

Minutes of the Meeting of the Language Committee held at the Council Chamber, Penmorfa, Aberaeron and remotely on Thursday, 25 May 2023

Present: Councillor Catrin M S. Davies (Chair), Councillors Rhodri Davies, Gwyn Wigley Evans, Gareth Lloyd and John Roberts.

Also in attendance: Councillor Bryan Davies.

Officers in attendance: Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer- Democratic Services; Nia Jones, Corporate Manager- Democratic Services; Carys Morgan, Language Officer; Non Davies, Corporate Manager- Culture; Steffan Rees, Cered Team Leader; Steffan Jones, Street Naming & Numbering Officer and Neris Morgans, Democratic Services Officer.

(10.00am- 12.03pm)

1 Apologies

- i. Councillor Chris James apologised for his inability to attend the meeting.
- ii. Councillor Gareth Lloyd apologised that he would be late in joining the meeting due to other Council Commitments.
- iii. Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer- Democratic Services apologised that she would be late in joining the meeting due to other Council Commitments.

2 Disclosure of personal/ prejudicial interests

There were no disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

3 To confirm as a true record the minutes of a meeting of the Language Committee held on 5 December 2022

It was RESOLVED to confirm as a true record of the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022.

4 Any matters arising from the minutes

It was noted that a presentation would be provided focusing on the 2021 Census Welsh Language results in the next meeting. A subject paper had been published and was available on the Council's website.

The Chair thanked all for their effort to increase the use of the Welsh Language in Democratic meetings.

5 Welsh Language Standards Monitoring Report April 2022 - March 2023

The Language Officer outlined the legal framework of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the requirement to produce a Welsh Language Standards Monitoring Report.

The report outlined the progress the Council had made in addressing the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards across its services and focused on the period 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023. The report set out the actions that have been taken to comply with the requirements of the Standards, and organised under the 5 Main Standards namely:

- Service Delivery Standards

- Policy Making Standards
- Internal Operations Standards
- Promotion Standards (requirement to develop and publish a 5-year Strategy)
- Record keeping standards.

An overview of the key achievements in 2022-23 was provided. The Welsh Language Commissioner expected that the Council could provide evidence in relation to the performance indicators; a full analysis was provided as part of the report.

It had been recognised that the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards was ongoing, and Ceredigion County Council was committed to continuing to deliver improvements, and to taking action to ensure it fully met the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

During the next reporting period, there would be a focus on the following:

- Develop a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for the next five-year period, in accordance with Standards 145/146.
- Review the Integrated Impact Assessment Guide to assist officers in highlighting any impact on the Welsh language when presenting policy decisions.
- Develop a 'Croeso Ceredigion' project in an attempt to assimilate incomers, with the work emanating from the Bilingual Futures Forum.
- Develop a guide to the use of the Welsh language for Town and Community Councils.
- Update the 'Work Welsh' pages on the Council's intranet site, including guidance and developing additional resources to promote the Welsh language and to help staff to use the language.
- A project to promote awareness of Welsh culture and Welshness in residential homes.

It was noted that Members were encouraged to use the Welsh language in Democratic meetings and facilities were in place to support this which included a guide on chairing and holding bilingual public meetings, but the choice of language was up to each individual.

All local authorities in Wales asked employees to self-assess their language skills. Ceredigion County Council measured the workforce's Welsh language skills using the ALTE Framework (The Association of Language Testers in Europe). It was recommended that a report to explain the process was provided at the next meeting.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED:

- To receive Ceredigion County Council Welsh Language Standards Monitoring Report (2022 -23).
- To approve that the full report was submitted to the Council's Cabinet for approval and published on the Council's corporate website, as required by the Welsh Language Standards regime, in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

6 Ceredigion Language Strategy Achievement Report 2018-23

Consideration was given to the Ceredigion Language Strategy Achievement Report 2018-23. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to impose duties on certain organisations, including Ceredigion County Council to comply with standards in relation to the Welsh language.

- Welsh Language Standard 145 places a duty on the County Council to develop and publish a 5-year strategy that explains how the Council intends to promote the Welsh language and facilitate the use of Welsh within the wider area.
- Welsh Language Standard 146 places the duty to assess the extent to which the Council has followed that strategy and met its set target.

The current Strategy period ends in 2023 and the achievement report had been prepared, with the input of partners.

