards 42, 43, 44, 45, 46 & 47

These Standards relate the following being produced in Welsh if they are for the public or provide information to the public:

Licences, certificates, brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, cards, policies, strategies, annual reports, corporate plans, guidelines, codes of practice or any rules that apply to the public

Any statement that we issue to the press must be bilingual unless the statement is issued during an “emergency” as defined in Section 1 - Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

If a document is produced for public use, and is not caught by any other standard, it must be produced in Welsh if the subject matter suggests it should be produced in Welsh or if the anticipated audience and their expectations suggest that it should be produced in Welsh.

Action taken:

Producing licences, certificates, brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, cards, policies, strategies, annual reports, corporate plans, guidelines, codes of practice or any rules that apply to the public, in Welsh, is already current practice.

Communications Team aware regarding the issuing of public statements.

Welsh Translation Guidance for Staff reviewed, updated and published on the Digital Workspace for reference.

Consultation Documents – Standards 44, 91, 92 & 93

- Consultation documents must be bilingual and must consider and seek views on:
- what the effects, whether positive or negative, the proposal would have on; or

- how the proposal could be developed or revised so that it would not have negative effects, or so that it would have decreased negative effects on:
- opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Action taken:

The Integrated Impact Assessment process includes a specific section on the Welsh language and consultation, and asks if considerations have been given to the Welsh language during the consultation process.

A Welsh Language in Consultation Checklist has been drafted so that all officers undertaking consultation exercises are aware of their obligations. Advice and support is available from the Engagement/Equalities and Welsh Language teams.

Welsh Translation Guidance for Staff reviewed, updated and published on the Digital Workspace for reference.

Website, Social Media and Electronic Devices – Standards 52, 56, 58 & 60

Each page of the Council's website must be bilingual, fully functional with Welsh treated no less favourably than the English pages. The interface and menus on pages must be bilingual.

Any social media accounts, which belong to the Council, must treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Self-service machines must treat Welsh no less favourably e.g. parking ticket machines.

Action taken:

Audit of entire website and its functionality was completed in September 2019.

Staff informed of process for publishing bilingual information on the Council's website.

Social Media Usage Guidance includes a section on the Welsh Language Standards.

Service areas with social media accounts have been asked to acknowledge the requirements to comply. This guidance is currently being revised with the Welsh language section being strengthened to include information on where there are compliance issues currently identified.

Any issues on any webpages are actioned with urgency.

Parking machines give people the option to select language choice.

Audit of corporate social media accounts is ongoing and staff are reminded of compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

The Planning Department's upgraded Public Access platform enables people to search, track and comment on planning applications in English and in Welsh.

A new website is at the final stage of the tendering process. The new website will be accessible and will consider the requirements of relevant Welsh Language Standards.

Welsh Translation Guidance for Staff reviewed, updated and published on the Digital Workspace for reference.

Public Signage – Standards 62, 67, 70, 141, 142 & 143

New and renewed signs must be bilingual and treat Welsh no less favourably than English and the Welsh language must be positioned so it is likely to be read first.

Action taken:

New and renewed signs are compliant.

FACTSHEET – Signage.

All translation work received is returned in the correct format. This is current practice.

Welsh Language Standards Manual for CCBC Works Signage produced in response to the number of service requests received regarding non-compliant works signage. This has been shared with officers and sub-contractors.

Signage developed for Council buildings are designed by the Council's in-house Graphic Design Team, who are fully briefed on the Welsh Language Standards, and who send proofs to the Translation Team prior to the signage being created.

Welsh Translation Guidance for Staff reviewed, updated and published on the Digital Workspace for reference.

Visitors to Buildings – Standards 64, 65, 65A, 67 & 68

A bilingual reception service must be provided at the following Council buildings and the Welsh language must not be treated less favourably than the English language:

- Penallta House
- Bargoed, Risca, Rhymney, Blackwood, Caerphilly and Ystrad Mynach libraries
- Registration Services
- Caerphilly, Heolddu, Newbridge and Risca leisure centres

Signs must be displayed on receptions stating the Welsh language may be used. Welsh speaking staff at receptions must display a badge stating that they can speak Welsh.

Action taken:

Services provided at reception is now by appointment only. Language preference is asked at first contact and a Welsh speaker is made available for the appointment should that be the language preference.

Training programme completed for staff on reception at Penallta House and Contact Centre. Further training being rolled-out along with ongoing support.

Cymraeg Gwaith - 10-hour online course rolled out to staff since September 2018.

