



WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

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REQUIREMENT FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Welsh Language Standards were prepared under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measures 2011 (1) and the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, which came into force on 31 March 2015.

The full list of the standards, with which Pembrokeshire County Council is required to comply, are contained within a Compliance Notice, which is available on our website at <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/customer-service/welsh-language-standards>

Standards 158,164 and 170 require us to publish an annual report, which sets out how we have complied with the:-

- Service delivery standards (1 to 87)
- Policy making standards (88 to 97)
- Operational standards (98 to 141)

This report touches on measures that have been in place since the introduction of the Standards but is primarily focused on activities undertaken during the period April 2019 – March 2020.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

The senior officer responsible for the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards within Pembrokeshire County Council is Ceri Davies, Head of Human Resources. He is supported in this work by the Welsh Language Standards Implementation Group, which comprises of representatives from different service areas across the organisation. The group meets quarterly and Ceri Davies reports to other senior officers and Cabinet members, as part of his membership of the Central Management Team (CMT).

The Council has also published a 5 Year Strategy (2016-21), which outlines how it will promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh-language more widely in Pembrokeshire. It has three key elements: the use of Welsh in our community, the use of Welsh in our workplace, and the use of Welsh in our schools. The strategy is available on our website at

<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/customer-service/welsh-language-standards>

During 2019, the Welsh Language Standards Implementation Group agreed a new monitoring framework, to help track progress with the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards.

The data collected as part of this framework, shows that there is growth in the demand for Welsh language services. The largest growth in demand has been in visits to our Welsh language web pages (www.sir-benfro.gov.uk). There was an increase of 241% in page views between 2018 – 19 and 2019 -20. Page views of our English language web pages fell by 4% over the same period. The most consistent demand for Welsh language service is experienced in the Council's telephone Customer Contact Centre, where we saw a 33% increase in demand for our Welsh language service between 2018 – 19 and 2019 -20, and a 1% decrease in demand for our English language service over the same period.

Ostensibly there has been a decline in the number of employees with Welsh language abilities. Our training needs self-assessment indicates a 10% decrease in the number of employees with Welsh language abilities at level 1 or above (between 2018 – 19 and 2019 – 20) and a 30% decrease in the number able to speak Welsh at levels 3 or 4 (between 2018 – 19 and 2019 – 20). We feel that there are two reasons for this:

1). Gathering data on employee's Welsh language abilities is challenging. Data is gathered via an online self-assessment form, which, while it is hosted on a system that is accessible to all, is complex to complete. This means the data we hold cannot be regarded as wholly reliable. There was a 1% fall in the number of employees who had completed the training needs-self assessment in 2019 – 20, compared with 2018 – 19. We will review the way in which we collected this data during 2020 – 21.

2). We have opened a number of new Welsh medium schools, and are therefore likely to have taken on more Welsh speaking staff, and both the number of posts designated as 'Welsh language essential' and the number participating in Welsh language training have increased slightly. However, initiatives such the Early Voluntary Retirement and Early Voluntary Redundancy have contributed towards an acceleration in the number of older employees leaving the authority, and it does not appear that we are recruiting and / or training sufficient number of Welsh speaking employees to offset the number leaving. We will consider ways of addressing this during 2020-21.

THE WELSH LANGUAGE IN PEMBROKESHIRE

Pembrokeshire County Council is a unitary Local Authority serving a population of around 125,000 (2018 mid-year estimate of total population). Of these 21,300 (17%) are aged under 16, 71,502 (57%) are aged 16 – 64 and 32,130 (26%) are aged 65 and over.

From the Welsh Language questions in the census held on 27 March 2011, from a total population of 118,392, 19.2% of the population over 3 years old could speak Welsh. The percentage for the whole of Wales is 19%. The 2001 census in respect of Pembrokeshire held a figure of 20.4% for the same age group.

