

Monmouthshire County Council Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2019-2020

This report reflects Monmouthshire County Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards during the financial year 2019-2020.

The report presents data on the required indicators in the following fields in compliance with Standards 158, 164 and 170: complaints; staff language skills; Welsh medium training for staff and recruiting to empty posts. This report is to be published on the Council website by 30th June 2020 in compliance with Standard 158.

Legislative requirements

The standards which apply to Monmouthshire County Council under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 can be found on our website at <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/monmouthshire-welsh-language/>

- Processes for translating documents, forms, leaflets, twitter and Facebook interactions etc. are now well established., and although occasionally one or two do slip through the net it is usually due to genuine forgetfulness or not getting the timings of a project correct. That said when spotted any issues are highlighted to the officers concerned and issues are quickly rectified.
- We continue to monitor our website ensuring that any new pages come on line in a bilingual format. The website will always remain a challenge due to the number of officers with the appropriate permissions to upload information and the sheer volume of documentation that goes onto it. Last year we translated over 1.6 million words, a high proportion of those documents, articles, posts etc. would have ended up on the council website.

Managing change

- We continue to be pro-active with our recruitment process and use a Welsh Language skills assessment for all vacancies. The Welsh Language Officer has worked through the workforce planning exercise with 4 of the council's 5 directorates. Social Care Health and Safeguarding is the outstanding area. This will be addressed after the pandemic eases.
- It is worth noting that in the monthly "More than Words Strategy" meetings with the Social Care Workforce Development Officer, conversations have been about how we can change vacancy adverts to attract more Welsh speakers into social care. This sector is notoriously difficult to recruit to due to the variety of staff that we employ and the specialist skills that are required. Welsh Language Training is offered to all staff whether as learners or for people with existing skills that have lost confidence in using the language (See Standard 170 (2) (b and c) for more detail)
- Every advertised vacancy is monitored by the Welsh Language Translation Team to check for completed skills assessments at the point that it is received in the translation email in-box. It is very encouraging to see that the number of reminders that need to be sent are by now very rare, and as an additional safety net, the Welsh Language Officer receives the authority vacancy list on a weekly basis to check on levels of compliance.
- A massive forward step has been that since approximately June 2019 the authority has agreed that all vacancies will be Welsh desirable as a minimum (Information regards recruiting to empty posts (*Standard 154, 170(c)*) are detailed below). This is a massive step forward for

Monmouthshire County Council and one that a few years ago many would never had anticipated or believed possible.

- There remains a significant challenge in ensuring a sufficient numbers of Welsh speaking front line staff to provide services through the medium of Welsh. The difficulty of recruiting Welsh speakers to some of these roles are reflected in a low the number of vacancies advertised as Welsh Essential as managers are mindful of the risks of having posts vacant for extended periods of they not being able to appoint to Welsh Essential roles due to a low supply of applicants.
- Our Welsh Language Line, which was established on the 4th July 2017, remains in operation and has had in total 312 calls during this time.

The following are the figures for the last financial year:

1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 – 64 calls in total

The following is a list of the service required or the nature of the phone calls received by the Welsh line in the last financial year.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| • Welsh Language Officer | 5 |
| • Refuse | 10 |
| • Communications Team | 8 |
| • Council Tax | 8 |
| • Grass Routes/Passenger Transport | 5 |
| • CYP/Education | 3 |
| • Social care | 2 |
| • Payroll /general finance | 3 |
| • Licensing | 2 |
| • Planning | 2 |
| • Parking enforcement | 2 |
| • Environmental Health | 2 |
| • Highways | 1 |
| • Human Resources | 5 |
| • Elections | 1 |
| • Wind farms/sustainability | 2 |
| • Community Education | 1 |
| • Countryside | 1 |
| • Estates | 1 |

Data required each year from 1 April – 31 March

- Information on complaints (*Standard 158(2); 164(2); 170(2)(d)*)
- Information on staff language skills (*Standard 170(2)(a)*)
Welsh medium training for staff (*Standard 170 (2)(b+c)*)
Recruiting to empty posts (*Standard 154, 170(ch)*).

