

SUBJECT: WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2022-27

MEETING: COUNTY COUNCIL

DATE: 3rd MARCH 20221

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Welsh Language Strategy for 2022 – 2027, which has been produced in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and describes our ambition to increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county in line with the Welsh Government ambition for a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Council approve the strategy which is a legal requirement under The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Monmouthshire is the gateway to Wales. The Welsh language is an important part of the culture and heritage of our place and importantly it's also a growing language, we've seen a significant rise in the number of people speaking the language over the past thirty years. We want to build on that growth with our next five-year strategy, harnessing the enthusiasm of local people towards the language and ensuring that it continues to thrive, benefitting residents and visitors to this special corner of Wales now and for generations to come.
- 3.2 This is our second Welsh Language Strategy and builds on the positive progress made over the past five years. The action plan for the period 2017-22 has been scrutinised regularly by the Strong Communities Select Committee as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 3.3 The new strategy establishes four objectives that will help realise our ambitions and contains an action plan setting out how these will be delivered. The objectives are:
- Increase the number of children who are educated through the medium of Welsh.
 - Provide more opportunities for adults to learn and use the language.
 - Increase the number of opportunities for the public to interact with public services delivered through the medium of Welsh.
 - Work with partners to create of more social opportunities for people to use the language in everyday life.
- 3.4 This strategy is closely linked to our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32 which has been scrutinised by the Children and Young Peoples Select Committee. Some

of the performance measures have been shared to ensure a consistency of approach and to ease performance monitoring,

- 3.5 We are committed to ensure that Monmouthshire plays its part and is having a positive impact towards achieving the Welsh Government's ambitious strategy of having a million Welsh speakers by 2050. These two strategies have given added impetus to the targets set out in this strategy.
- 3.6 This strategy is a challenging one, but is achievable with the appropriate level of planning, commitment and support from our officers, our partners in the Council's Welsh Language Forum, other Welsh Language organisations and of course the residents of Monmouthshire.

4. REASONS:

To deliver the Council's ambition to grow the Welsh language in Monmouthshire and to meet our statutory responsibility to produce a 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-27 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

5 EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 5.1 Progress with the strategy will be evaluated in the Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report which will be scrutinised by the Strong Communities Select Committee. This will assess progress against the action plan.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 There are no specific resource implications attached to the strategy. However, a pressure has been included within the 2022-23 budget to increase capacity in Equalities and Welsh language to strengthen our response to the standards and ensure we can deliver our commitment to delivering the aspirations of the strategy. Some commitments in the strategy may require specific decisions from Cabinet or Council at a future date and the financial implications of these will be considered at that point.

7. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

There are no significant equality impacts identified and this strategy is designed to have positive impacts on the Welsh Language.

8. CONSULTEES:

- 8.1 Strategic Leadership Team
Cabinet
Strong Communities Select Committee

The strategy was also the subject of a formal public consultation that ran between the 13th of December 2021 and the 30th of January 2022. Responses were generally supportive of the aims of the strategy with 74% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing compared with 17% who disagreed or strongly disagreed. A higher proportion of respondents were supportive of the specific objectives.

The following organisations were also invited to respond: Menter Iaith Blaenau Gwent Torfaen Mynwy (MIBGTM), the Urdd, Mudiad Meithrin, Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni, Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin, Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw and Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed, Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG).

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Monmouthshire County Council's Welsh Language Standards

10. AUTHOR:

Alan Burkitt Policy Officer Equalities and Welsh Language

11. CONTACT DETAILS:

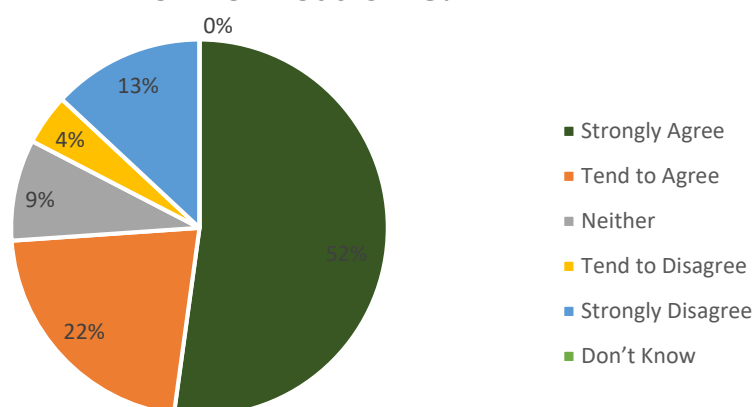
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Welsh Language Strategy 2022-27 Summary of Consultation Responses

Listed below are some of the questions that we asked in our public consultation that ran from the 13th December until the 30th January along with charts indicating whether people agreed or disagreed with our stated ambition and aims.

