

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 5 July 2022

Title: Welsh Language Standards Monitoring Report
April 2021 – March 2022

Purpose of the report: To present the Welsh Language Standards Report to Cabinet, which outlines progress in implementing the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, during period April 2021 – March 2022.

For: Decision

Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member: Councillor Catrin M S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Culture, Leisure and Customer Services

Background

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets a legal framework, which places a duty on Ceredigion County Council, amongst other institutions, to comply with Standards relating to the Welsh Language. As a result of the Welsh Language Standards Ceredigion County Council is duty bound to ensure the following:

- the Council must not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language
- the Council must promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in their everyday lives.

Five Main Standards representing a total of **167** sub-standards have been imposed on Ceredigion County Council through a Compliance Notice, with an initial implementation date of 30 March 2016. The full list of Standards to which Ceredigion County Council is required to conform is available on the Council's corporate website.

The Council is required to publish an annual report for the attention of the Welsh Language Commissioner outlining progress the Council has made in addressing the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. The attached report focuses on the period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022.

The Report records good practice as well as stating how the Council has complied with standards within the following categories:

- Service Delivery Standards

- Policy Making Standards
- Internal Operational Standards
- Promotion Standards

The report also presents data on the required performance indicators, namely Record Keeping Standards, as follows:

Staff Language Skills: During the year in question, the number of staff who have Welsh Language Skills. The information is to be recorded in accordance with the ALTE levels – Welsh Language Skills 0-5.
Recruitment to vacant posts: The number of posts advertised during the year, requesting Welsh language skills and categorised by ALTE level
Training courses to learn Welsh or to improve Welsh language skills: The number of staff who attended training courses to either learn Welsh or to improve their Welsh language skills
Welsh-medium Training Provision: The number of staff who, during the year, attended Council training courses through the medium of Welsh.
Complaints by Members of the Public: The number of complaints received relating to the Welsh language

Key Achievements

Further details can be found in the Annual Report, but here are some of the Key Achievements during 2021-22:

- Innovation, adapting quickly to the Coronavirus crisis, by organising democratic meetings virtually, with simultaneous translation service from Welsh to English; ensuring that the Council can protect the use of the Welsh language at public meetings.
- Ensure that Clic Ceredigion, the customer care service provides the proactive offer of Welsh language services at the first point of contact; and that the language choice is recorded for the purpose of further contact.
- Live streaming of Cabinet and Council meetings on Facebook – using the Social Media platform to alert service users, that a Welsh and English stream is available. The Welsh stream (the main language of the meeting) is broadcast on the Facebook account; with the simultaneous translation service introducing the English translation; promoting the principle of using Welsh in public administration.
- Use specific days in the national calendar to raise awareness of the Welsh language, organise virtual activities on St David's Day, Welsh Music Day, and Welsh Language Rights Day.

- Hold a Ceredigion Bilingual Futures Forum workshop, to review what we have achieved to date with the Ceredigion Language Strategy, also considering what more will need to be done in order to be able to prepare for the successor Strategy.
- To undertake a self-regulation exercise against some of the Welsh Language Standards. All Corporate Lead Officers were asked to score their services against aspects of the Welsh Language Standards, in an attempt to gauge current compliance. Following this self-regulatory work, we will be reviewing the Welsh Standards' action plan for the benefit of planning work for the next phase.

It is acknowledged that the process of implementing the Standards is ongoing. The aim is to make certain that the requirements are naturally mainstreamed into the Council's work, as well as ensuring that Welsh services are available by default. The Council is committed to making further improvements, and to working in a way that will ensure it fully meets the Welsh Language Standards' requirements. In this report, the Council acknowledges that progress has been made, but more work could be done to improve our services' Welsh-medium provision.

Priorities for 2022-23

Here is a list of some of the projects that need to be implemented in the next phase:

- Development of a training programme on the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards for councillors, following the May 2022 election.
- Revision of the Grants Policy in order to ensure that the Welsh Language Commissioner's good practice is highlighted.
- Creation of a report which outlines what the current Ceredigion Language Strategy has achieved, and to prepare and develop a new Strategy for next five years.
- Co-ordination of a project Group to develop a 'Welcome Pack' in an attempt to assimilate incomers: work which stems from the Bilingual Futures Forum
- Introduction of a plan which recommends improvements in order to fulfil the requirements of the Operational Standards – using Welsh internally, as well as promoting the concept of a bilingual workplace
- Revision of the Integrated Impact Assessment Guide, in order to assist officers to identify any impact on the Welsh language.
- Analysis Report 2021 Census Results: Number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion.

The Draft Report was presented at the Council's Welsh Language Committee on 13th June 2022.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:	Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why	Not applicable because this is a monitoring report not a new/revised policy, plan or initiative
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Summary:
Long term:
Integration:
Collaboration:
Involvement:
Prevention:

Recommendation(s):

- To receive and approve the Ceredigion County Council Annual Welsh Language Standards Report (2021-22)
- To approve that the Welsh Language Standards report is published on the Council's website in accordance with the statutory requirement

Reasons for decision: Statutory duty under the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011

Overview and Scrutiny: The Annual Monitoring Report was presented to the Council's Welsh Language Committee for their approval.

Policy Framework: Welsh Language Standards

Corporate Priorities: Investing in People's Future

Financial implications: No direct financial implications to this report

Statutory Powers: Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

Background Papers:

Appendices:

- Welsh Language Standards Report 2021-22
- Workforce Welsh Language Skills

Corporate Lead Officer: Lowri Edwards

Reporting Officer: Carys Morgan

Date: 5 / 7 / 2022



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

**Welsh Language Standards
Annual Monitoring Report**

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Cymraeg

Author: Carys Lewis Morgan, Democratic Services

Publication Date:

Language Committee: 13/06/2022

Approved by the Cabinet:

This report is available in Welsh and English.

We can provide this report in other formats on request. Please contact the Language Policy Officer as noted below:

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SECTION 1: Context

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets a legal framework, which places a duty on Ceredigion County Council, amongst other institutions, to comply with Standards relating to the Welsh Language. The purpose of the Standards is to:

- Provide greater clarity to organisations regarding their duties to the Welsh language
- Provide greater clarity to Welsh speakers regarding the services which they can expect to receive in the Welsh language
- Ensure a greater consistency of Welsh language services and improve their quality

As a result of the Welsh Language Standards Ceredigion County Council is duty bound to ensure the following:

- the Council must not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language
- the Council must promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in their everyday lives.

Five Main Standards representing a total of **167** sub-standards have been imposed on Ceredigion County Council through a Compliance Notice, with an initial implementation date of 30 March 2016. The full list of Standards to which Ceredigion County Council is required to conform is available on the Council's corporate website. The website can be accessed by following the link below:

[ceredigion-welsh-language-standards-compliance-notice.pdf](#)

The Council is also under obligation to publish a document explaining how the Council will comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

[ceredigion-compliance-with-welsh-language-standards.pdf](#)

Publishing the Report

This Annual Report must be published by 30 June, in accordance with Standards 158 and 164. The Report records good practice as well as stating how the Council has complied with standards within the following categories:

- Service Delivery Standards
- Policy Making Standards
- Internal Operational Standards
- Promotion Standards

The report also presents data on the required performance indicators, namely Record Keeping Standards, as follows:

Staff Language Skills: During the year in question, the number of staff who have Welsh Language Skills. The information is to be recorded for each ALTE level.

Recruitment to vacant posts: The number of posts advertised during the year, requesting Welsh language skills and categorised by ALTE level
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Training courses to learn Welsh or to improve Welsh language skills: The number of staff who attended training courses to either learn Welsh or to improve their Welsh language skills

Welsh-medium Training Provision: The number of staff who, during the year, attended Council training courses through the medium of Welsh.
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Complaints by Members of the Public: The number of complaints received relating to the Welsh language

This report notes compliance with the Language Standards as well as presenting the necessary data for the 2021-22 financial year. It is acknowledged that the process of implementing the Standards is ongoing. The aim is to make certain that the requirements are naturally mainstreamed into the Council's work, as well as ensuring that Welsh services are available by default. The Council is committed to making further improvements, and to working in a way that will ensure it fully meets the Welsh Language Standards' requirements. In this report, the Council acknowledges that progress has been made, but more work could be done to improve our services' Welsh-medium provision.

