

# Conwy County Borough Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2023 - 2024

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the



April 2024

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to show to which extent the Council has conformed to the Welsh Standards during 2023-2024, and the work done towards achieving all aspects of them.
- 1.2 We are incredibly proud of the many developments and successes that we accomplished during the year – further information about them are included in the main body of this document.

## **2.0 Report Background / Context**

- 2.1 Conwy County Borough Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, it will not treat the Welsh language any less favourably than the English language.
- 2.2 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 establishes a legal framework to impose a duty on the Council, amongst other organisations, to comply with the Welsh Language Standards. The Council have had 167 Standards to comply with in the following areas: Service Delivery, Operational, Policy Making, Promotion and Record Keeping. The Standards can be seen [on our website](#).
- 2.3 The duties which derive from the Standards mean that organizations should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language, together with promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in everyday life).
- 2.4 The standards aim to:
- provide greater clarity to organizations on their duties on the Welsh language
  - provide greater clarity to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh
  - ensure greater consistency of Welsh language services and improve their quality
- 2.5 The Welsh Standards supersedes the Council's Welsh Language Scheme first approved by the Welsh Language Board on 23rd July 1997, which was revised on 14th May 2004 and then on 23rd April 2009.
- 2.6 This monitoring report reflects progress against actions and targets deriving from the Welsh Language Standards. The information included in this report was collated thanks to the Council's continuous monitoring work.

## **2.8 Accountability**

- 2.8.1 The Welsh Language & Translation Manager and the Welsh Language Promotion and Development Officer were responsible for writing this report. It is then presented to the Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and then presented to the Cabinet for approval.
- 2.8.2 After approval the document will be available to the public in the Council's public offices and on the website. The document is also circulated to all the individual services and in addition, information about the general monitoring report, along with the recommendations, is published on the intranet, and disseminated via the internal postmaster messaging system and the Staff Newsletter. A link to this document will be shared with reception staff and we will also inform Conwy residents about the report.

## 3.0 Summary

### 3.1 Progress / Developments during the year

3.1.1 We're pleased to be able to report about a number of developments throughout the year. Several initiatives have meant an increase in the amount of opportunities for staff to use their Welsh language skills and to make it easier for people to use their Welsh skills in everyday life. Here's a summary:

- a) **Welsh Language Strategic Forum** – In June, alongside Councillor Aaron Wynne, we established a new forum – the Welsh Language Strategic Forum, to link in with the Council's new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. The forum aims to bring various organisations in the county together to discuss how we can work together to promote the Welsh language across the county and implement the new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. The first meeting was held in June 2023 with representatives from many organisations including Urdd Conwy, Menter Iaith Conwy, Mudiad Meithrin, Coleg Llandrillo Menai, the Council's Culture and Libraries service, Conwy's education officers, and staff from primary and secondary schools.
- b) **Welsh Language Newsletter** – We have continued with the newsletter since launching it last year and it has continued to develop. The purpose of this newsletter is to celebrate Welsh in Conwy and provide information to staff about various initiatives. Our last edition was the Christmas edition. This edition included a playlist of Welsh Christmas songs, information about our 'Cymraeg i Bawb – Conwy' Facebook page, a Christmas word search, information about events such as the Welsh class' Christmas bake off and a shout out to the staff that succeeded in their recent learning Welsh exams. We continued with our 'Q&A With a Welsh Learner' section, asking two members of staff, who are a married couple, about their experiences of learning Welsh through the Council's Work Welsh scheme. In addition, our 'Welsh in the Workplace' page also had a piece on how the Welsh has helped some members of staff in their everyday work.
- c) **Word of the week** – This year we started to share 'Word of the Week' posters through our Teams channel for every member of staff. The posters varied from week to week, and words, idioms, phrases and sayings were shared.
- ch) **Developing the intranet** – During the year, we have created a new page on the intranet specifically about learning Welsh. Information about learning Welsh and useful information for learners is now available for staff in one place under the heading 'Learning Welsh' on the intranet. There is information about the Council's Work Welsh scheme, Welsh lessons, the Council's Welsh skills table, a list of useful apps for learners, information about Cysill (Welsh spelling and grammar checker) and Cysgeir (Welsh-English dictionary and other handy tools), and much more.
- d) **Welsh Education Website** – Last year we developed a brand new webpage on the Council's central website all about Welsh medium education. The purpose of this page is to provide information for parents/guardians about Welsh education and the advantages of being bilingual. This year, together with the Council's Education Officers, we worked with the IT department to further develop the page. The page is now live and includes information about Welsh medium education, from pre-school to further/higher education, and about the immersion program. In addition, there is also a page for parents/guardians that answers frequently asked questions about Welsh medium education, including "What support can I get if I don't speak Welsh? How can I help with homework?"

