

Merthyr Tudful ...

... lle i fod yn falch ohono

Merthyr Tydfil ...

... a place to be proud of



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**  
**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

# WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**December 2021**

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## Section 1 – Introduction

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993. As part of the new legislation in Wales, the Welsh Language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated less favourably. Public bodies no longer need to develop and implement Welsh Language Schemes but instead now must comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards, in relation to the Welsh language by way of sub-legislation (Welsh Language Regulation Standards).

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council received its final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. This outlined the Council's duty to meet 171 of the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

This document has been created to comply with the following standards which Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is under a duty to comply with – 157, 163, 169 and 159, 165, 171. This document will state how the Council intends to comply with the service delivery standards, policy making standards and the operational standards issued to the Council by the Welsh Language Commissioner. It also states our arrangements for overseeing, promoting and facilitating these standards, including progress.

A copy of the Compliance Notice listing the standards issued to the Council and which are referred to within this document is available on the Council's website.

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## Section 2 – Service Delivery Standards

How we intend to comply	Promoting and facilitating
<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>Where correspondence is received in Welsh, we will reply in Welsh (unless the person has indicated there is no need to reply in Welsh). When we send the same correspondence to several people, we will send a Welsh version at the same time. The Welsh language will be treated the same as the English language.</p>	<p>This section sets out what the Council is doing to promote and facilitate the implementation of the standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s telephone system provides a greeting in Welsh states that a Welsh language service is available.</li> <li>• The Council is using its intranet to provide guidance and templates to support staff in complying with the standards. Desk stands have also been developed and distributed across the Council to support use of Welsh in the workplace e.g. when answering the telephone.</li> <li>• There are a number of processes used across the Council to record language choice.</li> <li>• External emails and official Council letter templates contain ‘Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhowch wybod inni beth yw’ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu’n ddwyieithog’ / ‘We welcome correspondence in Welsh and</li> </ul>
<p><b>Telephone Calls</b></p> <p>Calls will be answered with a bilingual greeting and a Welsh language option will be available on the Council’s telephone system. A team of Welsh speaking staff will be available to take the call until it is necessary to transfer the call to a member of staff who does not speak Welsh who can provide a service on a specific matter and no Welsh speaking member of staff is available to provide a service on that specific matter.</p>	
<p><b>Reception Services</b></p> <p>People that visit the Council reception will be greeted bilingually and access the service through the Welsh language. The ‘Iaith Gwaith’ logo will be displayed, and lanyards worn by staff to show which staff can deliver the query through Welsh.</p>	

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<p><b>Meetings</b> When required, the Council will facilitate meetings through Welsh.</p>	
<p><b>Public Events</b> These events will be advertised in line with the Welsh language standards so that information regarding the event is bilingual. Officers with Welsh language skills will be available.</p>	
<p><b>Publicity, Marketing Materials and the Council's General Documents</b> Bilingual documents will be published by the Council. Where it is not possible, 'Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg' 'This document is available in Welsh', will be stated on the document.</p>	
<p><b>Document and Forms</b> Documents and forms, required by the Standards and listed in the Compliance notice will be available bilingually.</p>	
<p><b>Signs and Notices</b> When putting up new signs, they will be bilingual, with Welsh first.</p>	
<p><b>Websites &amp; Online Services</b> The Council's website, apps, self-service systems and on-line forms will be available bilingually. Any public announcements/messages delivered over a public announcement system will be made in Welsh and English.</p>	<p>corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The actively seeks to recruit Welsh speakers in these customer facing posts. Additional Welsh speaking staff have been appointed in key front facing roles.</li> <li>• Guidance has been provided regarding holding bilingual meetings (internal and external). This and various other pieces of information are available through the Council's intranet and 'Welsh – What's changed booklet'.</li> <li>• The website and webforms are available in Welsh (with an option to transfer the Welsh website version and the English), bilingual agendas and minutes are available on the Council website.</li> <li>• Information regarding translation services is available on the intranet. Simultaneous translation can also be arranged.</li> <li>• The following wording is included on English language documents: 'Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg' 'This document is available in Welsh'.</li> <li>• Staff have received Welsh Language Awareness Training. This is being supplemented with additional training as</li> </ul>

