

SUBJECT: WELSH IN EDUCATION ACTION PLAN 2022-23

MEETING: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 15th December 2022

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee with Monmouthshire's first-year action plan for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32
- 1.2 This report presents Monmouthshire's WESP Action Plan 2022-23 to Scrutiny before submitting to Welsh Ministers in line with statutory requirements.
- 1.3 Members should review the actions and timescales proposed in the Monmouthshire WESP Action Plan 2022 – 23 in relation to all aspects of corporate and strategic work within the local authority. This is particularly relevant in the proposed development of a of Welsh-medium seedling class, school transport arrangements, provision for Welsh-medium learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and the Welsh language capacity of the workforce.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Scrutiny Members:

- 2.1 Receive the Monmouthshire WESP Action Plan 2022-23.
- 2.2 Agree to the actions and timescales contained within Monmouthshire's WESP Action Plan 2022-23, including:
 - the expansion of Welsh-medium seedling class in the north east of the county in September 2023.
 - a School Transport Review to ensure all learners within the county have a realistic option of choosing a Welsh-medium education
 - the development of ALN Welsh-medium provision and the delivery of wider ALN services through the medium of Welsh
 - an increase in the proportion of Welsh speakers in the school and local authority workforce

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Welsh Government's vision is to see one million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050 and to achieve this the following actions will need to happen:
- more children in Welsh-medium education.
 - better planning in relation to how people learn the language;
 - more easy-to-access opportunities for people to use the language;
 - a stronger infrastructure and a revolution to improve digital provision in Welsh; and
 - a sea change in the way we speak about it.
- 3.2 This WESP focuses on the following seven key outcomes which interface with other key areas including our next Welsh Language Strategy, the Curriculum for Wales (CfW) and the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (ALNET) Act.
- Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
 - Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
 - Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another
 - Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
 - Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school
 - Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
 - Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.3 The WESP Action Plan 2022-23 outlines the steps we will take over the coming year to promote the expansion of Welsh-medium education and increase the opportunities for learners at all levels to engage with and use the language with confidence in line with the targets as outlined on our WESP 2022-32.

4. KEY ACTIONS

- 4.1 Establish a Promotion Working Group to support the development of Welsh language provision in settings, schools and across local authority services

- 4.2 Work with Mudiad Meithrin to establish a fourth Cylch Meithrin setting in Chepstow and stimulate increased demand for Welsh-medium provision across the county.
- 4.3 Work with Public Health Board (ABHB) to capture current arrangements for providing services through the medium of Welsh and opportunities to promote the benefits of a Welsh language education.
- 4.4 Open a seedling school, managed as a satellite class for Ysgol Y Ffin, in Monmouth Town from September 2023.
- 4.5 Complete the statutory consultation to establish a Welsh-medium school located in Monmouth town We are hopeful that such action will attract those families interested in Welsh-medium provision who are currently concerned by the travelling distances to the existing options.
- 4.6 Apply for further funding to build on and promote the developing provision to support latecomers so they feel reassured that Welsh-medium education is a genuine option for their child(ren).
- 4.7 Plan a mechanism to monitor the linguistic progression and progress of Monmouthshire learners attending Welsh-medium secondary education in collaboration with other local authorities.
- 4.8 Develop a system to collate GCSE achievements for all Monmouthshire pupils including those educated in out of county schools
- 4.9 Engage with Careers Wales to provide advice and support to promote future opportunities available to learners who have a formal Welsh language qualification.
- 4.10 Ensure that all four secondary schools in Monmouthshire offer an A level course in Welsh as part of a wider collaboration model.
- 4.11 Work with Coleg Gwent as they deliver bilingual units in childcare, health and social care and public service courses.
- 4.12 Carry out a mapping exercise to establish the range of opportunities to learn and speak Welsh across Monmouthshire.
- 4.13 Seek out new opportunities for learners to purposefully use Welsh in a variety of contexts in schools to increase engagement in the language and culture
- 4.14 Undertake an audit of ALN Welsh language needs and provision across Monmouthshire within the first year of the plan.
- 4.15 Analyse the Welsh language skills of the local authority workforce to identify training needs and gaps in service areas.

5. STATUTORY PROCESSES

- 5.1 The Local Authority is required to submit a WESP Action Plan annually to Welsh Ministers for approval in December each year.
- 5.2 Welsh Ministers will consider the WESP Action Plan for consideration and approval.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 Wales is a bilingual nation with a clear ambition to increase the use of Welsh across the country. We fully support and are committed to the Welsh Government's national strategy for the Welsh Language Cymraeg 2050 and recognise the role of education in achieving this vision.
- 6.2 This WESP Action Plan 2022-23 sets out the strategic steps and actions Monmouthshire propose to take over the next year to contribute to our WESP and the Welsh Government's vision of million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The Local Authority secured Welsh Government funding to establish a new school in Monmouth as detailed in our Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) Band B. The funding at the time of application covered 100% of the costs, however, since the start of the pandemic the cost of building work has increased significantly and with the recently introduced requirement for schools to meet carbon neutral standards, current costs may exceed the original estimate. Consequently, there is a potential resource implication for the Local Authority if Welsh Government are unable to meet the increase in costs.
- 7.2 The expectation is that all other costs to implement this WESP Action Plan will be met through the Revenue Grant. This means that any increase to costs because of the school transport and ALN reviews will need to be considered in the context of the whole authority budget.
- 7.3 The cost of late immersion provision will be covered by a grant for a further period of three years. Any additional cost will fall to the local authority after this period unless further funding as available from Welsh Government.

8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

- 8.1 One of the main benefits of the WESP Action Plan 2022-23 is the Council's commitment to developing and expanding Welsh-medium education in the primary phase. The increase in capacity across the county will allow our current schools to continue to grow and create additional places in areas where there is increasing demand.

8.2 The development of Welsh-medium ALN provision to meet emerging ALN needs will ensure that these learners are well supported in their local school and community, and they can access support and services in Welsh.

8.3 The Equality Impact Assessment is included in Appendix 1.

9. **CONSULTEES:**

- Coleg Gwent
- Education Achievement Service
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Aneurin Bevan Health Board (ABHB)
- Yr Urdd
- School Transport Unit
- Cymraeg I Blant
- Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG) Menter Iaith Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen Mynwy
- Welsh in Education Forum/ Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg Monmouthshire

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- Monmouthshire WESP 2022-23
[WESP Final 220629 eng.pdf \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/wesp-final-220629-eng.pdf)
- Draft Monmouthshire County Council Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-27
[MCC Word Template 2012 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/mcc-word-template-2012)
- Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/guidance-welsh-in-education-strategic-plan.pdf>
- Overseeing compliance Good practice advice document (Welsh Language Commissioner)
<https://www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/media/tu5nll0x/20200901-1-overseeing-compliance.pdf>
- Producing a Welsh Language standards annual report Good practice advice document (Welsh Language Commissioner)
<https://www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/media/vfsfhdqi/20200901-5-welsh-language-standards-annual-report.pdf>
- Estyn Thematic Report Local Authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plans September
<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-report/local-authority-welsh-education-strategic-plans>
- Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers by 2050

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-12/cymraeg-2050-welsh-language-strategy.pdf>

- Welsh in Education Action Plan

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/welsh-in-education-action-plan-2017%E2%80%9321.pdf>

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