

Report of the Cabinet Member for Education

Cabinet - 17 November 2016

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

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| Purpose: | To seek approval to submit the draft statutory Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020 to Welsh Government by 20 December 2016. |
| Policy Framework: | The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013 as part of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Welsh Medium Education Strategy. |
| Reason for Decision: | A statutory requirement from Welsh Government. |
| Consultation: | Legal Finance Access to Services |
| Recommendation(s): | It is recommended that: 1) The draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 is approved by Cabinet on 17 November for submission to Welsh Government. 2) The draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 incorporates the City and County of Swansea Welsh Language in Education Policy |
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires local authorities to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) by 20 December preceding the year in which the plan will have effect for approval by Welsh Ministers. A local authority must then publish its revised plan by no later than 1 June in the year the plan (or revised plan) is to have effect.
- 1.2 The City and County of Swansea consulted on and published its first WESP in 2011 on a voluntary basis. The first statutory WESP for 2014-2017 was published in June 2014 and has been revised annually since.
- 1.3 The WESP must detail how the local authority will aim to achieve the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in the current national Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES). The strategy's stated vision is to:
'have an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education, reaches out to and reflects our diverse communities and enables an increase in the number of people of all ages and backgrounds who are fluent in Welsh and able to use the language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace'.
- 1.4 The WESP must also make reference to how the proposed strategic direction of the Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2020 will be reflected in both the forums and the plans.
- 1.5 The Welsh in Education forum for City and County of Swansea is Partneriaeth Addysg Cymraeg Abertawe (PACA). It comprises headteacher representatives from Welsh-medium and English-medium primary secondary schools, officers of the local authority and other stakeholders, including college and university representatives. PACA sits underneath Swansea's overarching partnership for raising standards in schools, the School Improvement Partnership. PACA has agreed upon, and is responsible for, the targets in this plan, except those concerning school places which is under the QEd 2020 Programme Board and pre-school provision which is guided by the Early Years Board and Operational Group, responsible to the Children and Young People Board.
- 1.6 A copy of the draft WESP can be found at Appendix A. In the City and County of Swansea, the draft WESP appears in English only during the preparation process. It will be translated before it goes out to consultation.

2.0 Statutory Requirements

2.1 Statutory guidance is provided by Welsh Government and outlines seven outcomes that local authorities must report their current position and set targets for. Objectives must be set to outline how these targets will be met.

2.2 The plan focuses on the five outcomes of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy 2010:

- More seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh
- More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school
- More learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh
- More learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh
- More learners with higher-level Welsh language skills

In addition, the following two outcomes must be included:

- Welsh medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN)
- Workforce planning and continuing professional development (CPD)

Standards of attainment in Welsh and Welsh Second Language must also be included in this plan.

2.3 Local authorities are required to provide short statements against each of the following to show how they will be embedded in the plan to ensure alignment with delivery of Welsh government priorities:

- Rewriting the Future: raising ambition and attainment in Welsh schools
- Successful Futures
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

3.0 Consultation Requirements

3.1 The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013 state that a local authority must consult on the plan in draft for a period of not less than eight weeks. A list of required consultees is specified in the regulations.

3.2 The City and County of Swansea intends to begin a consultation on 9 December 2016, after Cabinet has approved the draft for submission to Welsh Government.

- 3.3 It has been agreed with Welsh Government that a final version, including amendments as a result of the consultation, will be submitted in early 2017 with any other changes required as part of the approval process.

4.0 Approval Process and Annual Monitoring

- 4.1 The WESP must be submitted to Welsh Government by 20 December 2016. It will then be considered and approved or revisions requested by the end of January 2017. If Welsh Government determines that the WESP requires further amendment, discussion between Welsh Government officials and the local authority will take place during the period January to March 2017.
- 4.2 The final draft will then be produced and will need to be adopted by Council in April 2017 in order that it can become policy.
- 4.3 The WESP will become operational from 1 April 2017 and must be published by 1 June 2017. An annual report on progress must be provided to Welsh Government each December for the duration of the plan. This will be published alongside the original WESP.

5.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening form has been completed. A full EIA report has been completed and will be updated after consultation has taken place for the final 2017-2020 plan.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Funding for specific Welsh second language activity in the WESP is currently provided through the Education Improvement Grant and is partially match funded. The grant is allocated to the four regions in Wales, not directly to authorities. The grant must be directed to need.
- 6.2 The exact quantum for 2017-2018 will not be known until a grant offer is made to the region and apportioned to each authority.
- 6.3 Approval and decision to proceed with the spending plan and acceptance or otherwise of funding offered will be subject to agreement annually.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The statutory requirements are set out in the report. There are no additional legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers:

- EIA Draft Report for WESP 2017-2020
- Previous WESPs can be found at www.swansea.gov.uk/wesp
- The Welsh Medium Education Strategy and policy statement for 2015-2016
<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshmededstrat/?lang=en>
- Welsh Government Consultation on a Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050
<http://gov.wales/consultations/welshlanguage/welsh-language-strategy-consultation/?lang=en>
- School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/1/contents/enacted>

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 v2.0