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RHONDDA CYNON TAF
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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welsh Language Standards Compliance Report to the
Welsh Language Commissioner
2016 – 2017

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

June 2017

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INTRODUCTION: Welsh Language Standards

Rhondda Cynon Taf received its final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30th September 2015 which outlined the Council's duty to meet 171 of the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. An application to challenge 14 of the Standards was presented to the Commissioner on 29 March 2016. Following consolidation and further consultation, the Welsh Language Commissioner determined that no action should be applied to 9 of the Standards which were subject to challenge and a variation should be applied to 5 of the Standards which were subject to challenge. The amended Compliance Notice was presented to RCTCBC on 9th September 2016.

Vision

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is committed to creating an environment which encourages residents to use Welsh in their interaction with the council and supporting staff to use Welsh in the workplace.

Governance and accountability

In 2014 the Council established a Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group as a sub-committee of the Council's Cabinet. It is a cross-party group with community representation. The Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group oversees strategic developments, considers reports from relevant departments on Welsh language issues, makes recommendations to the Council's Cabinet and monitors Council-wide developments. It has responsibility for assessing the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan, monitoring the Council's progress as it seeks to meet the Welsh Language Standards.

A Working Group of Chief Officers has also been established to ensure that the required operational changes are implemented and to secure a collaborative approach that will support services to address any areas for improvement.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities: the Council's commitments under the Welsh Language Standards are integrated into the authority's planning documents including the Improvement Plan 2015, the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Corporate Plan 2016-2020. The Council's priorities are also informed by recent legislation including the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Care

and Well-being Act, 2016 that place responsibility on the Council to strengthen the Welsh language. The former Act requires public bodies to work towards seven national goals, one of which is 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language,' while the latter requires public service organisations to take into account the care and support services they provide to people who speak Welsh.

Reporting

This year has continued to be a year of transition from implementing the Welsh Language Scheme under the Welsh Language Act 1993 to implementing the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Due to the variations applied to some of the Standards by the Welsh Language Commissioner following an appeals process, this report this report officially covers the relevant Standards with which the Council has a duty to comply.

The report will be published by 30 June in compliance with Standards 158, 164 and (along with Appendix 1) details how the council has complied with the following Supplementary standards:

Service Delivery Standards

Operational Standard

Policy Making Standard

The report also presents data on the required indicators: i.e.

- number of staff who have Welsh language skills (Standard 151)
- number of staff who attended training courses if offered in Welsh (Standards 128/152)
- percentage of the total number of staff who attended any above courses (Standards 128/152)
- number of new and vacant posts that were advertised during the year which were categorised as (i) Welsh language skills essential (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post (iii) Welsh language skills desirable (iv) Welsh language skills not necessary
- the number of complaints received

Welsh Language Services Unit

The Council recognises that the Welsh Language Standards are to be given a high priority given the risks involved in terms of non-compliance. It recognises whole Council support is needed in order to offer and promote Welsh language services from the first point of contact. The Council invests in a 13 (2016/2017) strong Welsh Language Services Unit which undertakes to support all services and to provide the following:

- advice and support for all service areas on their responsibilities under the standard.
- translation of public facing documents
- identification of areas of potential non-compliance
- referral of formal complaints regarding non-compliance to the Council's Complaints Officer
- recording of informal customer complaints and half yearly reporting of these to the Welsh Language Working Group
- reporting on developments to the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group Welsh Language Working Group
- facilitation of staff committees e.g. Welsh Language Working Group (Y Gweithgor)
- attendance at the Fforwm Iaith
- liaison with Welsh-medium community organisations as appropriate

To address the risks, the Welsh Language Services Unit has developed relationships with all service areas in order to support the implementation of Standards. Monitoring systems are in place to ensure that any service led procedures facilitate the intended outcome of normalising use of the Welsh language and encouraging greater use.

The Welsh Language Services Unit has updated the Council's Welsh Language Policy/Staff Guidance to reflect the new statutory requirements. Additional budget was also secured, against trend, to allow for re-structure and increase in Translation Unit capacity.