Information on complaints (Standard 158(2); 164(2); 170(2)(d))

In 2019-2020 we did not have any formal complaints from members of the public. Any informal complaints or observations were dealt with by the Welsh Language Officer to the satisfaction of the complainants.

Information on staff language skills (Standard 170(2)(a))

Welsh Language Skills of Employees as at 31/03/20 (not including school based staff)

Staff Competency	Total	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Fluent	Total
Welsh Language skills	1523	171	44	7	34	256

Welsh language spoken skills by service area at 31 March 2020. (Not including school based staff)

	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Fluent	Total
Children and Young People	6	1	0	1	8
Social Care and Health	53	12	1	15	81
Enterprise	81	26	2	8	117
Resources	12	1	2	2	17
Chief Executive Officers Dept	19	4	2	8	33
Grand Total	171	44	7	34	256

Recruiting to empty posts (*Standard 154, 170(ch)*).

Job application processes are fully accessible in Welsh in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and every single vacancy is being advertised bilingually regardless of the Welsh assessment made and thereby goes over and above the requirement set by the standards allocated to us.

Below are the details of non-school advertised posts (not including schools) in 2019 – 2020.

- (a) The number of vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020; **362** (314 in 2018 – 2019)
- (b) The number of the vacant/new vacant posts advertised from 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020 that had 'Welsh language skills essential'; **1** (4 in 2018 – 2019)
- (c) The number of vacant/new vacant posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'; **351** (219 in 2018 – 2019)
- (d) The number of vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh-language skills when someone is appointed to the post';
0 (0 in 2018 – 2019)
- (e) The number of vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 that 'did not require Welsh language skills'; **10** (93 in 2018 – 2019)
- (f) The number that did not include an assessment 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 - **0**
- (g) The number not stated 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 – **0**

Here are the details of schools advertised posts in 2019 – 2020.

- (a) The number of **Schools** vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020; **133**
- (b) The number of the **Schools** vacant/new vacant posts advertised from 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020 that had 'Welsh language skills essential'; **18**
- (c) The number of **Schools** vacant/new vacant posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 that had 'Welsh language skills desirable or desirable but not essential'; **100**
- (d) The number of **Schools** vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh-language skills when someone is appointed to the post'; **0**
- (e) The number of **Schools** vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 that 'did not require Welsh language skills'; **15**
- (f) The number that did not include an assessment 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 - **0**
- (g) The number not stated 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 – **0**

Welsh medium training for staff (*Standard 170 (2) (b+c)*)

In 2019 - 2020, we ran the following Welsh Language sessions and financially supported (fees and books) individuals in their own time:-

- **14** members of staff enrolled for the Welsh Language taster/awareness session.
- **10** members of staff enrolled for the Cwrs Mynediad Year 1 Cymraeg yn y Gweithle 2 hour 30 week course provided by Coleg Gwent Welsh for Adults.
- **9** members of staff enrolled for Cwrs Mynediad 2.
- **10** members of staff enrolled for Sylfaen 1
- **1** member of staff enrolled for Sylfaen 2
- **14** members of staff enrolled for the free 10 hour Cwrs Croeso
- **1** member of staff enrolled for Uwch 1 after work.
- **10** members of staff enrolled for Cwrs Gloywi.
- **3** members of staff attended Nant Gwrtheyrn to take part on the Canolradd course funded by Welsh Government.
- Staff are funded to attend Coleg Gwent Welsh Weekend Courses should they chose to in addition to the normal weekly courses.

More opportunities will be offered in September 2020 obviously dependent upon the current pandemic situation having been resolved. It may be that we need to look at on-line courses such as "Say Something in Welsh" if the normal classroom is not an option.