



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

**MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
WELSH LANGUAGE  
ANNUAL MONITORING  
REPORT FOR 2022-2023**

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## SECTION 1

### FOREWORD

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 the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

This Measure gave equal status to Welsh and English so that Welsh cannot be treated less favourably than English. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards is designed to ensure that those in Wales who wish to live their lives in Welsh can do by obliging Councils, and other public sector bodies, to deliver their services in Welsh.

The Welsh Language Standards require the Council to compile an Annual Report, in relation to each financial year, that deals with the way that it has complied with the Service Delivery, Policy Making and Operational Standards. Provision is also included within the Standards concerning publishing and publicity of the Annual Report.

This Report sets out the Council's progress towards complying with the Standards during financial year 2022-2023.

The Council is committed to encouraging all of its customers to use the Welsh language skills that they have, and to creating an environment where they feel they can use Welsh in their interaction with the Council.

The Council is working closely with the Voluntary Sector, in particular, Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful to help us to successfully meet our obligations to the community under the legislation.

**Councillor Andrew Barry**  
**Cabinet Member for Governance & Resources**

**Councillor Michelle Symonds**  
**Welsh Language Champion for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council**

#### WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

In 2011 the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993 and as part of the new legislation, in Wales, the Welsh language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated any less favourably. Public bodies are no longer required to develop and implement a Welsh Language Scheme but must comply with a set of Welsh Language Standards instead.

The Standards explain how organisations are expected to use the Welsh language in different situations. This document sets out how MTCBC is meeting the standards.

The Measure establishes a legal framework to impose a duty on some organisations to comply with standards of conduct on the Welsh language. The Measure notes that Welsh Ministers may, by regulations, specify Standards in the following areas:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Promotion
- Record Keeping

The Standards aim to:

- Make it clear to organisations what their duties are in relation to the Welsh language.
- Make it clearer to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh.
- Make Welsh language services more consistent and improve their quality.

“The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 gives the Welsh language official status in Wales.

When exercising functions in accordance with this principle aim, the Commissioner must have regard to:

- The official status which the Welsh language has in Wales,
- The duties to use Welsh which are imposed by law, and the rights which arise from the enforceability of those duties,
- The principle that, in Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language in Wales, and
- The principle that persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.”

*Extract taken from the: ‘Code of Practice for the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015’; Welsh Language Commissioner; 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020*

## SECTION 3

### PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

The following summaries some of the key progress that the Council is making in implementing the Standards:

#### **WELSH LANGUAGE PROGRAMME**

The Council has developed a Welsh Language Programme structured around compliance with the Standards, translation and promotion of the Welsh language; it is made up of the following:

- Telephone and Reception
- Correspondence
- Social Media
- Website
- Welsh Language Training
- #Shwmaeronment Campaign
- Mystery Shopper Exercise
- Welsh Language Work Placement
- Welsh Language Translation
- Welsh Language Annual Reporting

The Welsh Language Programme forms part of the Council's Corporate Services work programme, supporting compliance with the Standards and delivery of the:

- Well-being Goal: A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
- Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy and Welsh Government's Million Welsh Speakers Strategy



As part of the Council's governance arrangements, progress on the Welsh Language Programme is monitored through highlight reports that are reported as part of Corporate Services management meetings, feeding into the Council's Strategies on a Page (Change and Performance).

We have outlined below some of the key changes made when delivering the Welsh Language Programme.

The Welsh Language Commissioner undertook a mystery shopper exercise where they telephoned and emailed the council several times to assess our response and our compliance, the WLC also reviewed our Social media and website. There were areas identified for improvement from the discussion with the WLC, the Council is awaiting the letter for confirmation.

#### **ASSESSING IMPACT**

##### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

In line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) the Council has developed an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The IIA includes an equality impact assessment in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011 and Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The IIA now assesses against our socio-economic duty. The IIA accompanies reports to Cabinet and Council as part of decision making. IIAs are published on the Council's website along with the relevant Cabinet or Council report.