- dd) Welsh Language Website** – As well as developing a new education page, we have also developed a brand new landing page on the county's central website for all matters relating to the Welsh language. The page is called [‘The Welsh Language - A Living Thriving Language’](#). It's full of information about the Welsh language in Conwy.
- e) Teams Backgrounds** – This year we have developed a range of Teams backgrounds to include more with the Working Welsh logo and the learning Welsh logo in order to make the Welsh language more visible in our online meetings. We have received positive feedback about them.
- f) Leading in a bilingual country** – This year the Council made a successful bid to take part in an exciting program called Leading in a Bilingual Country. Two heads of service, who are learning Welsh, were chosen to participate in order to become ambassadors for institutional culture where bilingualism can thrive. They learned about the latest Welsh language developments from experts. But the program was more than presenting information, it also looked at ideas about the language, experiences of the language and hopes for the future, through a leadership lens. In discussion they made sure that possible benefits and challenges were highlighted in regards to developing the leadership culture around the Welsh language in the Council. The program was an integral part of the development of the new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – Ein Llais Cymraeg (Our Welsh Voice).
- ff) Work Welsh Scheme** – As part of the Work Welsh scheme in 2023-2024, 78 members of staff took advantage of the Work Welsh provision. 4 courses were held under the leadership of the tutor, on Entry, Intermediate and Higher level.
- g) Welsh Taster Courses** – In 2023-2024 40 individuals registered for a total of 79 taster courses that they complete independently online. Of the 79 courses, 41 were completed and the rest were partially completed. The taster courses are available free of charge to staff members, and are in addition to the provision led by the tutor. The number of staff that registered for the taster courses this year was much higher than last year, which is wonderful to see.
- ng) Sgwrsio Scheme** – During the year, we developed our Sgwrsio Scheme (Speaking Welsh at Work) where a learner on an Intermediate level is given the opportunity to be paired with a fluent Welsh speaker in order to speak with them informally in Welsh. At the moment, we have 25 pairs who meet regularly as part of the ‘Sgwrsio’ in the workplace scheme. The number of pairs have increased since last year with 11 new pairs.
- h) Updating Information about Welsh Language Skills** – This year we updated the information about Welsh language skills to make it easier for staff to choose the correct level. We have also discarded Level 0. We will use the taster sessions to help members of staff that have noted their Welsh skills to be at Level 0 to increase that to a level 1. Anyone who wishes to learn Welsh can register for one of our internal courses too. We intend on offering two new entry level courses for beginners early next year.
- i) Updating our Equality Impact Assessment form** – To ensure we conduct a correct assessment of the impact of different policies and consultations on equality, we updated our equality impact assessment form. Now the Welsh Language and Translation Manager and the Welsh Language Promotion and Development Officer will receive a copy of all relevant forms to check the content and to offer any advice if needed.

## 3.2 Future Work

3.2.1 During the coming year we hope to develop the following matters, amongst many smaller developments:

- a) **Ein Llais Cymraeg - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy** – We're looking forward to publishing our new Welsh language promotion strategy, Ein Llais Cymraeg. It's a statutory document, required by law, but that's not why we're doing this. We're doing this because we are proud of our Welsh culture and proud of Conwy being a bilingual Council and we're passionate about supporting people. We want everyone to join us, no matter how much Cymraeg they know, wherever they come from and wherever they live now in the county of Conwy.
- b) **Learners' Forum** – We look forward to developing the forum, and the ideas that have derived from the forum during the next year.
- c) **Word of the Week** – We will continue with the 'Word of the Week' over the next year but following feedback from staff we will re-examine how it's shared. This year we shared the posters on Conwy's 'Notification' channel on Teams, but a lot of staff members weren't seeing them so we will try to find somewhere better to post them. Also, we will create a new page on the intranet that will be a home for all of the posters after they have been posted, so staff members can find them easily in one place.
- ch) **Recruiting to Welsh essential posts** – Over the next few weeks we will work with managers to ensure no member of staff is appointed to Welsh essential posts without the relevant Welsh skills. The new explanation of the Welsh level will also help with this.
- d) **Welsh Lessons** – We intend on offering two new entry level courses for beginners early next year.

## **4.0 Information about the year 2023-2024**

### **4.1 Leading in a bilingual country**

4.1.1 This year the Council made a successful application to take part in an exciting program called Leading in a Bilingual Country. Two heads of service, who are learning Welsh, were chosen to participate in order to become ambassadors for institutional culture where bilingualism can thrive. They learned about the latest Welsh language developments from experts. But the program was more than presenting information, it also looked at ideas about the language, experiences of the language and hopes for the future, through a leadership lens. In discussion they made sure that possible benefits and challenges were highlighted in regards to developing the leadership culture around the Welsh language in the Council. The program was an integral part of the development of the new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – Ein Llais Cymraeg.

### **4.2 Digital developments**

4.2.1 **Facebook Page** – We have a Facebook page called Cymraeg i Bawb – Conwy. The purpose of this page is to promote and celebrate the Welsh language in the county. There are regular weekly posts on the page, which includes sharing original posts as well as information from various other organisations such as the Welsh Language Commissioner, Menter Iaith, yr Urdd and many more.