SECTION 2: Promoting and Facilitating

How the Council has set about promoting and facilitating opportunities to use the Welsh language

With the unprecedented coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis having an impact on all our activities, the past two years has been a period of reacting to events as they unfold. But it has also been a year of innovation as the Council has been forced to adapt rapidly and, in the process, has taken advantage of a number of new opportunities.

The Council has made remarkable changes, using technology for the purpose of service provision. Through discovering alternative methods of service provision, such as working remotely, the Council has succeeded in safely delivering most of its essential activities to customers by means of this new method of working. The majority of Ceredigion County Council staff continue to work remotely; during April, the ***Interim Hybrid Working Policy*** was published in order to adopt a hybrid-working model and to facilitate a modern and efficient way of working which is sustainable and fit for the future.

Remote Services / Simultaneous Translation

One of the first challenges in the transition to working remotely was adapting to a new way of conducting democratic meetings, whilst still maintaining the principles of transparency and public accountability. From the outset, we had to ensure the provision of a simultaneous translation service in remotely held committees and meetings. Early on in the process, it was decided to use the Zoom platform for public meetings, as Zoom has a channel specifically assigned to simultaneous translation. Therefore, a simultaneous translation service is offered in all the County's democratic meetings; the service is also available in public events and meetings and in some of the Council's internal meetings (for example in disciplinary meetings, performance board meetings, interviews and training sessions).

Between March 2021 and April 2022, the translation team has supported 229 remotely held committees and meetings, providing a simultaneous translation service, normally from Welsh to English.

Number of Democratic Service meetings with a simultaneous translation facility	100
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Number of Wellbeing meetings with a simultaneous translation facility	33
Number of other meetings with a simultaneous translation facility	96
TOTAL number of meetings with a simultaneous translation facility	229

The Council employs 9 members of staff within the Translation Service, six of whom are employed on a full time basis, 2 members of the team work 3 days a week and one member works 1 day a week. Simultaneous translation is delivered by 4 of the full time members and by one of the two team members working 3 days a week, along with the 1 member of the team who works 1 day a week.

Technical Systems

A corporate licence is required in order to use the Zoom system for meetings of more than forty minutes' duration and the licence can be expensive. Therefore, the Council has purchased a limited number of licences; the Zoom platform is employed to facilitate public meetings as well as to provide corporate training; thus safeguarding the participants' preferred language. A bilingual guide was produced, providing staff with directions how to conduct remote meetings and also included guidance in relation to respecting an individual's preferred language.

For the Council's internal use, it was necessary to discover another platform, which would be less costly and more practical. The Council had not previously used the Teams program, but very quickly had to educate Ceredigion staff as to its use. A number of Teams' training sessions were organised, sessions were presented in both Welsh and English and a guide was produced in both languages.

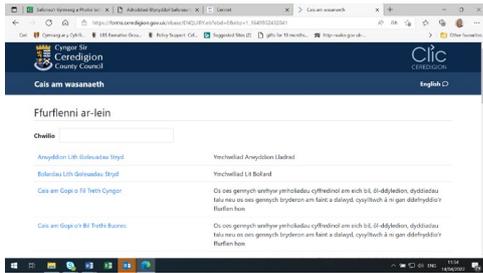
However, the Teams' system poses another challenge in internal meetings, with respect to language use, as it does not include the option of a simultaneous translation facility. Therefore, despite the fact that staff would normally use a combination of English and Welsh with a group of participants, the limitation of Teams leads to a stronger tendency to adhere to one language. However, we have discovered that the 'chat' button can be useful as a means of presenting a question or a comment in an individual's preferred language.

Ceredigion County Council, along with a number of public bodies have drawn attention to this omission and Welsh Government is currently collaborating with Microsoft in an endeavour to address the issue; we are expecting an announcement imminently.

How does the Council ensure that Welsh speakers receive their service through the medium of Welsh



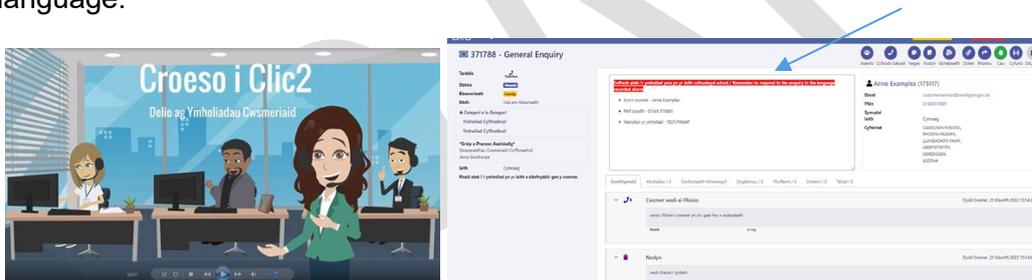
The Clic Customer Care service operates as a sole access point to all the County's services, either by telephone or digitally; users of the service can choose to contact the Council in either Welsh or English.



Clic Service staff continue to work remotely and provide a complete service either by telephone or digitally.

The Service operates an identical system to the one used in the office, there is a display at the bottom of the screen indicating that the caller has chosen the service through the medium of Welsh and therefore the person receiving the call can fully deliver the service in Welsh. The 'notice board' shows the number of calls being dealt with at the time, including the number of calls being dealt with in Welsh and in English.

During the reporting year, the Clic Service has updated the digital system, in order to facilitate the process of recording enquiries. The Clic Service deals with initial enquiries for the majority of the Council's services; however, in some more complex cases, the call has to be transferred to the relevant officer. The Service is responsible for recording the service user's preferred language and if the call needs to be transferred, the preferred language is clearly indicated. The Service has shared a bilingual video and guide explaining the system, including the requirement to check the preferred language and to respond to the service user in that language.



The Clic Service comprises 19 members of staff, of whom 15 are fluent in Welsh and can provide a full Welsh service. 4 attend Welsh classes, 2 of whom are now sufficiently confident to deal with calls on the Welsh line. This is following bespoke training for the Clic Service; covering the demands of providing a proactive offer; familiarising themselves with relevant terms and phrases when dealing with initial enquiries and growing in confidence with practice. The Service is currently advertising for 3 additional posts which stipulate Welsh language skills as essential skills.

Clic Service 2021-22 – number of calls

The Clic Service records the number of calls to the contact centre; the number of English calls tends to be significantly higher than the number of Welsh calls. However, the number of Welsh calls are regular and tend to represent 15% of the total number of calls received. Here is a record of the calls received during the reporting period:

	ENGLISH	WELSH	Total per month	%
April-21	8236	1513	9749	16%
May-21	7517	1379	8896	16%
June-21	8419	1399	9818	14%
July-21	8389	1453	9842	15%
August-21	8191	1379	9570	14%
September-21	9126	1660	10786	15%
October-21	7675	1276	8951	14%
November-21	7238	1156	8394	14%
December-21	5835	992	6827	15%
January-22	8874	1468	10342	14%
February-22	8576	1416	9992	14%
March-22	9306	1586	10892	15%
Total	97382	16677	114059	
Combined Total	114059			15%

The Council is committed to raising awareness of the Welsh services at the disposal of Ceredigion citizens; and are very eager to encourage our residents to use the Welsh language services available. See the 'Raising Awareness of Welsh Language Services Available' section. As part of the process of introducing the Clic Service, we have adapted our telephone Welcome Message, in order to encourage customers to use the Welsh language service.

Diolch am alw Cyngor Sir Ceredigion/ Thank you for calling Ceredigion County Council.

Mae croeso ichi ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg wrth gysylltu gyda'r Cyngor / You are welcome to use Welsh when contacting the Council.

Am barhau yn Gymraeg gwasgwch 1: To proceed in English press 2

Raising Awareness of Welsh Language Services Available

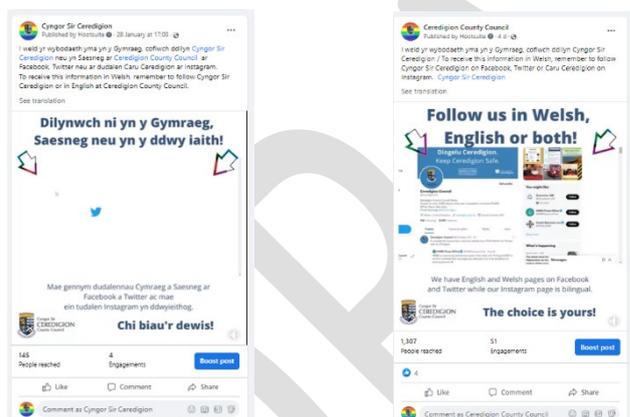
- Information about all Council services is available bilingually on the Council's website.

