

Report To: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting: **22nd May 2018**

Lead Member / Officer: **Cllr Huw Hilditch Roberts – Lead Member
Karen Evans – Head of Education and Children’s Service**

Report Author: **Geraint Davies – Principal Education Support Manager**

Title: **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020**

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report relates to the Council’s proposed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020 (Appendix 1).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 A decision is required to formally approve the Council’s draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for the period 2017 – 2020.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 For Cabinet members to consider the content of the report and approve the proposed strategic plan that has been approved by Welsh Government in March 2018.

3.2 That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

4.1 Every local authority is required to produce and submit their Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to the Welsh Government to demonstrate how they aim to achieve the outcomes and targets outlined by the Welsh Government.

4.2 The seven outcomes are as follows:

1. More seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh.
2. More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school.
3. More students aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh.
4. More students aged 14-19 in study subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning.
5. More students with advanced skills in Welsh.
6. Welsh medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN).
7. Workforce planning and continuing professional development.

- 4.3 Denbighshire County Council has a long term vision where we aspire that all children and young people in the County will leave full-time education competent and confident in using both Welsh and English languages.
- 4.4 This draft plan is targeted on improving skills particularly oral communication and understanding. Skills developed in the early years will enhance progression in the Welsh language and will lay the foundation that will lead to the normalisation in the use of the Welsh language amongst children and young people in Denbighshire.
- 4.5 The objectives of this draft plan are to:
- Ensure and develop sufficient Welsh Medium school places throughout the County.
 - Support the increase of Welsh oral communication and understanding skills in all early years' settings.
 - Increase the amount and quality of Welsh taught in English medium schools.
 - Increase the proportion of learners studying Welsh as a 1st language.
 - Raise attainment in Welsh and in subjects followed through the medium of Welsh at every key stage in every school.
 - Develop a sustainable workforce to support future provision.
- 4.6 The Welsh in Education Strategic Group will support and monitor the implementation of this plan against the agreed objectives. In addition every school will be expected to report on their progress against the outcomes of the plan in the Annual report of their Governing Body to parents.
- 4.7 This plan is subject to approval by the Cabinet of Denbighshire County Council and Welsh Government in line with the requirements of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013.
- 4.8 The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan supports and compliments the Denbighshire Welsh Language Strategy 2017-22
- 4.9 On February 5th, Estyn inspected Denbighshire's Education Services. As part of the inspection the inspection team are required to inspect and judge the standards of Welsh provision. Estyn judged the Welsh Education Strategic Plan as follows -

"The authority's 2017-2020 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) demonstrates a strong commitment to developing services through the medium of Welsh. The authority's plans for increasing the percentage of learners in Welsh-medium provision are suitably ambitious, as are the targets to increase the percentage of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh in schools that currently teach less than 50%. There are sufficient places in all phases for learners who choose Welsh-medium education."

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

- 5.1 The proposal will support the corporate priority of "improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings".

5.2 The Council has prioritised the Welsh Language and embraced the Welsh Language Standards.

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

6.1 It is expected that the objectives of the plan will be fulfilled using current resources. Any further resources identified as being required to support an objective of the plan would be subject to a separate report.

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

7.1 This new plan is for the period 2017 - 2020 and therefore the activities will be delivered in the short/medium term but the impact will have long term consequences.

7.2 The plan will increase the opportunities for all children to improve skill levels regardless of their geographical location or choice of school. It will increase the number of pupils with higher skill levels in spoken Welsh. It will also increase the number of opportunities to use the Welsh language in an informal setting within existing education provision and socially. This will be achieved in partnership with various stakeholders including the Council, Schools, Urdd, Mudiad Meithrin and Menter Iaith.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 Denbighshire County Council consulted on a new 3 year strategic plan for the period 2017 – 2020 for 8 weeks between the 24th of October and the 19th of December 2016.

8.2 The consultation documents were published on the Councils website in the current consultation section and a link was sent out to over 900 stakeholders via an email. Consultation meetings were arranged with young people by the learner voice champion and two sessions were held, one in Denbigh and one in Rhyl.

8.3 Not including comments received from meetings of the Welsh in Education Strategic Group and pupil consultation events, only fifteen additional responses were received during the 8 week consultation period.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The cost of delivering the Strategic Plan should be contained within existing resources.

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

10.1 There is a reputational and regulatory risk for the Council if we fail to meet the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act in respect of the statutory requirement to prepare and review a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for its area.

11. Power to make the Decision

11.1 Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013,
Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium
Education (Wales) Regulations 2013.