4.2.2 **Welsh Learning Channel on Teams** – We have a channel on Microsoft Teams called ‘Dysgu Cymraeg’ (Learning Welsh). The channel is for Council staff who attend the internal Welsh lessons. The page is managed by the Welsh Tutor but the Welsh Promotion & Development Officer also has access to the channel to share information about Welsh events, such as band of the month and information about opportunities to practice speaking Welsh at work or outside work.

4.2.3 **Welsh in Education Website** – During the year, we have developed a new Welsh education website on the Council’s central website. The purpose of this page is to provide information for parents/guardians about Welsh education and the advantages of being bilingual.

### **4.3 Developing Links with Primary Schools in the County**

4.3.1 The Welsh Promotion & Development Officer continues to regularly contact our primary and secondary schools. Further information about some of this work can be seen below.

### **4.4 Celebrating Welsh Language Music Day 2024**

4.4.1 On 9 February this year, it was Welsh Language Music Day. In order to raise awareness about the day, the Welsh Promotion & Development Officer decided to create a short playlist with 6 Welsh songs for schools to share with their pupils and asked the pupils to vote for their favourite song. The intention was to promote Welsh Music Day and make it easier for school staff by choosing music on their behalf. The songs and a link to a questionnaire were placed on a poster and shared with primary and secondary school via e-mail. This year 12 primary schools and 4 secondary schools took part in the project – a higher number than last year which is very encouraging. We had 376 responses to the questionnaire, 292 (77.7%) individuals, 71 (18.9%) as whole classes and 13 (3.5%) responded as a whole school. This means that thousands of children and young people throughout the county took part in Welsh Language Music Day this year. Very positive feedback was received from



teachers and they really appreciated the playlist. It was also wonderful to see new schools taking part. We also had some great comments from some of the pupils too.

4.4.2 The playlist was shared with the internal learning Welsh classes too. The playlist was shared by the tutor and also on the Dysgu Cymraeg channel on Teams.

#### **4.5 Celebrating Shwmae Su'mae Day 2023**

4.5.1 Shwmae Su'mae Day is a day to promote and celebrate the Welsh language in Wales. Shwmae Su'mae Day is celebrated every year on 15 October, which was on a Saturday this year. A message was shared on the Council's social media accounts and internally to staff, encouraging people to start conversations in Welsh with a copy of the Mentrau Iaith's 'Say it in Cymraeg' poster which included Welsh vocabulary to be used in the office, in cafes, in the pub, in the shop and during meetings.

#### **4.6 Celebrating St. David's Day 2024**

4.6.1 The Welsh Learners held a Cuppa and a Chat session in the Welsh Language Classroom in Bodlondeb on 1 March 2024. It was nice to see the learners giving their Welsh skills a go, and chatting in Welsh over tea and cake.

#### **4.7 Use Your Welsh Campaign – Welsh Language Commissioner**

4.7.1 The Welsh Language Commissioner held a new campaign this year, the 'Use Your Welsh' campaign. The campaign was held for a fortnight, between 27 November and 11 December. The aim was to promote the Welsh language and services through the medium of Welsh, as well as building people's confidence and increasing the use of services through the medium of Welsh. The IT Service created a background for Council desktops promoting the campaign and that the Welsh language belongs to everybody. Messages were shared on the Council's social media accounts and internal messages were sent by e-mail to staff.

#### **4.8 Welsh Language Skills Tool and E-mail Messages**

4.8.1 This tool has now been in place for many years and it continues to be very successful. With the IT Service's assistance, the Language Skills Tool is connected to the staff list who have an e-mail account. So, if a member of staff writes an e-mail to another Council staff member, and that member of staff speaks Welsh fluently, then a message appears above the name saying: "Rydw i'n siarad Cymraeg / I can speak Welsh". We are trying to develop this tool for Welsh learners too.

4.8.2 It has been a great help to staff when communicating with other staff members and it makes it much easier to know what staff's language skills are before contacting them.

#### **4.9 Working Welsh Logo / E-mail signature**

4.9.1 Staff who can speak Welsh include a logo at the bottom of their e-mail signature to let customers and colleagues know that they can speak Welsh. We have developed a logo for learners which says 'Dw i'n dysgu Cymraeg' (I'm learning Welsh). A large number of Welsh learners include this logo at the bottom of their e-mail signatures.

4.9.2 In accordance with the standards, we have a sentence at the bottom of all e-mail messages since the Standards were given to us noting that receiving messages in Welsh won't incur a delay in responding. To ensure the message is included on every account, this message is automatically part of every message that leaves every e-mail account in the Council.

#### **4.10 Translation Work**

4.10.1 Over the last six years, the amount of words we translate for Conwy Council has continued to increase significantly. Our written materials are available in Welsh and English at all times, whether that be for the public or internally for staff.

#### **4.11 Simultaneous translation**

4.11.1 Our public meetings continue to be held as multi-location meetings which means that attendees can choose to be present in the Council chamber in Bodlondeb or join online; those wishing to listen to the translation can do so using the headsets in the chamber or the translation function on Zoom.

