



# Flintshire County Council

## Welsh in the Workplace Policy

Policy owner for review	Strategic Policy Advisor
Date implemented	
Date of last amendment	
Version	
Date of next review	October 2021



## Welsh in the Workplace policy

The policy applies to all Flintshire County Council employees and will support the Council to meet its statutory duties as set out in the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice.

Welsh language is an important part of Flintshire's cultural identity, it is part of our heritage and our future. We have recognised the importance of offering language choice to our customers and are committed to treating the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. We provide services to the most vulnerable people in our communities, where accessing services in an individual's first language is especially important. The use of the Welsh language is as valid internally as it is in the conduct of our public business. Encouraging a culture which values and supports the use of Welsh internally will contribute towards the delivery of high quality services in both Welsh and English.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- i) promote positive attitudes and encourage employees to take pride in the Welsh language and Welsh culture.
- ii) increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and provide opportunities for employees who are already fluent Welsh speakers and those who are learning to use Welsh both in work and at work.
- iii) encourage a bilingual working environment in which employees have the freedom and support to work through the medium of Welsh.

The policy applies to employees, volunteers and elected members.

### To promote positive attitudes and encourage our workforce to take pride in the Welsh language and Welsh culture

- Celebrate the achievements of Welsh learners by awarding "Welsh learner of the year" as part of Flintshire Learning and Development Awards
- Provide a section on the Infonet to promote Welsh culture and resources to support learners and promote the use of Welsh in the workplace and externally.
- A "bilingual day of the week" will be promoted to encourage employees to use Welsh, whatever their level, in the workplace.
- Shwmae/Su'mae day, St David's day and other events in the Welsh calendar will be celebrated at work and in the community.
- Promote the role of the Welsh Language Network and develop an action plan to progress their work.
- Essential criteria on posts that are not assessed as Welsh essential will include a standard requirement: **Empathy with the Welsh Language and culture.**



**To increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and provide opportunities for employees who are already fluent Welsh speakers and Welsh learners to use Welsh both in work and at work**

**Recruitment**

- The language requirements of new and existing posts will be assessed and records maintained of that assessment.
- Welsh language will be seen as a valuable skill in recruitment and this will be promoted on the Council website and in job advertisements.
- Job vacancies will be advertised bilingually and Welsh essential jobs will be advertised through Welsh media.
- Applicants for jobs will be able to submit their application in Welsh and choose to use Welsh during interviews.
- Apprentices will be expected to attend Welsh language skills training.

**New Employees**

- Employee induction will include Welsh Language awareness training.
- New employees who do not have any Welsh skills will attend a one day Welsh in the Workplace courses as part of their induction, to equip them with basic Welsh skills.
- New employees will be asked whether they would like their contract to be provided in Welsh and managers will make arrangements for contracts to be available in Welsh.

**Existing Employees**

- The Council will provide “Panad a Sgwrs” at locations around the county offering the opportunity for Welsh speakers and learners to use their Welsh language skills in a supportive environment outside of formal learning sessions.
- The range of Welsh language training courses available will be actively promoted and actively encouraged.
- Employees will update their Welsh language skills assessment as part of the appraisal process. Managers will provide paper copies of the assessment for employees who do not have access to iTrent.
- Assessment of the need for Welsh language skills training will be undertaken during appraisal.
- The annual audit of Welsh language skills will be used to develop a Welsh language skills training strategy.
- Managers will be supportive of employees who request Welsh language training. Employees will be given time to attend Welsh language training as they would with other work related training.
- Managers will keep a record of employees who wish to receive personally addressed business correspondence in Welsh.
- Language choice (English/Welsh) will be available for employees when dealing with employment related matters, this includes correspondence and meetings relating to complaints and disciplinary investigations.
- All employees will be provided with access to Cysill and Cysgeir, Welsh grammar, spell checker and dictionary software.



- The principle of the “Active Offer” will be implemented across all Council services.
- Employees in public facing posts will be supported to attend Welsh language skills training.

### To encourage a bilingual working environment in which employees have the freedom and support to work through the medium of Welsh

- All training courses for employees provided or commissioned by the Council will be opened and closed bilingually.
- The Council power point presentation template will include bilingual phrases to open and close events.
- Employees will be encouraged to use bilingual presentations
- Meetings will be opened and closed bilingually (Phrases for meetings are set out in Appendix 1).
- Every Welsh speaking employee will be given lanyards and badges to show they are Welsh speakers and employees will be encouraged to invite correspondence in Welsh (via e-mail signature).
- All signs and notices in Council offices, depots and other buildings will be bilingual - Welsh must be positioned to be read first, i.e. to the left or above the English.
- The home page of the Infonet will be available in English and Welsh.
- Email signatures and out of office messages (internal and external) will be bilingual.
- Email addresses will highlight whether the individual speaks Welsh or is learning Welsh by using the Iaith Gwaith email footer.
- Employees will be able to receive documents relating to appraisal, annual leave, absences and flexible working in Welsh, if they so wish.
- Specific HR Policies as required by the Welsh Language Standards will be published in Welsh on the Infonet.
- Training in Welsh will be available on:
  - Recruitment;
  - Performance management;
  - Induction;
  - Dealing with the public; and
  - Health and safety
- Training will be provided in Welsh on using Welsh effectively in:
  - Meetings;
  - Interviews; and
  - Complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Managers will receive training on using Welsh language in their role.



## **Implementation**

The successful implementation of the policy lies with every individual and managers taking personal responsibility in the practical application of this policy. Further information providing guidance with the Welsh Language Standards in employment and service delivery is available on the Infonet. The policy will be implemented as part of the Council's Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is consistent with the Welsh Language Standards and current legislation. Actions and measures have been incorporated within the Council's performance management system and progress will reported to Cabinet annually and as when needed. A report describing progress to meeting the Welsh Language Standards will be published annually; information will include:

- The number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as posts where:
  - i) Welsh language skills were essential
  - ii) Welsh needed to be learnt when appointed
  - iii) Welsh desirable
  - iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary
- Number and percentage of employees who have completed the Welsh language skills audit.
- Profile of Welsh language skills of employees.
- Number of employees attending Welsh language skills training by level of training.
- Number and percentage of employees who have completed the Welsh language awareness e-learning training.
- Number of employees who attended courses through the medium of Welsh.

Progress will be monitored through the Chief Officer Team, Cabinet and relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

## **Appendix 1**



## Useful phrases for meetings

<b>Croeso'r i'r cyfarfod</b>	Welcome to the meeting
<b>Ymddiheuriadau</b>	Apologies
<b>Gai' i gyflwyno...?</b>	May I introduce...?
<b>Dan ni wedi derbyn ymddiheuriadau gan...</b>	We have received apologies from...
<b>Gadewch i ni fynd trwy gofnodion y cyfarfod diwethaf</b>	Let's go through the minutes of the last meeting
<b>Oes' na faterion yn codi?</b>	Are there any matters arising?
<b>Yr eitem cyntaf ar y agenda...</b>	The first item on the agenda
<b>The first item on the agenda</b>	The next item
<b>Gohebiaeth</b>	Correspondence
<b>Adroddiadau</b>	Reports
<b>Diolch am yr adroddiad</b>	Thanks for the report
<b>Unrhyw fater arall</b>	Any other business
<b>Oes gennoch chi gwestiynnau?</b>	Do you have questions?
<b>Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesa'</b>	Date of next meeting
<b>Diolch i chi am ddod</b>	Thank you for coming