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<b>Awarding Grants</b> Applications will be welcomed in Welsh. The Council will promote and facilitate the Welsh language through the grant process.	<p>part of the Council’s renewed Welsh language strategy. Further information is available on the Council’s intranet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Signs in the reception area, email signatures and logos are available on the intranet. The Welsh Language Policy Officer is available to provide support and advice. The Council has an Elected Member Welsh Champion (Cabinet Member) and officer Welsh Champions across the Council.</li><li>• The Council is renewing its induction process. The Welsh language standards form part of this.</li><li>• An entry level Welsh course is promoted to all staff. Customer facing staff have completed this. This is also a requirement in the appointment process to all new roles.</li></ul>
<b>Awarding Contracts</b> The Council will publish invitations to tender for a contract in Welsh and tenders can be submitted in Welsh, stating the Welsh language will be treated no less favourably than the English language. A translation service (Welsh to English) will be used as required during the process (e.g. at interview stage). If a tender is submitted in Welsh, the tenderer will be informed of the decision in Welsh.	
<b>Courses offered by a body</b> If the Council offers a course(s) to the public, learners will be asked if they prefer to undertake courses in Welsh and accommodate where required.	

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## Section 3 – Policy Making Standards

How we intend to comply	Promoting and facilitating
<p><b>Policy Decision and Assessment of Welsh Language</b></p> <p>The Council will embed Welsh language into its policy decision making and assessments. The use of the Welsh language will be promoted and not treated less favourably than the English language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Council has an integrated impact assessment (IIA) that is a requirement in making any corporate decision (e.g. Cabinet and Council decisions). Assessment against the Welsh language forms a key part of that assessment. IIAs are available on the Council's website.</li></ul>

## Section 4 – Operational Standards

How we intend to comply	Promoting and facilitating
<p><b>Using Welsh internally</b> The Council will develop an internal policy for staff who wish to use Welsh in the workplace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has developed a ‘Welsh – What’s changed booklet’ and developed its intranet page. These provide information on how staff can use Welsh in the workplace. This will be turned into a policy for staff who wish to use Welsh in the workplace, supporting the workforce section of the Council’s Welsh Language Strategy.</li> <li>• HR policies are currently being reviewed, these will be translated as part of the process and published.</li> <li>• Complaints and disciplinary processes are available in Welsh, simultaneous translation will be used if needed.</li> <li>• The Council subscribes to Cysglaid which is available to all staff.</li> <li>• Information regarding training is available to staff via the intranet. An entry level Welsh course is promoted to all staff. This is also a requirement in the appointment process to all new roles. Staff have received Welsh Language Awareness Training. This is being supplemented with additional training as part of the Council’s renewed Welsh language strategy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>New Posts</b> When a post is offered to an individual, the Council will ask if that individual wants the contract of employment or contract for services in Welsh.</p>	
<p><b>HR Policies</b> Relevant HR policies will be translated and published on the intranet for staff to access.</p>	
<p><b>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary</b> These processes are available through Welsh and the Council will facilitate this as required. Relevant documents will be available bilingually. Simultaneous translation will be made available if necessary.</p>	
<p><b>Software</b> Welsh spellchecking software is available to all staff who request it. This is promoted through the senior leadership team of the Council. The Council has subscribed to Cysgliad.</p>	