#### **4.12 Welsh Lessons**

4.12.1 Work Welsh is a program designed to strengthen Welsh language skills in the workplace. The scheme is funded by Welsh Government, and has been developed by the National Centre for Learning Welsh. It offers appropriate, fully funded, flexible training.

4.12.2 As part of the Work Welsh scheme in 2023-2024, 78 members of staff took advantage of the Work Welsh provision. 4 courses were held under the leadership of the tutor, on Entry, Intermediate and Higher levels. Also, a combined 50/50 course was held on Entry level, which started in September 2023. This was the first time we held a combined course and it was very successful. This year, for the first time, a successful 'Hybu Hyder' (building confidence) course was held, between November 2023 and January 2024. As part of the scheme Council staff had free access to 5 hour long taster courses that they completed independently online. It was great to see so many staff members registering and completing the taster course.

4.12.3 As part of our commitment to learning Welsh, we have a Champion for New Welsh Speakers that is chosen from amongst the Councillors. Councillor Louise Emery, who has been learning Welsh for a year now, was appointed to this role recently, and ideas are already being discussed. We are looking forward to further develop this function with Councillor Louise during the next few months.

4.12.4 In 2023-2024, 40 individuals registered on 79 taster courses, which are completed independently online. Of the 79 courses, 41 were completed and the rest were partially completed. We continue to monitor these courses to make sure everyone that has registered does complete at least one 5 hour course. 11 of the 40 individuals have completed at least two 5 hour courses. The remaining 29 will be encouraged to complete the courses. The taster courses are available free of charge to staff members, and are in addition to the provision led by the tutor. The number of staff that have registered for the taster courses this year is much higher than last year, which is wonderful to see.

### **4.13 Sgwrsio Scheme (Speaking Welsh Scheme)**

4.13.1 Taking advantage of opportunities to use and practice Welsh is very important in order to ensure the continuous development of the learners who are part of the Work Welsh scheme. At the beginning of 2021 we launched the Sgwrsio yn y Gwaith Scheme, where a learner on Intermediate level is paired with a fluent Welsh speaker in order to chat informally. At the moment, we have 25 pairs who meet regularly as part of the 'Sgwrsio' scheme. It has been wonderful to see the learners flourishing throughout the year as they come to the end of their current levels of Welsh lessons.

### **4.14 Update from the Council's numerous services**

#### **4.14.1 Main reception**

4.14.1 The Council's main reception/switchboard is located at Coed Pella, Bae Colwyn. Each one of the main reception/switchboard posts have been designated Welsh essential and each one of the 9 members of staff (100%) who work there are fluent Welsh speakers.

#### **4.14.2 Venue Cymru & Theatr Colwyn**

4.14.2.1 During Take Part we enjoyed live *Cyw* shows on the theatre stage and various workshops e.g. *Criw Celf Bach*, *Clog Dancing*, *Cimera* (circus skills), drumming, *Rownd a Rownd*, *Deian a Loli* and 'Deud O'; and we were also joined by *Mudiad Meithrin*, Bangor University, *Only Boys Aloud*, *Conwy Employment Hub*, *yr Urdd*, *Pobol y Cwm*, *Welsh National Opera* and *Xplore! Science Discovery Centre*.

4.14.2.2 *Family Art Festival* – The festival included 9 craft sessions with *Lowri Lewis*, 3 workshops from the *Theatr Genedlaethol* (Welsh National Theatre), 3 *Caffi Babis* sessions, *Cimera* sessions (circus skills), and 2 sessions with *Tape Music and Film*.

#### **4.14.3 Libraries**

##### **4.14.3.1 Conwy Archive and Library, Culture Centre**

###### **a) Archives:**

- Archives' annual "Explore your Archive" outreach event was delivered by archive staff in Welsh to three Welsh-medium schools. This activity allowed pupils to engage with original archive material relating to their school's *cynefin* and received excellent feedback from staff and learners.
- There have been 2 visits from Welsh-medium schools to the Archives, one celebrating the school's 60th anniversary and one themed around Christmas.
- Welsh-medium schools have requested and have been provided with interactive PowerPoints exploring their *cynefin*.
- One staff member, who is an advanced Welsh learner, has been bringing her Welsh class for regular sessions at the Archives using Welsh language material from Conwy's collections.
- Business History sessions were delivered in Welsh.

- Staff have engaged with Welsh-speaking members of the public at events including Deganwy Prom Day, the Seed Fair and the Honey Fair, providing information as well as bilingual leaflets and children's activity sheets.
- Open Doors tours were delivered bilingually.
- Activities around the Women's Peace Petition were facilitated in Welsh and English.
- A Welsh-speaking volunteer is working on a project in conjunction with National Library of Wales using the new Clip Corner in Conwy Archives.
- Archive staff facilitated filming of a Welsh language true crime documentary by S4C.

