

Report To: Welsh Language Committee
Date of Meeting: 18 December
Lead Member / Officer: Bobby Feeley / Nicola Stubbins
Report Author: Margaret Watkins, Staff Development Officer
Title: More Than Words framework

1. What is the report about?

This report sets out work carried out in relation to development of the Mwy Na Geiriau / More Than Words framework

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To inform members of the progress made in relation to the framework

3. What are the Recommendations?

To note the contents of this report.

4. Report details

‘Mwy na geiriau’/More than just words is a framework for promoting the Welsh Language in Health, Social Services and Social Care. The aim of the framework which was published in 2012 is to ensure that organisations recognise that language is an intrinsic part of care and that people who need services in Welsh get offered them. This is called the ‘Active Offer’.

As part of the ‘Mwy na Geiriau’ framework, there is a need to ensure that citizens can:

- receive high quality language appropriate care;
- access Welsh language services across social services and social care when they need it;
- be assured through the provision of the ‘Active Offer’ that they are treated with respect and dignity.

Within Denbighshire Social Services there is a clear commitment to delivering change and improving services in order to ensure that Welsh language need is a key component of care, to include services provided by the independent and third sector.

For 2017-18, the actions which the Council will implement will include:

- providing details on how services are currently meeting Welsh speakers’ needs alongside targets to ensure improvement;
- ensuring the Welsh language capabilities and competence of staff are embedded in human resource and recruitment procedures;
- sharing best practice in providing Welsh language services and how to make an “Active Offer” with all staff employed directly or within commissioned services:

- providing language training and resources for all staff and opportunities for Welsh speakers to increase their confidence in delivering services in Welsh.
- providing Welsh language interfaces and software (such as Cysgliad) to social services and social care services staff to enable and help them to work bilingually.
- The Welsh Government require an annual report from Denbighshire on the delivery of specific actions in implementing the framework. Further monitoring of the implementation of the framework will focus on users' experience of the service and existing monitoring systems (eg within CSSIW inspections).

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The framework contributes to the health and well-being of residents, as well as promoting the active offer of receiving services through the medium of Welsh. This is in line with the commitment made in the Council's Welsh Language Strategy to increase opportunities for people to access Welsh language services. It is also in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

This framework predominantly affects social services, although there is cross-over with the work that is being carried out corporately.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

Whilst no formal Well-being Impact Assessment is needed for this report, it is worth noting some of the key benefits in relation to the Well-Being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language Standards.

One of the key components of the well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is having: "A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language : A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation".

The Council also has a role, through its Welsh Language Standards, to promote opportunities for local communities to get involved in Welsh Language activities.

8. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The main risk is the failure to meet the actions set out in an annual action plan and residents not being able to access services through the language of their choice.

To reduce these risks, a monitoring group is in place and meets every three months to track progress.

A programme of communication and training has taken place to ensure that all social services staff understand and are actively actioning the activities laid out in the framework.