

City and County of Swansea
Consultation – Summary of Responses
Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032

Introduction

The consultation period began on 27 September 2021 and ended on 22 November 2021.

The consultation was published alongside the draft WESP 2022-2032 at www.swansea.gov.uk/wesp/.

The total number of respondents to the consultation was 21. They are listed at the end of this document.

Eight questions were asked in the consultation document, one on the WESP's vision statement and one for each of the outcomes listed in the plan. There was also an opportunity for general comments. The majority of respondents used the online response form or an official response paper form. Some responses were sent without using the form. An overview of the main themes arising in the comments and the results of the questions asked are noted below. In addition, the detailed responses (not on the form) have been considered in their entirety and, where relevant, reflected in the final iteration of the WESP. A pack of all the responses is also being shared with Cabinet Members.

Summary of Responses

Question 1a

We have a ten year target outlining the expected increase in Year 1 children who are taught through the medium of Welsh.

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	8	0	5	8

Question 1b

Please provide any comments regarding our proposed actions to meet the overarching target.

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- It's about time this county started promoting Welsh-medium education and opened more Welsh-medium schools across Swansea communities.
- I feel having a target such as this might subconsciously force the council into favouritism towards the Welsh Medium sector.
- This consultation does not provide any evidence to demonstrate that learning in a second language is beneficial to children.
- Better late than never! Well done
- I believe a parent has a right to choose which language they prefer their child to be taught in.
- This would require a massive shift in the work force to be able to teach in Welsh.
- My personal experience is that Welsh medium school take on English speaking children but as soon as they are found to have learning difficulties, the schools are advising the parents to take the children to English medium schools and the child has then lost several years of identification and assessment to ensure their needs are better catered for.
- Overall, the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) needs to be strengthened to reflect the range of activities planned and currently being developed to improve the strategic development of Welsh in Swansea's education services.
- Here are some general considerations for strengthening the plan:
 - Include more detail regarding how planned actions/innovations will bring about improvement.
 - Be more specific in identifying the intended outcomes, especially when discussing linguistic progression.

- Identify opportunities where the authority would benefit from collaborating with neighbouring authorities, for example in terms of developing a third Welsh-medium secondary school in eastern Swansea.
- Consider making explicit the links between the WESP and the Council's other strategic plans.
- Although we recognize the difficulty of setting a specific target, we would strongly encourage Swansea Council to do so in the final version of the Plan.
- The proposal to increase the Welsh-medium pre-school offer is supported as part of a wider marketing strategy. It is good to see that this could include at least one Cylch Meithrin linked to each Welsh-medium primary school and / or catchment area and increase the Flying Start Welsh offer in their current and possibly additional settings.
- We would like more detail on how it is intended to fill the approximately 120 additional Year 1 Welsh-medium places already available in schools.
- UCAC welcomes the authority's intention to establish a new Welsh-medium school (s) and to increase capacity in areas of high demand, although it must be noted that the plans now aim to increase proactively, not to respond passive to 'call'.
- The intention to 'identify' areas where Welsh-medium education is currently less accessible is noted. We strongly agree with the need to do so. But we would like to see some initial mapping in the final Plan itself as a basis for planning.
- We agree with the authority that in such areas, projects will need to be included in a capital program.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

A few of the responses wanted more information on the benefits of a bilingual education and believed that parents should have a right to choose between a child having a Welsh-medium or English-medium education. The benefits of bilingual education will be clearly shared with all stakeholders as part of our marketing strategy going forward. We believe that parents already have a choice available to them in their language choice for their child's education. This choice will always be available to all parents but always with an increasing focus on bilingualism and multilingualism across the new curriculum.

Question 2a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Outcome 1

More nursery children/three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	8	0	5	8

Question 2b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 1:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- Ti a Fi playgroups and nursery classes in every school are key to ensure a rise in Welsh-medium education.
- Need to ensure there is Nursery provision in all catchment areas
- I feel having a target such as this might subconsciously force the council into favouritism towards the Welsh Medium sector.
- Dictatorship ideals. Surely each language is equal.
- Many of the children we teach in our area are coming to school with much lower than expected communication skills. Their parents are not communicating with them in English and so they stand little to no chance of communicating with them in Welsh.
- The general proposals for achieving the vision are not sufficiently developed to address the ambition of parents of pre-school children in Swansea.
- The draft strategy does not align with the local authority's' stated aim...the approach does not address the gaps in terms of Welsh-medium provision in particular areas of the local authority.
- The Strategy could be strengthened by a proactive approach to identifying and planning a forward programme for increasing the pre-school Welsh-medium offer.
- The consultation document states that there is already capacity within the Welsh-medium primary education sector at present. If that is the case then it makes sense to focus on Welsh-medium pre-school provision as a means of increasing the numbers going on to Welsh-medium primary education. Achieving the main ten-year target for Year 1 learners will largely depend on ensuring that more families choose Welsh-medium care and nursery provision, and therefore transfer into existing primary provision.