All venues listed under Standard 64 have been given the 'laith Gwaith' poster to display in reception areas indicating that a Welsh language service is available.

Information available to staff on the Welsh Language and Equalities page on the Digital Workspace.

All learners and Welsh speakers have received a 'laith Gwaith' lanyard or badge.

Grant Awarding – Standards 71, 72 & 72A

Application forms for grants must be bilingual. Anything published regarding a grant must state that applications may be submitted in Welsh and will not be treated less favourably than the English, this includes timescales set for assessment etc.

Action taken:

FACTSHEET for staff – Grants.

A **Policy on Awarding Grants** was approved by Corporate Management Team in June 2022. This policy was shared with officers who administer grants, and published on the Welsh Language and Equalities page on the Digital Workspace and on the Council's website.

Education Courses – Standards 84 & 86

Education courses must be offered in Welsh unless an assessment under Standard 86 has been carried out.

Action taken:

Asking people if they wish to receive the course in Welsh at registration or enquiry point and then assessing the demand for the course through the medium of Welsh.

Public Address - Standard 87

All public addresses must be bilingual with Welsh first.

Action taken:

Fire Alarm Test and Minute Silence messages are bilingual.

Emergency Evacuation – English Only.

We are working with the Events Team to ensure that all public address messages are bilingual, Welsh first for all events.

Libraries' automated public address messages are fully compliant.

Policy Making – Standards 88, 89 & 90

New, revised or reviewed policies must consider the effect the policy will have on opportunities to use Welsh and must not treat Welsh less favourably.

Action taken:

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been implemented since 1 April 2021 and was developed using the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance on the Policy Making Standards. The impact assessment now requires officers to give more consideration on the impact on the Welsh language when developing proposals and policies.

Welsh Language Commissioner's good practice advice document has been published on the Welsh Language and Equalities page on the intranet for staff to view.

Advice document and recordings of the **Seminar: Considering the effects** have been published on the Council's Intranet and Management Network are aware of this information.

HR Processes – Standards 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 112A, 114, 115, 116, 116A, 118, 119

We must ensure that our recruitment and internal HR processes are available in Welsh, where we ask language preference of applicants and staff, and communicate with them in the language of their choice. For staff this includes any disciplinary, complaints, grievance processes and the availability of certain HR Policies in Welsh.

Action taken:

Please see recruitment update in **Section 6**.

There are a number of HR forms and policies available for staff in Welsh on the HR Portal on the Intranet.

The Equalities and Welsh Language Team already conduct and record one-to-one and Performance Development Reviews (PDR) meetings in Welsh with staff.

Intranet / Internet Pages - Standards 122 & 124

The intranet home page must be bilingual, fully functional and treat Welsh no less favourably. English language pages must state that a corresponding Welsh page is available, with a link if applicable.

Action taken:

A bilingual intranet is in place. Following the launch of our new Digital Workspace for staff, we are in the process of finetuning the pages to ensure that every page is fully accessible in both Welsh and English.

There is a dedicated section on the intranet for Welsh language information for staff to access, regarding the Welsh Language Standards, Welsh language training and information on Welsh translation.

There are a number of HR forms and policies available for staff in Welsh on the HR Portal on the Digital Workspace.

Welsh speaking staff can be identified with the laith Gwaith icon against their names on the people directory.

Welsh Language Training and Staff Communication – Standards 128, 129, 130, 133, 134 & 135

We must provide training in Welsh for staff if it is provided in English on: recruitment, performance management, complaints, disciplinary, induction, dealing with the public, health and safety, on using Welsh in meetings, interviews, complaints and during disciplinary procedures.

Staff must be given opportunities in work hours to receive basic Welsh lessons and, for employees who manage others, to receive training on using Welsh in their role as managers.

We must provide new employees with information on the Welsh language and text or logo for Welsh speaking employees to use in e-mail signatures that indicates they are willing to use Welsh, whether fluently or as a learner.

Welsh language version of contact details in emails and out of office, messages must also be in Welsh.

Action taken:

FACTSHEET for staff – HR.

If any training requests were received, we would work with neighbouring councils to make courses viable.

The annual Welsh language training programme delivered since 2001, offers staff a variety of different courses, including online, self-study, residential, weekly and Welsh Language Awareness courses. 102 learners undertook these courses during 2024-2025.

Information on the Welsh language should be included in HR Induction Packs. The Equalities and Welsh Language Team are currently involved with the development of a new Induction Programme for new starters. They are also in discussion regarding the development of a new learning management system for e-learning, with a view that elements of equalities and Welsh language being essential for all staff to complete.