- A document can be found on the website noting the Standards with which the Council has to comply.
- The Council's Policy Statement is also available to download from the Council's website, noting the Council's commitment to supporting the Welsh language and culture, ensuring its services and activities promote the use of the Welsh language across the County. Welsh Language Policy Statement - [Y Gweithle Dwyieithog: \(ceredigion.gov.uk\)](http://Y_Gweithle_Dwyieithog:_ceredigion.gov.uk)
- The Council also makes substantial use of social media, see details below regarding promotion of the Welsh language
- The Council has organised campaigns providing information relating to the Welsh language services available, using specific days to do so eg: Shwmae Day, Saint David's Day and Rights Day

Social Media and the Welsh language

Ceredigion County Council has English and Welsh accounts on Facebook and Twitter and a bilingual account on Instagram. Messages are always posted bilingually on the Instagram account. The **Social Media Editorial and Administration Policy** includes a section on the use of the Welsh language and provides guidance as to language use.

In order to promote the Welsh language accounts, the Press Service posts a quarterly message on Facebook and Twitter drawing attention to the Welsh language account. See the example included below:



The Council has managed to webcast Council and Cabinet meetings on 'Facebook Live'. Because the language of the floor in these meetings is Welsh, the Welsh version is broadcast on the Welsh and English account, but the simultaneous translation service is broadcast on the English version. We post comments at the beginning of every meeting, as below:

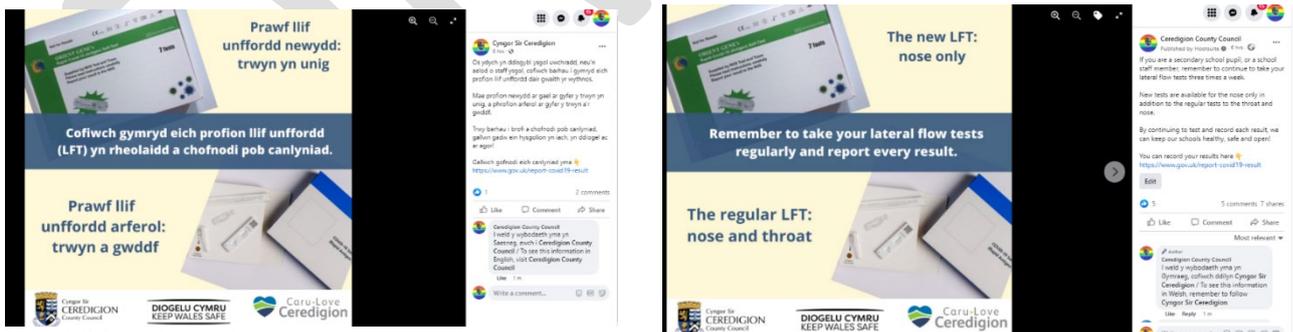


Since lockdown and the need to webcast Cabinet and Council meetings, we have seen an increase in the number of people who make enquiries on our English Facebook account, where they can access information in Welsh. In order to address this issue, we endeavour to post a comment in the comments' box, noting as follows:

Facebook Saesneg: *I weld yr wybodaeth yma yn y Gymraeg, cofiwch ddilyn @Cyngor Sir Ceredigion / To receive this information in Welsh, remember to follow Cyngor Sir Ceredigion*

Facebook Cymraeg: *I weld yr wybodaeth yma yn Saesneg, cofiwch ddilyn @Ceredigion County Council / To receive this information in English, remember to follow @Ceredigion County Council*

Here are some examples:



In addition, in certain messages, where space permits, we try to include the Welsh page's address in the original message, in order to facilitate clicking between pages when reading the message. Here is an example:



Number of followers

Account	August 2021	February 2022	Increase
Facebook (Welsh)	1,586	1,639	+53
Facebook (English)	12,447	14,610	+ 2,163
Twitter (Welsh)	2,495	2,537	+42
Twitter (English)	8,299	8,469	+170
Instagram Caru Ceredigion	1,139	1,204	+ 65

The Council has also set about promoting the Welsh language services available; informing residents of their rights to receive services through the medium of Welsh and encouraging residents to avail themselves of these services.

Saint David's Day 2022

Using Saint David's Day to celebrate language and culture in Ceredigion. In order to draw attention to the fact that the National Eisteddfod will be held in Ceredigion in August this year, we created a video explaining the Eisteddfod and what it has to offer. The Eisteddfod is one of the cornerstones of the Welsh language, providing significant opportunities for people to talk the language and to boost their confidence in the language. It is also an opportunity to attract non Welsh-speakers to the language as well as being an opportunity for Welsh-learners to practise the language.

The Eisteddfod's cultural possibilities provide people with an opportunity to socialise and use the Welsh language publicly, reflecting the enthusiasm associated with a living language. Therefore, our campaign also included an encouragement for service users to use the Welsh language services offered by the Council.

A message to celebrate Saint David's Day was also included in the news bulletin. Welsh Language Standards Posters were distributed. These posters are a useful prompt, a reminder of the Welsh Language Standards' requirements. As everyone is now working from home, it is a simple means of reminding staff of their duties in relation to using the Welsh Language.



A Day to Promote the Rights of the Welsh Language

On December 7th 2021, public organisations across Wales worked in conjunction with the Welsh Language Commissioner to organise a 'Welsh Language Rights Day'. This is a day to celebrate the Welsh language services offered by organisations, and people's right to use the Welsh language in their dealings with these organisations. It was an opportunity for Ceredigion County Council to promote the Welsh language services available, endeavouring to increase the number of people choosing these services. A short video was promoted on social media, drawing attention to some of the rights that people have, when they contact the Council.

SECTION 3: Compliance Arrangements

Arrangements for Monitoring Compliance

The information collected and included in this report is the result of the Council's continuous monitoring of its services.

Currently the political portfolio for the Welsh Language constitutes part of the duties of the Council Leader, Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn. Strategic responsibility for the Welsh Language lies with the Democratic Services. The Corporate Lead Officer is Lowri Edwards. The operational day-to-day work of dealing with Welsh-language matters is the responsibility of the Welsh Language Policy Officer, Carys Lewis Morgan.

The Welsh Standards' Monitoring Report is scrutinised by Members of the Language Committee, who recommend proposals to the Council's Cabinet. The report will be published on the Council's Website; the report will also be included on the Leadership Group's Agenda, for their information.

Language Committee:

The committee provides a political direction for the promotion and the facilitation of the Welsh Language in Ceredigion, and supports the efforts to improve the use of the Welsh language throughout the organisation. The Committee consists of 6 Elected Members who represent the political parties and Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, the Leader of the Council, is responsible for chairing the Committee. The Committee may require any member or officer of the Council to attend, in order to answer questions and it may invite others to attend Committee meetings.

The Committee holds quarterly meetings. As well as Standards Compliance, the committee receives reports on the Strategic Framework More Than Just Words, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and the activities of Cered and Theatr Felinfach in promoting and facilitating the Welsh language. This Committee recommends proposals to the Council's Cabinet.

Bilingual Futures Forum:

Ceredigion's Bilingual Futures Forum was established to support the work of fulfilling Ceredigion's Language Strategy, the requirements of Promotion Standards 145 and 146. Ceredigion's Language Strategy sets out how the Council services, along with other partner organisations, will collaborate in order to promote the Welsh language and facilitate wider use of the language across the county. The Forum also allows for an inclusive discussion on the benefits of the Welsh language, it facilitates the sharing of information and best practice and fosters co-operation for the benefit of the Welsh language. Membership includes Ceredigion's Public Service Board partner organisations, as well as a range of County-wide organisations, which have committed to the vision of a truly bilingual Ceredigion. Currently, the Forum is chaired by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn.

Self-regulation

In his Assurance Report 'Bridging the Gap' the Welsh Language Commissioner places an expectation on the Council to self-regulate its performance against the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. With the Leadership Group's consent, we reviewed a selection of Standards dealing with service provision, as well as some of the Operational Standards which deal with internal administration. All Corporate Lead Officers were asked to score their services against aspects of the Welsh Language Standards, in an attempt to gauge current compliance.

The main finding was that the Council is performing quite well against the requirements of those Standards, which pertain to the provision of primary services, i.e. users can be confident of receiving the following services in Welsh - services by telephone, written services, and services which can be planned in advance. Users are less likely to be able to receive more personal services or face-to-face services in Welsh. This finding is in line with national findings collated by the Welsh Language Commissioner: 'Bridging the Gap' Assurance Report.