- There is no attempt here to analyse the wider childcare situation in detail, or a meaningful discussion as to how access to Welsh-medium early years care and education provision can be expanded and facilitated.
- We (Menter Iaith Abertawe) welcome the intention to develop an appropriate digital platform on the Council's website which will provide information to parents on the benefits of bilingualism. Similarly we welcome the intention to develop and deliver a clear marketing strategy.
- We also welcome the reference to developing an appropriate digital platform to share necessary information with parents in this section of the draft. We will be keen to work together to develop an interactive version of the Welsh Education pamphlet as part of this platform.
- Mudiad Meithrin welcomes the county's recognition of working together to develop services in areas where there is currently no provision, but the county requires detailed planning on the progression process in these areas, and also the lack of suitable buildings. Mudiad Meithrin is currently developing in the county in specific areas under the Set Up and Succeed Scheme which also includes setting up a Cylch Ti a Fi.
- The importance of pre and post natal service messages has a role to play in this outcome. The Cylch Meithrin is the first step into Welsh education for many families. The above is of paramount importance to Welsh-medium education.
- We welcome the recognition that there is one dedicated Welsh Flying Start provision in the county and the need to explore opportunities to increase the number of Flying Start settings.
- It is good to see that the authority is encouraging and promoting an Active Offer across all pre-school and childcare providers but it would be good to see more specific details about this.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

A few responses showed concerns that the Council would be favouring Welsh-medium education over other mediums and thought that English and Welsh should be treated equally. The Council's role will be to promote the benefits of bilingualism in support of the Welsh Government's aspiration of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. By promoting these benefits we will give parents the information to make an informed choice. As it currently stands there isn't an equal and equitable language choice across the city and county and the targets set for local authorities by Welsh Government will move us towards a more equal and equitable offer for all.

Question 3a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Outcome 2

More reception class children/five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	8	1	4	8

Question 3b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 2:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- This can't become a reality without promoting playgroups and opening more Welsh-medium schools across Swansea.
- I feel having a target such as this might subconsciously force the council into favouritism towards the Welsh Medium sector.
- Totally isolating and discriminatory views! For children, parents and school staff who work in these settings.
- Whereas I support a parent's right to choose whether their child learns through the medium of Welsh or English, I feel that there is a big political push to make the learning of Welsh more appealing to families by constructing new Welsh Medium Schools.
- The document outlines the local authority's plans to increase the number of Year 1 children who are taught through the medium of Welsh by between 200 and 400 during the lifetime of the strategy. The intention to link 'Cylchoedd Meithrin' to every Welsh-medium primary school is sensible. The strategy could be strengthened by developing Cylchoedd Meithrin provision in areas where at present access to Welsh-medium is limited. This could, over the life of the plan, enable greater access to pre-school Welsh-medium and be the first step towards developing new Welsh-medium primary schools which are accessible and rooted in local communities.
- The plan would benefit from having more proactive offers to increase accessibility to Welsh-medium across the city. The data provided shows that half of the Welsh-medium primaries are over-subscribed. The document does not indicate how it intends to provide additional capacity in four out of five of these schools.
- The Strategy could be strengthened by including an indication of how it intends to increase Welsh-medium capacity in areas where the provisions is currently weak to improve its spread and accessibility across the local authority. It would also be useful for the Strategy to include a more definitive reference to their intended policy for new schools to address the needs of an influx

of new pupils living in new housing developments. We welcome the local authority's review of its approach to supporting pupils new to Welsh.

