WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Stage 1 – Information Gathering **NOTE:** As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. Please see Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance for more information on data sources.	
Proposal Name:	Customer & Digital Strategy 2027 – 2032
Department	ICT & Digital
Service Director	Tim Jones
Officer Completing the WLIA	Emma Williams
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Brief Description	The Customer & Digital Strategy 2027–2032 aims to use customer-focused services, digital technology, trusted data and improved skills to make Council services simpler, more inclusive, secure and efficient.
Date	14/10/26
Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)	Service Users, Employees, Members, Visitors, Wider Community

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What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?	The Strategy aims to use customer-focused services, digital technology, trusted data and improved digital capability to make Council services simpler, more inclusive, secure and efficient. It supports the Welsh language by ensuring digital services and content are designed bilingually, meet Welsh Language Standards and provide an equally accessible and effective experience in Welsh and English. It also promotes Welsh-language choice, inclusion and the confident use of Welsh across customer and workforce channels. It will be delivered across four themes: • Customer Experience • Digital Solutions and Technology • Data, Insight and Intelligence • People and Digital Capability
Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.	Welsh-speaking residents, service users, employees, elected members, businesses and visitors; Welsh learners; Welsh-medium education communities; community groups and partner organisations; and people who prefer or need to access Council information, support and digital services through the medium of Welsh.
Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned	The 2021 Census figures regarding the Welsh language show a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales to 17.8%. There was, however, a small increase in RCT – the percentage of the population of the county borough who can speak Welsh increased from 12.3% to 12.4%. Numerically, RCT saw a 2.8% increase in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough, from 27,779 speakers to 28,556 speakers. RCT was also one of only four LAs in Wales to see an increase in the percentage of Welsh speakers – the others were Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Merthyr Tudful. All of these are neighbouring county boroughs, which could demonstrate that our region is seeing some positive trends in terms of increases in Welsh speakers, and that there may be a resulting increase in demand for services through the medium of Welsh.
Other relevant data or research	As of September 2026, 13.27% of Council staff speak Welsh, and the recently approved policy for the internal use of Welsh seeks to continually increase this percentage, and ensure staff have opportunities to use Welsh both formally and informally at work if that is their choice. Implementing this strategy will contribute to these

	outcomes, which are also share by bodies at a national level, including the Welsh Language Commissioner, the Future Generations Commissioner and Welsh Government. In 2025, a survey conducted by the Council's RCT Together team showed that 41.2% of people surveyed in the county borough wanted more opportunities to use or learn Welsh. This strategy could also help offer those opportunities for those who want them, through giving more confidence to people to interact in Welsh with the Council.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments can be found by clicking here.

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	**Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.**	**What evidence do you have to support this view?**	**What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?**
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language e.g. staff, residents and visitors The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work	Positive	The Strategy will have a positive impact by increasing opportunities for residents, visitors, elected members and staff to use Welsh through bilingual digital services, online content, customer contact channels and workplace tools. Services will be designed so people can choose Welsh	The Strategy commits to accessible, bilingual digital services and content, appropriate channel choice, assisted and non-digital support, and solutions optimised for the Welsh language. Its Customer Experience and People and Digital Capability themes also	Ensure Welsh-language requirements are built into the design, procurement, testing and review of all digital services from the outset. Provide equally accessible Welsh and English content and customer journeys, promote the Welsh-language option