All Chief Officers and Service Managers continued to be briefed during 2016/2017 to ensure understanding of how services are affected by the statutory Standards in order that services continue to address specific requirements and implications. In addition, budget was secured so that all front line staff attended a 3-hour training session. The training included understanding Standards that apply to customer service staff and how they affect their role and the importance of high quality customer service to all customers. Training also include language sessions i.e.

basic Welsh language greetings and conversations and continuing presentations by the Welsh Language Officer.

Guidance documents continued to be produced and disseminated including: *Welsh: What's Changed* brochure distributed to staff, available as pdf via intranet; *Extended Guidelines for Employees* and *Welsh @your fingertips* ICT brochure; mouse mats with key greetings.

As part of the Council's requirements to prepare a 5 year strategy under Standard 145, a public consultation took place between April and July 2016 with residents across Rhondda Cynon Taf to gather feedback on their priorities for Welsh Language services (April – June 2016). Consultation was also conducted with Menter Iaith, members of the Fforwm Iaith (Welsh Language Strategic Group in Rhondda Cynon Taf), the Council's Senior Leadership Team, internal Council services and Members of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group. The results of the consultation informed the 5 year strategy developed in collaboration with Sbectrwm, an organisation that has extensive experience of language planning; Menter Iaith and members of Fforwm Iaith, Council Services and Elected Members.

Additionally, the Welsh Language Services Unit secured the services of two graduate officers to undertake a research project (on-going) to promote Welsh Language provision within the local communities. The main aims of this project are to:

- To examine the current level of Welsh language and bilingual services provided by the Tackling Poverty Programme, Communities First and work clubs commissioned by them;
- To identify gaps in Welsh language skills possessed by those involved in the delivery of such programmes, work clubs and activities;
- To provide recommendations to the project sponsor that can help inform the authority's strategy to satisfy the Welsh Language Standards within their processes and procedures.

A report will be presented in 2017/2018 drawing on evidence and data gathered.

Building on the healthy relationship between the Welsh Language Services Unit and other cross cutting service areas, it was agreed that due to the significance of the Standards, all service areas were required to report relevant developments in their Annual Service Self-Evaluation.

The details noted in each Service Self-Evaluation are at Appendix 1 in accordance with Standards 158, 164 and 170.

COMPLAINTS: STANDARD 158(2) 164(2) 170(2)(d)


The following complaints were received 2016 - 2017:

Complaint Date	Nature	Via	Outcome / Response
July 2016	Leisure services: Allegation of failure to comply with Welsh Language Standards 81 and 84 with which the Council has a duty to comply.	Welsh Language Commissioner	<p>On-going as at 31 March 31 2017.</p> <p>Standard 81: Following investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner, the proposed finding is that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has not failed to comply with standard 81 in this case, on the basis that the person offering the swimming lessons in Welsh on its behalf promotes the lessons and advertises them in Welsh.</p> <p>Standard 84: Following investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner, the proposed finding is that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has failed to comply with standard 84 in this case, on the basis that the Council does not offer swimming lessons in Welsh at a number of levels, although swimming lessons are offered at those levels in English. The Welsh Language Commissioner proposes that Council prepares an action plan which will state what</p>

			steps it will take in order to comply with standard 84 in relation to swimming lessons.
December 2016	Pensions service: Allegation of failure to comply with Welsh language Standard 1	Welsh Language Commissioner	On-going as at 31 March 2017. Proposed terms of reference of the Welsh Language Commissioner's investigation of a possible failure to comply with Welsh language Standards received on 23 March 2017.

STAFF WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS: STANDARD 170(2)(a)

The section outlines the number of employees/post holders who had Welsh language skills at the end of 2016 – 2017 (April 2017). The figures are based on the records kept in accordance with Standard 151 based on the requirements of Standard 127.

