



Report of the Cabinet Members for Education & Learning and Culture, Human Rights and Equalities

Scrutiny Programme Committee - 19 March 2024

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-23

Purpose	To present the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-23.
Content	The report provides a summary of the activities relating to Welsh Standards within the financial year ending 31 st March 2023; including new projects and activities during the year.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided and give views
Lead Councillor	Councillors Robert Smith and Elliott King, Cabinet Members for Education & Learning and Culture, Human Rights and Equalities
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1. Background

- 1.1 Since 30th March 2016 all local authorities in Wales have had a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) and with Welsh Language Standards imposed by the Measure through sub-legislation (Welsh Language Regulation Standards), commonly referred to as the 'Standards'.
- 1.2 Swansea Council is required to comply with 163 standards across 5 categories. Standards 158, 164 and 170 require the Council to produce an annual report which details how it has complied with the standards, including:
 - the number of complaints received during that year which relate to the Standards relevant to the Council
 - the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question
 - the number of employees who have participated in Welsh training courses during the year

- the number of new and vacant posts requiring Welsh Language Skills as essential, desirable, or not required.

1.3 The Standards also require the Council to:

- publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates
- publicise the fact that you have published an annual report
- ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available on the Council website, and in each of our offices that are open to the public.

2. Briefing

2.1 The 2022-23 Annual Report is at Annex A and includes examples of actions we have taken across the five standards categories during the year as well as data demonstrating our compliance.

2.2 During 2022-23 we received six complaints regarding the Council's compliance with the standards (see section 3.4 of Annex A).

2.3 846 employees reported having some level of Welsh language skills, which is a 28% increase on the 662 who reported this in 2021-22. 601 employees were willing to use Welsh in the course of their work, compared to 454 in 2021-22, an increase of a third.

2.4 65 employees participated in formal Welsh language training courses, nearly a third more than in 2021-22.

2.5 58% of new or vacant posts (excluding schools) specified that Welsh language skills were desirable or essential, compared to 34% in the previous year.

3. Conclusions

3.1 During 2022-23 the Council continued to promote the Welsh language and sought to strengthen its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards across the five categories - from publishing the 2022-27 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and embedding Welsh language into the Integrated Impact Assessment, to responding to the outcome of Welsh Language Commissioner investigations and promoting Welsh Language event days such as St David's Day.

3.2 The data in Section 2 above and in Annex A shows that the actions being taken by the Council to promote the Welsh language are having an impact. That said we continue to find the recruitment of Welsh speakers challenging and are looking for ways to address this in 2023-24.

3.3 The 2022-23 Annual Report should have been published by June 2023, but has been delayed due staffing issues. The Welsh Language Commissioner's Office is aware of the delay. The report will be published once translated, following the Scrutiny Programme Committee's consideration of it.

4. Legal implications

4.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

5. Finance Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Glossary of terms: Not applicable

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Annex A - Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-23