The Equalities and Welsh Language Team have been involved in the Social Services Induction Programme for new starters in the past.

A new e-learning platform called 'Thinqi' has gone live, with courses available in English and Welsh.

IT has provided all staff with a bilingual auto-signature for all emails.

IT has been unable to pre-populate a bilingual email out of office message, therefore desk stands were created for all staff to raise awareness of the requirement to ensure their out of office messages are bilingual.

Workplace Signage – Standards 141,142 and 143

New and renewed signs must be bilingual and treat Welsh no less favourably than the English and the Welsh language must be positioned so it is likely to be read first.

Action taken:

All public facing signage is bilingual and if new or renewed is produced Welsh first.

Signage developed for Council buildings are designed by the Council's in-house Graphic Design Team, who are fully briefed on the Welsh Language Standards, and who send proofs to the Translation Team prior to the signage being created.

Welsh Language Strategy – Standards 145 & 146

We must produce and publish on the website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how we propose to promote the Welsh language and facilitate its use more widely in the county borough. The Strategy must include –

a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5-year period concerned, and

a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).

Action taken:

The Council's second Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027 was implemented from 1 April 2022. <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/my-council/strategies,-plans-and-policies/equalities/welsh-language-strategy?lang=en-GB>

An action plan has been developed in collaboration with stakeholders, which includes the Council's services areas and key Welsh language organisations, through the Welsh Language Forum, which is coordinated by Menter Iaith Caerffili.

The Forum is working collaboratively with members of the Welsh in Education Forum and the More than just Words Forums to deliver on some key actions in the strategy.

Complaints – Standards 147, 148, 149, 156, 158 (2), 162, 164 (2), 168 (a), 170 (2) (d)

We must keep a record of the number of complaints received which relate to compliance with the Standards.

Action taken:

Reported annually in the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report, which is published on the Council's website by the 30th June every year. See **Section 4 – Complaints from the Public**.

Equalities and Welsh language categories added to complaints system so that we can monitor if any complaints have an equalities or Welsh language element. This will help with annual reporting and to identify trends.

A new Complaints system went live in April 2024, where complaints and service requests across the Council are all held centrally. The new system includes an option to select if Welsh or Equalities are elements of any complaints and service requests. Moving forward this will make it easier to pull down reports to include in statutory on equalities and Welsh language annual reports.

Publicising Compliance – Standards 161, 167, & 163

We must publish on the website a document that states the policy making standards we must comply with and how we do so, and this must be available in each office open to the public.

We must publish on the website a document that states the operational standards we must comply with and how we do so, and this must be available in each office open to the public.

We must have arrangements in place to oversee compliance with the policy making standards, publish the arrangements on the website and make the document available in each office open to the public.

Action taken:

See Caerphilly Council's Compliance Notice Report June 2021 here:

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/my-council/strategies,-plans-and-policies/equalities/welsh-language-standards.aspx?lang=en-GB>

Compliance Notice on website to allow any queries from the public to be dealt with by accessing the internet on their behalf.

Staff Language Skills – Standards 151 & 170 (2) (a)

We must keep a record (following an assessment) of the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of every financial year to include the skill level.

Action taken:

Following correspondence from the Welsh Language Commissioner, and as outlined in our response dated 22 February 2022, a forward work plan has been developed to address a

number of urgent matters relating to recruitment, including compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

A Welsh Language Skills Audit was developed and rolled out in April 2024. We had a 75% return rate, with the data now in the system cleansed so that we are reporting on actual data as the situation is today. Staff can update their Welsh Language Skills data by logging into the HR system (iTrent).

Welsh Language Training – Standards 152, 170 (2) (b) & 170 (2) (c)

We must keep a record of the number of staff that attend training courses through the medium of Welsh and the percentage of the total number of staff who attended a course in Welsh. Please see **Section 5** of this report.

Recruitment – Standards 154, 170 (2) (ch) & 154

We must keep a record of the number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as posts with:

- Welsh language skills essential
- Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post
- Welsh language skills were desirable
- Welsh language skills were not necessary

Action taken:

Staff Language Skills, Welsh Language Training Provision and Recruitment are reported on annually in the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report, which is published on the Council's website by the 30 June every year. See Sections 4, 5 and 6 for details.

2. Promotion

In order to encourage the use of the language in the county borough, we regularly engage in promotion activity with staff and with members of the public. Throughout the year, we choose key dates to take the opportunity to raise awareness of some of the key messages around the Welsh language.