The Schools and Culture Service gained the highest score against the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, whilst the Information Technology Service and Porth Cynnal Service gained the lowest score. This possibly reflects the number of fluent Welsh speaking staff within these Services:

Service	Fluency (ALTE 5)	With no skills
The School and Culture Service	46%	1%
Porth Cynnal Service	23%	8%
Information Technology	40%	3%

Following this self-regulatory work, we will be reviewing the Welsh Standards' action plan for the benefit of planning work for the next phase.

Compliance with Service Delivery Standards (Standards 1-87)

This set of standards identifies how the Council is required to use the Welsh language in different situations so that Welsh speakers can have unhindered access to Welsh language services; for example, when sending correspondence, dealing with telephone calls, providing on-line or face-to-face services.

Standard Number	Standard Requirement and an overview of steps taken to comply with the requirement
7,64, 67,68	<p data-bbox="424 338 911 371">Establishing the Preferred Language</p> <ul data-bbox="424 371 1394 613" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="424 371 1394 472">• When dealing with service users for the first time, Clic Customer Care Service enquires as to their preferred language and notes the preferred language if the enquiry is to be transferred. <li data-bbox="424 472 1394 539">• Corporate headed paper as well as the Council's external e-mail includes a statement welcoming the use of the Welsh language <li data-bbox="424 539 1394 613">• The corporate website provides a choice of language from the first page.
1-7 8-22 37+38 40-49 50-51 69-70	<p data-bbox="424 624 655 658">Correspondence</p> <ul data-bbox="424 680 1394 1095" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="424 680 1394 792">• The Induction Course and the Mandatory E-learning course inform every member of staff as to the procedures relating to receiving and sending correspondence. <li data-bbox="424 792 1394 927">• Guidance and guidelines have been published to ensure that all members of staff are cognisant of the internal procedures in relation to sending and receiving correspondence. Welsh Language Standards 'What I need to do' <li data-bbox="424 927 1394 994">• The instructions have been published on the intranet and have been promoted by means of the corporate news bulletin. <li data-bbox="424 994 1394 1095">• All members of staff are to be responsible and accountable for following the correct internal procedures, in order to ensure compliance with the standards.
8-22	<p data-bbox="424 1106 639 1140">Telephone calls</p>
	<ul data-bbox="424 1151 1394 1655" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="424 1151 1394 1240">• The Clic customer care service deals with all initial enquiries to the Council and is responsible for offering a proactive Welsh language provision. <li data-bbox="424 1240 1394 1420">• The Welsh language is noted as being an essential requirement for posts dealing with the Clic service and Welsh speakers have been appointed to these posts. 5 posts were advertised during the reporting year and the Council managed to appoint Welsh language speakers. <li data-bbox="424 1420 1394 1509">• Welsh speaking members of staff have been highlighted in the electronic staff directory, so that it is easy to find Welsh language speakers when necessary. <li data-bbox="424 1509 1394 1655">• The instructions for staff in terms of the Welsh Language Standards have been published on the intranet and contain clear instructions as to the procedures to be followed if the caller wants to deal with the service in Welsh. Welsh Language standards 'What I need to do'.
24-29 30-38 87	<p data-bbox="424 1666 1094 1700">Conducting meetings and organising public events</p> <ul data-bbox="424 1700 1394 2022" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="424 1700 1394 1868">• The Council's established practice is to conduct the Council's Democratic meetings in the Welsh language (80% of the Council's Democratic meetings are chaired through the medium of Welsh). There is a simultaneous translation service at all of the Council's Democratic meetings to facilitate language use. <li data-bbox="424 1868 1394 2022">• Instructions for staff on the Welsh Language Standards have been published on the service's intranet and include clear directions as to the procedures to be followed if members of the public wish to talk Welsh when meeting Service representatives. Welsh Language Standards 'What I need to do'.

38, 40, 47-51	<p>Agendas, Minutes and other Public Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producing agendas, minutes and supplementary papers for Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees in Welsh and English is established practice, and all of these documents are available on the Council's corporate website. The Council has adopted the principle whereby publishing a document for public use is not permitted, unless completed versions are available for simultaneous publication in English and Welsh. Instructions were shared in the March 2022 news bulletin informing members of staff that if it is necessary to produce separate Welsh and English documents, a disclaimer is required stating 'This document/form is also available in Welsh.'
52 55-56 58-59	<p>Websites, apps and on-line services, together with use of social media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website content is managed by the IT Service to monitor quality, and no information can be published until complete Welsh language and English language versions are both available. The Council's main social media account is managed by the Press Team, with separate English language and Welsh language accounts.
64,67,68,69,70	<p>Service at Reception Desks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As all reception desks have closed due to the pandemic, we have reminded the Leisure Service and the Library Service of the Standards requirements, providing them with a check list as they reopen.
61-63,70	<p>Signs and Notices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's policy states that every Council sign should be bilingual, with the Welsh language text placed so that it is likely to be read first.
71-75 94	<p>Awarding Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The criteria attached to all community grant applications require evidence of opportunities to use the Welsh language The policy for awarding grants will need to be amended to include the good practice contained in the Welsh Commissioner's guidance.
76-80	<p>Awarding Contracts</p> <p>Work is ongoing with the procurement service to ensure Welsh Language Standards requirements have been incorporated when contracting or commissioning a service. The service can advise officers as to the type of clauses they need to include when commissioning or contracting work, in order to ensure compliance with the Standards.</p>
84 a 86	<p>Education courses open to the public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 9 Step guide has been shared with the Dysgu Bro Service (Adult Community Learning Service) and the Leisure Service to help the services assess the level of demand for the course in the Welsh language. When they register for a course, service users are asked whether they wish to follow the course in the Welsh language.

Compliance with Policy Making Standards (Standards 88-89)

Policy Making Standards - focusing on completing a Welsh language impact assessment when making policy decisions, and taking positive action to promote the use of the language.

In order to comply with the policy-making category of the Standards, the Council has taken the following actions:

Standard Number	Overview of steps taken to comply with the Standards
88-90 94	<p>Developing or Renewing Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance has been published which states that officers have to consider the potential impact (positive/or negative) of the implementation of any new policy on the Welsh language and on the opportunities for Welsh speakers to use the language. • The Integrated Impact Assessment document has to be presented along with any policy document, which is considered by the Council's Cabinet – this provides a warranty that matters pertaining to the Welsh language have been considered when creating the document and that mitigation measures have been noted in order to address any negative impacts on the Welsh language. • The guidance for Assessing the Impact of the Welsh Language will need to be amended, in order to ensure that the Welsh Commissioner's good practice is incorporated into the document.
92-93	<p>Conducting public enquiries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have developed a set of questions which officers may use when dealing with any enquiry, in order to establish the public's point of view with regards to the impact of the decision on the Welsh language. • We have arranged matters so that the first step in any consultaion project is to consult with the Engagement and Equality Officer, in order to ensure corporate management.

Compliance with Operational Standards (99-144)

The set of **Operational Standards (98-144)**, deals with the way the Council uses the Welsh language internally, and gives employees the right to receive Human Resources' services in their chosen language. The set of Standards requires the Council to consider methods of increasing and facilitating the use of the Welsh language internally, to contribute to the Welsh Government's vision of seeing an increase in the number of people speaking and using the language from day to day.