The IIA supports the Council in demonstrating how it is planning, delivering and monitoring services in line with the sustainable development principle and how it is seeking to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Merthyr Tydfil, now and for future generations by:

- Thinking about the **long term** impact of our work on people in Merthyr Tydfil
- Taking an **integrated** approach to services, looking at the impact our work could have on other services and organisations
- **Involving** people in the decisions that affect them
- Working with others to find **collaborative** solutions
- Understanding the root causes of issues and **preventing** them from occurring



The IIA that is completed as part of all Cabinet and Council reports was approved by Cabinet, the IIA incorporates the Council's Well-being Objectives, the Sustainable Development Principle, Equalities, Welsh language and Biodiversity, to support effective decision making and ensuring compliance. The IIA has been updated further this year to ensure we assess our socio-economic duty. The IIA ensures compliance with the following legislation:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6 of Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Socio-economic duty (Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010)

The IIA has been applied to the MTCBC Project Management Framework and was implemented for Council and Cabinet Reports.

The IIA is supported by detailed guidance to support staff when completing the document, which is available on the Council's intranet.

## **Implementing 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy and the Welsh Education Strategic Plan**

### **Urdd Eisteddfod 2022**

The National Urdd Eisteddfod took place in Denbighshire with Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Pen y Dre representing Merthyr Tydfil in numerous competitions. Pen y

Dre High School were successful in coming first, second and third in a number of recitation competitions for learners.

### **Welsh Language and Adult Community Learning Marketing Event**

In July and August 2023, a series of marketing events were arranged in conjunction with Adult Community Learning, the Early Years Department and Learn Welsh Glamorgan. The purpose of the events was to provide information to the public on Welsh for Adult courses taking place. The Strategic Lead for Welsh and staff from the Early Years Department also provided information to prospective and current parents on the benefits of Welsh Medium Education. Six events were arranged in the North, South and Central areas of the County Borough. Between 10 and 12 people turned up to each event. Welsh Language promotional merchandise was available at these events.

### **Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae**

To build on the success of the previous annual Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae event, this was arranged in conjunction with partners of the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) and the Welsh Language Strategy Steering Group. It was opened by the Director of Education and Welsh Language from the Welsh Government.

The event was held at Cyfarthfa Park on October 15. Children from Pantyscallog Primary School, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Rhyd y Grug and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun provided entertainment as did a local harpist and Dowlais Male Voice Choir. Entertainment for the younger children was provided by the bilingual company Do Rei Mi Canu and pupils from Ysgol Coed y Dderwen also offered a variety of activities through the medium of Welsh. The Chief Executive and Head of Communications of the Football Association of Wales were present to undertake a question-and-answer session on how the Welsh language has been used and embedded into the organisation. Between 300 and 400 hundred, people attended the event allowing children, young people and the wider community to engage with the Welsh Language. There were more businesses present than in 2021 and the event provided positive publicity for the use of the Welsh language across Merthyr Tydfil. The partners who participated in the event were Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful and Canolfan Soar, Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg, Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg, Well Being Merthyr, Early Years Department Family Information Service of MTCBC and Merthyr College.

During the event a competition was launched jointly between Merthyr College and MTCBC to name the Shwmaeronment mascot. The winner (a pupil from Cyfarthfa Park Primary School) received a signed Welsh football shirt and ball.

### **Christmas Fair**

For the first time a Welsh Language Christmas Fair was organised to promote the Welsh Language across the County Borough. Cyfarthfa Park Primary School, Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug, Pen y Dre High School came to perform Welsh language items as well as Ynysowen Male Voice Choir. Cylch Meithrin Treharris and Pentrebach also participated. A bilingual musical company Do Rei Mi provided other entertainment for young children as well as Sion Corn. There was the opportunity to buy Welsh related items from a range of stalls. Positive feedback was received from members of the public with approximately 500 members of the public attending the event. Mudiad Meithrin, and Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful had a stall promoting Welsh language and educational programmes.