- We are of the view that this section fails to explain in detail the Council's strategy to ensure a significant increase in the number of reception class children receiving education through the medium of Welsh. For example:
 - There is no reference to data or an attempt to analyse the current situation with the County's primary provision.
 - If the Council succeeds in operating in accordance with Outcome 1 and ensures that the existing surplus capacity in primary schools is filled, this will mean that around 120 more learners will receive Welsh-medium primary education. The consultation document does not refer to the Council's plans to achieve this increase (that is, beyond filling the current surplus capacity).
 - We understand that some matters may not yet be finalised, but there is a need to outline what the Council's intention is in terms of where provision needs to be increased, and what the timetable is for implementing this.
 - The above points also relate to the commitments in respect of latecomer provision. A commitment to undertake future reviews and to consider the findings does not equate to a strategic plan. The whole purpose of the WESP is that this research is undertaken during the formulation of the strategy, and that this provides the basis for a detailed action plan. We accept that review and monitoring work is continuous and welcome the intention to undertake reviews in the future, but this does not prevent consideration of the evidence already available to the Council and the proposal of specific commitments here.
- It is vital that Mudiad Meithrin is involved in the discussions and plans to ensure that the county meets the plan's target. Progression is vital in increasing the numbers of children in Welsh-medium education.
- The benefits of Welsh-medium education need to be promoted and they need to reach every family in the county. Welsh-medium education is for everyone.
- We trust that the review of current provision for latecomers will be completed in time to include definite proposals in the final Plan, particularly in light of the announcement of additional funding for the purpose by the Welsh Government.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

A few responses showed concerns that the Council would be favouring Welsh-medium education over other mediums and thought that the plan and its proposals would isolate and discriminate against the children, parents and staff of the English-medium schools. There was also a view that there is a political push to make the learning of Welsh more appealing to families by constructing new Welsh-medium schools. As mentioned previously, the Council's role will be to promote the benefits of bilingualism in support of the Welsh Government's aspiration of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. By promoting these benefits we will give parents the information to make an informed choice. The WESP will be inclusive and as a result we will work with all our schools – children, parents and staff – in all our schools and settings to improve the Welsh-medium offer and to move everyone along the language continuum. The Council has an excellent track record of investing, with the Welsh Government, across all its schools not only our Welsh-medium schools.

Question 4a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	8	4	1	8

Question 4b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 3:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- There will be very little increase in pupils' Welsh language skills within the English sector. If we want to increase the number of fully bilingual pupils, the way to do this is through Welsh-medium education.
- Gower College Swansea offers learners opportunities to complete their coursework through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. The progression from statutory to post-statutory education means that many pupils who have attended a Welsh-medium school are losing their post-16 Welsh language skills. Gower College Swansea enables learners to complete a number of qualifications whilst being taught bilingually at college in order to maintain or improve their Welsh.
- More community teachers / first language adviser needed to support Welsh medium schools.
- I totally support the need to continue and improve ALL languages taught in this phase. The introduction of the New Curriculum for Wales also suggests a third language as well!
- The local authority has a positive track record in ensuring linguistic progression between key stage 2 and key stage 3. However, actions within this objective are vague and occasionally 5 include references to plans without explaining how they will be realised.
- The percentage of pupils transferring from Welsh-medium primary education to Welsh-medium secondary provision is very high. We therefore agree that maintaining a similar percentage in the future is a reasonable target for the Council.
- The proposed increase in Welsh-medium primary school numbers will hopefully lead to a corresponding increase in the secondary sector in the future. We accept that there are some years until this increase affects secondary schools, but there is room to consider this in the discussion of this Outcome. For example, what are the implications of targets for Outcome 2 on

future secondary provision? What is the capacity of existing secondary schools? Will plans be needed to expand Welsh-medium secondary provision in the future?