Diwrnod Shwmae / Su'mae

On Shwmae / Su'mae day this year, we shared a video of people from all walks of life across the county borough saying Shwmae to show that it's possible for anyone to start a conversation in Welsh.

One of our residential homes, where staff had recently completed a short 10-hour introduction to Welsh language course, also celebrated the day with a Shwmae selfie frame. They spent the day encouraging staff and residents to start their conversations with Shwmae!

Dydd Santes Dwynwen

On Dydd Santes Dwynwen 2025, we put out social media posts with links explaining the story of Santes Dwynwen and encouraged members of the public to use Welsh language phrases.

St. David's Day

The Council released two social media posts in relation to St. David's Day this year. The first was uploaded the day earlier with a link to the Council's recycling strategy to encourage more people to recycle correctly.

On 1 March, the Council posted a clip of Caerphilly Castle in all its glory with daffodils outside on social media wishing everyone a Happy St. David's Day.

Internally, we also held our Clwb Clebran (Welsh Chat Club) which aims to help learners and fluent speakers use their language skills in the workplace. We invited Menter Iaith Caerffili to the event to discuss opportunities to use Welsh in the wider community, and also invited Coleg Gwent to provide information on upcoming courses including courses for staff to build confidence.

The Equalities and Welsh Language Team visit to Ffos Caerffili

To ensure more Council services are fully compliant with Welsh Language Legislation, the Equalities and Welsh Language Team visited Ffos Caerffili, one of the Council's enterprises, providing some smaller businesses with a marketplace. During the site visit, alongside one of the managers, the team looked at current compliance and what could be done to increase it. Officers took the time to look at the functionality of the app/website on which food and drink is ordered, signage around the site and use of Work Welsh lanyards to provide to the Welsh language speakers working at the venue.

In the coming months, officers will return to the venue to measure the improvements made.

Welsh Language Skills Audit for Staff

In April 2024, the Equalities and Welsh Language Team started an extensive piece of work, working alongside the Workforce Development team, to run an audit of Welsh language skills across all staff, including frontline staff. See **Section 4 – Staff Welsh Language Skills**.

Pride Caerffili

In June 2024, Caerphilly Council hosted Pride Caerffili for the second year in a row.

The event was led by the Equalities and Welsh Language Team, together with a number of council service areas, Councillors and other stakeholders. There was a great emphasis on

the event being bilingual, from the branding, the bilingual working group agendas, and even having two Welsh speaking comperes on the main stage during the event. Whilst the aim of this event was to showcase the talent of the LGBTQ+ community in our area and to show support, it also proved to be an opportunity to show that the Welsh language has a place in the LGBTQ+ community.

National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd

In August 2024, the Council contributed to the Regional Welsh-medium Education Promotion Champion's stall at the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd. On the Monday of the Eisteddfod, the stall was staffed by Council officers, including Early Years staff, the Senior Education Officer and councillors who engaged with parents around the benefits of Welsh-medium education.

On this day, the Equalities and Welsh Language Policy Officer, Geraint Ashton, was also accepted into the Gorsedd of Bards. Caerphilly Council used this as a chance to publish a press release and posts on social to further promote and raise Welsh language awareness in the Council among members of the public. More information is available here:

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/news/news-bulletin/august-2024/ccbc-officer-inaugurated-into-the-gorsedd-of-bards>

Idris Davies School

In February, the Senior Policy Officer and Policy Officer for Equalities and Welsh Language attended a day at Idris Davies School to take part in a carousel event which involved pupils moving from employer to employer, asking questions about the use of the Welsh language and its importance in the workplace.

Caerphilly Youth Service - Welsh Language, Culture & Heritage Policy

In January 2025, the Council's Youth Service launched an exciting new curriculum for all youth centres in the County Borough as part of its newly developed Welsh Language, Culture & Heritage Policy. The policy focuses on implementing the following themes:

- Cultural identity and pride
- Language skills and wider learning
- Inclusivity and Diversity
- Community Engagement and Development

As part of the new initiative, the service has created a curriculum looking at Welsh history including history of the Welsh language, Welsh folklore and traditions. Each youth setting has been entered into a house and complete monthly challenging which will eventually lead to an inter-setting Eisteddfod at the end of the year.

Over the first 3 months (January – March), 80% of 35 youth provisions took part, those that haven't is due to staff sickness, staff shortages or the needs of the groups. This shows the huge success of this innovative initiative.

