

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Annual Update 2017-2020</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>Children and Young People</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Children and Young People Select Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b>

## **1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Children and Young People Select Committee with an update on progress towards the targets agreed by the Local Authority contained within the WESP 2017-2020.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 Select Members scrutinise the following reports and take the opportunity to comment on the contents.

## **3. BACKGROUND:**

- 3.1 The WESP is the long-term language planning tool for the local authority, which sets out the strategic direction for the planning, delivery and growth in Welsh medium education. The first plan covered the three year period from 2014 – 2017 and the second plan spans 2017 -2020. The current WESP is underpinned and informed by Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy (April 2010) and policy statement for 2015-16.

- 3.2 The current WESP is structured around the following seven outcomes:

- More seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh
- More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary school to secondary school;
- More 14 -16 year old learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh;
- More 16-19 year old students studying through the medium of Welsh in schools, colleges, and work based learning
- More learners with higher skills in Welsh
- Welsh-medium provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs
- Workforce planning and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

- 3.3 The Local Authority must submit a WESP to Welsh Ministers for approval under section 87 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 before the commencement of the plan. The current WESP was approved for publication and implementation on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

- 3.4 The Local Authority should review progress against the WESP on an annual basis.

## **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The approval process for 2017-2020 WESPs took much longer than anticipated. During the process, Welsh Ministers commissioned a rapid review of WESPs before approval. This meant that the implementation of our WESP did not commence until October 2018 and as a result, the timescale for the delivery of the plan is now two years instead of the initial three years.
- 4.2 The three-year life cycle of the current WESP is not long enough to implement change in a number of key areas. For example, the number of seven-year old learners taught through the medium of Welsh by the end of the plan, would be very similar to the number of Reception children in school at the start of the plan.
- 4.3 The Minister for Education amended reporting requirements for school performance after the approval of the WESP. This means that since 2018 there has no publication of school targets and school performance.
- 4.4 The format of the next WESP will change to reflect shortcomings identified during the rapid review of WESPs in 2017.
- 4.5 The pandemic has had an impact on progress in some areas of the current WESP and delayed the introduction of the next WESP.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 There is a potential resource implication for the Local Authority if the proposals for the expansion of Welsh-medium education within Monmouthshire are agreed as part of our School Organisation Plan. There is a 35% Capital contribution required from Monmouthshire as part of our Band B proposals with the remaining capital funding being provided by WG funding.

## **6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to work towards seven well-being goals, one of which is 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'. The Local Authority has a duty to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh and work towards the well-being goals. Education, through the WESP, has a significant role in supporting the development of Welsh language and culture.

## **6 SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 Safeguarding arrangements and access to support from Local Authority services apply equally to children and pupils in Welsh medium settings and schools.
- 6.2 Officers from Education, Inclusion and Children's services work in close partnership with all schools and settings, to ensure that learners are kept safe at all times

## 7 CONSULTEES:

- Members of Children and Young People's Select Committee
- Education Achievement Service (EAS)
- Children and Young People Departmental Management Team

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Monmouthshire Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020  
<http://hub/corporatedocs/layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/corporatedocs/Equalities/MCC%20WESP%20Final%20Proofed%2014.10.18%20-%20ENG.docx&action=default&DefaultItemOpen=1>
- Future Generations - <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en>
- Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022 Monmouthshire  
<http://hub/corporatedocs/layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/corporatedocs/Equalities/MCC%205%20Year%20Welsh%20Lang%20Strat%2020180101%20Com%20Bilingual.docx&action=default&DefaultItemOpen=1>
- Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans 2021-2031  
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-05/guidance-on-welsh-in-education-strategic-plans.pdf>

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