#### **b) Museums:**

- Out and About Gender and Sexuality Workshops were held by a Welsh facilitator
- Out and About Queer Welsh Stories creative writing workshop was held by a Welsh facilitator
- Museum Festival Clog Dancing workshops were held with a Welsh facilitator
- Ysgol Penmachno worked with the museum on an art project inspired by paintings in the museum and by nature
- Re-Imagining Congo House/African Institute animation workshops were delivered bilingually by a bilingual facilitator
- The Museum Officer regularly talks to visitors, responds to emails, facilitates and delivers workshops and events in Welsh

#### **c) Fusion:**

- 8 storytelling sessions through the medium of Welsh were held, and numerous other bilingual sessions were held during the year
- Festival Spooky Stories were held in Welsh at Sir Henry Jones Museum by Gill Brownson.
- An Arts Award at Ysgol Dolwyddelan was held in Welsh (all other Arts Awards were delivered bilingually)

#### **4.14.3.2 Working with children**

- Every week, we hold a story time session for children under 5 years old, and bilingual craft sessions regularly, as well as offering a Snack and a Story sessions during the summer holidays
- In cooperation with Menter Iaith Conwy, we had an opportunity to enjoy a morning in the company of Magi Ann (main character of a series of stories for children) and friends as she celebrated her 4th birthday. The library was full to the brim as 73 babies and children came to the party to enjoy Welsh stories and songs, as well as a craft session
- We have a full program of school visits and these visits are all available in Welsh
- We visited Ysgol Morfa Rhianedd to celebrate World Book Day. 4 sessions were held with the pupils to talk about our libraries, the importance of reading and then they had an opportunity to read books and take part in activities

#### **4.14.3.3 Activities and Resources for learners**

- The libraries are a stronghold for learning Welsh amongst staff and customers. A number of additional developments were accomplished this year, as well as buying Lingo for all area libraries
- Our 'Panad a Sgwrs' sessions at Llandudno, Llanrwst and Abergele libraries continue. Different content is prepared for the sessions. Sessions are held with different themes, and discussions and information about the subject e.g. Santes Dwynwen Day and St. David's Day are had

- To celebrate St David's Day we discussed St David's Day themed vocabulary and how to pronounce the words, we looked at the national anthem's history and then sang the anthem, and enjoyed some tea and Welsh cakes
- The Learners Reading Circle is still very successful
- Clwb Clebran Abergele is still going from strength to strength
- We have rearranged stock at Abergele Library and created a special space for our collection for those eager to learn Welsh or who are already learning the language

#### **4.14.4 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**

4.14.4.1 We had an exciting year in terms of Welsh in Education - here are some of the main points.

##### **4.14.4.2 2023-2024 Updates:**

- The Welsh Medium Education Strategic Forum was re-established with key stakeholders to draw up Conwy's WESP for 2022-27
- Estyn's Inspection of the Education Service – Welsh in Education was seen as a strength
- Contribute to national discussion with WG as and when necessary
- The Welsh Advisory Team Co-ordinator represents the authority on:
  - WG's national committee on school categorisation according to the amount of Welsh provision
  - The Association of Schools in favour of Welsh Medium Education's Primary Executive Committee
  - Conwy's Language Forum
  - Consortia meetings as and when necessary
- Welsh Language Advisory Team and Conwy's Language Centre part of a national network on immersion education
- Continually updating Conwy's public website and head teachers in the county with information about Welsh in Education in Conwy
- Distributing information to every childcare setting to share with parents – Menter Iaith Conwy's marketing booklet 'Welsh Medium Education: The Best of Both Worlds'.
- Establishing the Camfa Croesi'r Bont program as part of Mudiad Meithrin and Early Years Wales' program – Llanfairfechan
- Collaborating on a bespoke support program for specific schools with the Pre-school Support Team, Mudiad Meithrin, Welsh in Education Advisory Team and Menter Iaith Conwy with regards to training, good practice visits, examples of lessons, immersion education and Menter Iaith Conwy's activities
- WG Late Immersion grant
  - Conwy – Supporting immersion education in Welsh medium primary schools, including NQTs
  - Dyffryn Conwy – Immersion support for primary schools that feed the school and supporting latecomers
  - Creuddyn – Increase the provision of the Immersion Scheme and promote the benefits of immersion education to families that are eager to follow Welsh medium secondary education
- Welsh medium secondary schools are networking effectively with Gwynedd schools
- Awareness of the benefits of Welsh in the workplace by working with key stakeholders e.g. Coleg Llandrillo, Careers Wales
- The Language Charter and Cymraeg Campus programs have continued in all primary schools
- Secondary schools are establishing the arrangements according to national developments

- Ysgol Uwchradd Aberconwy – the first secondary school to achieve the bronze Cymraeg Campus award
- Primary, secondary and special schools, and referral units, have received funding to work together on projects that support the informal use of Welsh and to develop the workforce in the clusters:
  - Training for the primary workforce on planning, pedagogy and developing the workforce's Welsh language skills in the context of the Curriculum for Wales – Language, Literacy and Communication, including targets from the Language Charter and Cymraeg Campus
- A Welsh in a Year Sabbatical Scheme to develop Welsh language skills of the workforce
- Conwy and Anglesey are piloting a confidence building course with Nia Parry and Learn Welsh. A 10 week program to build confidence in using Welsh for the education workforce, parents, workers and other members of the school's community