The report was presented in two parts:

- A Review Welsh Language Strategy Report: which reported on methods of operating as well as the methods of measuring outcomes
- Achievement Report Welsh Language Strategy: which reports on all activities organised to promote the use of the Welsh language (Appendix 1)

The principal aim of Ceredigion's Welsh Language Strategy 2018-23 was to expand the use of the Welsh language in all aspects of life in the county. The strategy identified three strategic areas:

- Increase the language skills of the people of Ceredigion
- Maintain and increase opportunities to use the Welsh language in Ceredigion in a range of contexts
- Create the social conditions that enable the Welsh language to thrive in Ceredigion

A summary of the main achievements of implementing the Language Strategy was provided. It was acknowledged that Covid-19 had impacted much of the work as engagement was one of the main aims.

The Strategy also set a target to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion from 47.5% to 48.5%, an increase of around 1,500 by 2023. Since the 2011 Census, results from the 2021 Census reported a decrease of 3,286 people (2%) who declared themselves as able to speak Welsh. Despite an overall decrease, the proportion of adults between 16-44 years old able to speak Welsh had increased by 2.2% by 2021. It must be noted that care was required when interpreting the Census data as the picture was very complex. Other surveys including the Annual Population Survey indicated that the percentage of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion had increased. The Welsh Government was currently carrying out a survey on the different data that existed for measuring the number of Welsh speakers and trying to define the inconsistency in the data.

In reviewing the attainment of the Welsh Language Strategy, it was important to recognise that language planning was a long-term process and developing

initiatives to increase the use of Welsh took time to foster, however, the Council felt confident that the Language Strategy had laid the right foundations for progressing to the next 5-year period. A workshop was held on 20 March 2023 to discuss the new Welsh Language Strategy and was well attended by members of the Bilingual Futures Forum.

The following main points were raised during discussions:

- Following approval by Scrutiny and Cabinet, a consultation process would commence soon around changing the language medium in the Foundation Phase at Comins Coch, Llwyn yr Eos, St Padarn's, Plascrug and Cei Newydd School.
- Despite Welsh Government's Helo Blod Project ending in April 2022, it continued to provide a free translation service of up to 500 words per month for businesses and community organisations. The Welsh Language Commissioner are now focusing their efforts on 'The Welsh Offer Scheme' to support businesses to make more use of Welsh within their business.
- There is a focus in the Arfor programme on encouraging young people to remain and succeed locally. There are work opportunities in Ceredigion, but greater promotion is needed to ensure people are confident enough to apply for the roles. It was noted that there were many projects underway with the Growth and Enterprise team.
- Given that the Urdd and the Young Farmers' Clubs were two strong youth organisations in Ceredigion, it was unfortunate that the Urdd National Eisteddfod and the Young Farmers' Clubs Rally clashed.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to receive the report, and recommend submitting the Report to Cabinet for approval, and for information at the Ceredigion Public Services Board meeting.

7 Cered: Menter Iaith Ceredigion Language Initiative- Targets for 2023-24

A presentation was provided to the Committee outlining the following:

- Cered's Aim
- Strategic contribution
- Budget
- Staffing and Structure
- Partners
- 2023-24 Targets
- Themes (Children, Young People, The Community, Welsh Learners and Infrastructure)
- Summary

The following main points were raised during discussions:

- An invitation to attend Ras yr Iaith in Aberystwyth on 22 June 2023 had been extended to the schools in Ysgol Penglais and Ysgol Gyfun Gymunedol Penweddig's catchment area.
- The numbers involved in different projects varied (5 in the Young Sports Reporters Scheme for football fans and 25 on 'Ar Gered'). Cered were eager to develop projects further subject to funding and capacity.

- Training had been provided in the past to enable people to use the translation equipment available to be loaned by communities; this could possibly be looked into again in the future.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to accept the report on Cered's targets for 2023-24 and note the work of the Initiative in promoting and developing the use of the Welsh language in Ceredigion.

8 Street Naming and Numbering Policy Update

Consideration was given to the report updating Members on Ceredigion County Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy. The report outlined how the Street Naming and Numbering function had progressed over the last year (April 2022- March 2023).

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to note the report.

9 Forward Work Programme

The following items were suggested by Committee Members:

- Presentation on the ALTE Framework
- Report on Ceredigion's Social Media accounts (December meeting)
- New Welsh Language Strategy
- 2021 Census Welsh Language results

10 Any other matter which the Chairman decides is for the urgent attention of the Committee

None.

**Confirmed at the Meeting of the Language Committee held on 26
September 2023**

Chairman: _____

Date: _____