

# **Monmouthshire County Council Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2016-2017**

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 2016-2017.

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 will be published by 30th June 2017 in compliance with Standard 158.

## **Legislative requirements**

This year has been a year of ensuring that we know where we are in terms of levels of compliance with the Standards allocated to us. Also we have looked at trying to establish how consistent we are in terms of compliance to the Standards across all directorates/divisions. It has once again been a very challenging time due to the tight timescale, the sheer volume of the Standards and also the complexity of interpreting what does each individual standard actually mean without having any guidance to follow. Having said that for an authority that has a comparatively low proportion of Welsh speakers we are rightly proud of the level of compliance that has been reached and the "can do" attitude of the staff that are in the vast majority not Welsh speakers and have very little knowledge or skills in the Welsh language.

## **Managing change**

We have been in contact with directorates/divisions to speak to them regarding some of the more challenging standards and the dialogue has always been positive and solutions to any problems have always been found and enthusiastically implemented. It was decided that in order to monitor our progress in service delivery that we procure the services of our partners – Menter Iaith BGTM are being commissioned to carry out a "mystery shopper exercise" to see where we are at in certain key areas. On St David's Day we launched our bilingual website with its Welsh Language resource page and our Facebook and separate twitter accounts to encourage the public to take up our Welsh Language services. Our Welsh Language line is becoming ever more popular with 70+ phone calls received and dealt with or transferred to the relevant officers through the medium of Welsh.

## Data required each year from 1 April – 31 March 2017

- 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))

One complaint was received in 2016-2017 regarding the provision of swimming lessons through the medium of Welsh in the county but the final adjudication as to whether we are non-compliant has not yet been received.

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

### Welsh Language Skills of Employees as at 31/03/17

Staff Welsh Competency	Total posts	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Fluent
Welsh Language	3,096	1	20	5	30

### Welsh language spoken skills by service area at 31 March 2017.

	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Fluent	Total
Resources	5	2	1	3	11
Social care	19	4	0	11	34
Highways/Operations	9	1	0	2	12
Children and Young People	3	1	0	2	6
Partnership/Communications	3	1	1	2	7
Enterprise Directorate	69	10	3	10	92
Elected Members	4	1	0	1	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>168</b>

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

In 2016-17, we ran the following Welsh Language sessions:-

**3** members of staff attending the Cwrs Mynediad Year 2 Cymraeg yn y Gweithle 2 hour 30 week course provided by Coleg Gwent Welsh for Adults.

**7** members of staff attending Cwrs Mynediad year 3 Cymraeg yn y Gweithle 2 hour 30 week course also provided by Coleg Gwent Welsh for Adults.

**53** members of staff attending a bespoke 2 hour 2x per week 20 week reception course designed and run by Coleg Gwent Welsh for Adults

**9** members of staff attending a bespoke 2 hour 2x per week 8 week reception course designed and run by Coleg Gwent Welsh for Adults

**5** members of staff attending a second bespoke 2 hour 2x per week 15 week reception course designed and run by Coleg Gwent Welsh for Adults.

**4** members of staff are attending Sylfaen courses outside of work time

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

Job application processes have been amended to be fully accessible in Welsh in accordance with the Standards.

Below are the details of advertised posts in **2016 - 2017**

(a) The number of vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017;  
402 (250 in 2015 – 2016)

(b) The number of the vacant/new vacant posts advertised from 1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017 that had 'Welsh language skills essential'; 21 (10 in 2015 – 2016)

(c) The number of vacant/new vacant posts advertised from 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017 that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'; 105 (2 in 2015 – 2016)

(d) The number of vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017 specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh-language skills when someone is appointed to the post';  
8 (0 in 2015 – 2016)

(e) The number of vacant/new posts advertised from 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017 that 'did not require Welsh language skills'; 90 (230 in 2015 – 2016)

It has also been noted that there were 176 with no assessments carried out and two that were unclear.

A great deal of work has been carried out over the last year working closely with HR and other colleagues in developing an assessment process that has reaped dividends in terms of essential and desirable assessments being made. The non-assessments above were from very early on in the year when the process was not in place. It is anticipated that the figures next year will be even better. A pilot project has been established to carry out a workforce planning review with the Recycling and Refuse Service. Once this has been completed the process will be amended if required and the process carried out with all divisions. The project will establish the existing Welsh language skills within services and then look at front line or specific service gaps. Posts will then be identified as either Welsh essential or desirable and it is hoped that this will lead to us discovering existing Welsh speaking staff and lead to an incremental increase in the council's capacity to communicate and offer services through the medium of Welsh.