- There is reference here to transfer rates between Primary and Secondary, but we would expect the Council to refer to data that examines linguistic progression between all the key stages.
- There is some consideration in the consultation document in relation to plans for supporting the Welsh language skills of all pupils in the county. We believe that there is room here to expand on this, including the examination of data on linguistic progression in English-medium schools.
- As the consultation document states, the council is expected to set a target outlining the anticipated increase during the life of the plan in the amount of Welsh-medium education provided in schools. However, no targets are set.
- We very much welcome the aspiration that at least one member of staff from each Early Years/Foundation Phase English-medium primary school attends a national sabbatical course. It is not clear to us what it meant by the phrase that the Council 'aspires' to achieve this. We would appreciate detail as to the practical actions the Council can take to facilitate this.
- Menter Iaith Abertawe will also contribute to outcome 3 in trying to ensure that learners continue with Welsh-medium education when transferring from one key stage to the next. We are in the process of discussing with the secondary schools how we can work together to enrich their existing transition programmes, and there is certainly potential for this programme to naturally tie in with the development of the WESP action plan. We intend to support the schools' internal transition programmes and offer additional transition sessions to pupils, as well as offering sessions to support and raise the confidence of non-Welsh speaking parents.
- There is currently no significant discussion in your plan about the educational provision for learners after they leave the compulsory sector.
- Outcome 3 does not mention the importance of transition between Cylchoedd Meithrin and the primary schools and a clear progression route for families should be identified in terms of Cylch Meithrin/primary/secondary schools.
- UCAC is delighted to see the authority promoting the overriding principle of supporting all learners to become multilingual, to be able to use Welsh, English and at least one other international language, and to develop openness and curiosity about all world languages and cultures. This is a matter of great importance in the modern world.
- The development and delivery of a Language Scheme template for all schools to support each child's linguistic progress in Welsh across all our schools is to be welcomed.
- It is encouraging to see that the authority is 'aspiring' for at least one member of staff from each English-medium Early Years / Foundation Phase primary school to attend the national sabbatical course.
- We support the authority's intention to work with regional partners to provide support and resources for schools.
- It would be good to see the data for transfer rates between other key stages.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

One response thought that there will be very little increase in pupils' Welsh language skills within the English sector. The plan, with the establishment and implementation by Welsh Government of a single continuum of Welsh language learning, ensure that all learners across all our settings have a clear path for improving their Welsh language skills.

Question 5a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	7	1	4	9

Question 5b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 4:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- Gower College Swansea offers a number of qualifications that can be taught through the medium of Welsh and all learners have the opportunity to submit coursework in Welsh or bilingually. Public Services, Health and Care and Childcare are taught bilingually and fluent learners complete their Welsh Bacallaureate through the medium of Welsh.
- Evidence should be provided that taking exams in a second language does not have a detrimental impact on results before there is any government funded push for children to do this.
- The same comments here as well! No thought given to English speaking staff or consultation with them creating feelings of anxiety and stress to what is an already over stretched work load.
- As a parent, I very strongly disagree with this and am angry that my children are being forced to take GCSE Welsh, disadvantaging them against their English peers by reducing the number of GCSEs that they are actually interesting in taking.
- The local authority has a good track record in increasing the number of pupils following a Welsh 1st language GCSE. The Strategy includes relevant figures showing a positive trend over time. The Strategy does not provide information about the proportion of option choices followed or qualifications taken by pupils in Welsh in key stage 4 or the sixth form.
- The document notes that Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr currently is over-subscribed, whereas Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe has surplus places. In terms of Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr, we are aware of plans to expand the school site and it would be helpful to include this information in the document. In addition, the local authority is planning to upgrade parts of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe and this would be helpful information to include in the narrative in the WESP.
- Also, we are aware that the present catchment areas were reviewed and changed a few years ago and will eventually help to address the issues in both schools. It may be the case that during the life of the Strategy, the local authority could consider

expanding Welsh-medium provision in the east of Swansea, with the possibility of working on a shared proposal with a neighbouring authority for a new Welsh-medium secondary school.

- The draft Strategy does not include a reference to increasing or improving Welsh-medium provision in English-medium schools in general.
- There is a lack of detail in clarifying and analysing the current situation, and the action points are once again extremely general and vague.
- We do not believe that this section aligns with the requirements of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019, or Government guidance.
- It's good to see that there is a steady growth in learners studying for qualifications assessed in Welsh as a subject but it must be ensured that a pupil who wants to study in Welsh is not disadvantaged because the choice of studying in Welsh is not available
- The importance of non-maintained early years vocational courses should be included in this outcome. Mudiad Meithrin will be ready to work together to spread the message.
- Although we agree in principle with each of the broad areas outlined for action, it is not possible to respond meaningfully without further detail, including specific approaches, timescales and specific targets and stages of progress. We would have expected to see individual schools named - what needs to be done to bring about improvement is not necessarily the same for all schools.
- Exploring opportunities such as e-schools and developing partnerships with providers such as Gower College is key but consideration may need to be given to opening a third Welsh-medium school in the city in order to achieve this target.
- I wonder if it is necessary to go further to acknowledge the role and influence of the new curriculum? The Welsh language continuum (properly implemented) should mean that no pupil slips back in terms of the standard of their Welsh, or the level of expectations of them, irrespective of the language medium of their chosen provision. In principle, it should lead to more confident speakers - which may, over time, lead to a greater willingness to take qualifications in Welsh.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

A further comment here that proposals would isolate and discriminate against the children, parents and staff of the English-medium schools. There was also a thought that evidence is needed to show that there is no detrimental impact on results of taking exams in a second language. Finally, a view that children should not be forced to study for a Welsh language GCSE.