### **Other Christmas Activities**

The following primary schools were part of the Christmas song montage - Cyfarthfa Park, Coed y Dderwen, Caedraw, Abercanaid, Troedyrhiw, Edwardsville, Pantyscallog, Dowlais, Gwaunfarren, Blessed Carlo Acutis St Mary's Campus, and Ysgol y Graig Primary School.

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug performed an additional song. The video was placed on the Shwmaeronment Facebook page receiving 3.3k views and many positive comments were received. Once again, working in conjunction with Castell Howell Foods, their Christmas lorry visited the schools who had participated in this project with Sion Corn and his elves, who engaged with the children bilingually.

### **Cyfarthfa Cluster Eisteddfod**

To further develop the Welsh language and to build on the work from last year, the Strategic Lead for Welsh supported the Cyfarthfa Cluster Eisteddfod which this year was held in Coed y Dderwen Primary School. Additional competitions were introduced this year including an arts and crafts section. All the cluster schools participated.

### **Blessed Carlo Acutis Eisteddfod**

The Strategic Lead for Welsh supported the school to undertake its first Eisteddfod. A variety of musical, recitation, dance, and arts & crafts competitions took place.

### **St David's Day Event**

This year, The College, Merthyr Tydfil, and Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful put on specific St David's day events. Schools involved included Ysgol y Graig, Coed y Dderwen Primary School, Pen y Dre High School and a pupil from Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun performed items at The College. Also, Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful put on an event for the Cylchoedd Meithrin in Merthyr Tydfil.

### **Noson Lawen**

For the first time a Noson Lawen was arranged at "The Church of the Latter Day Saints Church" in Georgetown, Merthyr Tydfil. This event was built upon the first event held last year at Canolfan Soar. Over 200 children from across the County Borough were present to perform Welsh language items including the winners of the Pen y Dre, Cyfarthfa and BCA cluster Eisteddfods and additional items from Afon Taf High School, Ysgolion Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Rhyd y Grug and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun. Coleg Cymraeg Ambassadors from The College Merthyr Tydfil helped at the event with Mistar Urdd and Dwynwen the Shwmaeronment dragon also making an appearance and Dowlais Male Voice Choir performing a few Welsh Hymns.

### **Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg / Learn Welsh Glamorgan**

The Council continues to work in partnership with Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg (Learn Welsh Glamorgan) to provide workplace training opportunities for staff and Councillors. This includes an ongoing promotional campaign to encourage staff and Councillors to undertake Welsh language training opportunities via drop-in sessions, through the intranet, by email, and taster sessions.

Courses and learning this year have been held mostly online through Microsoft Teams with some sessions returning to face-to-face learning.

The Council currently has members of staff learning Welsh in the workplace ranging from Entry level to intermediate level 1 and 2 and some on Higher. Level 1 Welsh e-learning courses are being promoted to staff as part of our Coronavirus recovery and wider improvement planning (Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I Plan) in developing a learning culture across the Council.



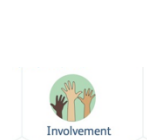
Working in partnership with Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg we also continue to provide ongoing social opportunities for learners to listen and practice using Welsh. Previously, learners of the Council have assisted Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg with the marketing of courses and offer any support to promote the Welsh language throughout the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil.

As part of implement the 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy and the Welsh Education Strategic Plan 4 Welsh learners of the Council contributed to the implementation projects by undertaking activities stating the reasons they decided to learn Welsh and the benefits they have seen from it.

### **Welsh Word / Phrase of the Fortnight**

To support staff and Councillors learning and promote the Welsh language, the Council has developed a Welsh word / phrase of the fortnight initiative.

The short Welsh phrases appear on computer screens every fortnight designed to help staff and Councillors learn basic business Welsh. Staff and Councillors are also encouraged to practice the Welsh phrases with colleagues, friends and family. This has not been in place due to a post vacancy but it will be revisited for 2022/23.



### **Working Skills for Adults 2**

Working Skills for Adults 2 had 3 learners on the Welsh Language in Nurseries for Early Years Practitioners Entry 3 course in 2022/23.



