



WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

This document is also available in Welsh.

1. Introduction

Bridgend County Borough Council is required to produce and publish an annual report by the 30 June each year under the new Welsh Language Standards.

The 2015/16 annual report covers the following:

- The way/s in which the council has prepared for compliance with the March 2016 Welsh Language Standards;
- The period during which Bridgend County Borough Council was required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards i.e. 30 and 31 March 2016.

The requirement to produce and publish this annual report is outlined in the following standards:

158	(1) You must produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the service delivery standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year. (2) The annual report must include the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which you were under a duty to comply. (3) You must publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates. (4) You must publicise the fact that you have published an annual report. (5) You must ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available— (a) on your website, and (b) in each of your offices that are open to the public.
164	(1) You must produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the policy making standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year. (2) The annual report must include the number of complaints you received during the year which related to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you were under a duty to comply. (3) You must publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates. (4) You must publicise the fact that you have published an annual report. (5) You must ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available - (a) on your website, and (b) in each of your offices that are open to the public.
170	(1) You must produce a report (an "annual report") in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the operational standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year. (2) the annual report must include the following information (where relevant, to the extent you are under a duty to comply with the standards referred to) - (a) the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 151); (b) the number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152); (c) if a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152); (ch) the number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where - (i) Welsh language skills were essential, (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post, (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable, or (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary, (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154); (d) the number of

<p>complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the operational standards with which you were under a duty to comply. 3) You must publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates.</p> <p>(4) You must publicise the fact that you have published an annual report.</p> <p>(5) You must ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available (a) on your website, and (b) in each of your offices that are open to the public.</p>

2. How the council has prepared for compliance with the March 2016 standards

- a) In summary, the council has taken the following steps towards compliance with all March 2016 standards:
- has a lead officer for Welsh language and equalities;
 - held staff awareness-raising sessions in the summer of 2015;
 - set up a Welsh Language Standards Board, chaired by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, that consists of directorate representatives who have responsibility for jointly interpreting the requirements of the standards, collating and disseminating data and monitoring compliance;
 - developed an action plan and put our standards into ten key themes. Each theme has a lead officer who ensures the standards under those themes are communicated and that plans are in place to ensure these standards are met;
 - developed a communications plan to ensure that regular information is being filtered through the organisation in a consistent and timely way;
 - developed a risk register to help identify what actions need to be put in place to ensure compliance with the standards;
 - developed a team of Welsh Language Champions who help to raise awareness of the standards and provide support and guidance to staff;
 - developed staff intranet pages so employees can reference information on the standards and access resources that will help them in their day-to-day roles;
 - issued regular communications to employees through email and staff newsletters;
 - developed a series of briefing sessions for staff across all service areas during March 2016;
 - introduced a Welsh Language Standards email account for staff to ask questions. This was also used to develop FAQs which were circulated to all staff;
 - provided front-line staff with Welsh language training enabling them to meet and greet customers bilingually.

b) Service Delivery standards:

The steps undertaken by the council to comply with the Service Delivery standards can be summarised as:

- external telephone customers are greeted bilingually (Welsh followed by English) and, where relevant, conversations continue in Welsh until they are concluded or callers are passed to Welsh speaking staff (if available), or to English speaking staff if no Welsh speaker is available and the customer is agreeable to this;
- the council has the same number for its main telephone number, call centre numbers and helpline numbers for Welsh and English callers. If a Welsh service is not available callers are advised, in Welsh when such a service will be available. Welsh language callers to the council's main telephone number are also able to leave a message in Welsh;
- Welsh language training for all front-line staff in reception areas has been provided to 48 staff on 30 and 31 March 2016. Staff taking direct calls have access to resources to help them do this. When telephone numbers are advertised the council aims to ensure it states calls are welcomed in Welsh and English;
- attendees at meetings are asked whether they would like the meeting to be conducted in Welsh and, if so, either simultaneous translation is arranged or, the meeting may be conducted in Welsh if the employee is a Welsh speaker;
- the council sends bilingual invitations to public meetings and to those that we fund by fifty per cent. Anyone presenting at the meeting will be asked if they wish to use Welsh as well as attendees being told that they are welcome to use the Welsh language if we are advised in advance of the meeting;
- the council assesses the need for education courses open to the public to be provided in Welsh;
- bilingual public-facing marketing, advertising and publicity materials are produced;
- bilingual public-facing policies, strategies, consultation papers and brochures are produced and we ensure that any press statements issued by the communications team are bilingual unless the media outlet has selected one language only and we have recorded this;
- Welsh social media messages are responded to in Welsh;
- when street, place and direction signs are replaced following damage or normal wear and tear, they are replaced with bilingual signs with the Welsh text positioned so as to be read first;
- bilingual official notices are produced;
- reception staff who are able to speak Welsh wear lanyards to identify themselves as Welsh speakers. Reception staff who are learning