#### **4.14.5 Updates on Creu Conwy 2021-2026**

- The Creu Conwy Using Welsh in your Business toolkit is available to download and has been actively promoted through business forums and networks such as Destination Conwy
- The Town Teams that have been developed in Abergele, Bae Colwyn, Conwy, Llandudno and Llanrwst are supported to be bilingual with translation / interpretation services present as required
- The Open Doors program of activities in September featured a number of Welsh language facilitators including Clog Dancing with Angharad Harrop and 'fynci jync' percussion with Colin Daimond
- Following on from the huge success of Winter Sounds 2022, Creu Conwy were delighted to create Winter Sounds Ifanc (Gigs y Gaeaf Ifanc) 2024! Beacons Cymru brought their Basecamp event to North Wales on the 8th March 2024 with Tape Music and Film and Menter Iaith Conwy as delivery partners. The music industry 'Basecamp' event for young people focused on promoting and showcasing the Welsh language music scene. 50 young people aged between 16 and 25 attended. The event included workshops with various individuals involved in the Welsh language music scene
- The extensive Young Creatives program has continued to have a strong element of Welsh language provision with 36 Welsh language sessions.
- She Sheds – Textiles project with Cefyn Burgess was held in Welsh

#### **4.14.6 More than Just Words**

- a) More Than Just Words 2022-2027 is the government's 5 year strategic framework to strengthen the Welsh provision within health and social care. The aim is to support Welsh speakers to have services in their language of choice.
- b) The scheme is based on the following themes:
  - Culture and leadership
  - Planning and Welsh language policies
  - Supporting and developing Welsh skills in the workplace
  - Sharing and developing good practice
- c) Conwy's Social Services and Education established a More than Just Words steering group in December 2022. The group's objectives are:
  - Enabling a healthy culture of belonging to the Welsh language in health and social care
  - Gather evidence for the More Than Just Words 2022-2027 plan

## 4.15 The Welsh Language Skills of Council Staff

4.15.1 Since developing the tool with the Information Technology Service, which appears on everyone's computers to collect information about the Welsh language skills of staff, there has been an improvement in the accuracy of recording staff's Welsh language skills. By now, all members of staff can use this tool, and we have, with the Information Technology Service's assistance, been able to collect information about all members of staff by now, including those who don't have access to the intranet. With the exception of schools, the authority employs 1,861 members of permanent staff. Below are the details for the 1,861 members of staff who have provided information about their Welsh Language skills:

### The Welsh Language Skills of Council Staff:

Listening / Speaking			
Level		Number of staff	%
Level 0		438	24
Level 1	FLUENT LEARNING WELSH	607	33
Level 2		199	11
Level 3		138	7
Level 4		174	9
Level 5		305	16
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,861</b>	

Reading / Understanding			
Level		Number of staff	%
Level 0		405	22
Level 1	FLUENT LEARNING WELSH	590	32
Level 2		213	11
Level 3		138	7
Level 4		203	11
Level 5		312	17
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,861</b>	

Writing			
Level		Number of staff	%
Level 0		524	28
Level 1	FLUENT LEARNING WELSH	568	31
Level 2		219	12
Level 3		145	8
Level 4		171	9
Level 5		234	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,861</b>	

4.15.2 Council staff have used the tool on the intranet to note their Welsh Language Skills by using the table found in the Welsh Language Policy.

4.15.3 From the above, it can be seen that 479 members of staff (26%) have classed themselves as fluent Welsh speakers (Levels 4 and 5).

4.15.4 Level 0 will now cease to exist and we will help staff that don't have any Welsh skills at all to move from level 0 to level 1 by offering online taster sessions and other resources.

4.15.5 The percentage of staff that have some Welsh skills (Level 1) has increased slightly compared to last year, although the numbers have increased significantly. 51% of staff members have Welsh skills to some extent. The increase in the staff's Welsh language skills is partly due to staff members going on the Welsh courses offered to learn or improve skills during the year.

4.15.6 Below is a breakdown of the language Welsh skills that Heads of Services have.

**Heads of Services' Welsh Skills:**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Total no. of staff</b>	<b>No. of staff who speak Welsh fluently (Levels 4 and 5)</b>	<b>Percentage that speak Welsh fluently (Levels 4 and 5)</b>	<b>No. who are learning Welsh (Levels 1, 2, and 3)</b>	<b>Percentage who are learning Welsh (Levels 1, 2, and 3)</b>	<b>No. that have no Welsh skills (Level 0)</b>	<b>Percentage that have no Welsh skills (Level 0)</b>
<b>Heads of Service</b>	14	6	43%	8	57%	0	0

4.15.5.1 It's encouraging to see that nearly half of the Heads of Services speak Welsh fluently. Three Heads of Services have started learning Welsh courses this year, and use their Welsh very often.