		throughout their interaction with the Council, with accessible Welsh content and assisted or non-digital support available where needed. Digital skills, Welsh-language provision and staff capability will also help Welsh speakers and learners use Welsh confidently when accessing services and at work.	include inclusive service design, workforce skills and support, providing a clear basis for increasing opportunities for residents, visitors, Welsh speakers, learners and staff to use Welsh when accessing services and at work. Partner engagement – we have actively engaged with our partners to ensure that Welsh is available in their technology, examples include: Microsoft, Enghouse Welsh Government – Welsh Language Technology Plan Council Staff Strategy Consultation- (available following consultation) Office National Statistics Digital Communities Wales Office of Chief Digital Officer Wales (LocGov) SOCITM Cymru Welsh Government	clearly across all channels, involve Welsh-speaking users in service design and testing, and provide staff with the tools, guidance and training needed to deliver services and work confidently in Welsh. Monitor usage, feedback and service quality by language and use the findings to address barriers and increase take-up. Ensuring relevant departments have sufficient Welsh-speaking staff to deliver services in Welsh through robust recruitment practices and implementation of the Policy for the Internal Use of Welsh.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment **Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**				
	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	**Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.**	**What evidence do you have to support this view?**	**What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?**
Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers e.g Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy	Neutral	The Strategy is expected to have a positive enabling impact on the number and percentage of Welsh speakers. Although it will not directly create new speakers, it will make Welsh more visible, accessible and practical to use through bilingual digital services, workplace tools, learning support and community-facing channels. This can help Welsh speakers maintain and increase their use of the language, give learners more opportunities to practise, and support children and young people moving from Welsh-medium education into further study, employment and everyday community life. It therefore contributes to the Council's Welsh Language	The Strategy commits to bilingual and accessible digital services, solutions optimised for the Welsh language, Welsh-language choice across customer channels, digital inclusion, and improved workforce skills and support. These commitments create more opportunities for Welsh speakers to use the language and for learners to practise it through Council services, employment and community-facing activity. This supports the Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy objective to increase the number of Welsh speakers by 5%, although the Customer & Digital Strategy's contribution will be enabling and should be assessed through Welsh-language service	Build Welsh-language requirements into digital service plans and use bilingual services, workplace tools and community channels to create more opportunities for Welsh speakers and learners to use and practise Welsh. Work with Welsh Language Services, education and community partners to promote Welsh digital services and support progression from Welsh-medium education into employment and everyday use. Monitor Welsh-language service take-up, staff skills and

		Promotion Strategy aim of increasing the number of people who can speak Welsh by 5% and developing Rhondda Cynon Taf as a fully bilingual county.	take-up, staff skills and confidence, learner engagement and relevant local census or survey data. Partner engagement: Welsh Government – Welsh Language Technology Plan Council Staff Strategy Consultation- (available following consultation) Office National Statistics Digital Communities Wales Office of Chief Digital Officer Wales (LocGov) SOCITM Cymru Welsh Government	confidence, learner engagement and relevant census or survey data, using the findings to target improvements and demonstrate the Strategy's contribution to the Council's 5% growth objective.
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time	Positive	The Strategy will have a positive impact by raising the visibility and status of Welsh across Council digital services, customer channels and workplace tools. Welsh-language options will be clearly and proactively promoted, rather than offered only on request, encouraging residents, visitors and staff to choose and use Welsh in everyday interactions with the Council, at work and within the community. Providing accessible, equivalent and easy-to-use Welsh services, supported by digital inclusion	The Strategy commits to bilingual, accessible and inclusive digital services, solutions optimised for the Welsh language, and customer choice across digital, assisted and non-digital channels. It also promotes digital confidence and workforce capability, including staff tools, guidance and training. These commitments provide clear opportunities to actively promote Welsh-language services, make Welsh options more visible and easier to use, and encourage residents, visitors and staff to use Welsh more routinely. Usage,	Proactively promote Welsh-language services and make the Welsh option clear and equally prominent across websites, online forms, customer communications, assisted channels and workplace tools. Use campaigns, staff guidance and community engagement to encourage residents, visitors and employees to choose Welsh. Involve Welsh speakers and