To comply with the category of Standards relating to internal operation, the Council has taken the following actions:

Standard Number	Overview of the steps taken to conform with the Language Standards
98	<p>Policy to Facilitate the Use of the Welsh Language Internally</p> <p>The Council has developed a policy to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language in internal administration, and this document has been published on Cerinet (the Council's intranet). In addition, managers and staff have been informed of the Operational Standards and workers' rights.</p>
99-104	<p>The provision of employment documents in the Welsh language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Human Resources Service issues employment contracts bilingually.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are given the option of receiving personal employment correspondence in the language of their choice. • When accessing the human resources digital system, council staff are presented with a choice of language; therefore staff can book leave, record absence and flexible hours in the Welsh language. • Annual appraisal documents are available in the Welsh language, the HR service is working to ensure the form also works digitally.
105-111	<p>Provision of HR Policies in Welsh</p> <p>All Human Resources policies are provided bilingually on Cerinet (the Council's intranet)</p>
112-119	<p>Grievance and disciplinary procedure</p> <p>The grievance and disciplinary procedure policy informs staff of their rights to use the Welsh language</p>
120-126	<p>The intranet and ICT resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CeriNet, the Council's intranet is completely bilingual. • Newyddion HR News is presented in both Welsh and English, and staff can choose to receive correspondence in their preferred language. • A designated page is available on CeriNet to support staff to use the Welsh language at work. This will be updated during the reporting period • 'Cysgliad', software to check Welsh language spelling and grammar is available on every computer.
127	<p>Assessing Workforce Language Skills</p> <p>Staff language skills are recorded during the recruiting process and annual appraisal. A record of language skills is kept on CeriNet. An analysis of workforce language skills results can be seen in Appendix 1 of the report.</p>
128-133	<p>Standards pertaining to the development of Welsh language skills through planning and by training the workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, a Work Welsh Tutor is employed to provide Welsh language learning training at a range of various levels. • The induction training refers to the requirement of complying with Welsh Language Standards. • Language awareness training along with training on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards are available for staff • Arrangements are in place so that staff can apply to undertake corporate training courses through the medium of Welsh; we will work to improve the provision during the next reporting period. <p>An analysis of workforce training results for the reporting period can be found in Section 4</p>
134-135	<p>Wording and logo for staff e-mail signature</p> <p>Directions how to put the 'Iaith Gwaith' logo on e-mail signatures, creating a bilingual address, as well as suggestions for bilingual out of office messages were distributed to staff.</p>
136-137	<p>Recruitment and appointment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting Managers are required to assess the ALTE Level requirement for every post, and provide the rationale for the assessment result as part of the Permission to Fill New Posts process.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The skill level required for the 4 skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading) is included in the job description. • Basic courtesy skills in the Welsh language are essential for all new posts within the Council. All successful candidates must attain at least Level 1 within 6 months of their appointment, and will be supported in doing so. • In cases where it was not possible to appoint an officer fully meeting the linguistic requirements, a clause is placed in the employment contract referring to the commitment required to attain the expected Welsh language skills.
137-140	Application Forms and Job Interview Arrangements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application forms are available bilingually through the Ceri e-recruitment electronic system • Changes were made to the recruitment site, in order to promote the fact that applicants can choose their preferred language for job applications and interviews. • It is the Council's policy to ensure that the interview panel consists of at least one Welsh speaker. Where this is not possible, a simultaneous translation service is provided, if the applicant has expressed a wish to communicate in Welsh during the interview.
141-144	Signs and announcements displayed in the workplace
	The Council's Policy is to place every sign (or announcement on audio equipment) bilingually, with the Welsh language text placed so that it is likely to be read first. This includes both temporary and permanent signs.

Compliance with Promotion Standards (Standards 145-146)

In accordance with the Promotion Standards, the Council is required to draw up a 5-year strategy explaining how the Council will set about promoting the Welsh language and facilitating wider use of the language within the area.

Ceredigion's second Welsh Language Strategy was published in 2018, in order to promote the use of the Welsh language. The strategy explains how the Council along with other partner organisations (members of Ceredigion's Bilingual Futures Forum) will set about promoting the Welsh language and facilitating wider use of the language. In accordance with the requirement, a target was set for increasing the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion by the end of the strategy period, namely the percentage of Welsh language speakers in Ceredigion rising to at least 48.5% (an increase of approximately 1,500 Welsh speakers).

For this strategy, Ceredigion's Bilingual Futures Forum agreed to focus on 3 strategic aims, namely:

Strategic Aim 1: To maintain and increase the Welsh-language skills of the people of Ceredigion

Strategic Aim 2: To maintain and increase opportunities to use the Welsh language in Ceredigion

Strategic Aim 3: To create social conditions that enable the Welsh Language to thrive in Ceredigion.

A copy of the Action Plan can be found here:

<http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/welsh-language/promoting-and-facilitating-the-language/>

The Bilingual Futures Forum works to ensure fulfilment of the Language Strategy, and members include Council Officers, along with Officers from partner organisations who are committed to working together for the benefit of the Welsh language across the county.

Due to the COVID-19 situation, the Council is concerned that the pandemic has delayed our plans, and has hindered us from reaching our target of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and users of the language in Ceredigion, by the end of the current Strategy's lifespan. We organised a workshop in March, to review our progress in relation to the current Language Strategy, considering what else needs to be done in preparation for the ensuing Strategy. We asked everyone to provide oral evidence and we have also asked all members to provide written contributions before the end of April.

These are the questions posed in order to stimulate discussion:

- Do you believe that there is an increase in the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion today?
Yes /No / remains stable
- What works well?
- What are your concerns?
- What needs to happen?

We will be using the responses as part of our process of conducting a full review of the current Language Strategy's achievements. We will then set about developing a Language Strategy for the next five years.

SECTION 4: Assessment of Compliance

Compliance with Record Keeping Standards (147-154)

WHAT NEEDS TO BE REPORTED?

Staff Language Skills: Number of staff with Welsh Language skills, by ALTE level, for the year in question
Recruitment to vacant posts: Number of posts advertised during the year requiring Welsh language skills, categorised by ALTE levels.
Training in Learning Welsh or Improving Welsh Language Skills: Number of staff who attended training courses to either learn Welsh or to improve their Welsh language skills
Welsh-medium Training Provision: Number of staff who attended Council training courses offered through the medium of Welsh during the year.
Complaints by members of the public: Number of complaints received relating to the Welsh Language

Staff Language Skills :

Number of staff with Welsh Language skills, by ALTE level, for the year in question.

Council staff were invited to self-assess their language skills, using the ALTE Language Levels Framework in three skills, namely speaking, writing and reading. Language skills are recorded during the recruitment process and then reviewed during the annual evaluation process. A total of 2045 staff members, excluding school staff, have self-assessed their language skills and recorded these on the Ceri system. The Council currently uses can-do statements, derived from the ALTE framework, The Association of Language Testers in Europe, a set of common standards assessing linguistic skills. This method has been adopted throughout European countries. See the can-do statements in appendix 2.

The results of the workforce's language skills are summarised in the table below for the 3 skills of listening and speaking; writing and reading.

Table 1: Results of the Welsh Language Skills Audit: Staff Overview 2021-22

Listening/ Speaking			Writing			Reading		
Level	Number of staff	%	Level	Number of staff	%	Level	Number of staff	%
No skills	79	4%	No skills	180	8.80	No skills	161	7.87
Level 1	394	20%	Level 1	453	22.15	Level 1	401	19.61
Level 2	294	14%	Level 2	333	16.29	Level 2	316	15.45
Level 3	312	15%	Level 3	271	13.25	Level 3	270	13.20
Level 4	315	15%	Level 4	308	15.06	Level 4	319	15.60
Level 5	651	32%	Level 5	500	24.45	Level 5	578	28.26
TOTAL	2045	100	TOTAL	2045	100	TOTAL	2045	100

Main Headings:

- 651 (32%) of staff say they are fluent in the Welsh language, ALTE Level 5, this is consistent with previous workplace skills' profiles.
- Only 79 (4%) of the workforce noted that they have no oral Welsh language skills. In an attempt to reduce the number of employees who state that they have no Welsh language skills, the Council will encourage Officers to complete the 'Croeso Cymraeg' 10-hour e-learning package developed by the National Centre for Learning Welsh.
 - Among those members of staff who stated they were fluent in the Welsh language (ALTE 5), it seems that their oral skills are superior to their written skills. Fluent oral Skills: 32%; Fluent Writing Skills: 24%. To build on this finding, the Council will place more emphasis on courses to refresh and improve written Welsh.
 - There are 5 Services within the Council where 40% or more of their staff have stated they have fluent skills in the Welsh language, namely ALTE level 5 (Customer Contact Services; Democratic Services, People and Organisation Service, Porth Cymorth Cynnar and Schools and Culture Service).

- The number of care sector workers who have fluent skills in the Welsh language continues to be a cause for concern; this also reflects the shortage of Welsh language skills across this sector on a national level. To address this issue, the Council is trying to develop its current workforce.

Recruitment to Vacant Posts

Number of posts advertised during the year which required Welsh language skills and were categorised according to their ALTE level.

The Council is very aware of its duty to plan the workforce so as to ensure it has the right people with the right skills at the right time. To achieve this from a language perspective and to ensure that the residents of Ceredigion can receive a bilingual service, the Council aims to ensure that it has sufficient employees who are competent in written and spoken Welsh. This will be achieved by assessing every new or vacant post in terms of the Welsh language skills required in order to fulfil the post.