4.15.7 The breakdowns per service can be seen on the next page.



**Council Staff's Welsh Language Skills, by service:**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Total no. of staff</b>	<b>No. of staff who speak Welsh fluently (Levels 4 and 5)</b>	<b>% that speak Welsh fluently (Levels 4 and 5)</b>	<b>% change since 2022-2023?</b>	<b>No. of staff learning Welsh (Levels 1, 2, and 3)</b>	<b>% of staff learning Welsh (Levels 1, 2, and 3)</b>	<b>% change since 2022-2023?</b>	<b>No. of staff who don't understand any Welsh (Level 0)</b>	<b>% of staff who don't understand any Welsh (Level 0)</b>
Chief Executive's Department	6	2	33%	-7%	4	67%	-7%	0	0%
Education	183	59	32%	-4%	82	45%	+1%	42	23%
Environment, Roads and Facilities	233	42	18%	-1%	124	53%	-2%	67	29%
Internal Audit	11	2	18%	+3%	8	73%	+11%	1	9%
Economy and Culture	307	82	27%	-2%	146	48%	No change	79	26%
Corporate Financial Services	41	7	17%	-2%	28	68%	+4%	6	15%
Social Services – Adults	471	110	24%	No change	236	50%	+2%	125	27%
Social Services – Children	213	56	26%	+1%	82	38%	-2%	75	35%
People and Performance	42	10	24%	+5%	32	76%	+21%	0	0%
Revenue and Benefits	62	18	29%	No change	38	61%	+8%	6	10%
Regulatory & Housing	104	19	18%	-2%	75	72%	+8%	10	10%
Strategic Housing	62	13	21%	Cannot compare – new service	33	53%	Cannot compare – new service	16	26%
IT and Digital Transformation	67	14	21%	+2%	43	64%	-1%	10	15%
Law and Governance	59	45	76%	-1%	13	22%	-1%	1	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,861</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>26%</b>		<b>944</b>	<b>51%</b>		<b>438</b>	<b>24%</b>

**4.15.6** Two services report that they have no Welsh speakers at level 0 i.e. that don't understand any Welsh at all, and 4 other services report very few staff members on that level. After simplifying and amending the definition of the levels this year, early next year we will be asking everyone to re-assess their skills.

**4.15.7** It's great to see that the percentage of staff who don't understand any Welsh has decreased in the Revenue and Benefits Service and the Regulatory Housing Service, from 18% to 10% because many of their staff members have developed their skills from level 0 to level 1 or higher.

#### **4.16 Recruitment – Jobs advertised during the year**

**4.16.1** Every post which the Council advertises includes a Welsh designation for the post of either Welsh essential or Welsh desirable, but those sentences are expanded so that the applicants know exactly to what extent the Welsh language skills are needed. These sentences are amended when advertising and therefore are relevant to the post being advertised.

**4.16.2** Every post that is advertised is sent to the Welsh Language & Translation Service in order to come to a decision about whether the post should be advertised as one where the Welsh skills are essential for the post or where the Welsh skills are desirable. Several aspects of the post is considered such as the duties of the post as well as how many Welsh speakers work in the particular team.

**4.16.3** Please find below the number/percentage of jobs advertised during the year where Welsh was essential or desirable, and the number and percentage of posts where Welsh speakers were appointed.

<b>Designation</b>	<b>No. and % by language category</b>	<b>No. and % of posts where Welsh speakers were appointed</b>
Essential	152 posts (33%)	Of the 139 posts recruited to, Welsh speakers (level 4 and above) were appointed to 129 (93%) of them.  We are disappointed that this figure isn't 100% this year, like it has been for many years now, but we have put steps in place to remind managers of the importance of filling posts with staff that can speak Welsh fluently. We will add an additional step to note the exact level that is needed for each post advertised so this doesn't happen again.  To date, no one has been appointed to 13 of these posts as the recruiting process is ongoing.
Desirable	307 posts (67%)	Of the 293 posts recruited to, 188 of the officers spoke Welsh fluently (64%).  To date, no one has been appointed to 14 of these posts as the recruiting process is ongoing.
<b>TOTAL IN ALL CATEGORIES</b>	459 posts	Therefore, from the 432 posts recruited to, a total of 317 were fluent Welsh speakers, a percentage of 73%.

**4.17 Welsh Medium Training Completed** – Please find information below about the number of staff that have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level and the number of staff who have had Welsh language awareness training in 2023-2024.

**4.17.1 Welsh in The Workplace Courses**

Course level	Type of course	Suitable for	Details	Application	Total attendees
Entry 1	Blended learning	Staff who wish to learn Welsh or improve their skills	Courses held between April 2023 and March 2024 for people who wish to learn Welsh	Staff's personal choice	16
Entry 1	1:1 (Leader of the Council)				1
Entry 2	Face to face (online / class)				5
Entry 2	Self-Study				4
Foundation 1	Self-Study				4
Foundation 2	Self-Study				6
Intermediate	Face to face (on-line / class)				14
Higher 1	Face to face (on-line / class)				9
Hybu Hyder	Face to face (on-line / class)				8
Taster	Online				11
<b>TOTAL NUMBER WHO ATTENDED THE COURSE</b>					<b>78</b>

