

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th February 2022
Report Subject	Welsh in Education Strategic 10 Year Plan 2022-2032
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been developed to provide Members with an overview of the draft plan for the next Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) which will run from September 2022 until 2032.

Flintshire County Council believes that the Welsh Language belongs to everyone. The Welsh Education Strategic Plan in Flintshire is a long-term strategic tool for us to contribute our part in the country-wide goal of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Flintshire County Council is committed to increasing the number of those speaking Welsh within the wider community, with the aim of creating an increasingly bilingual county and country.

The well-established Flintshire Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Forum works closely with its partners to challenge, support and monitor developments in Flintshire's Welsh medium strategy. The Forum is a vibrant body that celebrates innovative actions to support the Welsh language and Welsh medium education in Flintshire but also challenges the Council and other partners to be ambitious in its vision for the future.

The first ten year Plan will commence on 1 September 2022 and expire on 31 August 2032. Each further Plan will commence on 1 September in the year during which the previous ten year Plan will come to an end i.e. 1 September 2032 to 31 August 2042 etc. The Plan must include a target outlining the expected increase in the number of Year 1 learners taught through the medium of Welsh in the local authority area during the lifespan of the Plan.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 were amended. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations") came into force on 1 December, 2020. These delayed the start date of the next

WESP cycle from 1 September 2021 to September 2022. The current Flintshire WESP cycle (2017 - 2021) was therefore extended by one year and will conclude by September 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet considers the feedback on the consultation for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 and approves the Plan for implementation by the Council, subject to approval by Welsh Ministers.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP)
1.01	<p>The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is made under Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the content complies with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019.</p> <p>A Plan must contain:</p> <p>a. A local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh ("Welsh-medium education") in its area; ii. Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area; <p>b. The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area;</p> <p>c. Report on the progress made to meet the targets contained in the previous Plan or previous revised Plan.</p> <p>Section 85 of the 2013 Act requires each local authority to submit its Plan to Welsh Ministers for approval.</p> <p>The Welsh Ministers may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approve the Plan as submitted, • approve the Plan with modifications, or • reject the Plan and prepare another Plan which is to be treated as the authority's approved Plan.
1.02	The seven outcomes of the Plan set by Welsh Government are:

	<p>Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.</p> <p>Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.</p> <p>Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.</p> <p>Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.</p>
1.03	<p>Welsh Strategic Forum:</p> <p>Flintshire County Council has a well-established and effective Welsh Strategic Forum. This meets termly, with work programmes developed through its three sub-groups (Provision, Standards and Workforce).</p> <p>The Forum's remit is to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support council officers to develop the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which includes challenging targets and performance measures to achieve success. • Monitor the implementation of the WESP and evaluate success in achieving its objectives. • Ensure appropriate cross-referencing is made to other plans and strategies – locally, regionally and nationally as determined by Welsh Government regulatory requirements. • Provide support and challenge to all partners on the implementation of the WESP particularly schools including workforce and governors. • Provide good quality Welsh-medium education provision which is strongly advertised to parents/carers to encourage high level of take up. • Provide feedback to the Council's leadership and elected members on the priorities within the WESP through the appropriate means e.g. Cabinet and Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with relevant bodies and partners, including neighbouring local authorities, to improve the success of the WESP in achieving its objectives. • Work with the five other Councils identified by Welsh Government as being within Group 4 to achieve the WESP targets. • Provide a forum for information sharing and the dissemination of best practice. • Reach out to other authority WESP Forum groups to support/challenge each other by sharing good practice and investigating common challenges. 			
1.04	<p>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Ten Year Targets</p> <p>The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) 2019 Regulations make provisions requiring a local authority to design their plans on the basis of a target. The Council is therefore required to set a ten year target outlining the expected increase in Year 1 children who are taught through the medium of Welsh in Flintshire.</p> <p>Councils have been grouped by Welsh Government into different categories reflecting the current similarities and differences between the 22 local authorities in Wales. The factors considered when grouping included the percentage of learners taught in Welsh in an area; the models of Welsh-medium education provision adopted and the linguistic nature of the area. For this purpose Flintshire has been placed in Group 4.</p> <p>The Definition of Group 4 is:</p> <p>Group 4: 12% or fewer of Year 1 children in these local authorities were being taught through the medium of Welsh in 2017/18. There is a choice between Welsh-medium education and English-medium education in these local authorities.</p>			
1.05	<p>Flintshire Ten Year Target:</p> <p>Welsh Government has established a lower range and an upper range target for Flintshire. This represents a 6 percentage point increase (lower range) and 10 percentage point increase (upper range) in the number of Year 1 pupils being taught through the medium of Welsh. Whilst the lower range is the minimum to be achieved, the upper range should not be treated as a maximum.</p> <p>We will need to look to increase the number of Year 1 pupils being taught through the medium of Welsh to between 225 and 295 pupils over the ten years of this Plan.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1951 1385 2056"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1951 699 2056">2019/2020</td> <td data-bbox="699 1951 1070 2056">2031/2032 Target Lower Range</td> <td data-bbox="1070 1951 1385 2056">2031/2032 Target Upper Range</td> </tr> </table>	2019/2020	2031/2032 Target Lower Range	2031/2032 Target Upper Range
2019/2020	2031/2032 Target Lower Range	2031/2032 Target Upper Range		