As mentioned previously, the WESP will be inclusive and as a result we will work with all our schools – children, parents and staff – to improve the Welsh-medium offer and to move everyone along the language continuum. As part of our marketing strategy we will map out the whole education journey and provide evidence to show the benefits of bilingualism and the performance levels of our Welsh-medium schools. It is national policy that all children in Wales study Welsh-language to GCSE level.

Question 6a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	10	1	2	8

Question 6b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 5:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- There are opportunities at Gower College Swansea for students to take part in activities through the medium of Welsh, to be Welsh Ambassadors through Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol as well as to be part of the college's Welsh language crew.
- I strongly support teaching Welsh as a second language in school but do not agree with targets for number of pupils in Welsh medium education.
- By placing a greater emphasis and increasing funding for learning Welsh for all children, both in and out of school, Swansea council would be able to increase the number of Welsh speakers without risking the educational prospects of those for whom Welsh is not their first language. In particular, outside school Welsh clubs or opportunities should be explored to bring Welsh speaking into the community. This could also include opportunities for parents and children to learn and speak Welsh together.
- I regularly observe children from the local Welsh comprehensive, speaking English as soon as they leave the school grounds. If they are not interested, then why would English speaking children want to?
- Within the Welsh-medium sector where there is an entirely Welsh speaking atmosphere to support learners' linguistic development.
- This aspect is not particularly innovative and does not set out a range of stimulating activities for pupils to hear and use Welsh clearly enough. The local authority would benefit from working with other local authorities to develop this aspect of the plan.
- While we welcome the actions included for this Outcome, most are quite vague and indicate an intention to continue to deliver activities already being provided, or to continue to collaborate with key partners. We do not question the importance of these actions, but it would be useful to include more specific and detailed actions.

- As you know, the Council has a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, which was approved in 2016. The Council will be expected to produce and publish a revised version of the promotion strategy 5 years after the publication of the initial strategy. There are clear benefits for consideration in terms of developing the content of these strategies in parallel, and there is capacity to refer to the content of the strategy when discussing Outcome 5.
- Outcome 5 and providing opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts may well be where Menter Iaith Abertawe's work interweaves closest with the objectives of the scheme. We feel that this is a key element in ensuring the success of the scheme. It is important that the partners meet regularly (should this take the form of a PAGA or take advantage of the regional Fforwm Iaith) to ensure effective collaboration and joint promotion, and to ensure that Swansea residents receive the information about the opportunities available.
- Getting Swansea residents to take advantage of what is already available through the medium of Welsh can be a challenge at times, so a stable joint promotion platform and procedure will be a great help.
- As we work together on the implementation of the scheme, we also feel that it is crucial to consider how we can increase our capacity as a Menter. Very little match funding reaches Menter from the council, and we are totally dependent on individual projects and funds that arise occasionally. This approach is not sustainable in the long term, and does not provide opportunities for strategic planning...establish a more formal and consistent working relationship between the council and Menter...consideration must then be given to funding Menter so that we can lead and provide what has been agreed.
- Shwmae Awards - we would like the county to include non-maintained services as part of this development and recognize the contributions made in the non-maintained sector to progression and the Welsh language.
- Language Charter: We support the development of the Language Charter Framework but recognize the importance of analysing the success of the Language Charter in schools.
- It is encouraging to read about the authority's vision to promote the use of Welsh in different contexts across all the county's schools. Collaboration with organizations such as the Urdd and Menter Iaith is key to the success of this. Benefiting from the experiences of the Language Charter and other initiatives is likely to come to fruition. The Shwmae Awards and many similar incentives would help attract more pupils to consider Welsh as a living language for everyday life.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

There were a couple of comments regarding pupils' language changing to English outside of the school gates and that these proposals would only be viable within the Welsh-medium sector where there is an entirely Welsh speaking atmosphere to support learners' linguistic development. Both these comments will be tackled under our plans by increasing opportunities within and outside all schools for all learners to develop linguistically.

