

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

HELD AT ON WEDNESDAY, 27 AUGUST 2014
AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor F M Gordon (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
J C Bayliss A C S Colburn	D W Cole S M Jones	T H Rees L V Walton

Officers:

J Hooper	- Directorate Lawyer
E Owen	- Access to Services Manager
P Couch	- Equality Policy Officer
S Collins	- Democratic Services Officer

17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V M Evans, E T Kirchner, C L Philpott and G J Tanner.

18 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

19 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Equalities Committee held on 2 July 2014 be agreed as a correct record.

20 **WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME DRAFT ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2013-14 AND WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS.**

The Equality Policy Officer and the Access to Services Manager presented the Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2013 – 2014. The report had been submitted to Cabinet for consideration prior to the Meeting. The report had been circulated to Committee members at the end of July as the last meeting, when the item was originally scheduled for discussion, had been cancelled due to a special Council meeting.

It was outlined that the Council was required to undertake an annual review of the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme with a report presented to the Welsh Language Commissioner and published.

It was added that in common with many parts of Wales, the profile of the language in the City and County of Swansea had changed over the past decade. According to the 2011 Census, 11.4% of the population (26,332) of the City and County of Swansea speak Welsh (with 19.3% having one or more language skills). This represented a decrease of 1.6% since the 2001 Census, which was a little less than average across Wales (1.9%). As Swansea was an economic and retail centre for South West Wales, it was important to note that nearly a third of all Welsh speakers live within the region.

The draft report was provided at Appendix A to the report and covered the year to March 2013. The Welsh Language Commissioner required that the monitoring report covers six Performance Indicators, as well as providing information on the following areas:

- Compliance with the Welsh Language Scheme.
- Frontline services.
- Management and administration of the Scheme.
- Welsh language skills.
- Mainstreaming the Welsh language.
- Performance analysis.

The statutory requirements for each public body in Wales with regards to the production of a Welsh Language Scheme were outlined in detail. The time table for, and some of the likely changes from, the introduction of Welsh Language Standards next year were also outlined.

The Committee discussed the details contained within the report. Discussions centred around;

- How people engage their level of Welsh and the need to provide services that reflect the demand for, and support the use of, Welsh.
- How the Authority has promoted the services it has and the Welsh language skills within the workforce.
- How the forthcoming austerity measures could affect the language provision within the Authority.

RESOLVED that the Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2013-2014 be noted.

21 **MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

There were no reports from Member Champions.

22 **WORK PLAN TIMETABLE 2014-2015.**

The Chair presented the revised Work Plan for 2014/2015.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

23 **NEXT MEETING – 5.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2014.**

NOTED that the next meeting of the Committee at 5pm on Wednesday, 24 September 2014.

The meeting ended at 5.35pm.

CHAIR