As part of the Policy for Promoting and Facilitating the Welsh Language Internally (December 2017) it was decided that all employees must meet the Level 1 'speaking and listening' requirements at the very least, namely basic courtesy language, when they are appointed, or within six months of their appointment. The Council will encourage Officers to complete the 'Croeso Cymraeg' 10 hour e-learning package developed by the National Centre for Learning Welsh, so that they can develop basic courtesy language skills. Following this decision, Welsh language skills are essential for every post, and consequently the required language level for each post must be determined using the ALTE framework (competence statements); and must be recorded on the 'Permission to Fill a New Post' form. In certain cases, if it is impossible to recruit at the expected ALTE level, there will be an agreement to impose a training condition in the employment contract. The successful candidate will be expected to attain the required ALTE standard within 2 years of the appointment. The line manager will be expected to monitor this.

Linguistic requirements of posts advertised 2021-2022		
	Number	Percentage
Total number of posts advertised	598	
Number of posts requiring Level 5 Welsh language skills	65	11%
Number of posts requiring Level 4 Welsh language skills	115	19%
Number of posts requiring Level 3 Welsh language skills	294	49%
Number of posts requiring Level 2 Welsh language skills	20	3%
Number of posts requiring Level 1 Welsh language skills	104	18%

Number of post where Welsh language skills were not required	0	0
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The Council continues to advertise for ALTE 5 fluent Welsh language skills in a number of posts (11%); currently in terms of ALTE levels, posts requiring language level ALTE 3 represent the highest percentage of posts advertised (49%). ALTE level 3 requires the person to be able to understand and take part in normal day-to-day conversations in the office, with level 5 representing complete fluency in Welsh.

When interviewing for posts, the Council ensures that people are permitted to choose their preferred language, in accordance with Standard 137.

Candidate: Chosen language in an interview		
English	2382	81%
Welsh	517	18%
Not known	25	1%

The number opting to conduct their interview in Welsh continues to be low in comparison with the number opting to conduct their interview in English. In April of this year, the Human Resources Department has taken a number of steps to draw attention to the fact that it is possible to submit application forms and conduct interviews in the applicant's chosen language.

We operate a bilingual policy. All applicants are invited to apply in Welsh, any application submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than an application made in English.

The banner featured above is included on the home page of the 'Search Jobs' website. Information regarding the use of the Welsh language when recruiting has been placed on the 'information and frequently asked questions' pages, which appear at the bottom of every job advertisement.

[Search Jobs | Ceredigion County Council Careers](#)

The Ceri self-service system operates completely bilingually; however, although the Council has a high number of Welsh language speakers, the number of staff who have registered to use the Welsh language version is low.

Language	Number	Percentage
English	2634	72%
Welsh	184	5%
Unknown	844	23%

The numbers who choose to receive Newyddion HR News in the Welsh language are low, and certainly, the numbers opting to receive the services in the Welsh language do not correspond to the numbers within the Council's workforce who are Welsh language speakers. We will again be considering methods of promoting the availability of a Welsh or a bilingual version.

Language	Number	Percentage
English	744	20%
Welsh	97	3%
Bilingual	313	8%
Unknown	2547	69%

Training in Learning Welsh and Improving Language Skills

Number of staff who attended training courses to either learn Welsh or to improve their Welsh language skills:

The Council has formed a partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to finance a Work Welsh tutor. Being able to employ a Welsh Language Tutor in the workplace has made a big difference to the Council's Welsh language learning provision.

This year teaching has been delivered at entrance level to Advanced 3, the National Welsh Language Centre's entire teaching range. This meant that 7 weekly intensive classes were held by the Training Officer, all at different levels. This is the most comprehensive provision ever offered on the Work Welsh programme in Ceredigion, and the success of this provision is reflected in the high number of students across the levels (see table below). One to one training is also delivered to a new Corporate Director. These sessions are held as hybrid classes, using the National Centre's self-study system alongside sessions with the Work Welsh Training Officer every three weeks. These will also be running throughout the summer.

Much interest was expressed in sitting Entrance examinations in January 2023, therefore this has been set as a target for formal examinations, as part of the plan.

No significant informal teaching events were organised between January and March 2022, in order to concentrate on the volume of intensive teaching. However, two successful events were held during the Christmas term, and such events will be recommenced after Easter.

During May 2022, the Work Welsh Training Officer will be delivering training sessions for Best Interest Assessors throughout Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, regarding the use of Welsh in the workplace. These were organised in conjunction with Porth Gofal in Ceredigion and the Council's Learning and Development team.

During the summer term, a specific training course will be organised for the Customer Care Service CLIC in conjunction with the Council's Welsh Officer.

Course title	Number of attendees
Cwrs Mynediad (Entrance Level)	22 + 1 (one to one entrance level course)
Cwrs Sylfaen (Foundation Level)	15
Cwrs Sylfaen i Ganolradd	16

(Foundation to Intermediate)	
Cwrs Canolradd (Intermediate course)	7
Cyrsiau Uwch (Iefelau 1, 2 a 3) (Higher level courses – levels 1, 2 and 3)	21
Total number of Welsh learners	82

Extra-curricular resources	
Clwb Cinio (Lunchtime club)	Weekly sessions of 10 students. Shwmae Sumae quiz, 34 participants. Christmas parties, 40 attendees. No significant events were held during the Spring Term. We will be recommencing these events during the summer term.
Ffrind Iaith (Language Buddy)	20 students expressed an interest in this scheme, and they will be paired with mentors in readiness for the summer term.

Corporate Welsh Medium Training Provision:

How can Council staff gain access to Welsh-medium training courses?

Training opportunities are promoted in the weekly Human Resources News article, which is published for staff in both English and Welsh. Training events are also promoted through Cerinet, the Council's intranet system. Staff can choose to access the site in Welsh or in English.

Staff can search for courses on Cerinet, by typing 'Cymraeg'. All available courses will be shown, including the Work Welsh courses. They can view these courses and book their place on training courses or register their interest by adding their name to a waiting list. Course titles are shown in English and a letter 'c' indicates those courses delivered through the medium of Welsh.

Due to the Covid pandemic, all training was adapted and delivered on-line via Microsoft Teams. Some of the internal Welsh-medium trainers were not available to deliver Welsh medium courses, as they had to prioritise and support the Local Authority's response to Covid. Consequently, some of the sessions that would normally have been part of the annual calendar were not delivered.

WL Standard Ref.	Requirement-	Number/ %

152	Total number of training sessions the Council offered to staff	788 sessions 6,622 members of staff attended
	Total number and % of training sessions delivered to staff through the medium of Welsh	64 (8%) sessions offered 29 cancelled, 20 of those due to insufficient numbers.
	Total and % of training sessions offered to staff through the medium of Welsh or bilingually	67 (8.5%) offered 29 cancelled as above
152	Total number and % of staff who attended courses delivered by the Council through the medium of Welsh during the year.	259 (4%) staff

WL Standard Ref	Name of course	Number attending Welsh medium course	Number attending English medium course	% attending Welsh medium course
128	Interview skills	Not delivered	22	0
128	Performance Management	Not delivered	Not delivered	0
128	Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure	Not delivered	Not delivered	0
128, 133	Induction sessions – including information regarding Welsh language standards.	Not delivered	127	0
128	Dealing with the public (ie Customer Care: putting the customer first)	Not delivered	11	0
128	Health and Safety	51	924	5%
129, 132	Language Awareness and Language Standards Training	Not delivered – e-learning only this year		0
	Language Awareness and Standards e-learning programme	41	304	12%

The requirements of the Welsh Language Standards are discussed as part of the corporate induction process; in addition, new members of staff are made aware of the Welsh Language Standards Guide: 'What I need to do'. The e-learning programme 'Language Awareness and Welsh Language Standards' is also a mandatory programme, and staff members have to complete the programme as part of the corporate induction programme. I note that it was not possible to deliver an induction programme through the medium of Welsh this year, because Welsh medium staff were required to prioritise and support the response to the pandemic. However, the Corporate Training Team is currently addressing the issue.

Work is ongoing to introduce a new learning platform; Learning Management System. This new system will operate in both Welsh and English; as the old system was not fully operative through the medium of Welsh.

Complaints by Members of the Public:

Number of complaints received relating to the Welsh Language

The council has published a 'Corporate Concerns and Complaints' policy which can be seen on the Council's corporate website.