Staff base*	Skill level: 	Fluent	%	Fairly fluent	%	Total	%
14,495	All staff	800	5.52	395	2.73	1,195	8.25
8,074	Schools based staff	564	6.99	327	4.05	891	11.04
6,421	Non-schools based staff	236	3.68	68	1.06	304	4.74

* staff base is not a headcount, it includes multiple employment i.e. an employee will be counted for every post that they hold. The staff bases also include casual employees

TRAINING FOR STAFF: STANDARD 170 (2) b+c

The following courses were provided between 2016 – 2017: The figures are based on the records kept in accordance with Standard 152 based on the requirements of Standard 128.

Recruitment & Advertising.

One face to face session has been run since September – none of the delegates required the course in Welsh.

Performance Management.

One face to face session has been run since September – none of the delegates required the course in Welsh.

Complaints and Disciplinary procedures – no courses provided

Induction – one induction session has been run for graduates and apprentices. None of the delegates required the course in Welsh

Dealing with public – one customer service course has been run since September – none of the delegates required the course in Welsh

Health & Safety – no face to face training has been delivered

RECRUITING TO EMPTY POSTS: STANDARD 170 (ch)

In 2016 – 2107 the following posts were advertised where Welsh skills were categorised. The figures are based on the records kept in accordance with Standard 154 based on the requirements of Standard 136.

Welsh language Skills	Learning requirement	0
Welsh Language Skills	Not required	85
Welsh Language Skills	Desirable	250
Welsh Language Skills	Essential	11

Further information:

Welsh Language Services Unit

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Pavilion A

Clydach Vale

Tonypandy

Rhondda Cynon Taf

CF40 2XX

Tel: 01443 570001

Appendix 1

How the Council has complied

The following details how the Council has complied with the relevant Standards during 16/17 based on individual Service Self-evaluation

Communities & Prosperity

A review to examine the Welsh language and bilingual services provided by the three tackling poverty programmes; Communities First, Flying Start and Families First was undertaken by Menter Iaith.

Good progress has been made in implementing the report recommendations. This includes: Identifying a designated officer to support the implementation of a strategic approach to planning and delivery of Welsh language provision across all programmes.

An audit of staff's Welsh language skills and capability.

Bilingual signage and promotional/publicity materials – all offices now have bi-lingual signage.

Good practice guides in addressing members of the public and service users by telephone – during August and September 2016 all staff have attended Hyfforddiant i Dderbynwyr/Receptionist training.

All staff now have a corporate bi-lingual email signature and access to the 'Welsh what's changed' documentation.

The creation of a single commissioning team as part of the Communities and Prosperity service ensures that the requirements of the Welsh Language standards are embedded into contracts commissioned by the service. Compliance and Monitoring Officers have been recruited to the team to ensure partners delivery against this requirement.

A review into all commissioned activity is currently taking place with the Welsh Language requirements a key focus of this work. The findings from this work will be used to inform future commissioning decisions.

Community Housing Service

In housing services there are 5 fluent Welsh speakers. Two staff members are also Welsh Learners and have been given time out of the office to attend Welsh classes, which have also been paid for by the service.

All staff have been made aware of the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards in team meetings and have been signposted to the training available on the intranet. Team Leaders have been tasked with ensuring that literature relating to services is translated.

Where personal information is collected e.g. housing application form, then language preference is requested. All staff answer the telephone in Welsh and Welsh is spoken frequently in the office and encouraged.

Adult Services

Work has continued in 2015/16 on the implementation of the 'More than Just Words' action plan that has been produced following the production of the Welsh Government strategic framework for Welsh language services in Health and Social Care.

Overall good progress is being made in Adult Services as we continue to move towards becoming an 'active offer' service, where we fully move the responsibility from the user to ask for services through the medium of Welsh, to a service which ensures it them.

In Adult Services, we make an active Welsh offer at the point of contact with First Response as all callers are requested to select the Welsh or English option. If the Welsh option is chosen the caller is diverted to a Welsh speaker at First Response. This offer is able to be progressed and supported through short term and long term services.

In 2015/16, we amended our information systems in order to allow us to record/reflect services users wishes in respect of verbal/written communications. Contact has also been made with known Welsh speakers to review their requirements.