Do you agree with the aims of our 5 Year Strategy for Monmouthshire?

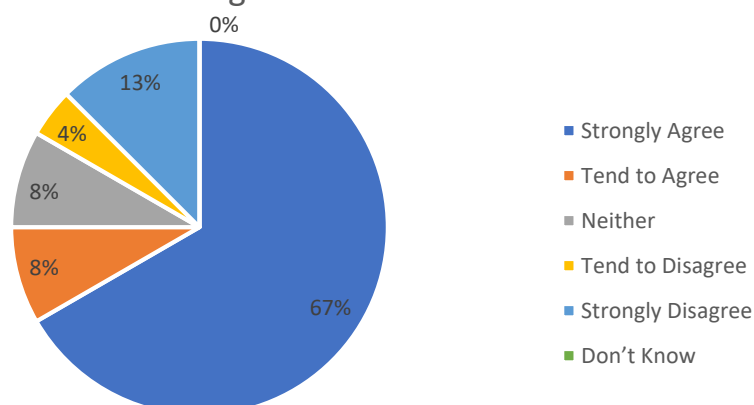


Comments included:

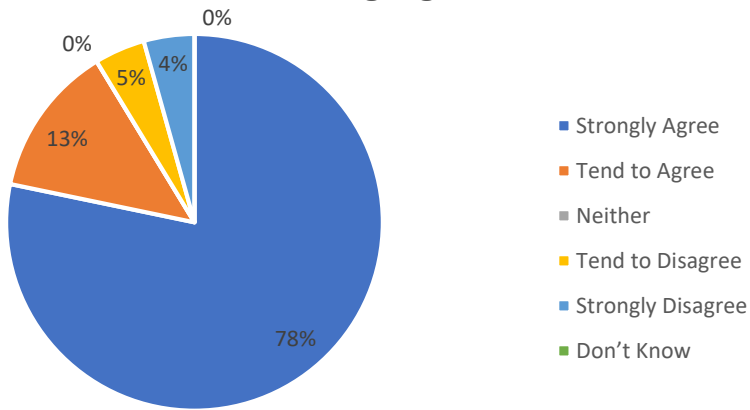
- I agree strongly but think that Monmouthshire could be more ambitious
- Great to see that the council support more leisure activities and services through the medium of Welsh...very important that the strategy is monitored and evaluated
- It would be lovely to hear more Welsh spoken 'in the street' and in the shops in Monmouthshire.
- There is no need to constantly try to force Welsh on people. There is no practical benefit to Welsh outside of Wales.

We also asked people whether they agreed or disagreed with each of the four objectives:

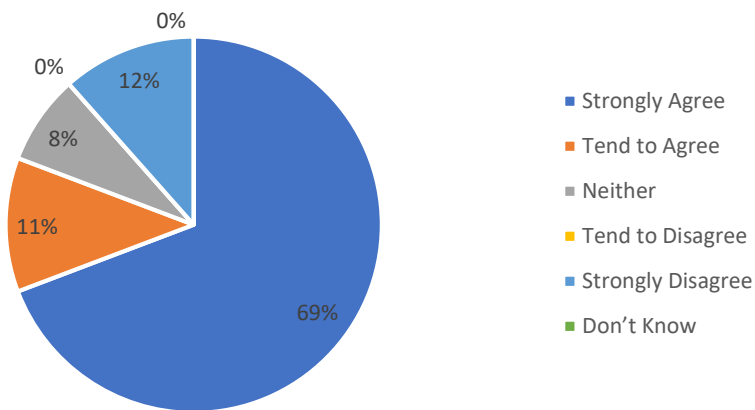
Increase the number of children who are educated through the medium of Welsh



Provide more opportunities for adults to learn and use the language



Increase the number of opportunities for the public to interact with public services delivered through the medium of Welsh



Work with partners to create of more social opportunities for people to use the language in everyday life.