<http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/comments-compliments-and-complaints/corporate-complaints/>

This policy refers to the Council's duty in relation to receiving and dealing with complaints. Service users can present their concerns via the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure. This can be done through the medium of Welsh or English, according to the individual's chosen language. The policy also notes that the complainant may ask the Welsh Language Commissioner for further advice, if the complainant is not satisfied with the Council's response.

There is also a link on the Council's Welsh Language Standards' page informing the public how they can complain in relation to compliance with the Standards or a failure to receive services through the medium of Welsh. See the text below:

Welsh Language Complaints

If you would like to make a complaint relating to the council's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards or a failure on the council's part to provide a bilingual service, please use the council's complaints procedure on the [Comments, Compliments and Complaints](#) page.

You also have a right to direct any complaints relating to the Welsh language to the Welsh Language Commissioner: [Welsh Language Commissioner's Website](#).

Here is the link to the details on the Council's website:

<http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/welsh-language/welsh-language-standards/>

As part of the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure, the Welsh Language Policy Officer is informed about every complaint pertaining to the Welsh language; in order to advise officers and consider further actions.

Complaints Received

Although the Council states that complaints may be presented in Welsh, only one complaint was received in Welsh out of 139 complaints received during the year. The complainant received a full response in Welsh, in accordance with the Council's Corporate Complaint Policy.

Complaints received directly	
Classification of standards	Nifer
Service delivery standards	2
Policy making standards	0
Operational standards	0

Two complaints were received during this reporting period, which referred to the Council's apparent failure to adhere to the Welsh Language Standards. Both cases were dealt with according to Step 1 of the Council's Concerns and Complaints Policy, and there was no need to proceed to a formal enquiry (i.e. Step 2), as it was possible to solve both cases following consideration by the managers of the relevant services. The information provided below gives details of the complaints and the restorative steps taken to solve them. In addition, information is given regarding the lessons learnt by both services, as a result of these complaints.

Complaint 1

Ref: 19612 (Step 1)
Received: 07/04/2021
Service: Highways and Environmental Services: Corporate Transport Unit
Result: Complaint supported
Response: 26/04/2021

Summary of the complaint:

Failure of the Corporate Transport Unit to respond to the complainant in Welsh, the complainant's chosen language; this was contrary to the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards set by Ceredigion County Council.

Findings:

Confirmation of this error. The enquiry discovered that the error had happened when recording the chosen language during the initial contact.

Restorative Steps:

The manager apologised for the error and provided a copy of the response in Welsh. The matter was also referred to the Council's Language Policy Officer.

Lessons learnt:

- The Clic Customer Contact Service has been reminded of the protocol of correctly recording the chosen language during the initial contact, in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards.
- The Officer who provided the response has been reminded of the statutory duty to respond in the customer's chosen language, and has also been reminded of the support and the options available, in order to ensure that the Council complies with the Welsh Language Standards requirements.
- The Officer who provided the response is attending the Welsh Language Standards Awareness Course and had received a copy of the Guidance; "Welsh Language Standards: What I need to do."

Complaint 2

Ref: 19855 (Step 1)
Received: 18/04/2021
Service: Economy and Regeneration Service: Planning Service
Outcome: Complaint supported
Response: 21/04/2021

Summary of complaint:

The Plannig Service's failure to publish correspondence received in Welsh on its web page. On the website, a translated version of the letter was published; this was contrary to the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

Findings:

The enquiry discovered that the officer had immediately translated the letter for the service's internal purposes. The planning website's policy practice is to publish the letter in the language in which the correspondence was received. However, this time the translated

version was published on the website and the error was not identified until the Complainant drew the matter to the Service's attention.

Restorative Steps:

The complainant received an explanation for the error, as well as receiving an apology. The original Welsh version was posted on the website.

Lessons Learnt:

- Planning service staff were reminded of their duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards' requirements, making sure to respect service users' chosen language.
- Members of staff in the planning service were also reminded that letters should be checked before being published on the Planning Website, so that they were published in the original language, according to the Council's planning policy.

SECTION 5: Conclusions

This report notes our progress towards fulfilling the Welsh Language Standards as well as presenting specific data for the 2021-22 financial year. We are pleased with the progress made but acknowledge that there are still improvements to be made to the Welsh-medium provision within our services. However, the pandemic and remote working have created a number of language planning related challenges, and we will need to be mindful of these as we move on to the next phase.

Challenges as we move forward:

Interim Hybrid Working Policy

It has to be acknowledged that working remotely has provided staff with new opportunities, but it might have had a less positive impact on the use of the Welsh language. It is correct to note that it is much more difficult to monitor the use of Welsh when everyone is working from home. In an office situation, the use of the Welsh language was organic, with colleagues being able to encourage one another. The Welsh language was heard in a formal context, but also informally, for example, in the corridor, over a cup of tea, by the photocopier or in the canteen. It is quite possible that a number of officers no longer hear the Welsh language, and this may impact on their confidence in using the Welsh language with service users. Because they are working from home, some Welsh speakers are no longer in the habit of using Welsh. More work will be needed to remind staff members as to their right to use the Welsh language; ensuring also that they have the confidence to use Welsh in their dealings with service users; in order to ensure that the Council continues to be able to comply with the Welsh Language Standards as has been agreed upon. As the Council implements its Interim Hybrid Working Policy, the Language Unit will have to ensure that there is sufficient support and resources available for staff to be able to operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards requirements. One of those actions will be revising the 'Iaith ar Waith' pages on the intranet; in order to ensure that the latest advice and templates can be easily accessed.

Recruitment

In the recovery phase following the pandemic, several sectors across the Authority are finding it very challenging to recruit professional workers; for example, there is a great shortage of Welsh speaking professional social care workers. It is of key importance that the workforce has the necessary skills to provide the interactive offer of a Welsh language service. As we move forward, we will need to revise the method used by the Council to assess the language skill requirement for vacant and new posts. In order to ensure that our ability to offer the

interactive Welsh language service is not decreased/diluted, we need to work to ensure that our staff have the appropriate skills and confidence. The fact that the Clic Customer Care Service places great emphasis on language skills as part of its recruitment process has enabled the provision of a high quality Welsh language service from the outset.

Learning and Improving Language Skills

It is evident that the change to providing on-line Welsh language training has provided new opportunities for some members of staff, 80 members of staff took advantage of this training. However, it is quite likely that this change will slow down the development of some individuals, as the same opportunities do not exist at home to practise their skills between more formal lessons. Some learners will neither see nor hear the Welsh language for long periods between the formal lessons. Therefore, the challenge is to maintain the momentum whilst working from home. The Council intends relaunching the Language Buddy Scheme, whereby a learner is paired with a Welsh language speaker. Twenty learners expressed an interest in the scheme and arrangements will be made to pair learners with mentors for the summer term. Welsh improvement courses will need to be reintroduced in order to boost learners' confidence to use the Welsh language publicly. The council has 21 members of staff who attend the Advanced Welsh course. We will need to work hard with this cohort, so that they make the transition to becoming fluent Welsh speakers. In terms of developing basic courtesy skills in the language, the Council needs to make better use of the online courses available via the Welsh Learning Centre, this in turn will free our Work Welsh tutor so that he can focus on the advanced levels of language learning. We will be looking at our arrangements during the next period.

The public's use of Welsh language services

The Welsh Language Commissioner's guidelines on how to promote the use of Welsh services has tried to consider the factors that influence people's decisions as to the use of language; how do people decide whether to use the Welsh service or not?

"Users tend to follow the norm, and accept the default choice. Because of this, we would like to see organisations designing their services, so that there is no need to make any effort or additional decision in order to use the Welsh language." Users should not have to go out of their way to use the Welsh language. A study of data showing the numbers of Welsh language service users gives the incontestable impression that the number of Welsh language service users does not correlate with the number of Welsh speakers in the county. In the Assurance Report 'Rights in Use' the Welsh Language Commissioner discusses the changes which could lead to an increase in the use of Welsh language services. Prominent themes include the following:

- The availability of Welsh language services which are of an equal standard to the English medium services offered
- The need to raise an awareness of the Welsh services available and to make the existence of these services clear
- The need to initiate contact in Welsh and as a default service
- People do not want any fuss or embarrassment – they are not likely to ask specifically for a Welsh service if it is not immediately available
- The need for continuity through the various aspects of contact with the Council
- People are unwilling to complain about a lack of service, as it is troublesome and they are worried that they will be treated less favourably
- The need to use language that is easy to understand.