	Number of year 1 pupils = 105	225	295
	Percentage (%) of year 1 cohort = 6	13%	17%
1.06	<p>'Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers' introduces the Welsh Government's long-term vision for a Wales where the Welsh language thrives. The strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of Welsh speakers to 1 million by 2050 and, • ensure that the percentage of the population that speak Welsh daily, and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, increase from 10 per cent (in 2013–5) to 20 per cent by 2050. <p>The strategy focuses on three themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the number of Welsh speakers • increasing the use of Welsh • creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context <p>The statutory education system has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers. We must increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in school and the opportunity to use it in their everyday lives, significantly, to achieve our goals.</p>		

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>The Education and Youth Portfolio leads the management of the WESP and it sits within the remit of School Improvement. Core budget is allocated to support this work. The team of Welsh Advisory teachers play an essential role in supporting the delivery of the WESP objectives and will continue to have a key role in supporting the Council to meet the requirements of this new ten year plan.</p> <p>Capital Investment - the capital programme for the expansion of Welsh medium provision will be included in a future report on School Modernisation later in the Scrutiny cycle.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>The Education Portfolio maintains a detailed risk register including the an identified risk in relation to the WESP: The risk is defined as: <i>'Failure to meet the statutory targets in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan due to insufficient parental take up of Welsh medium education'</i>.</p> <p>The current risk rating is Amber and the target risk rating for the end of the 10 year plan period is Yellow.</p>

	The risk register is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Portfolio's Senior Management Team and is reported on regularly to the Council's Recovery Committee and to Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	
3.02	A draft integrated impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The final integrated impact assessment will be completed once feedback on the WESP is received from Welsh Government and ahead of implementation in September 2022.	
3.03	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	Positive – increases number of Welsh speakers and protects the language
	Prevention	No change
	Integration	Positive – encourages people to use their Welsh language skills within their communities
	Collaboration	Positive – WESP actively encourages partnership working between key stakeholders to achieve the Plan's targets/outcomes
	Involvement	Positive – WESP actively involves a wide range of partners and stakeholders who are committed to supporting the Welsh language
3.04	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – more Welsh speakers to support employment opportunities and the economy. Encourages young people to stay, study and work in Wales.
	Resilient Wales	Positive – more opportunities for people to live and work in Wales and use their Welsh language skills for study, work and recreation
	Healthier Wales	No impact
	More equal Wales	Positive – encourages people to use their Welsh language skills potentially increasing employability and reducing poverty.
	Cohesive Wales	Positive – encourages respect for Welsh language and culture.
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – promotes a thriving Welsh language and a strong cultural identity.
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Each Council is expected to consult for no less than 8 weeks on their draft plan with the following bodies/stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. neighbouring local authorities; b. heads of all schools maintained by the authority; c. the governing bodies of all schools maintained by the authority; d. all further education sector institutions within the area; e. in respect of any foundation school or voluntary school in the area – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the person responsible for appointing governors – if the school has a religious character, the relevant religious body; f. The Welsh Language Commissioner (within the meaning of section 2 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011); g. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (within the meaning of "Early years development and Childcare Partnership" in section 119 of the Act 1998); h. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales; i. providers of initial school teacher training; j. such organisations providing services to children and young people as the local authority considers appropriate; and k. such other persons or bodies as appear to the local authority to be appropriate. <p>Flintshire's consultation period started on Wednesday 17th November 2021 and ended on Wednesday 15th January 2022. The results from this consultation have been used to inform this Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032, which will begin September 2022. The Consultation documents were available on the Council website and a high level summary of responses received is included in the appendices.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<p>Appendix 1 - Consultation Feedback Report Appendix 2 – Final Draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (January 2021) https://gov.wales/welsh-education-strategic-plans</p>

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Vicky Barlow, Senior Manager for School Improvement Telephone: 01352 704019 E-mail: vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Cymraeg 2050: Our national Welsh language strategy for a million Welsh speakers was published in August 2017. Our ambition for reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and to continue to encourage more people to use and speak Welsh in their everyday lives is incorporated in the aims and values of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and also Prosperity for all: the national strategy.</p> <p>Ten year target: the target is consistent with the milestones in Cymraeg 2050 which relate to the increase in the number of learners in Welsh-medium education required to meet the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050</p> <p>Welsh Government ten year target categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1 The vast majority of Year 1 children (more than 91% in 2019/20) are already being taught through the medium of Welsh in these local authorities. Welsh-medium community education is the norm and English-medium schools are rare exceptions. • Group 2 Between 17% and 73% of Year 1 children in these local authorities were being taught through the medium of Welsh in 2019/20. It may be that Welsh-medium community education is the norm, or that it is the norm in a significant number of communities within the local authorities. In other areas, there is a choice between Welsh-medium education and English-medium education. • Group 3 Between 14% and 19% of Year 1 children in these local authorities were being taught through the medium of Welsh in 2019/20. It may be that Welsh-medium community education is the norm in one/a very small number of areas, but this is the exception not the rule. There is usually a choice between Welsh-medium education and English-medium education. • Group 4 13% or fewer of Year 1 children in these local authorities were being taught through the medium of Welsh in 2019/20. There is a choice between Welsh-medium education and English-medium education in these local authorities. <p>Integrated Impact Assessments: An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is a way to look at how a proposal could affect communities and if different groups within the community will be affected differently. It takes into consideration impacts on the environment, equality (people with protected characteristics), health, poverty and Welsh language.</p>