

Welsh Language Standards

Annual report 2018/19

This document is also available in Welsh.

1. Introduction

The Welsh Language Standards require Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to produce and publish an annual report by 30 June each year.

This 2018/19 annual report covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 and outlines how the council continues to be compliant during this period as well as highlighting any new developments/areas of progress.

2. How the council complies with the Welsh Language Standards

Since the last annual report of 2017/18 the council is no longer under challenge for any standards and any changes to compliance dates, extensions or circumstance for the previously challenged standards can be viewed in the council's amended compliance notice.

2.1 General compliance

- The council continues to have a lead officer which covers the Welsh language
- Employees continue to receive regular updates and information regarding the Welsh language in terms of compliance, access to resources such as training and raising the profile of the language and culture
- Our corporate induction programme has a specific section dedicated to the Welsh language and its importance, which signposts new employees to other information resources
- The Welsh Language Standards Board has been re-established along with a new action plan to develop specific standards and monitor compliance
- Welsh language continues to remain on the council's risk register in order to help monitor compliance
- Employees continue to be able to access the Welsh Language Champions for support and advice
- Staff intranet pages and the dedicated Welsh email inbox still exist. Some of the intranet pages have now been updated but there is still work to be completed, details of this are contained within our new action plan

- The council continues to provide a range of Welsh language training and resources for staff
- Employees are able to access two different Welsh translation contracts in order to ensure we can meet demand as well as access a range of different types of translation support
- We continue to have a [compliance document](#) available which details how we will comply with the relevant service delivery, operational, record-keeping, promotional and policy making standards. Our [complaints procedure](#) is also available on our website as well as previous [annual reports](#)
- We continue to provide information to the Welsh Language Commissioner as requested.

2.2 Service delivery standards

In 18/19 we are continuing to:

- Respond to correspondence received in Welsh where a reply is required
- Issue generic bilingual or separate English and Welsh versions of correspondence, treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English
- Provide a bilingual greeting over the telephone 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
- Operate a single main telephone number (01656 643643) for those wishing to speak to someone in Welsh or English. If a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available at the time of calling, callers are advised, in Welsh, when such a service will be available. Those wishing to speak to someone in Welsh can also leave a message in Welsh
- Aim to state on materials that advertise a BCBC telephone number that calls are welcomed in Welsh and English. We continue to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language on the advertising materials
- Ask people we have invited to a meeting if they wish to use the Welsh language at the meeting and put the necessary arrangements in place to facilitate this. The meeting toolkit that was developed identified that during 18/19, 877 people attending meetings were offered the opportunity to conduct the meeting in Welsh
- Send bilingual invitations to BCBC public meetings/events (where relevant) and those meetings/events funded by BCBC (50% or more funding). Anyone presenting at meetings will be asked if they wish to use Welsh as well as attendees being advised that they are welcome to use the Welsh language (if we are advised in advance) at the meeting. Materials used for advertising these meeting/events or for display at the meetings/events are bilingual
- Assess the demand for Welsh language education courses that are open to the public and if there is a need, offer the course in Welsh

- Produce public-facing marketing, advertising and publicity materials (including press releases and statements) bilingually. This is also applicable to public-facing corporate documents such as policies and rules as well as consultation documentation. These documents aim to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English. Separate English versions of documents that are available in Welsh (where they are required to be) state this on the English version
- Produce publically available forms bilingually or as separate English and Welsh versions. If separate versions are in place, we state on the English version of the form that the Welsh is available
- Respond to Welsh language social media messages in Welsh where a reply is required
- Replace street, place and direction signs (including temporary signs where applicable) following damage or normal wear and tear, with bilingual signs with the Welsh text appearing first
- Produce official notices bilingually with the Welsh text appearing first
- Have Welsh speaking reception staff wearing lanyards to show customers they are able to provide a Welsh language service
- Make bilingual audio announcements with the Welsh announcement first
- Make grant applications (and the process), tenders (and interviews) available in Welsh
- Promote Welsh language services that we have available as required
- We continue to produce our agenda and minutes for Cabinet and committee meetings bilingually (standard 41). These are available on our website
- During this period we have continued to develop bilingual content and functionality on the website as required (standard 52 and 56)
- Continue to post bilingually on social media and respond to Welsh queries received in Welsh, where a response is required. We do not post bilingually in circumstance where an emergency or urgent communications need to be issued where.

New developments for 18/19:

- We are now compliant with standards 2,3,5,7 and 21 we have developed a central citizen language preference database which is accessible to employees via the staff intranet. Work on the functionality of the central citizen language database is has been completed and we are working to ensure that My Account subscribers are manually input into the central system. This system assists us to record and act upon people's language preference
- We are now compliant with standards 29 and 29a, therefore we ensure that where more than person is invited to a meeting (and that meeting relates to the wellbeing of one or more of the individuals invited) attendees are asked if

they wish to use the Welsh language, and ensure if they do that translation is available

- During the period we have started to draft guidance for staff to help them to comply with standard 1 which includes a standardised process for dealing with correspondence received in Welsh. This guidance includes a set of standardised responses which can be utilised before a full response can be provided
- We have ensured that with the exception of parking machines (extension until August 2021) all self-service machines are fully functional in Welsh
- Amended and communicated our guidance for reception staff in line with changes to our compliance document for standard 64 (which now only applies to our main civic Offices reception) and for the introduction of a new standard (66) which applies to all other reception areas
- Amended our signage for the changes to standard 64 and 66 in order to manage expectations.