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<p><b>Intranet</b> A Welsh homepage on the intranet is available in Welsh with items relating to the Welsh language.</p>	
<p><b>Assessing Language Skills</b> The Council will assess the Welsh language skills of its employees.</p>	
<p><b>Training</b> Welsh language training – Staff can access a variety of courses. This includes entry level Welsh (is compulsory for each new starter). Courses are advertised to staff but prioritised for those staff dealing with the public.  Welsh language awareness training – The Council has worked with partners to deliver this training with staff. Reinforcement is continuing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council is renewing its induction process. The Welsh language standards form part of this.</li> <li>• A survey of the Council’s staff is being developed as part of our continuous improvement. This will be used to better understand staff skills and language choice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessing linguistic requirements for each vacant post</b> Managers complete an assessment of each role, including the nature of the role and the existing provision within the service. This assessment is evaluated by the corporate management team of the Council before progressing to interview. The Council includes Welsh as, at least desirable, in all its adverts. Where Welsh is essential, the Council advertises on a Welsh language platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intranet is being reviewed and renewed to better suit the needs of staff. Welsh language provision will form a key part of this work. The Council promotes key dates in relation to the Welsh language (e.g. Saint David’s Day and Welsh Language Rights Day). This links with the Council’s Welsh Language Strategy and Welsh language events.</li> <li>• Welsh language assessments are included in the Council’s moratorium process to fill posts. Managers complete this assessment for each role. This includes the nature of the role and the existing provision within the service. This assessment is evaluated by the corporate management team of the Council before progressing to interview. The Council includes Welsh as, at least desirable, in all its job adverts. Where Welsh is essential, the Council advertises on a Welsh language platform.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Application forms</b></p> <p>The Council will state that application forms can be submitted in Welsh and that this will not be treated less favourably than if the application is made in English.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council is redeveloping its recruitment process as part of a priority programme. Welsh language requirements are a key focus for this work.</li> <li>• Signs in the reception area, email signatures and logos are available on the intranet. The Welsh Language Policy Officer is available to provide support and advice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Email signatures, out of office messages and 'work Welsh' logo</b></p> <p>Email signatures, out of office and displaying the 'work Welsh' logo (where appropriate) will be used by staff. Information will be available to staff through the intranet and from the policy officer.</p>	
<p><b>Signs displayed in a body's workplace</b></p> <p>Guidance on internal signage is available on the Council intranet page for staff to access.</p>	
<p><b>Audio announcements and messages in a body's workplace</b></p> <p>If the Council makes an announcement using audio equipment in the workplace, it will be made in Welsh (with the Welsh being first).</p>	

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## Section 5 – Monitoring and overseeing

This section considers how service delivery, policy making and operational standards will be monitored at MTCBC.

### **Monitoring Service Delivery**

Strategic oversight will be provided through the Elected Member with Welsh language in their portfolio. The Council also has an Elected Member Welsh Language Champion.

Operational delivery will be monitored through the Council's senior leadership team and relevant steering groups or managers networks. The Council produces a Welsh Language Annual Report that is approved by Cabinet and is available to the public.

A mystery shopper exercise is carried out which feeds into service plans for improvement and Welsh language (like other services) aligns with the Council's performance management processes.

### **Monitoring Policy Making**

The Council has an integrated impact assessment (IIA) tool that is used to inform every Cabinet and Council decision made (including information presented to Cabinet and Council). This IIA includes the Welsh language.

The Council has a Welsh Language Policy Officer and an Officer to support the delivery of the Welsh Language Strategy and WESP. These officers can provide advice on key policies and decisions.

### **Monitoring Operational Standards**

The Council's Corporate Performance processes include the Welsh language measure. Welsh language has been integrated with the Council's Corporate Well-being Plan. As such it is monitored with other key strategic plans. This means the annual report will be approved by Cabinet. The senior leadership will receive regular updates together with challenge regarding implementation.

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Specific operational changes will be built into service delivery plans. As such this will be monitored through existing governance. For example, this could include being part of self-evaluation exercises feeding in the scrutiny process. Lessons learnt and best practice will be shared across the Council through this process.

The appointment process includes an analysis of linguistic requirements for each post. Managers complete an assessment of each role, including the nature of the role and the existing provision within the service. This assessment is evaluated by the corporate management team of the Council before progressing to interview.