During the next phase, we will need to consider the ways the Council provides the interactive offer of a Welsh service, and how its services are organised so that Welsh speakers are more likely to use the Welsh language services available.

Action Plan

During the next phase of implementing the Language Policy, our aim will be to consider the following spheres of action:

- Development of a training pack on the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards for councillors, following the May 2022 election.
- Revision of the Grants Policy in order to ensure that the Welsh Language Commissioner's good practice is highlighted.
- Revision of the Integrated Impact Assessment Guide, in order to assist officers to note any impact on the Welsh language.
- Creation of a report which outlines what the Ceredigion Language Strategy has achieved and preparation of the Strategy's development for the next five years.
- Coordination of a project Group to develop a 'Welcome Pack' in an attempt to assimilate incomers: work which stems from the Bilingual Futures Forum
- Introduction of a plan which recommends improvements in order to fulfil the requirements of the Action Standards – using Welsh internally, as well as promoting the concept of a bilingual workplace
- Updating of the 'Iaith ar Waith' pages on the Council intranet, to include current guidelines and developing the supplementary support material required to promote the Welsh language and to assist staff in their use the Welsh language.
- Revision of the Council's method of providing the language option offer
- A project to promote the awareness of Welsh culture and Welshness in residential homes (commenced in 2019 but postponed because of Covid-19). Assessing the possibility of relaunching the project.

Appendix 1: Language Skills Data Data 2021-22 by service

Speaking and Listening skills

Department	Number of staff with Welsh language skills	Number of staff with no Welsh skills	Percentage (%) of staff with Welsh language skills
The entire organisation	Total: 1966 ALTE 5: 651 ALTE 4: 315 ALTE 3: 312 ALTE 2: 294 ALTE 1: 394	79 3.86%	Total: 96.14% ALTE 5: 31.83 ALTE 4: 15.40 ALTE 3: 15.26 ALTE 2: 14.38 ALTE 1: 19.27
Customer Contact Service	Total: 136 ALTE 5: 55 ALTE 4: 34 ALTE 3: 17 ALTE 2: 21 ALTE 1: 9	3 2.16%	Total: 97.84% ALTE 5: 39.57 ALTE 4: 24.46 ALTE 3: 12.23 ALTE 2: 15.11 ALTE 1: 6.47
Democratic Service	Total: 114 ALTE 5: 47 ALTE 4: 23 ALTE 3: 23 ALTE 2: 10 ALTE 1: 11	3 2.56%	Total: 97.44% ALTE 5: 40.17 ALTE 4: 19.66 ALTE 3: 19.66 ALTE 2: 8.55 ALTE 1: 9.40
Economy and Regeneration Service	Total: 202 ALTE 5: 41 ALTE 4: 24 ALTE 3: 34 ALTE 2: 30 ALTE 1: 73	14 6.48%	Total: 93.52% ALTE 5: 18.98 ALTE 4: 11.11 ALTE 3: 15.74 ALTE 2: 13.89 ALTE 1: 33.80
Finance and Procurement Service	Total: 99 ALTE 5: 25 ALTE 4: 18 ALTE 3: 15 ALTE 2: 23 ALTE 1: 18	1 1%	Total: 99% ALTE 5: 25 ALTE 4: 18 ALTE 3: 15 ALTE 2: 23 ALTE 1: 18
Highways and Environmental Services	Total: 245 ALTE 5: 53 ALTE 4: 51 ALTE 3: 37 ALTE 2: 42 ALTE 1: 62	6 2.39%	Total: 97.61% ALTE 5: 21.12 ALTE 4: 20.32 ALTE 3: 14.74 ALTE 2: 16.73 ALTE 1: 24.70
Legal Services and Governance	Total: 17 ALTE 5: 3 ALTE 4: 4 ALTE 3: 6 ALTE 2: 2	2 10.53%	Total: 89.47% ALTE 5: 15.79 ALTE 4: 21.05 ALTE 3: 31.58 ALTE 2: 10.53

	ALTE 1: 2		ALTE 1: 10.53
People and Organisation Service	Total: 50 ALTE 5: 22 ALTE 4: 9 ALTE 3: 8 ALTE 2: 9 ALTE 1: 2	1 1.96%	Total: 98.04% ALTE 5: 43.14 ALTE 4: 17.65 ALTE 3: 15.69 ALTE 2: 17.65 ALTE 1: 3.92
Policy, Performance and Public Protection Service	Total: 125 ALTE 5: 36 ALTE 4: 26 ALTE 3: 28 ALTE 2: 15 ALTE 1: 20	10 7.41%	Total: 92.59% ALTE 5: 26.67 ALTE 4: 19.26 ALTE 3: 20.74 ALTE 2: 11.11 ALTE 1: 14.81
Porth Cymorth Cynnar	Total: 245 ALTE 5: 105 ALTE 4: 59 ALTE 3: 35 ALTE 2: 26 ALTE 1: 20	3 1.21%	Total: 98.79% ALTE 5: 42.34 ALTE 4: 23.79 ALTE 3: 14.11 ALTE 2: 10.48 ALTE 1: 8.06
Porth Cynnal	Total: 116 ALTE 5: 33 ALTE 4: 11 ALTE 3: 17 ALTE 2: 21 ALTE 1: 34	4 3.33%	Total: 96.67% ALTE 5: 27.5 ALTE 4: 9.17 ALTE 3: 14.17 ALTE 2: 17.50 ALTE 1: 28.33
Porth Gofal	Total: 328 ALTE 5: 84 ALTE 4: 33 ALTE 3: 72 ALTE 2: 65 ALTE 1: 74	27 7.61%	Total: 92.39% ALTE 5: 23.66 ALTE 4: 9.30 ALTE 3: 20.28 ALTE 2: 18.31 ALTE 1: 20.85
Schools and Culture Service	Total: 334 ALTE 5: 156 ALTE 4: 30 ALTE 3: 27 ALTE 2: 39 ALTE 1: 82	5 1.47%	Total: 98.53% ALTE 5: 46.02 ALTE 4: 8.85 ALTE 3: 7.96 ALTE 2: 11.50 ALTE 1: 24.19
Leadership	Total: 3 ALTE 5: 2 ALTE 4: # ALTE 3: # ALTE 2: # ALTE 1: 1	1 25%	Total: 75% ALTE 5: 50 ALTE 4: # ALTE 3: # ALTE 2: # ALTE 1: 25

ALTE Framework for Ceredigion County Council:

Can-do Statements...

Level	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can pronounce place names and personal names correctly. • Can greet customers on a reception desk or on the telephone. • Can begin and end a conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand short reports on familiar matters, if these are expressed in simple language, such as elementary signs, simple instructions and agenda contents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write personal names, place names, job titles and names of Council departments. • Can write a simple request to a colleague, i.e. So and so has called.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the essence of a conversation. • Can receive and understand simple messages following normal patterns, such as time and place of meeting, request to talk to someone. • Can pass on basic information and simple instructions. • Can begin and end conversations and meetings bilingually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand most short reports and familiar instructions within the area of expertise, provided enough time is given. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a short simple message on paper or by e-mail to a colleague within the Council or a known external contact
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand and participate in most day-to-day conversations in the office. • Can advise the public on general matters within own area of work, but must turn to English for technical or specialist terms. • Can understand most reports, documents and correspondence he/she is likely to encounter during his/her work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand most reports, documents and correspondence he/she is likely to encounter during his/her work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medru llunio negeseuon ac adroddiadau anffurfiol at ddefnydd mewnol.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write informal messages and reports for internal use. • Can contribute to meetings or presentations within own area of work, but must turn to English for technical or specialist terms. 		
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can contribute effectively to internal and external meetings in the context of the job area. • Can understand differences in language and dialect. • Can argue for or against a specific case. • Can chair meetings and answer questions confidently from the Chair. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand correspondence and reports expressed in standard language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write business correspondence, short reports, e-mail messages and information literature with editorial assistance.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can contribute fluently and confidently in relation to all aspects of day-to-day work, including discussing and advising upon technical, specialist or sensitive matters. • Can contribute to meetings and make presentations fluently and confidently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand reports, documents and articles he/she is likely to read during his/her work, including complicated concepts expressed in abstruse terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write business correspondence, short reports, e-mail messages and information literature to an acceptable standard with the assistance of language tools. • Can write detailed notes in a meeting whilst contributing fully.