

## CABINET

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday, 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
<b>Report Subject</b>	Welsh Language Annual Report 2016/17
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has a statutory duty to publish an annual report setting out how it has met the Welsh Language Standards (WLS). The WLS with which the Council has to comply are set out in a Compliance Notice, these Notices are unique to each organisation and specify what the organisations are expected to do and deliver in Welsh and by when they are required to comply.

This report provides an overview of the Welsh Language Annual Report, progress being made to comply with the Standards and identifies areas for improvement.

Flintshire County Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2016/17 is attached as an Appendix. This is the Council's second report on meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. It includes data specified in the Compliance Notice and actions that have been taken to meet the Standards.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To agree the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring report for the period 2016/17, attached as an Appendix.
2	Note progress being made to implement the Welsh Language Standards and areas for improvement.

## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT
1.01	<p>The Welsh Language Measure (Wales) Measure 2011 enables the Welsh Ministers to specify Standards relating to the Welsh language. The aim of the Standards is to continue and develop the work of the former Welsh Language Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• improving the services Welsh speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh</li><li>• increasing the use people make of Welsh language services</li><li>• making it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language</li><li>• ensuring that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.</li></ul>
1.02	<p>The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) served Compliance Notices on each of the 22 local authorities in Wales in September 2015 identifying the Standards with which they must comply.</p> <p>The first set of Standards needed to be met by 30 March 2016. Compliance Notices are unique to each organisation reflecting the linguistic profile of the local community and organisational capacity to meet the Standards.</p> <p>The WLC has the powers to investigate and take action against those organisations who fail to comply with the Standards. This includes imposing financial penalties for non-compliance.</p>
1.03	<p>The Compliance Notice for Flintshire County Council sets out 171 Standards; the majority of the Standards are consistent with the commitments in the Council's former Welsh Language Scheme.</p>
1.04	<p>The Council is required to publish a Welsh Language Annual Report to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Standards 158, 164 and 170). The report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The number of employees who have Welsh language skills</li><li>• The number and % of employees who attended training through the medium of Welsh</li><li>• The number of posts advertised as :<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Welsh essential</li><li>○ Welsh desirable</li><li>○ Welsh skills not necessary</li><li>○ Requirement to learn Welsh</li></ul></li><li>• The number of complaints received relating to compliance with the Operational Standards, Policy Making Standards and Service Delivery Standards</li><li>• Information on how the Council has complied with the Standards.</li></ul> <p>Progress against these requirements is covered in the next paragraph.</p>

1.05	<p><b>Progress and areas for improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services are implementing the “More than Just Words Framework” which places them in a stable position to comply with the Standards and deliver bilingual services.</li> <li>• The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is being updated and is an important strategy for increasing the number of pupils learning through the medium of Welsh and, over time, the pool of potential Welsh speaking employees.</li> <li>• As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, just over 82% of employees have completed the Welsh language skills audit, compared to 40% on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2016. Completion of the audit provides baseline data to inform a strategy for managers to plan how they will deliver bilingual services. Further initiatives to increase the response rate to the audit will be introduced over the next 12 months.</li> <li>• The results of the Welsh language skills audit show that less than 4% of employees are fluent Welsh speakers and approximately 37% employees have no Welsh skills. This profile will need to develop over time to increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and reduce the number of employees without any knowledge of the Welsh language. This will support the Council to deliver bilingual services and meet the needs of Welsh speaking customers.</li> <li>• An increased number of employees are attending Welsh language training compared to 2015/16, however it can take up to seven years before a Welsh learner becomes fluent. Welsh Government are working with adult education providers to modernise Welsh for Workplace training.</li> <li>• HR are also reviewing the recruitment and selection processes to attract more Welsh speaking job applicants, including advertising jobs in Welsh media.</li> <li>• An increase in the number of employees completing the Welsh language awareness training is encouraged (available on Flintshire Academi at Learning Pool). This aims to show the link between Welsh language, good customer care and high quality services. It is a valuable aid to support employees in understanding why offering Welsh language services should be embedded in how we work.</li> </ul>
1.06	<p>There have been 16 complaints relating to Welsh language during 2016/17 compared to three complaints during 2015/16. They related to potential breaches of 17 Standards and concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• failure to offer an education course through the medium of Welsh</li> <li>• misspelling on signs – (three complaints)</li> <li>• information - signage, posters and forms - available in English only (five complaints)</li> <li>• correspondence- English only correspondence (three complaints)</li> <li>• website and social media – (two complaints)</li> <li>• self- service machines not being available in Welsh</li> <li>• telephony- time taken to respond to callers ringing Welsh telephone lines</li> </ul> <p>Of these, nine complaints were investigated by the Welsh Language Commissioner, with a further two currently being investigated. The</p>