We have continued to raise and promote language awareness among all staff. All staff are encouraged and opportunities provided to them to undertake Welsh language courses and refresher training for Welsh Speaker in the work environment.

All adult social care public facing information is translated including the information contained in the Council's website and DEWIS. Welsh on the wall posters have been distributed to our care homes with greetings and key phrases featuring on the posters. These are displayed in the home offices.

The 'Follow on strategic framework for Welsh language services in health, social services and social care 2016-19' will be adopted and resulting actions will update our 'More than Just Words' action plan and we will continue with a focus on understanding the Welsh language requirements of service users.

Adult Services: Transformation

Part 1

Each workstream within the regional implementation plan manages its own requirements to address the Welsh translation of any public material (e.g. the public consultation).

Formal documents resulting from work undertaken in the plan are all translated into Welsh (e.g. the older people's statement of intent, the carers strategy etc. all engagement and published material).

Part 2

The Social Care Workforce Training and Development

Workforce Data collected in December 2015 identified 157 social care workers across all the partnership providers who acknowledged any command of the Welsh language. Within the Local Authority 102 staff (mostly senior managers and social work staff) have been identified as confident to work with the public through the medium of Welsh.

All publications including training schedules are now bi-lingual.

All staff are aware of the Welsh Language requirements and how this fits into their role and service area.

Purchasing and Commissioning

The contract monitoring framework monitors each providers compliance of the Welsh Language Measure.

The team are aware that there is a Welsh speaker in the team to whom Welsh enquiries can be diverted.

All employees are offered and have access to Welsh language lessons and this is promoted via email circulars.

The Service Improvement & Welfare Rights Service

Front line services dealing directly with Service users make the active offer of communication in Welsh and arrangements have been made with Welsh speakers within the service to carry out such conversations as necessary. Service users preferring the medium of Welsh are highlighted within SWIFT. To date, no communication in Welsh has been requested.

All our public facing material contains a Welsh translation and the complaints Team make provision for people to have their case heard in Welsh if required.

Leisure, Parks & Bereavement

Registration & Bereavement Services

The services provide opportunities for marriage and civil ceremonies to be undertaken in Welsh.

All frontline staff have undergone Welsh language training.

New staff are required to undertake Welsh language training.

Records of requests for service delivery in Welsh are recorded for trend analysis.

Service delivery changes incorporate the medium of Welsh in all considerations.

Telephone systems upgraded for bilingual announcements.

Leisure Services

From the perspective of information provision, leisure sites are contributing well to meet the criteria of the Welsh Language Measure.

A programme of updates has begun for centre directional signage, and all facilities are being upgraded and building and development work is undertaken.

All leaflets, posters, banners etc, are provided by the Council's marketing team and these are fully bilingual and meet the criteria.

All staff have attended the Welsh Language training sessions and aware of their responsibilities under the Measure.

All recent procurement contracts have asked prospective suppliers to ensure that any fitness equipment information is available in Welsh, in order that customers can make informed choice when using equipment.

Children's Services

Children's Services are compliant with the Welsh language minimum standards. All Children's Services staff are aware of the Welsh language requirements and how this fits into their service area. Front line services dealing directly with service users make the active offer of communication in Welsh and arrangements have been made with Welsh speakers within the service to carry out such conversations as necessary. Service users preferring the medium of Welsh are highlighted within SWIFT.

Staff are encouraged and supported to attend training that enables them to learn Welsh. Managers have attended briefings and undertaken e-learning modules with regard to the Welsh language measures. Staff have been briefed and updated through team meetings

Both CTSB and CLA websites bi-lingual.

Correspondence about CLA CP to the public bilingual.

All publications bi-lingual.

Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Community Safety

Since the last service evaluation, we have taken action to ensure:

The training of front line staff who answer the phone and staff reception areas.

The promotion of Welsh Language Beginners training in teams without a current or adequate provision of Welsh speakers.

Forms and communications used by services to communicate with businesses are being produced bilingually.