2.3 Policy-making standards

In 18/19 we are continuing to:

- Use our equalities impact assessment (EIA) process to ensure consideration is given to the Welsh language when policies are revised or developed
- Ask those taking part in consultation, engagement and research activity for their views on whether a policy decision (if applicable) could impact on the use of the Welsh language
- Consider the effects that awarding grants may have on the use of the Welsh language

New developments for 18/19:

- We have done further work to develop our EIA process internally. This has included updating our toolkit and improving our central record of completed EIAs ensuring that we are able to accurately monitor and record the EIAs completed annually
- We have re-established the Welsh Language Standards Board and developed a new action plan to develop specific standards and monitor compliance.
- The Welsh Language action plan contains actions that have been developed as a result of WLC seminars that were held during 2018, and includes ensuring relevant wording in relation to adverse and positive effects on the language exists consistently in every policy making consultation and ensure the outcomes of the adverse/positive impact is recorded in the consultation.

2.4 Operational standards

In 18/19 we are continuing to:

- Have a policy on using Welsh within the workplace available on our intranet for staff to access
- Allow employees to access the complaints procedure and process in Welsh including relevant documentation
- Allow employees to access the disciplinary procedure and process in Welsh including relevant documentation
- Provide access to computer software for staff to check spelling and grammar
- Ensure the relevant sections/interface of our intranet are accessible in Welsh and have a dedicated Welsh section on the intranet as a resource for staff
- Assess the Welsh language skills of our employees on an ongoing basis
- Have 'meet and greet' training and Cwrs Mynediad courses available for staff
- Have e-learning packages available for staff on Welsh language awareness and culture as well as on the Welsh language standards
- Provide access to bilingual email signatures and out of office messages. Welsh speakers and Welsh learners are encouraged to identify themselves as such on their email signature (using the relevant recognised logos)
- Assess the Welsh language skills for new and vacant posts. A breakdown of this information is included in section five
- Ensure the job applications process and documentation is available in Welsh and that the Welsh language process is treated no less favourably than the English. This also includes contracts of employment
- Check language preference of employees to provide correspondence relating to their employment, and various employment related forms in Welsh as required
- Ensure relevant HR policies are available in Welsh, and provide training (e-learning) in Welsh in recruitment and interviewing, performance management, Induction and using Welsh effectively in meetings, interviews and complaints and disciplinary procedures (standards 128 and 129)
- Have bilingual signage in place at our main reception area (Civic Offices), with Welsh appearing first
- Have a [five year strategy](#) in place which we report on at our Cabinet Equalities Committee on an annual basis.

New developments for 18/19:

- Development of an assessment tool to help managers further understand the linguistic skills and development needs of their team so future training can be more targeted. This was piloted in customer services during 17/18 and rolled out to other reception areas i.e. Bridgend Day Centre and Trem-y-mor in 18/19

- The development of the five year strategy in relation to training continues, with Entry Level Year 1 and Year 2 continuing to run, and the introduction to Foundation Level Year 1
- Successful recruitment campaign undertaken with our Welsh Secondary School to appoint Welsh speaking apprentices, resulting in the appointment of two Welsh speaking apprentices in HR
- Business Welsh was run for 8 weeks for our 7 Welsh speaking apprentices to help them develop their Welsh Language Skills for the workplace
- Work to develop our five year strategy is ongoing including looking at partnership opportunities and different ways of measuring the effectiveness of public-facing activities as well as training opportunities for staff and developments in Welsh Medium education and childcare
- We have been successful in a bid to develop Welsh Medium childcare settings across the County Borough, a steering group made up of childcare professional and third sector colleagues has been established to ensure effective delivery over the next three years.

2.5 Record-keeping standards

In 18/19 we are continuing to:

- Record any complaints received relating to our compliance as part of our corporate complaints system
- Monitor and record the number of employees accessing training courses through the medium of English and Welsh - see section four for further details
- Record Welsh language skills of employees and assessments of new and vacant posts – see section five for further details

3. Complaints

- An informal complaint was made on 18 January 2018 to the Highways department regarding incorrect signage and availability of Welsh speakers on the phone. The complaint was responded to by the 29 January 2018. No further action has been taken
- A complaint was made to the Welsh Language Commissioner on 1 May 2018 in relation to a failure to respond to a Welsh language email. This investigation has now been concluded and we have been issued with a compliance notice which must be actioned by September 2019. This compliance notice states that we must produce clear guidelines which will assist staff to comply with standard 1 and take steps to raise awareness of standard 1

- A complaint was made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner in relation to an email response being provided in Welsh but with English only attachments as well as issues related to paying council tax online and being diverted to the English version of the external system as opposed to the Welsh version. Investigation is ongoing
- A complaint was made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner in relation to English wording on the Welsh page of democratic services website. After being provided with information the Commissioner concluded that no further action was necessary
- A complaint was received 8 February 2018 by the commissioner regarding a consultation presentation to parents that was held at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd as part of the Post-16 review. The allegation is that the session was available in English only. Investigation is ongoing
- A complaint was received on 12 February 2019 by the commissioner in relation to an English only maintenance/works sign being placed West Drive, Porthcawl (Windsor Road junction).The signage was immediately removed. Initial information was provided and no further action has been taken
- A complaint was received on 12 February 2019 from the commissioner in relation to an alleged failure to provide a Welsh language version of the current subsidised bus consultation document at Pencoed Library. Initial information was provided and no further action has been taken
- There were no complaints received under the policy making standards.