### **WELSH SPEAKING VOLUNTEERS**

To complement the Welsh Language Customer Telephone and Greeting Refresher Training the Council's list of Welsh speaking volunteers has been reviewed, updated and made available on the Council's staff intranet.

This list sets out the members of staff who have volunteered to assist the Council in speaking to customers through the medium of Welsh, consisting of both fluent speakers and learners to support them in practising their Welsh.

### **Welsh Language Coffee Morning**

The Council have been working with staff at the Neighbourhood Learning Centre in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to hold a coffee morning once a month for learners and staff who have lost their confidence to speak the language. Through the pandemic this has been difficult to do via virtual means it is hoped that this can be brought back to face to face soon so that the good success can be built upon. It is an informal event where staff members speak about hobbies and social events. This has proven to be very successful and it is hoped that it can be rolled out in other departments of the Council. A monthly Clwb Clonc which is an informal drop in session in the Civic centre where staff can practice and build confidence has begun and the Welsh Language Policy Officer will be looking at ways to develop this further.

## **Welsh Language Champions Group**

In October 2019 a Welsh Language Champions group was established for staff members of the Council. The purpose of this group is to share ideas of good practice to see how departments can implement the Welsh Language Standards and discuss any issues in relation to the Welsh Language. Welsh Language Desk Stands have been created for all members of staff to have to help them with basic phrases and to give them the confidence, to speak the language. This resource is also available electronically on the Intranet. The Welsh Language Champions Group has been difficult to arrange over the past couple of years but this will be revised and will also assist with meeting the objectives of the new strategy.

## **Welsh Introductory Course**

From April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 all new members of staff will be required to undertake Welsh introductory course. This is called the Welsh Work 10 Hour online course. It provides basic training in Welsh on how the following:

- How to answer the phone
- Provide directions and information to external visitors when entering the building
- Learning pronunciation of numbers
- Place names and months of the year

All members of staff are encouraged to undertake the course as part of their focus on the future performance appraisal (annual appraisal).

Since the beginning of April 2022 142 new starters have completed the course.

## **MEETINGS**

It is now general practice to open all Council meetings in Welsh and the use of the Welsh language in all forms is encouraged by Senior Managers and Councillors alike.

## **GRWP DEDDF**

The Council is an active member of Grŵp Deddf and regularly attends their meetings. Grŵp Deddf is a voluntary group consisting of Welsh Language Officers for public sector bodies who come under the compliance requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 at a regional level. The aim of Grŵp Deddf is to discuss and share information and good practice on Welsh language. Although attendance has been limited since the post holder has moved into another role within the Council. Attendance at this meeting began again in January 2023 when the new Welsh Policy Officer post started work with the authority.

## **Rhwydiaith**

The Council is an active member of Rhwydiaith and regularly attends their meetings. Rhwydiaith is a group consisting of Welsh Language Officers for public sector bodies who come under the compliance requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

at a national level. It is organised by the Welsh Government and discusses and shares information and good practice about the Welsh language and relevant Government legislation, strategies, policies and procedures.

### **URDD**

The Urdd holds a Lunchtime Club and a 'Sesiwn Siarad' for pupils in Years 8 and 11 at Pen-y-Dre School on a weekly basis. There was also an Equality Event held at Theatr Soar which celebrated, discussed and raised awareness of equality and diversity. The Urdd also organise a weekly Youth Club for students in Years 4-6 in Welsh Medium education. There are plans to open a Youth Club for teenagers who attend Welsh medium education later in the year.

### **Menter Iaith Merthyr**

Menter Iaith Merthyr hold weekly drop-in session for both Welsh learners and those that already have Welsh language skills. Both sessions are on Wednesdays.

### **Partnership Working:**

As part of the project there are partnerships in place with the following key stakeholders to provide opportunities to support and develop the Welsh language:

- Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful
- Urdd
- Welsh and English medium schools in Merthyr Tydfil
- Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun
- Central South Consortium
- The Youth Service
- The College Merthyr Tydfil
- Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
- Adult Community Learning

### **SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS**

The Council is subject to 87 Service Delivery Standards.