There are officers who are proficient in Welsh within the service and a number happy to use Welsh in the course of their work and have done so.

We are working to collect information about people's language preferences, which is to be recorded on the Flare database, and currently offer that letters can be provided in Welsh if required.

Where Welsh language skills are identified on individual officer training plans, these are given a Priority 1 in the training needs evaluation by Senior Management.

As part of Trading Standards service agreement with TS Broadcast, information leaflets for both consumers and businesses are automatically uploaded to the internet in both English and Welsh.

Customer Care

The service is represented on the Welsh Language officer working group and provided a detailed response to the Welsh Language Measure and is included in the Corporate action plan monitoring arrangements.

Advisor Services (Contact Centre and One4aLL)

Contact Centre callers are greeted bilingually, with the Welsh language not treated less favourably than English. Each published number offers a bilingual greeting and a 'press 1' for Welsh option in 2016-17 to date - 0.4% of customers used this option.

14% of "day time" Contact Centre advisors are Welsh speaking and during Q 1 & 2 this year a Welsh speaker has been available 92.7% of the time and this is tracked at all times

Calls to 'old' Switchboards (no longer published) do not have automated messaging but are greeted bilingually and those who communicate in Welsh are transferred to the Welsh language line.

One4aLL appointments are offered in Welsh at the time of booking.

Website

The website has a 'splash page' so any user can select English or Welsh on the landing page and within any page using the 'Cymraeg' 'button'.

The site and content is developed with the support of the Welsh Language Service to ensure the Council's website content and processes meet the new Welsh Language Standards.

INFORM was also developed to support Bilingual web services although content is managed elsewhere (Comms and Marketing)

ICT

ICT provides services that support the provision of Welsh Language in the Council, in accordance to the [Welsh Language Standards](#).

As a support service, ICT does not directly support the provision of the Welsh Language to the public. Different to many other Local Authorities the service does not own, have accountability or responsibility for the Councils Website or Social Media channels which would provide content or information to the public both in English and Welsh.

However, the service is aware and compliant with the [Welsh Language Measure](#) and provide the following support to internal services -

Bilingual email footers, out-of-office assistants

Provide Global Email Messages to all staff, members and Schools bilingually.

Deployed Welsh Language Interface tools through MS Office (Cysgair) to all staff within the Council. As well at this,

Offer Welsh Language Translation software tools (Cysill) that can be deployed to staff as needed.

Can offer Service Desk assistance in both the medium of English & Welsh

Support Welsh Medium Schools in the provision of ICT

Support the procurement of Welsh language Systems and software

Streetcare & Waste

The service is reviewing and working towards full compliance with the Welsh Language Standards in terms of policy documents, correspondence and face to face contact with the public.

Standard letters, leaflets and posters are produced in both Welsh and English. We also ensure any information featured on our website is also bi-lingual and since the last meeting we have checked out web pages to ensure bi-lingual information is provided.

Staff are advised on induction on our service requirements under the Welsh Language Measure. Since the last assessment we have continued to identify and encourage staff who either would like refresher training or start a beginners course on conversational Welsh. We have updated our training files on who in the service are fluent and partially fluent in conversing in Welsh.

The service strives to provide training opportunities and ensure all staff are appropriately trained and aware of Council policies. In order to ensure continuity of service delivery alternative methods of training and awareness raising is considered e.g. early morning training for waste and cleansing operatives in depots.

Transportation

The Transportation Service has embraced the new Welsh Language Standards and accordingly has expanded the services it provides through the medium of Welsh. All staff have been advised of the requirements of the new Welsh Language Standards and every effort is taken to ensure the Welsh Language is treated no less favourably than the equivalent service provision in English. With 31.5% of pupils (3,619) being transported to a Welsh Language School, the service has traditionally provided its policies and standard letters bilingually but since April 2016, it has dealt with six telephone enquiries in Welsh. Three staff within the service have a reasonable knowledge of spoken and written Welsh, five have attended a basic introductory course and a number have indicated that they wish to learn Welsh.