Welsh are encouraged to wear lanyards to identify themselves as learners;

- any audio announcements we make are bilingual with Welsh coming first;
- grant applications (and the process) may be made in Welsh;
- tenders and associated interviews may be made/held in Welsh.

c) Policy Making standards:

The steps undertaken by the council to comply with the Policy Making standards can be summarised as:

- our EIA process has been revised to include specific sections and guidance on the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards for managers to use when policies are being revised or developed;
- participants to consultation and research activities are asked for their views on whether the policy decision could impact the use of the Welsh language;
- the effects that awarding grants may have on the use of the Welsh language are considered.

d) Operational standards:

The steps undertaken by the council to comply with the Operational standards can be summarised as:

- a policy on using Welsh in the workplace has been developed which outlines how staff can be supported to use Welsh internally in their day-to-day business;
- staff have been provided with software to check their Welsh grammar and spelling;
- our intranet homepage and menus are bilingual and fully functional. Welsh language pages correspond with English pages and links are provided between these pages;
- we have developed a system for capturing details of all employees' Welsh language skills;
- standard wording for 'out of office' messages for emails has been provided to staff;
- a logo has been provided to Welsh speaking employees to use on email signatures to identify them as being Welsh speakers or learners;
- in order to increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and improve the Welsh language service provided by the council, all positions will be advertised with Welsh desirable, unless the screening identifies an essential requirement. This is reported on in more detail within this annual report;

- recruitment applicants are able to receive all documentation in Welsh and access the selection process in Welsh if required;
- the signage in our main reception area is bilingual with Welsh positioned so as to be read first.

3. Complaints received by the council on 30 and 31 March 2016.

- a) **Service Delivery standards:** none received/recorded.
- b) **Policy Making standards:** none received/recorded.

4. Employee skills and training:

- a) **The number of employees who had Welsh language skills at the end of the financial year (31 March 2016):**

The following data relates to employees as at 31 March 2016:

	Schools	%	Other Services	%
Welsh speaker				
○ a little	286	8.8%	380	11.6%
○ fairly good	59	1.8%	46	1.4%
○ fluent	172	5.3%	94	2.9%
	517	16.0%	520	15.9%
Welsh reader				
○ a little	270	8.3%	397	12.2%
○ fairly good	63	1.9%	62	1.9%
○ fluent	173	5.3%	91	2.8%
	506	15.6%	550	16.8%
Welsh writer				
○ a little	244	7.5%	296	9.1%
○ fairly good	59	1.8%	43	1.3%
○ fluent	167	5.2%	85	2.6%
	470	14.5%	424	13.0%

The total number of schools employees was 3241 and the total number of employees working in other services was 3265.

- b) **The number of employees who attended training courses offered in Welsh on 30 and 31 March 2016:**

No courses offered in Welsh were arranged on 30 and 31 March 2016.

- c) **Where Welsh versions of courses were held on 30 and 31 March 2016, the percentage of staff who attended the Welsh course:**

N/A.

5. Recruitment and selection:

a) The number of new and vacant posts advertised on 30 and 31 March 2016 which were categorised as posts where –

- i. Welsh language skills were essential – 1,
- ii. Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post – 0,
- iii. Welsh language skills were desirable – 0, or
- iv. Welsh language skills were not necessary - 17.

To assist the council in complying with Standard 170 it has:

- i. revised its Managers' Recruitment and Selection Guidelines;
- ii. updated its associated e-learning module to clarify the need for Welsh;
- iii. language skills for vacancies to be considered;
- iv. Issued a new vacancy management form to record the assessment of skills and
- v. made a policy decision that all vacancies be advertised with skills in Welsh as desirable except where Welsh skills are assessed as being essential.

6. Reception services, contact centres and telephone contact centres.

a) Demand for Welsh services in the Customer Contact Centre on 30 and 31 March 2016.

	March 30	March 31
Face to face interactions	0	0
Total visits	143	170
Welsh requests as % of total interactions conducted	0.00%	0.00%

b) Demand for Welsh services in the Telephone Contact Centre on 30 and 31 March 2016.

Telephone customers requesting a Welsh service do so by choosing option 7 on the opening bilingual message.

Call volumes	March 30	March 31
During normal working hours	3	7
Out of hours	0	0
Total calls (Welsh and English)	1304	1254
Welsh requests as % of total calls	0.23%	0.56%

7. Equality Impact Assessments carried out on 30 and 31 March 2016

- a. **Number of full EIAs undertaken:** none.
- b. **Number that considered impact on Welsh Language Standards:**
N/A.
- c. **Number of policies/strategies revised (if any) as a result:** N/A.