Question 7a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

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.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	9	0	4	8

Question 7b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 6:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- Equal opportunities for each pupil! It is a myth that Welsh-medium education hinders the development of ALN pupils.
- There is a need for a Welsh-medium ALN unit in the County - too many parents being advised to move their children to English-medium schools because of their children's needs. Headteachers have raised this for some years.
- If a parent decides they want Welsh Medium education then there should be ALN provision. Too often ALN pupils in Welsh provision end up transferring to English provision.
- Evidence has not been provided that learning in a second language does not have a negative impact on education outcomes. This should be provided for speakers with alternative learning needs.
- Unrealistic targets!
- Children with ALN have enough hurdles in their life especially if they experience ALN with a strong language and communication slant. Why would anyone think that adding an additional language would be of benefit to these children?
- There is very little information in this objective apart from a general aim to support learners with additional learning needs. It would be beneficial to set out how the local authority intends to support these learners if the demand for ALN provision increases. At present, this aspect of the plan does not provide assurance that the local authority is able to meet the needs of pupils educated through the medium of Welsh and who require ALN provision, either presently or moving forward. The local authority might benefit from working with other nearby authorities to strengthen this aspect of the plan.
- The consultation document states that the local authority reviews the level of demand and additional learning provision available through the medium of Welsh on an annual basis. However, there is no mention of the main findings of this work. In

other words, what exactly is the current demand, what is the current Welsh-medium provision, and to what extent is it currently meeting the needs of learners? If the local authority considers that current provision is adequate and meets the needs of learners, then this needs to be clarified and evidenced.

- We do not believe that this section meets the requirements of the guidance on WESPs because it merely states that the Council will review provision annually, and that the Council will address shortcomings as necessary. The current provision needs to be clarified and analysed, identifying specific actions to address any existing shortcomings. The guidance also lists several other things that should be considered here, for example, joint working arrangements with neighbouring local authorities and ALN workforce matters.
- We would like to see definite steps towards securing expert Welsh language support for every child with additional learning needs in the county. Support through the medium of Welsh should be equal to English-medium support.
- I would like the county to specify the steps with regards to how the families will be aware that a Welsh-medium service is available to every child.
- I would like this outcome to recognize the importance of support for children in our non-maintained early years services to ensure that all children can benefit fully from early intervention. The support the children receive during the early years is essential to ensure that they have language acquisition skills. Mudiad Meithrin is ready to collaborate on this.
- There is also a need to ensure that the children receive the same support when they attend school part time.
- In recognizing what the authority is already achieving successfully, it is felt that more detail is needed about the authority's plans in order to achieve this target. This section does not provide enough basic information about existing provision and how it operates, or the adequacy of specialist staff and classroom space. This section will require a great deal of development work to be fit for purpose, and compatible with the requirements of the new Legislation and transformation program. As with all other sections, there is a need to see mapping, analysis, detailed planning, timetable and quantitative targets for different aspects.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

Question 8a

Please indicate which of the following statements best reflects your views on our proposed actions.

Outcome 7

Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

Total Respondents	I support this	I do not feel strongly one way or the other	I do not support this	No response/form not used
21	7	2	4	8

Question 8b

Please comment on any aspect of our proposals in relation to Outcome 7:

Below is a summary of the comments received followed by a short narrative of response from the Council. As explained previously the full consultation responses are being made available for Cabinet Members to read alongside the amended WESP and supporting documents.

- Gower College Swansea's staff development program provides staff with opportunities to learn Welsh through Colleges Wales - Work Welsh scheme. They have the opportunity to attend Sgiliaith training to increase the use of bilingualism within their classes. The College's recruitment policy provides opportunities to increase the number of Welsh speaking staff at the College. The college has received grants from Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol this year to employ 3 tutors to teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.
- I support investment in helping all teachers to improve their welsh skills, but feel that evidence has not been provided to demonstrate that this should be through welsh medium education.
- Again totally discriminating against English speaking members of the workforce who are passionate motivated facilitators of education.
- The background information about staff competencies in Welsh provides very helpful context. There are significant numbers of staff with Welsh skills working in English medium settings which is encouraging. There is also a large proportion of staff with very little Welsh language skills. The local authority sets out a list of intentions to increase staff competency in Welsh and encourage staff to develop their confidence to teach in Welsh-medium settings.
- The plan mentions working with other partners but does not set out a strategy to work with initial teacher training to increase the proportion of teachers able to teach through Welsh.
- In our conversations with officers, we explored the importance of ensuring that staff were engaged with the WESP at different levels and understood their role in helping to achieve the outcomes. Officers also identified the importance of ensuring that there are strong links between the local authority's corporate strategies including the Swansea Bay City Deal and the priorities