Welsh Language Statistics 2024-2025

Number of translation requests received.....	4,054
Number of translation requests sent externally.....	61
Number of words translated in-house.....	1,924,756
Number of words translated externally.....	451,321
Number of staff learning Welsh.....	102
Number of Welsh Language Investigations since 2016.....	13

3. Complaints from the Public

Welsh Language Commissioner Investigations

We use this section of the report to detail any Welsh Language Commissioner Investigations. For the duration of 2024-2025, we received no new investigations for the sixth year in succession. The last Investigation received was January 2019.

Members of the public can view the Council's Complaints Procedure for dealing with complaints made through the medium of Welsh via our website using the following link: <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Strategies,-plans-and-policies/Equalities/Welsh-language-Standards>

Complaints and Service Requests

Corporate complaints are those that are due to failure of process or failure to operate Council policy correctly. These are complaints that could ultimately be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman or Welsh Language Commissioner, for example.

Code of conduct issues around staff behaviour or attitude are dealt with via People Services' internal processes. Equalities and Welsh language complaints are however something of a hybrid, in that a failure of process may be as a result of the attitudes or opinions of a staff member towards a particular group for example.

The Council's **Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028** has a specific objective, which commits the Council to use its service requests and complaints data to:

Equality Objective 1 – Service areas respond to all equality related complaints in a timely manner, and learn from them

During 2024-2025, 3 complaints and 4 service requests were received relating to the Welsh language. The 4 service requests were made up of the following:

Detail(s) of Service Request(s)	Resolution
Ffos Caerffili - errors on Welsh signage	Managers of Ffos Caerffili notified and the sign was corrected
Ffos Caerffili - errors on Welsh signage	Managers of Ffos Caerffili notified and the sign was corrected
Email regarding damage to vehicle following Food Festival, having been told by Events Team to park car in a designated area. Made reference to letter received from Events team was in English only and wished for correspondence to be in bilingual in future.	English only correspondence was an oversight. Reassurance given that all future correspondence will be bilingual.
Can the council record language choice for correspondence with residents to save money on printing multiple documents.	Response sent detailing the relevant Standards in the Council's Compliance notice which relate to correspondence and when correspondence must be bilingual.

The 3 complaints were as follows:

Detail(s) of Complaints	Resolution
English version of Winter Maintenance Form completed and complaint that they received an English automated message.	Issue related to user submitting the form in English and then receiving an automated English Only message. Service area advised to change automated message to a bilingual message.
School Admissions form not processed due to it being completed in Welsh. Response was then sent in English only.	Administration error in processing the form. Service area advised to respond to correspondence in the persons preferred language, or as known by correspondence received.
Correspondence sent twice in English only despite form being completed in Welsh online.	This complaint was received on 28.03.2025. At time of reporting the resolution was ongoing.

For the sixth consecutive year, we did not receive any Welsh Language Commissioner Investigations in this financial year. The last Investigation was received in January 2019.

Complaints and Service Requests by Directorate

DIRECTORATE	COMPLAINTS	SERVICE REQUESTS
Economy and Environment	0	3

DIRECTORATE	COMPLAINTS	SERVICE REQUESTS
Education & Corporate Services	3	1
Social Services & Housing	0	0
TOTALS	3	4

4. Staff Language Skills

In April 2024 we rolled out a Welsh Language Skills Survey for all staff to complete. The purpose of this survey, aside from it helping the Council meet its requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Standard 127), is to map Welsh language skills capacity within teams across all services, and to identify Welsh language skills gaps that require support or training.

We are all acutely aware how difficult it is to recruit at the moment, and conducting such an audit would assist us in recording the Welsh language skills of staff to enable us to deliver our services bilingually, when our customers request services in Welsh. There needs to be sufficient capacity to allow us to meet this need.

The data collected has helped to us to identify where our Welsh speaking members of staff work; and whether they wish to receive additional support and/or training. We have been able to assign the laith Gwaith logo against their names on the people directory on the digital Workspace to make it easier to locate a Welsh speaker should a situation arise where one is needed to deal with a call or query in Welsh. The data will also assist managers when undertaking recruitment exercises, using the data to determine whether a post should be advertised as Welsh essential or Welsh desirable.

Whilst the uptake amongst staff was quite low at first, by working with managers and communicating directly with staff, by the end of March 2025, we had received over 3400 responses from across the workforce, not including schools (approx. 75%).

The ability to record Welsh language skills in terms of staff data and analysis is an integral part of the payroll system within Caerphilly County Borough Council. Financial year-end figures to 31 March 2025 are shown below. The skills levels are measured in accordance with the language skills guidelines provided by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). These levels also align with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Welsh courses delivered to staff.