	Commissioner has found the Council to be in breach of eight Standards and has chosen not to fine the Council but has served enforcement notices and made one recommendation to include S4C as a TV channel choice within Deeside Leisure Centre.
1.07	A series of “workforce news” items, including Frequently Asked Questions, were circulated to assist managers and employees awareness of the changes and the new Standards. A page dedicated to the Standards is on the intranet with resources to support employees. Further “workforce news” items and initiatives to raise awareness are planned to remind employees of the Standards with which they should be already complying.
1.08	<p>The Welsh Language Standards require the Council to produce two new documents:</p> <p>i) a five year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. The purpose of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy is to raise the visibility and profile of the Welsh language and maintain or increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county. The strategy will be closely linked with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</p> <p>ii) and a policy for Welsh in the Workplace.</p> <p>Both policy documents are in preparation and will be presented to Cabinet for approval in the autumn.</p>
1.09	To ensure that the reporting timeframe for the Welsh Language Annual Report can be met, a limited number of specific actions and measures will be developed around completion of the Welsh language skills audit and incorporated into CAMMS (the Council’s integrated performance management system). This will facilitate effective and efficient reporting for services in the future.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	It is difficult to estimate the full financial cost of implementing the Standards. There will be an increased use of interpretation and translation services to meet many of the Standards and meet the needs of Welsh speaking customers and employees. Non - compliance with individual Standards may result in the Commissioner imposing financial penalties on the Council. Continual breaches by services may have a significant cumulative financial impact on the Council.
2.02	There are training implications for employees. Both Welsh language skills training and Welsh language awareness training is provided. The numbers accessing Welsh language awareness training needs to be increased. Managers need to ensure that employees comply with the Standards and are aware of their responsibilities.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Key officers throughout the Council have been asked to contribute to the annual report.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	<p>Meeting the Standards will promote equality for Welsh speakers in service delivery and for Council Welsh speaking employees. They will ensure that the Council considers the impact of policies and decisions on both Welsh speakers and the Welsh language to promote positive impact and eliminate/reduce negative impact.</p> <p>Actions are being taken as described in the body of the report to ensure that awareness of the Standards and their compliance is supported.</p>

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Welsh Language Annual Report 2016/17.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p><a href="#">Compliance Notice</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702122  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk">fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<p><b>CAMMS:</b> an integrated planning, risk management and programme/project management and reporting system.</p> <p><b>Compliance Notice:</b> specifies the exact standards that each organisation should have to comply with and also the date by which they are required to comply with a standard.</p> <p><b>Flintshire Academi:</b> Flintshire County Council's learning and development intranet pages.</p> <p><b>Learning Pool:</b> web based e-learning management resource which hosts the Council's e-learning modules.</p> <p><b>More Than Just Words Framework:</b> Welsh Government Framework to strengthen Welsh language services in health, social services and social</p>

care.

**Welsh In Education Strategic Plan:** the Council's plan setting out how it will support, expand and promote Welsh-medium education within the whole community, increasing the number and percentage of pupils receiving Welsh-medium education in compliance with the Welsh Government's 'Welsh-Medium Education Strategy' of developing learners who are fully bilingual.

**Welsh Language Measure: Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011:** confirms the official status of Welsh, creates a new system of placing duties on bodies to provide services through the medium of Welsh and creating the post of Language Commissioner with enforcement powers.

**Welsh Language Scheme:** previous policy stating the Council's commitment to the Welsh language, this includes an action plan setting out how it plans to deliver bilingual services. The Standards have replaced Schemes.

**Welsh Language Standards:** specific standards of conduct in relation to the Welsh language.