No Service Delivery Standard are under investigation.

### **POLICY MAKING STANDARDS**

The Council is subject to 16 Policy Making Standards.

No Policy Making Standards are under investigation.

### **OPERATIONAL STANDARDS**

The Council is subject to 53 Operational Standards.

No Operational Standards are under investigation.

**WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS OF EMPLOYEES (ON THE BASIS OF THE RECORDS KEPT IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD 151):**

<b>Listening Skills</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2021/22</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2022/23</b>
All work conversations	120	119
Majority work conversations	23	23
Routine conversations	42	41
Basic social conversations	174	192
Basic enquiries	552	593
No skills	714	735
<b>Total</b>	<b>1625</b>	<b>1703</b>

<b>Reading Skills</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2021/22</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2022/23</b>
All work material	118	121
Majority of material	46	48
Routine material (using a dictionary)	69	72
Basic work material	130	139
Basic words and phrases	571	615
No skills	675	696
<b>Total</b>	<b>1609</b>	<b>1691</b>

<b>Speaking Skills</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2021/22</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2022/23</b>
Fluent - all conversations	116	124
Majority of situations	31	29
Converse with others	53	51
Answer simple queries	145	150
General conversation	519	570
No skills	743	780
<b>Total</b>	<b>1607</b>	<b>1704</b>

<b>Writing Skills</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2021/22</b>	<b>Number of Employees 2022/23</b>
Skilled - do complex work	97	105
Majority of written text	40	40
Routine text, with help	51	53
Basic messages	106	497
Simple correspondence	470	119
No skills	845	883
<b>Total</b>	<b>1609</b>	<b>1697</b>

The difference in numbers could be due to several reasons but it is pleasing to see the increase in numbers in categories. The opportunity for staff to update the details on our HR system themselves could be the main reason for the increase in numbers, as all new employees are asked to complete the monitoring form as a matter of course when taking up a new role. Those who identify with no skills or basic can enrol for Welsh courses in September to assist them in increasing their skill level if they wish.

**THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF STAFF WHO ATTENDED TRAINING COURSES OFFERED IN WELSH DURING THE YEAR (ON THE BASIS OF THE RECORDS KEPT IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD 152):**

The Council currently has members of staff learning Welsh in the workplace ranging from Entry level to Intermediate level 1 and 2. The Council also has several members of staff at higher levels and is keen to continue to support learning for staff members. Promotion of opportunity to learn and attend classes will be communicated via email, staff forum etc when the enrolment is open.

**IF A WELSH VERSION OF A COURSE WAS OFFERED DURING THE YEAR, THE PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF ATTENDING THE COURSE WHO ATTENDED THE WELSH VERSION (ON THE BASIS OF THE RECORDS YOU KEPT IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD 152):**

Not Applicable.

**THE NUMBER OF NEW AND VACANT POSTS ADVERTISED DURING THE YEAR WHICH WERE CATEGORISED AS POSTS WHERE - (I) WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WERE ESSENTIAL, (II) WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS NEEDED TO BE LEARNT WHEN APPOINTED TO THE POST, (III) WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WERE DESIRABLE, OR (IV) WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WERE NOT NECESSARY, (ON THE BASIS OF THE RECORDS YOU KEPT IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD 154):**

Out of 313 jobs, 9 had Welsh as essential and 304 as desirable.

**THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR WHICH RELATED TO COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS WITH WHICH WE WERE UNDER A DUTY TO COMPLY:**

The Council's Complaints Department received no formal complaints in relation to the Welsh language during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

## SECTION 4

### CONTACT DETAILS

#### **How to contact us**

If you would like a copy of this Annual Report in any other format or translated into another language, please contact us on:

Our website: [www.merthyr.gov.uk](http://www.merthyr.gov.uk)

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