Below, you will see details of the language skills of staff per service area which follows the CEFR grading, C2 being the most proficient.

C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0
Proficient	Advanced	Upper Intermediate	Intermediate	Elementary	Beginner	No Knowledge

LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF WORKFORCE - WELSH LANGUAGE ABILITY BY SERVICE AREA AND FLUENCY AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

i) OVERALL STAFF FIGURES 2023-2024 COMPARED WITH 2024-2025

Economy and Environment – Totals for 2023-2024	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Infrastructure	928	125	13.46
Property Services	63	20	31.74
Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services	781	205	26.24
Regeneration & Planning	350	70	20.0
Total	2099	417	19.86

Economy and Environment – Totals for 2024-2025	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Infrastructure	934	106	11.34
Property Services	57	20	35.08
Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services	725	206	28.41
Regeneration & Planning	274	104	37.95
Total	1973	429	21.74

Education & Corporate Services – Totals for 2023-2024	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Corporate Finance	167	25	14.97
Customer & Digital Services	150	43	28.66
Learning Education & Inclusion	483	114	23.60
Legal & Governance	67	17	25.37
People Services	112	36	32.14
Schools	3310	1166	35.22
Transformation Services	870	196	22.52
Total	4935	1538	31.16

Education & Corporate Services – Totals for 2024-2025	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Financial Services	167	59	35.32
Customer & Digital Services	149	67	44.96
Learning Education & Inclusion	501	266	53.09
Legal & Governance	66	24	36.36
People Services	111	60	54.05
Schools*	3277	52	1.58
Transformation Services	838	128	15.27

Total	4867	623	12.80
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*This year's Welsh Language Skills Audit did not include schools, resulting in the absence of data regarding school staff members. Consequently, the reported number of Welsh speakers appears significantly lower than the actual figure. We therefore intend to run the Audit for school-based staff during 2025-2026.

Social Services & Housing – Totals for 2023-2024	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Adult Services	1073	148	13.79
Caerphilly Cares	34	9	26.47
Caerphilly Homes	537	78	14.52
Children Services	337	114	33.82
Joint Workforce Development Team	2	0	0.0
Total	1974	349	17.67

Social Services & Housing – Totals for 2024-2025	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Adult Services	1061	240	22.62
Caerphilly Cares	33	16	48.48
Caerphilly Homes	550	131	23.81
Children Services	349	185	53.00
Joint Workforce Development Team	2	1	50.00
Total	1992	571	28.66

NOTES

The figures per service area for **Total Staff** and **Welsh Speakers** do not equal the overall total per Directorate due to some members of staff having more than one post within the organisation and those posts are within different service areas.

As with previous reports, the figures in **4i)** above are the total number of people per directorate who have completed the Linguistic Skills form noting Welsh Language skills.

The figures shown in **4ii)** to **4iv)** that follow refer to levels of fluency of Welsh speakers per service area and cannot be compared directly with the totals shown in **4i)** because for example, in Corporate Finance (the second section below in **4ii)** the "Level 4" column refers to a staff member who can read, speak, understand and write at Level 4, not 3 different members of staff.

ii) Economy and Environment

Infrastructure	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	7	6	3	3	8	65	14	0

Infrastructure	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Speaking	5	2	6	5	9	60	19	0
Reading	9	4	2	5	12	58	15	1
Writing	6	2	5	5	8	40	39	1
Total Staff	106							

Land and Property Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	0	0	0	0	1	10	9	0
Speaking	0	0	0	0	1	16	3	0
Reading	0	0	0	0	3	12	5	0
Writing	0	0	0	0	1	5	14	0
Total Staff	20							

Public Protection Community & Leisure Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	13	9	11	11	21	113	28	0
Speaking	8	3	12	13	29	118	23	0
Reading	14	4	12	15	29	109	23	0
Writing	7	3	10	15	28	72	71	0
Total Staff	206							

Regeneration & Planning	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	3	1	3	8	13	63	13	0
Speaking	2	1	4	5	15	59	18	0
Reading	2	2	4	8	16	59	13	0
Writing	1	1	3	5	15	38	41	0
Total Staff	104							

iii) Social Services and Housing

Adult Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	11	6	4	10	18	147	44	0
Speaking	4	4	9	7	25	157	33	1
Reading	11	5	3	12	13	147	49	0
Writing	4	3	10	7	12	80	124	0
Total staff	240							