in the WESP. This would help the WESP to be a relevant consideration across key areas of the local authority's work. It would be helpful for the Strategy to include a broad indication of the number of staff with Welsh-medium skills it will need to deliver the outcomes in 10 years.

- It would be useful to refer much more specifically to the School Workforce Annual Census data as a basis for discussing the action points of Outcome 7. In other words, the current situation needs to be analysed, with regard to the kind of progress that will need to be seen to achieve the targets for the remaining Outcomes. Is there sufficient capacity in the Welsh-medium workforce, or will there be a need to ensure more teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh, and if so how many?
- The College has submitted evidence to the Welsh Government about the challenges arising from a fall in the number of education trainees that are qualifying to teach through the medium of Welsh, and Welsh as a subject. While your plan identifies the importance of ensuring a suitable workforce for the existing (and new) schools developed as a result of these plans, the discussion about this area is on the whole superficial. What is the current situation regarding the education workforce within your county? How many more teachers and support staff will you need to deliver the plans for the growth set out in your plan? What plans do you have to share this analysis with the Government and the Education Workforce Council to ensure that there is sufficient supply of qualified staff to meet demand?
- The points about the education workforce in its wider sense are also relevant to outcome 1 and the development of nursery provision, and we as a College will work with further education colleges and Mudiad Meithrin to expand childcare provision so that there is a suitable supply of staff who will be able to provide first-class bilingual childcare and nursery education.
- How to increase the early years workforce needs to be included under Outcome 7. There is a shortage of qualified Welsh-speaking practitioners in education and the early years. It is vitally important that there are opportunities for practitioners to follow Welsh-medium childcare courses. Stability can be achieved for the childcare services and will also ultimately benefit the schools. We need to ensure that the information is shared regularly with practitioners.
- Mudiad Meithrin is able to work with the county through the National Training Scheme (apprenticeship) and the Cam wrth Gam Schools Scheme which offers a full range of Welsh-medium Childcare, Play Learning and Child Development qualifications in the post 14/post 16 education sector.
- This Outcome is the cornerstone of everything else in the Plan.
- We agree that there needs to be a strategic focus in this area, identifying priorities for growth and progress.
- It would be useful to see more statistical analysis in the Plan regarding the skill levels of the county's education workforce (headteachers / teachers / assistants) in relation to the Welsh language. Such an analysis would form the basis for setting specific progress targets to match the Welsh Government's targets under its Welsh language strategy 2050.
- We feel, in fairness to Swansea County Council (and other councils) that much of the control over the supply of staff rests with other bodies eg The Welsh Government, the Education Workforce Council (and the ITE Accreditation Board), providers of Initial Teacher Education, and that the most effective approaches will require partnership working.

Council's Response

The majority of responses in all questions wanted to see more specific targets, clearer actions and a specific timeline for delivery. The amended WESP now includes more specific targets and clearer actions – a number of these were identified by consultees and built upon some of the actions that had already been identified.

We have split the actions to show those that we aim to deliver in the first 5-years of the plan and those that we will look to deliver by the end of the plan. A more detailed action plan will be developed as soon the final WESP has received Ministerial approval. This will be monitored annually alongside the WESP.

A further comment here that proposals would isolate and discriminate against the children, parents and staff of the English-medium schools. As mentioned previously, the WESP will be inclusive and as a result we will work with all our schools – children, parents and staff – to improve the Welsh-medium offer and to move everyone along the language continuum. This will include an opportunity for all members of staff, as part of their ongoing professional development, to learn and use the language.

Consultation Responses

List of respondents who submitted during the consultation period

3 school responses

8 individual responses

Gower College Swansea

Estyn

Parents for Welsh Medium Education (RhAG) Swansea

Parents for Welsh Medium Education (RhAG) National

Merched Y Wawr

The Welsh Language Commissioner

Menter Iaith Abertawe

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin

UCAC (Undeb Canedlaethol Athrawon Cymru)