According to the 2013-2015 Welsh Language Survey, of the 22,800 Welsh speakers 9,600 (42%) reported speaking Welsh fluently. Overall some 11,000 people (48% of Welsh speakers) reported speaking Welsh daily, the 6th highest proportion of Welsh Local Authority areas.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Delivery of services - the Council has responsibility for delivering the complete range of local government services for residents, businesses and visitors.

We provide a wide range of services for our customers, which include schools, waste and recycling services, social care and housing, public protection and area maintenance etc.

We currently employ approximately 6,100 staff, who each work within one of five Directorates: Chief Executive Office; Resources; Community Services; Social Services and Housing, and Children & Schools.

Our staff operate from a wide range of locations including offices, depots, libraries and leisure centres, as well as from our headquarters at County Hall in Haverfordwest. Over recent years, we have been supporting office-based employees to embrace agile working. This has enabled us to start consolidating the number of Council managed buildings, from which we operate, but ultimately means that staff are working from an ever greater range of locations, including their own homes and a range of other wifi enabled facilities.

With staff operating from so many different locations, ensuring that all employees engaged in the delivery of services have an awareness of the Welsh Language Standards, and act in compliance with them can be challenging.

We have addressed this by ensuring that the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards have been embedded into our key communications employee guidance document: *Communications Standards, Services & Resources – Guidelines for Employees*. This document is made available to employees via the Intranet and as a downloadable PDF. The guidelines are highlighted are part of corporate induction, and are supplemented by a number of fact sheets, containing 'bite-sized' information on the requirements of the Standards.

Complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office also prompted us to strengthen awareness amongst elected members, of the requirements in relation to email correspondence, and for our employees acting as administrators on our numerous social media sites. We addressed the later through the development of an action plan, which saw us strengthening advice within the *Communications Standards* document and our *Social Media Policy*. We also conducted a training session, for all our social media administrators, in September 2019 and have undertaken regular follow-up monitoring of all our social media pages since that time.

In addition to the services, which we deliver directly ourselves, we also commission a range of goods and services from external contractors and other providers.

A *Supplementary Guidance for Managers and Senior Officers* document, which includes guidance on the provision of education courses to the public, the awarding of grants and procurement of goods and services, sits alongside the *Communications Standards* document on the dedicated Welsh language page on our Intranet, and can also be downloaded as a PDF. We have also provided periodic training for managers and officers engaged in the commissioning of third party services, which has included guidance on the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

A complaint, made directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner during 2019, in relation to the provision of Fixed Penalty Notices in Welsh, resulted in the above requirements being re-emphasised to relevant services.

In December 2019, we supported the Welsh Language Commissioner's Welsh Language Day with promotional posts on our social media pages. We also shared the Commissioner's video, encouraging staff to begin learning or to improve Welsh language skills, with our employees.

During 2019-20 we agreed a new Welsh Language Standards monitoring framework, which reflects a number of areas where we can track demand for and provision of services in Welsh. Data gathered in relation to the delivery of services is reflected below in the 'Table 1: Delivery of services'.

Analysis of this data shows that we experience greatest demand for the provision of service in Welsh via our telephone Customer Contact Centre. During 2019, we re-designated a number of posts within our telephone Customer Contact Centre as 'Welsh-language essential', which has enabled us to continue to provide a good level of service for Welsh-speaking customers via this means. An overall increase in call waiting times during 2019 – 20 can largely be attributed to the introduction of a new household waste and recycling service in November 2019. It is notable, however, that the increase in call waiting times for English language customers was significantly larger than the increase in call waiting times for Welsh language customers. With the new waste and recycling service now in place, it is anticipated that figures for 2020 – 21 will return to levels similar to those experienced during 2018 – 19.

We have also adopted a 'Channel Shift Customer Service Strategy'. The strategy outlines how we will support customers to move away from face-to-face and cash transactions towards online and other contactless options. As part of this strategy, we closed Customer Service Centres in Fishguard, Milford Haven and Neyland during 2019. The consolidation of customer services via our telephone Contact Centre, and our remaining Customer Service Centres in Haverfordwest and Pembroke Dock, has helped us to enhance provision for Welsh speaking customers.