Caerphilly Cares	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	0	2	0	0	1	9	4	0
Speaking	1	0	1	0	0	9	5	0
Reading	1	1	0	0	1	12	1	0
Writing	1	0	1	0	0	5	9	0
Total staff	16							

Caerphilly Homes	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	4	6	4	4	6	70	37	0
Speaking	2	0	6	7	10	81	25	0
Reading	3	5	2	8	9	81	23	0
Writing	1	1	3	7	12	47	60	0
Total staff	131							

Children Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	7	6	6	6	15	120	25	0
Speaking	3	4	9	5	19	123	22	0
Reading	4	7	7	8	16	110	32	1
Writing	4	1	4	11	15	67	83	0
Total staff	185							

Joint Workforce Development Team	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Speaking	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Reading	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Writing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total staff	1							

iv) Education and Corporate Services

Financial Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	2	1	1	3	3	33	16	0
Speaking	0	2	2	3	5	32	15	0
Reading	2	1	1	6	2	42	5	0
Writing	2	0	2	2	3	16	34	0
Total staff	59							

Customer & Digital Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	1	4	2	1	6	37	16	0
Speaking	1	2	3	1	8	39	13	0
Reading	1	2	3	2	8	43	8	0
Writing	1	1	2	3	4	24	32	0
Total staff	67							

Learning Education & Inclusion	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	22	5	6	17	27	162	26	1
Speaking	16	4	10	11	30	173	21	1
Reading	19	8	7	15	28	154	34	1
Writing	14	3	8	14	22	107	97	1
Total staff	266							

Legal Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	1	0	2	2	4	10	5	0
Speaking	0	1	0	4	5	11	3	0
Reading	1	0	1	4	4	12	2	0
Writing	0	1	0	2	7	4	10	0
Total staff	24							

People Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	1	1	1	4	4	37	12	0
Speaking	0	1	2	2	7	35	13	0
Reading	1	1	1	4	6	40	7	0
Writing	0	0	1	1	7	22	29	0
Total staff	60							

Schools	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	6	2	2	2	10	25	5	0
Speaking	5	1	2	2	11	29	2	0
Reading	6	2	1	2	11	25	5	0
Writing	3	2	3	2	8	19	15	0
Total staff	52							

Transformation Services	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0	Undisclosed
Listening	11	2	2	10	14	75	14	0
Speaking	9	2	2	10	14	77	14	0
Reading	9	4	0	11	18	69	17	0
Writing	9	3	1	7	13	51	44	0
Total staff	128							

5. Welsh Medium Training Provision

Caerphilly Council has provided conversational Welsh courses for staff and elected members since 2001. Courses are also accessible to members of the public and staff members from partner organisations to attend. The courses range from basic taster courses for beginners to courses which cater for those who are now fluent Welsh speakers. During the initial lockdown, all courses moved to being held online; this in turn has led to the majority of lessons continuing to be held online, with a small number of staff attending lessons in person.

We run in-house training sessions including taster courses for staff which range from pronunciation of local place names and job titles to basic greetings including likes and dislikes.

The data for the Welsh courses offered and attended by Caerphilly CBC staff for the academic year 2024-2025 is as follows:

COURSE OFFERED	NUMBER OF STAFF ATTENDING
Taster Courses (including 10 hour sessions)	58
Entry Level Year Courses	24
Foundation Level Year Courses	10
Intermediate Level Year Courses	4
Advanced Level Year Courses	4
Proficiency Courses	2
Withdrawn	0

Caerphilly Council is proud to support staff in a wide range of Welsh language courses via the Learn Welsh website. Courses include year-long courses, lasting between 30 and 32 weeks; online courses, 10-hour self-study modules; summer and residential schools; and taster and supplementary courses, each ranging from Entry Level to Proficiency level.

Caerphilly Council Staff Figures – 2018-2025

Academic Year	Year courses	Taster and Supplementary Courses	Total Number of Learners	(Numbers withdrawn)
2018 – 2019	53	91	144	(6)
2019 – 2020	62	185	247	(0)
2020 – 2021	27	219	246	(2)
2021 – 2022	35	-	35	(1)
2022 – 2023	50	11	61	(5)
2023 – 2024	41	55	96	(4)
2024 – 2025	44	58	102	(0)
TOTALS	312	619	907	(18)

The overall number of staff learning Welsh increased during this financial year to 102 from 96 last year.

Working closely with the National Learn Welsh centre, staff can start a Welsh course at any point during the academic year, and as noted, above courses vary in delivery style and location. Some staff have even followed intensive week-long courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn on the Llŷn Peninsula. Two members of staff from the Early Years department studied an intensive, one-week course there this year and have now been inspired to continue learning with a 32-week course.

