

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	30 January 2020
Lead Member/Officer	Cllr Richard Mainon/Alan Smith, Head of Business Improvement & Modernisation
Report author	Emma Jones – Performance and Programme Systems Administrator
Title	Street Naming and Numbering Policy Review

1. What is the report about?

1.1. A review of Denbighshire's Street Naming and Numbering policy.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. Scrutiny requested a review of the current policy, in the light of concerns that it might not properly reflect the Council's Welsh Language Policy.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee considers the proposals contained in this report, comments accordingly and recommends that:

- 3.1. all new streets are named in Welsh only;
- 3.2. the option to name streets after individuals is removed from the policy;
- 3.3. the Council's policy is amended to reflect this and presented to Cabinet for approval; and
- 3.4. that the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 5) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

The Council's current Street Naming and Numbering policy was presented at Performance Scrutiny Committee in March 2019. The feedback from the committee was that the policy needed a thorough review, especially in relation to the Welsh language. It was recommended that the policy went to the Council's Welsh Language Steering Committee.

The policy went to the Welsh Language Steering Committee in July 2019. Their feedback was similar to that of Scrutiny's: that the policy needed to be looked at thoroughly and that removing "Y/Yr" from the naming of a street in Welsh could be detrimental to the Welsh name of a street.

The Council's Welsh Language Officer, Manon Celyn was consulted. She agreed to read through the policy in English and Welsh and highlight anything that wasn't in line with the Welsh language or the Council's Welsh language standards. She responded that apart from the example that had already been found, there didn't appear to be anything else in relation to the Welsh language (see Appendix 1 attached).

To gain further input in the review the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office were asked to consider the Council's policy. Eleri James responded to say that the Commission primarily focuses on settlement names and is responsible for advising on the standard forms of town and village names in Wales (Appendix 2).

However, I had raised the question of renaming English streets into Welsh/English streets. She relayed some of the principles that they follow and said that the "*seventh principle advises against the literal or whimsical translation of place-names unless there is real evidence that the form has been adopted widely by the community and become well-established. There are certainly risks attached to a pure translation exercise as the original meaning and historical significance of the names may be lost or misinterpreted. We would also not encourage the translation of street names that are currently Welsh only*" (see Appendix 3). She included a copy of the letter that the Commissioner had sent to Cardiff City Council upon their publication of a new Street Naming and Numbering policy (Appendix 4). The Commissioner congratulated them on their intention to give Welsh names only to streets in new developments and encouraged them in their pursuit of strengthening historical and cultural links to the Welsh language through this. These seem important principles that it is recommended are incorporated into the Council's policy.

The ability to name streets after people within the current Street Naming and Numbering Policy if there is a strong case made for it was also raised at Scrutiny. Particular reference was made to a recent development in Rhyl. This example again raises concerns about the general principle of naming streets after people, particularly in the current climate where street names have had to be changed due to people's histories coming to light. Whilst the above example is clearly not of this nature, it would be good to guard against this possibility in the future. This is the second recommendation from the review: that we no longer allow streets to be named after people.

Upon full review of the policy, these changes are recommended.

1. That all new streets are named in Welsh only;
2. That the option to name streets after individuals is removed from the policy.
3. That the Council's policy is amended to reflect this and presented to Cabinet for approval.

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

5.1. N/A

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

6.1. There are no additional costs

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

7.1. The policy review has highlighted some changes that need to be made. Doing the WIA has shown that there will be a positive impact on the Welsh language and culture as street names will need to be locally relevant and, if the policy is changed, in Welsh only. A copy of the WIA can be seen at Appendix 5. No further impact assessment is needed.

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

8.1. Welsh Language Steering Committee, the Council's Welsh Language Officer and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. N/A

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

10.1. If the Council's Street Naming and Numbering policy does not properly reflect our Welsh Language policy, or its provisions do not reflect community concerns, then it may fall into disrepute.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Local Government Act 1972

11.2. Section 7.4.1 of the Council's Constitution outlines Scrutiny's powers with respect of policy development and review, whilst Section 7.4.2(d) states that Scrutiny may make recommendations to Cabinet arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.