Its roadside bus timetables are bilingual, together with all the material that promotes the service's activities on the Council's website. No complaints have been raised about the service's use of the Welsh Language. Proposals to charge for the discretionary elements of the School Transport Policy and the subsequent reversion to the previous policy were both considered to have a high impact on the Welsh Language community but the appropriate Equality Impact Assessments considered that the impact was substantially positive in its effects as it still ensured that school transport was provided consistently and equitably.

Arts Service

The service presents Welsh Language events as part of its events programme such as Welsh is Magic, a Welsh Language production aimed at increasing Welsh language skills in English primary schools.

A number of Welsh Language and bilingual drama pieces including *Dau* and *The Good Earth* have been presented at the Park & Dare Theatre and at Garth Olwg. RCT Theatres continues to support Garth Olwg with its programme of professional events in order to ensure arts provision remains in the Pontypridd area following the community asset transfer of the Muni Arts Service. This venue also enables the service's Welsh language productions to connect with as big an audience as possible.

The service ensures that residents are able to access its marketing information in their choice of language. A Welsh language version of the Live event brochure is produced alongside the English Language version. Both versions are given equal prominence in display racks.

The signage within the theatres is provided in a format that complies with the Welsh Language standards.

The service's Facebook and Twitter accounts are updated in both languages the majority of the time through scheduling posts and having content translated in advance. The box office telephone greeting is bilingual and all the box office staff have attended the Welsh language

training provided by council. The service is working on the development of a new bi-lingual website and this should be live in the New Year.

The service employs a number of Welsh speakers within its teams and across its various levels. Other staff are encouraged to access the Welsh Language training offered by the Council.

The Arts and Creative Industry Development Officers employ a number of Welsh-speaking workshop facilitators and provide both bilingual and Welsh Language arts workshops as part of its programme.

The service is keen to ensure that front of house and bar staff attend Welsh Language training to ensure that customers are welcomed into the theatres in both languages. The service also considers language needs as part of its recruitment processes.

HR

HR Welsh Language Working Group

A working group and action plan has been established to ensure compliance with the Welsh language standards. Policies have been reviewed and are being translated. Next steps are to develop a communication strategy for the communication of policies and to establish a monitoring mechanism for review of policy usage.

[RCT Source](#) does not offer all e-learning in Welsh. Some modules have been translated but there is little staff capacity to get information onto Word documents for the Translation Team and to create the Welsh modules so progress is very slow.

E-recruitment is being used to monitor the essential/desirable Welsh status.

HR will also be supporting the Council with the Welsh Skills Audit.

Operational

HR staff are answering the telephone in Welsh. E-mails and correspondence are in compliance. The Councils accident form and all recently produced (2015 on) guidance for schools are available in Welsh.

An audit has been undertaken of the number of Welsh Speakers in HR and subsequently a Welsh language practice group has been established and several staff members will be undertaking Welsh language development courses.

A core group of staff have been identified to take calls from customers who wish to speak through the medium of Welsh

Employment Services

staff have received training to improve conversational Welsh – however there is a need to strengthen this area of the service to meet potential demand

All information provided to Schools is bilingual including policies and procedures and supporting documentation

When posts become vacant a review of the Welsh language needs of the service area will be undertaken to assess the level of Welsh language skill required

Tourism

All tourism advertising, merchandise, website etc is in line with the new Welsh Standards. This is discussed at regular regional meetings as a priority for all campaigns we develop.

The Tourism Officer has attended Welsh for Adults evening courses in 2007 Cwrs Mynediad and in 2009 completed Cwrs Sylfaen, which provides a basic knowledge of the Welsh language and is able to read and understand a conversation. The Tourism Officer has attended, Rhondda Cynon Taf meetings, which were to raise awareness of the new Welsh Measures and implement them into their working practices including answering the telephone bilingually and the creation and use of a bilingual email signature.

If there is an area which is unclear the Tourism Officer will liaise with the Welsh Translation Unit to clarify.

To date there have been no complaints re: the lack of or inappropriate use of Welsh within the Service.