To further encourage staff to attend courses, we hold a ‘Clwb Clebran’ (chat club) for Welsh learners and speakers, to come together and to create a welcoming environment for staff to use their Welsh language skills. The network of staff support each other in the workplace, and help develop Welsh language skills for the workplace.

No requests from staff were received for Welsh Language Awareness courses to be delivered in 2024-25, there are no staff training figures recorded.

However, in March 2025, a new Learning Management System (Thinqi) was released to the first phase of staff and provides access to an interactive e-learning module on Welsh Language Awareness to all staff. Moving forward, we will be able to report on the amount of staff completing this interactive module along with staff numbers completing further Welsh Language Awareness in person or on MS Teams where there is demand.

This course must be provided for staff in line with Standard 132:

You must provide training courses so that your employees can develop – awareness of the Welsh language (including awareness of its history and its role in Welsh culture); an understanding of the duty to operate in accordance with the Welsh language standards; an understanding of how the Welsh language can be used in the workplace.

The Welsh Language Awareness courses can be very effective in changing attitudes and explore the following points:

- Why do we need to give attention to the Welsh language?
- What do we need to know about the language and its speakers?
- How can we act in a way that facilitates the use of the Welsh language?

In previous years, members of staff have highly recommended the course, noting:

“[The course was] Very insightful and aimed in the right way to all who attended both those who have some understanding and those who have little or no understanding of the language. Thoroughly enjoyed this session and has made me want to learn more.”

In accordance with Standard 128, the council must provide training to staff through the medium of Welsh in the following areas:

You must provide training in Welsh in the following areas, if you provide such training in English –

- (a) recruitment and interviewing;
- (b) performance management;
- (c) complaints and disciplinary procedures;

- (d) induction;
- (e) dealing with the public; and
- (f) health and safety.

No requests from staff were received for any of the above listed courses to be delivered through the medium of Welsh, therefore there are no staff training figures recorded. The above information is published here to provide continuity with previous reports.

We did however offer staff working in Social Service and Social Care courses on Awareness of the Active Offer; and More Than Just Words and Making the Active Offer.

Welsh Government have a strategic framework in place aimed at strengthening Welsh language services within health, social services and social care. The “More than just words” strategy emphasises that the Welsh language is not just an add-on and nice to have, but an integral part of quality care. The framework aims to ensure Welsh speakers’ language needs are met and to demonstrate the importance of the language in providing good quality care.

Awareness of the Active Offer

This training course covers:

An awareness of Welsh history, policy, legislation, and frameworks of the Welsh language.

Summarise the More than Just Words Strategic Framework & Active Offer

Identify the roles and responsibilities of all workers within the organisation can play in making sure the Active Offer is Implemented.

Discuss the impact working bilingually using Welsh can make for individuals and families supported by care.

Demonstrate how introducing the Welsh language and culture can be introduced in everyday work when assessing or supporting people in the Social Care Sector.

Outline resources available to support people in learning Welsh.

Target Audience:

Anyone who works with individuals and families or CYP following the initial assessment – example roles include Domiciliary Care Workers, Residential Workers, Day Support Staff, if you work in support services.

During 2024-2025 82 members of staff completed this training.

More Than Just Words and Making the Active Offer

This training course covers exactly the same as the Awareness of the Active Offer, but is aimed at a different target audience such as, those who have responsibility for completing the initial assessment or are a supervisor or manager of others - example roles include Social Worker, Team Leader, IAA, Manager.

During 2024-2025 136 members of staff completed this training.

6. Recruiting to Empty Posts

A total of **710** new and vacant posts advertised since 31st March 2024 were categorised as posts where:

- (i) Welsh language skills were essential - **6**
- (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post - **18**

Welsh language training courses have been available to all staff and elected members free of charge since the 2001-2002 (see Section 5)

- (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable - **686**
- (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary - **0**

The Welsh Language Skills Assessments in relation to vacant or new posts are undertaken as required by Standard 136, and have been recorded by Human Resources since October 2016. The assessment and supporting evidence then forms part of the business case that is required to gain permission to fill a vacant post or create a new one. See Section 4 – Staff Language Skills.

A Welsh Language Skills Assessment is completed for all vacant or new posts, which are advertised as Welsh desirable as a standard requirement. The assessment undertaken determines whether any new or vacant posts should be advertised as Welsh essential, in accordance with the job role and contact with the public.