

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	14 th of December 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Huw Hilditch- Roberts
Report author	Geraint Davies
Title	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022 - 2032

1. What is the report about?

This report contains information regarding the new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide an overview of the new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which will set out how Welsh will be developed in all our schools over the next 10 years.

3. What are the Recommendations?

To approve the submission of the plan to Welsh Government by the 31st of January 2021 ensuring compliance with the requirement to create a new 10 year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

4. Report details

4.1. It is a statutory requirement for all Local Authorities in Wales to have a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The new plan which is currently out for consultation will cover 10 years up until 2032 (see appendix 1).

4.2. Every new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan follows the same guidance and is arranged around seven outcomes. The outcomes reflect a learner's education journey and are consistent with the policy areas of Cymraeg 2050 and Education in Wales: Our National mission.

Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

4.3. Each Local Authority have been set a target by Welsh Government to increase the number of year 1 pupils receiving Welsh medium education. The lower target for Denbighshire has been set at 37% and the upper target is 41%. As of 2021, 27% of year 1 pupils in Denbighshire access Welsh medium education.

4.4. The new plan sets out how Denbighshire will meet the Welsh Government target through increasing the capacity in Welsh Medium Schools and changing the language designation of schools of some English Medium schools.

4.5. The new plan also sets out for all seven outcomes listed in 4.2 the following information:

- Where we are now?
- Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?
- Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

- 4.6. The final plan will be submitted to Welsh Government in January 2022 for approval. Welsh Government will either approve the plan, approve it with amendments or reject it. If it is rejected, Welsh Government will provide the Council with a plan to implement.
- 4.7. The consultation period started on the 12th of October. Statutory Consultees were emailed a copy of the plan. This included all schools, Governing Bodies, Neighbouring Authorities, Diocese, Estyn, Welsh Language Commissioner and further education providers. The plan was also published on the Councils Consultation page.
- 4.8. The consultation period came to an end on the 7th of December 2022. The response to the consultation over the 8 week period has been relatively low despite every school, governing body and statutory stakeholder receiving a copy of the plan at the start of the consultation period and the plan being published on the County's website. In addition, Denbighshire consulted with pupils on the plan.
- 4.9. Feedback to the plan from consultees include general support for the aim of growth in Welsh medium education but concerns have been raised regarding the number of Welsh medium teachers available to deliver the plan, if the plan is ambitious enough and if the plan is too focused on rural Denbighshire.
- 4.10. The plan approved by Welsh Government will guide policy over a ten year period. Further opportunities for consultation will be guided by the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018 based on any individual proposals for change that are proposed during the lifetime of the plan.

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

The new plan contributes to the development of the Welsh Language and culture, which underpins the Council's Corporate Plan.

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

There is no specific funding allocation currently linked to the delivery of the plan. Existing funding streams will be utilised by the Council and its partners to deliver the objectives

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

The new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan has the potential to have a positive impact on a Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, cohesive communities, a more equal Denbighshire and a more prosperous Denbighshire.

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

Consultation has been carried out with the Lead Member for Education, Children Services and the Welsh Language and the Welsh Language Steering Committee. The plan is currently out to consultation until the 7th of December 2022.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Although there is no direct financial implications relating to the submission of the strategic plan to Welsh Government, implementing the plan will have financial implications. It is pleasing that the service will try and utilise existing funding streams to deliver the objectives of the plan.

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

The main risk associated with the new plan is a lack of action by stakeholders in implementing its objectives. All partner organisations have committed to contributing towards the development of the Welsh language nationally and towards the million speakers target set by the Welsh Government by 2050.

11. Power to make the decision

The new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan will be approved by Welsh Government to comply with the provisions in relation to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 ('the Act') and regulations made under it.