In December 2019, we held a workshop with managers responsible for a number of other public facing reception areas across the authority, to explore ways in which we could improve the provision of services for Welsh speaking customers at these points. It has been agreed to extend the re-designation of a number of posts as 'Welsh-language essential' within these service areas. Progress with this will be carefully monitored.

TABLE 1. Delivery of services

What are we monitoring?	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	Change
01437 764551 Calls to the main Council number. Number of calls in English, number of calls in Welsh	300,233 E 4,551 W	299,501 E 6,872 W	1% decrease E 33% increase W
01437 764551 Average queue time on the main Council number. Queue time for calls in English, queue time for calls in Welsh	115 sec E 59 sec W	334 sec E 87 sec W	65% increase E 28% increase W
Website www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk Number of page views	604,258	577,431	4% decrease
www.sir-benfro.gov.uk Number of page views	1,821	6,223	241% increase
My Account Number wishing to receive communication via My Account in English (15/05/20) Number wishing to receive communication via My Account in Welsh (15/05/20)	Not available	44,117 164	Not applicable

Social Media www.facebook.com/pembrokeshirecountycouncil No. of likes	16,753 E	19,479 E	16% increase E
www.facebook.com/cyngorsirpenfro No. of likes	97 W	121 W	25% increase W
www.twitter.com/pembrokeshire No. of followers	13,440 E	14,400 E	7% increase E
www.twitter.com/cyngorsirpenfro No. of followers	462 W	514 W	11% increase W
Meetings No. of requests to the corporate translation service for simultaneous translation	Not available	5	Not applicable
Tenders Number of tenders submitted in Welsh	Not available	0	Not applicable
Complaints (Standard 158) No. of complaints relating to Welsh language service delivery standards	3	2	33% decrease
Complaints (Standard 164) No. of complaints relating to Welsh language policy making standards	0	0	No change
Complaints (Standard 170) No. of complaints relating to Welsh language operational standards	0	0	No change

POLICY MAKING

The Council has a responsibility, when formulating a new policy or reviewing/revising an existing policy, to consider the effect that a policy decision has on the opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language.

To aid with evidence based policy development and decision-making, a corporate *Integrated Impact Assessment Tool* has been devised. The tool comprises a set of guidance notes and a template, and covers the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, alongside those of the Equality Act (and Public Sector Equality Duty, Wales), and the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It is available to employees via the Intranet and downloadable as a PDF. Bespoke support and advice for employees and members is also available from the Corporate Policy & Partnerships team.

During 2019, we developed and delivered corporate Project Management Training, which covered use of the corporate Integrated Impact Assessment tool, to 127 employees and 15 Council members. In addition, Integrated Impact Assessment training session was delivered to Head-teachers and Governors in July 2019.

Corporate templates for reports submitted to Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council all require a summary of the finding of the Integrated Impact Assessment to be provided. Specific points to be addressed include what, if any, impact recommendations are likely to have for people with protected characteristics, as defined within the Equality Act 2010, and what, if any, impact the recommendations have on the Council's obligations under the Welsh Language Standard Regulations 2015.

From early 2019, Cabinet Members have also been empowered to make Individual Decisions. Requirements in relation to Integrated Impact Assessments remain the same for these types of decisions, as they do for decisions made by Cabinet and Council.

Over the course of 2019 – 20 there have been a number of decisions assessed as having a positive impact for the Welsh-language, such as the decision taken, in February, to establish a new 3 – 11 Welsh medium primary school to serve the Pembroke and Pembroke Dock area. There have been no decisions assessed as having a negative impact for the Welsh-language.