**4.17.2 Using Welsh Exams – WJEC**

Exam	Details	Total who sat their exams	Total who succeeded in their exams
Foundation	The WJEC's 'Using Welsh' exams assess the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills of those who learn Welsh, with 60% of the marks in all exams given for the speaking tests. Exams are offered on Foundation, Intermediate and Higher levels in June every year, and Entry level exams in June and January every year.	10	10
Intermediate		3	3
<b>TOTAL WHO SUCCEEDED IN THEIR EXAMS</b>			<b>13</b>

**4.17.4 Various Courses Offered / Held in Welsh**

Course offered	How many courses offered in Welsh?	Total attendees
Safe Recruitment for Managers (Standard 128 (a) recruiting and interviewing)	All such courses are offered in Welsh and English.	No courses were held this year as no one applied for the course to be held.
Managing the PDR process (Standard 128, (b) managing performance)	All such courses are offered in Welsh and English.	No courses were held this year as no one applied for the course to be held.
Managing the Discipline Process (Standard 128, (c) complaints and discipline procedures)	All such courses are offered in Welsh and English.	No courses were held this year as no one applied for the course to be held.
Corporate Health and Safety (Standard 128, (f) health and safety)	All such courses are offered in Welsh and English.	No courses were held this year as no one applied for the course to be held.

#### 4.17.5 Corporate Induction Session / Welsh Awareness

Date/Length of course	Suitable for	Details	Application	Total attendees
10/5/2023	New members of staff – (Every new member of staff should attend a corporate induction session within 6 months of starting to work for the Council).	The officers are addressed by the Chief Executive, with part of the address in Welsh. Some of the presentations during the half day are presented in Welsh, including a presentation from the Welsh Language and Translation Service about implementing the Welsh Language Standards, the help and advice on offer, using Welsh internally and Welsh language awareness. <b>(Staff from various services of Conwy County Borough Council)</b>	Compulsory for every new member of staff who starts working for the Council	37
22/5/2023				35
13/9/2023				41
15/11/2023				38
26/01/2024				41
<b>TOTAL NUMBER WHO ATTENDED THE COURSE</b>				<b>192</b>

4.17.6 From this year's statistics, it can be seen that 192 members of staff have had Welsh awareness information this year.

## 5.0. Record Keeping

### 5.1 Complaints

5.1.1 The public can complain via the Council website or directly with the Welsh Language & Translation Manager or the Welsh Promotion & Development Officer. All complaints are recorded on the Council's complaints system.

5.1.2 One complaint was received in 2023-2024.

<b>Date</b>	26/06/2023
<b>Reference</b>	GF126399
<b>Nature of complaint</b>	A complaint by a member of the public about errors on a poster.
<b>Service area</b>	Venue Cymru
<b>Summary of complaint, steps taken and how it was resolved</b>	<p>A member of the public got in touch with a complaint about a poster in Venue Cymru.</p> <p>Unfortunately, a non-Welsh speaking member of staff had translated the poster in a hurry before an evening show when the Council's translator weren't working.</p> <p>The poster was taken down and translated by the Council's translation service ready for next time.</p> <p>The team were reminded of the usual process so this won't happen again.</p>

### 5.2 Investigations by the Welsh Language Commissioner

5.2.1 The public can also complain directly to the Welsh Language Commissioner, and one complaint was submitted this year (see below).

<b>Date</b>	19/03/2024
<b>Welsh Language Commissioner's reference code</b>	CS1244
<b>Nature of the complaint to the Welsh Language Commissioner</b>	Consultation on free school transport to Conwy County's secondary schools.
<b>Council's Response</b>	<p>The transport section acknowledged their faults, there were flaws in the initial consultation, but, when attention was drawn to this, we worked with the Welsh Language Commissioner's team and we amended the consultation according to the recommendations made.</p> <p>This included updating the effect of getting rid of the non-statutory funding for Welsh medium education from the Equality Impact Assessment form and updating the questions in the review, including a section on the effect of any change to the current policy</p>

	<p>on opportunities for people to use Welsh and not treating Welsh less favourably than English.</p> <p>The section extended the timeframe to respond to the questionnaire to allow more time for stakeholders to consider the revised document.</p> <p>The Council has also updated its Equality Impact Assessment form to make sure that the Welsh Language and Translation Manager and the Welsh Language Promotion and Development Officer receives copies of every relevant form to check the contents and offer advice as necessary.</p>
<b>Outcome</b>	Investigation ongoing.

## **6.0 Conclusions and recommendations / actions to be taken**

- 6.1 It has been remarkable to see so many developments and successes going from strength to strength throughout the year.
- 6.2 We take pride in the success of our Welsh lessons and the Sgwrsio Scheme, and we look forward to developing the scheme during the next few months. It's great to hear about the learners' progress using their Welsh in the workplace and beyond.
- 6.3 It has been wonderful to see so many Welsh events being held and with so many more in the pipeline for next year.
- 6.4 We look forward to implementing our new Welsh Language Strategy – Ein Llais Cymraeg during the next year.