All advertising, merchandise, website, emails etc are in line with the new Welsh Standards.

The full time Event Coordinator is a fluent, first language, Welsh speaker and therefore is able to offer the service in Welsh as well as English.

Staff are encouraged to attend Welsh courses, answer the telephone bilingually and have a Welsh email signature. The central answer machine has a bilingual message.

Our customer satisfaction survey is available in both Welsh and English and in our bank of Casual Event Assistant there are three Welsh speakers.

Adult Education

38% of staff speak Welsh at beginner, intermediate or fluent levels (compared to 30% in 2014/15). Of these 23% are fluent Welsh speakers while 15% are learners. Consequently the service is capable of dealing with customer requirements in Welsh if required. All members of staff are fully briefed on the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and should be fully aware of their responsibilities, from a service delivery perspective, under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Final Compliance Notice issued to the Council on 30th September, 2015 (amended, after appeal, in September 2016).

The Welsh language skills of a number of staff are of the highest level so that no written work is referred to the Council's translation team from the adult education service as it is all done within the service.

The service works closely with a wide range of Welsh-medium organisations and community groups and, along with libraries, is crucial in enabling these groups to meet and flourish.

The Adult Education Service through its centre at Gartholwg facilitates:

Welsh language classes

Welsh language Parent and Toddler groups

Welsh dramas and theatre performances

A wide range of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people

The bilingual environment and the positive culture created at Gartholwg has been crucial as a means of promoting the Welsh language within the area. This work is of increasing importance as it will form an important part of the Council's Strategy for promoting and facilitating the Welsh language in the county as required under Standard 145 of the Welsh Language Regulations (2015).

Education non-schools

Recruitment of Welsh speakers to specific posts as and when vacancies arise has strengthened language skills in relevant areas e.g., recruitment of a Welsh speaking Fixed penalty notices officer has ensured that technical and legal queries in this area can be dealt with directly via the Welsh language; SIMS IT training to schools can now be delivered in Welsh.

The Youth Engagement and Participation Service has ensured Welsh provision is available at all Welsh medium schools and all aspects of the YEP service now have a Welsh speaker available. New content on the Wicid website is now bilingual, although there remains some historical content only available in English.

As at June 2016, 65 non-school based staff in Education indicated they were fluent in Welsh, with a further 9 self identifying as 'fairly fluent'.

The service has ensured that all written materials available to the public are produced in both Welsh and English. All online information on the Council's website, including online applications, is now available bilingually.

Library Service

24% of library staff speak Welsh at beginner, intermediate or fluent levels (an increase of 4% on the previous year due to the redeployment of 2 fluent Welsh speakers into the service). Consequently the service is capable of dealing with customer requirements in Welsh if required. In libraries where there are no fluent Welsh-speaking staff a system is in place to ensure that

any customer who visits or contacts a library can be referred to a Welsh speaker if they wish to do so. All members of the Library Service have attended Welsh Language Awareness training and basic Welsh Language training this year. This includes casual staff so that every member of staff should be fully aware of their responsibilities, from a service delivery perspective, under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Final Compliance Notice issued to the Council on 30th September, 2015 (amended, after appeal, in September 2016). This training will form part of all future inductions and any staff who wants to improve their Welsh language skills will be supported to do so.

Libraries facilitate:

Welsh language classes

Welsh-medium Book Clubs

Welsh-medium Parent and Toddler Groups

Cymraeg i Blant

Creative writing sessions in Welsh through partnership working

Work with partners such as the Welsh Arts Council to promote activities such as Bardd Plant Cymru

This means that there is ample opportunity for staff to practice their Welsh within their libraries and this is encouraged by managers and by Welsh speaking members of the public and tutors who use their venues. Consequently there is a nurturing environment which it is hoped will support the development of staff skills.

All public documents and posters directly produced by the service comply with the Council's Welsh language policy and specifically the statutory regulations in relation to documentation under the Welsh Language Standards introduced in 2015. Posters and short leaflets are now produced in Welsh in-house with larger documents being referred to the Welsh Translation team.