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

We have developed a wide range of resources for employees and managers, to support the implementation of the operational standards. These include:

1). A dedicated Welsh Language Standards page on our Intranet. This contains:

- Communications Standards, Services & Resources – Guidelines for Employees, and associated Fact Sheets
- Welsh Language Training Needs Self-Assessment, and guidelines for completion
- Welsh Language Courses
- Performance Appraisal – guidance and paperwork
- Supplementary Guidance for Managers & Senior Officers
- Internal Use of Welsh Policy
- Policy on Awarding Grants and Application Form

2). The Human Resources (HR) section on the Intranet contains the following resources:

- Internal Policies, Procedures and Guidance (in English and Welsh as applicable)
- Recruitment guidance, including Welsh Language Standard Requirements, for HR Advisors and service managers

In addition, in December 2019, we ran an inter-active workshop session for all HR Advisors to refresh their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language standards in relation to HR practice. The session covered complaint / grievance and disciplinary procedures, performance review, training, recruitment, policies and forms.

During 2019 – 20 we have seen a slight increase in the number of posts designated as 'Welsh-language essential' and 'Welsh-language desirable' and a slight decrease in the number of posts designated as 'Welsh not required' (see below Table 2: Operational Standards). This is to be encouraged and we will continue our efforts in these areas, particular in relation to employees providing reception services.

We have developed a wide range of opportunities for employees to participate in training through the medium of Welsh and to improve their Welsh language skills.

The courses are provided by Learning Pembrokeshire, our adult and community learning arm. Learners can chose to take part in Welsh in the Workplace or community learning classes. All training is provided free of charge and employees taking part in classes outside of working hours can reclaim time in lieu. In addition, there is an enhanced package of support available for front-line services, which enables managers to back-fill where employees are released for Welsh language learning.

During 2019 – 20 we have seen a slight increase in the number of employees taking part in Welsh language learning (see below Table 2: Operational Standards). This is to be encouraged and we

will continue our efforts in these areas, particularly in relation to employees providing services directly to the public.

We have also developed resources to assist us with the recording of the development of employees' Welsh language skills, as well as their communication preferences.

TABLE 2: Operational Standards

What are we monitoring?	2018 – 19	2019 - 20	Change
Employee communication preference No. of employees wishing to receive paper correspondence that relates to his or her employment, and which is addressed to him or her personally, in Welsh	Not available	13	Not applicable
Welsh Language Skills of Employees No. able to use Welsh Language at Levels 1 – 5	1,685 employees completed the training needs self-assessment 870 indicated Welsh language skills at Level 1 or above. On 04/07/19 we recorded 171 employees as being able to <u>speak</u> Welsh at Level 3 or 4	1,663 employees completed the training needs self-assessment 781 indicated Welsh language skills at Level 1 or above. On 07/05/20 we recorded 120 employees as being able to <u>speak</u> Welsh at Level 3 or 4	1% decrease in no. completing training needs self-assessment. 10% decrease in the number indicating Welsh language skills at Level 1 or above. 30% decrease in the no. being able to <u>speak</u> Welsh at Level 3 or 4
Training through the medium of Welsh Recruitment & Interviewing Performance Management Complaints & Disciplinary Induction Dealing with the public Health & Safety	26 employees undertook one of these training courses through the medium of Welsh	0 Course not provided 0 0 Course not provided 30	13% increase
Welsh Language Training Mynediad 1 Mynediad 2 Sylfaen 1	23 20 23	33 7 17	8% increase

Sylfaen 2	1	21	
Canolradd 1	14	2	
Canolradd 2	0	12	
Uwch 1	1	1	
Uwch 2	2	0	
Uwch 3	0	1	
Hyfrededd	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	
Total	89	97	
No. of posts designated as:			% of 'not required' has reduced, while % of desirable / essential has increased
Welsh language essential	51 (10%)	80 (13%)	
Welsh language desirable	311 (62%)	398 (64%)	
Welsh to be learnt	23 (5%)	32 (5%)	
Welsh not required	<u>117 (23%)</u>	<u>113 (18%)</u>	
Total	502	623	
No. of complaints made by employees to us in Welsh	Not available	Not available <i>(relevant staff wholly occupied with COVID-19 response)</i>	