		and staff capability, should build confidence, normalise the use of Welsh and help increase demand over time.	service quality and feedback can be monitored to evidence whether awareness, confidence and demand increase over time. Partner engagement: Welsh Government – Welsh Language Technology Plan Council Staff Strategy Consultation- (available following consultation) Office National Statistics Digital Communities Wales Office of Chief Digital Officer Wales (LocGov) SOCITM Cymru Welsh Government	learners in design and testing, monitor take-up, completion rates, service quality and feedback by language, and use the findings to remove barriers, improve the Welsh user experience and increase demand over time.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment **Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**				
	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	**Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.**	**What evidence do you have to support this view?**	**What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?**
Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards e.g increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh. Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work	Positive	The Strategy will positively support compliance with the Council's statutory Welsh Language Standards by embedding Welsh-language requirements into the design and delivery of digital services, systems and workplace tools. Welsh services will be available without being treated less favourably than English, including equivalent content, functionality, quality and access; Welsh correspondence and language preferences will be supported; and contact channels will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh by residents, visitors and staff. Policy and service-design	The Strategy explicitly commits to bilingual, accessible and inclusive digital services; solutions optimised for the Welsh language; appropriate customer choice across digital, assisted and non-digital channels; and workforce skills and support. It also requires services to meet Welsh Language Standards and embeds security, accessibility and Welsh-language considerations into service design and procurement. These commitments support the Council's ability to provide Welsh services that are equivalent in availability, functionality, quality and ease of access, while enabling residents and staff to	Embed the applicable Welsh Language Standards into digital governance, service design, procurement and supplier contracts. Record and retain users' language choices, ensure Welsh correspondence, online content, forms, interfaces and customer journeys are available to an equivalent standard and without delay, and test Welsh and English versions before launch and after significant change. Provide staff with clear guidance,

		decisions will consider their effect on opportunities to use Welsh and on treating Welsh no less favourably than English.	use Welsh in their dealings with the Council and at work. Partner engagement: Welsh Government – Welsh Language Technology Plan Council Staff Strategy Consultation- (available following consultation) Office National Statistics Digital Communities Wales Office of Chief Digital Officer Wales (LocGov) SOCITM Cymru Welsh Government	bilingual tools and routes to Welsh-language support; assess policy decisions for their effect on Welsh; and monitor availability, response times, quality, complaints and take-up by language, escalating gaps through the Council's governance and compliance arrangements.
Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language				

Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?

• Embed Welsh-language requirements and Welsh Language Standards into the design, procurement, configuration, testing and review of all digital services, systems and workplace tools.	As part of an action plan subject to Strategy approval	Head of Digital Transformation
• Provide equivalent Welsh and English customer journeys, content, functionality, quality and access across digital, assisted and non-digital channels.	As part of an action plan subject to Strategy approval	Head of Digital Transformation
• Involve Welsh-speaking staff and learners in service design and user testing, and act on their feedback.	As part of an action plan subject to Strategy approval	Head of ICT Operations
• Provide staff with bilingual tools, guidance and training, and monitor Welsh-language availability, usage, service quality and feedback to identify and remove barriers.	As part of an action plan subject to Strategy approval	Head of Digital Transformation
• Ongoing engagement with incumbent Council system suppliers to seek opportunities to improve their solutions for the benefit of Welsh	As part of an action plan subject to Strategy approval	Head of ICT Operations

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.

What was identified?	**Why is it not possible?**
Some digital systems either do not provide or fully provide the ability to use Welsh.	Software suppliers may not support or plan to incorporate Welsh language within their offerings. Wherever possible we will work with the suppliers to ensure full compliance over an agreed timeframe, stressing to them that this is a legal requirement in Wales. The Council's procurement process seeks to ensure full compliance with the Welsh

	Language Standards and other relevant legislation in the field where possible.

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Stage 4 – Review

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your completed (Stage 1>6) impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation report to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. See our guidance document for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
Diolch yn fawr iawn for completing this impact assessment for the Customer and Digital Strategy. It rightly acknowledges that the strategy has the potential to have a great impact on the number of people using Welsh to interact with council services, and the number of staff using internal systems in Welsh. It also recognises that bilingual design from the start will be key to any success in this regard, and that increasing user confidence with Welsh 'interfaces' is important to increasing uptake of services in Welsh. To that end it would be useful to use the implementation of the strategy as an opportunity to work with Welsh Language Services and Comms/Design around some promotion, either with staff or with the public (or both) to promote the use of the different services offered in		

Welsh. This would tie in with the new Policy for the Internal Use of Welsh, and national aims around increasing the use of Welsh in the community and in the workplace.		
Officer Review Panel Comments	**Date Considered**	**Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations**
Consultation Comments	**Date Considered**	**Brief description of any amendments made following consultation**

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

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Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write 'please see full report at Appendix x' in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.
A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -

Stage 7 – Sign Off			
Name of Officer completing the WLIA		**Service Director Name:**	
Position		**I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)**	**Is implemented with no amendments**
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language

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Signature		**Service Director Signature**	
Date		**Date**	

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