4. Employee skills and training

Welsh language skills as at 31 March 2019:

Description	Schools				All other services			
	Female	Male	Total	%	Female	Male	Total	%
Total headcount	2,490	510	3,000		2,284	667	2,951	
Welsh speaker								
'A little'	327	57	384	12.80%	331	93	424	14.37%
'Fairly good'	64	17	81	2.70%	38	9	47	1.59%
'Fluent'	129	20	149	4.97%	91	22	113	3.83%
'No'	314	67	381	12.70%	1,088	331	1419	48.09%
No response	1,656	349	2005	66.83%	736	212	948	32.12%
Welsh reader								
'A little'	318	56	374	12.47%	342	95	437	14.81%
'Fairly good'	75	18	93	3.10%	49	19	68	2.30%
'Fluent'	129	21	150	5.00%	89	21	110	3.73%
'No'	312	66	378	12.60%	1067	320	1387	47.00%

No response	1,656	349	2005	66.83%	737	212	949	32.16%
Welsh writer								
'A little'	287	53	340	11.33%	262	61	323	10.95%
'Fairly good'	65	15	80	2.67%	49	14	63	2.13%
'Fluent'	123	20	143	4.77%	77	18	95	3.22%
'No'	358	73	431	14.37%	1,160	361	1521	51.54%
No response	1,657	349	2006	66.87%	736	213	949	32.16%

Please note:

- The 'Schools' category covers employees directly employed by governing bodies. Inclusion staff are included under the 'All other services' category
- The 'No response' category covers employees who have not provided details of Welsh language skills
- The skill levels identified are based on individual self-assessment
- 211 employees hold a school position and an 'All other services' position and are counted once in each category.

Number of employees who attended training courses in Welsh between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019:

- Welsh language 'Meet and Greet' training was provided to 33 attendees (three sessions during 2018/19)
- 37 employees have attended 'Cwrs Mynediad' training in 18/19, enabling them to develop their language skills further. This comprised of one class for year 1 year 2 and year 3, each based on two hours per week over 30 weeks. Business Welsh training was also provided to 8 individuals over 10 weeks in 2018/19
- There were no requests for face to face training materials to be made available in Welsh during 2018/19
- There were 0 Welsh language e-learning module completions during 2018/19.

5. Recruitment and selection

Number of new and vacant posts advertised during 2018/19 where Welsh language skills were:

Essential: 10	Desirable: 454
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6. Reception services: contact centres and telephone contact centres

Demand for Welsh services in the Customer Contact Centre between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019:

Face to face interactions in Welsh	4
Total visits	30,989
Welsh requests as % of total interactions conducted	0.01%

Demand for Welsh services in the Telephone Contact Centre between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019 (telephone customers requesting a Welsh service do so by choosing option 7 on the opening bilingual message):

Volume of calls during normal working hours (Welsh and English)	161,483
Volume of calls received out of hours (Welsh and English)	N/A*
Total calls received (Welsh and English)	161,483
Volume of calls in Welsh	95
Welsh requests as a % of total calls	0.06%

Requests for Face to Face contact have remained consistent.

Telephony requests have reduced significantly as result of recycling and waste enquiries being handled directly by our partner Kier.

*In 2017/18 our telephony systems changed and as a result our ability to report on calls (English and Welsh) made outside of office hours has changed. This has only recently been resolved, with a separate queue in place to handle calls out of hours. This was not in place before as the system CISCO was not used in CCSU. Next year we should be able to report on these figures.

7. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) carried out between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019

Six full EIAs were carried out and considered the impact of the policy/strategy on people's opportunity to use the Welsh language in a positive or negative way and treat both languages equally. No impact was identified and as a result, no amendments were made to the proposed policies/strategies assessed.

8. Promoting and raising awareness of the Welsh language and Welsh culture

The council promoted the following events and activities between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019:

- St Dwynwen's Day;
- Internal emails about the citizens language preference database;
- Internal emails about the Welsh language toolkit;

- Shwmae Sumae Day;
- St David's Day;
- BCBC Welsh language social media accounts;
- Welsh culture/language fairs and festivals;
- Ras Yr Iath
- Welsh language play scheme (Menter Bro Ogwr)
- Welsh Medium education;
- Welsh Medium provision for pupils with autism
- Welsh Medium childcare.

The detail of these promotional activities will be documented as part of our reporting process for our Welsh language strategy. This period will be reported on at our Cabinet Equalities Committee in November 2019.