

Denbighshire County Council Welsh Language Strategy 2023-28

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Foreword

We are pleased to provide the revised version of our Welsh Language Strategy, following a strategic review. It has been five years since the current version was approved, and during this time a large number of improvements have been introduced to promote and facilitate the Welsh language internally and within the wider community. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 enabled the Government to set standards regarding the Welsh Language, and Welsh Government expects the Council to adopt a Welsh Language Strategy, as part of its response to the Standards. Five years following the publication of the Strategy, we are now publishing a revised version.

Section 2 of the Strategy outlines some of the main achievements and lessons that stem from the strategy.

The Council continues to respond positively to the Welsh Language Standards and has already implemented a large number of the agreed approaches. It has also responded positively to the 'More Than Just Words' framework which has been established in order to improve Welsh language provision in the health and social care sector. An inclusive action plan is in place and Denbighshire is committed to implementing that plan in the county, for the benefit of the county's residents. The Council also has a Welsh Language in Education Strategic Partnership which looks at the strategic development of the Welsh language in the county's schools. An Action Plan has been approved by the Welsh Government.

Combining the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan and the Language Forum

Denbighshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan until 2032 includes information about merging the current Welsh in Education Strategic Group with the County's Welsh Language Forum. During the last year, the Welsh Language Forum officers have focussed their efforts on combining the Forum and the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan following other successful models.

This means that each meeting is divided into two parts with one part specifically dedicated to Education and the other specifically dedicated to the Language Forum. There will be a

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minimum of 3 meetings each year and the intention is to have an independent Chairman. The main advantages of this structure are ensuring a clear strategic direction, reduced duplication of activities and increased opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate with each other.

Looking to the future

We have created our vision for the Welsh language in Denbighshire.

- The Corporate Plan 2022-27 makes a firm commitment to ensure that the Welsh language is a thriving and evolving language.
- Denbighshire is a predominantly bilingual county with a rich heritage and culture. We are proud of this and want that pride to be reflected in our daily work with communities, residents and our staff.
- We are committed to ensuring that the principles of the Welsh Language Standards are the basis for the method in which we provide services to the public; we want people to be able to access services through their natural language of choice, at every stage of their lives.
- We wish to build on the bilingual culture and ethos of the organisation, providing training and social opportunities for our staff to work in Welsh and to increase their confidence to use the language in the workplace.
- We wish to work with partners and the wider community to ensure that Welsh is a thriving language in Denbighshire.
- We have an ambition to be sector leaders in the development of the Welsh language in Wales.

Our aim is to prevent the reduction in numbers of Welsh speakers in Denbighshire. As a result, we propose to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Denbighshire by 0.5% over the next five years, with the intention of considering a longer term target to increase the number of Welsh speakers over the next 15 years. The Council will provide the main elements of this strategy by working strategically and in collaboration with a variety of community organizations in order to further mainstream the Welsh language into service provision and to ensure that it is an essential consideration in projects, strategies and future work schemes.

It is essential that the Welsh language forms a key part of the policy creation process in each of our areas of work, including planning, regeneration, education and social care. For this purpose, the Council will work with partners to ensure that linguistic planning is a more strategic outcome, to ensure that all partners work together towards the same goal: protecting and enriching the Welsh Language in Denbighshire.

We are delighted that the number of Welsh speakers is increasing in Denbighshire and we hope that the ongoing partnership work with leading organizations in the County will make a difference.

Councillor Emrys Wynne / Leader Jason McLelland (photos)

Welsh is a Corporate priority

We are playing our part to achieve one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050, by providing the Welsh Language Strategy with partners and communities. This includes:

- Ensuring that everyone can access services through the medium of Welsh naturally, and at every stage of their lives
- Supporting children and families during their early years to develop confidence in using the Welsh language
- Supporting the wider use of the Welsh language and celebrating Welsh culture in the community, including workplaces
- Developing a culture and ethos that encourages daily use of the Welsh language by elected members and council staff, and providing training and social opportunities to develop their confidence in using the Welsh language
- Developing the services available at the Welsh Language Centre in St Asaph for the benefit of the wider community

Strategy Achievements 2017-22

(the main findings of the Language Planning Centre following a success report)

Executive Summary

Denbighshire's Welsh Language Strategy has been developed around the vision of ensuring that the Welsh Language is a thriving language that evolves within Denbighshire's communities, as well as within our organisation.

In order to realize this vision, it was decided to continue with the themes of the original strategy as they are just as applicable, relevant and current to reach our goal.

[Theme 1: Education, Youth and Leisure Service](#)

[Theme 2: The Community](#)

[Theme 3: Business and Economy](#)

[Theme 4: Council internal administration](#)

Theme 1 looks at increasing the number of pupils who become fluent in the Welsh language during their time at school and encouraging more to use the language after they have left school. We are also looking at improving opportunities for children and young people in social settings by working with our Youth and Leisure services.

Theme 2 looks at issues that affect communities in terms of the Welsh Language, with a specific focus on the impact of our policy decisions. There is a key focus on local planning issues and the More Than Just Words Framework in order to enrich bilingual services in health and social care.

Theme 3 looks at how Denbighshire and its partners in terms of economic development should recognize the importance of a prosperous economy to the future of the Welsh language and ensure that strategies are in place to ensure opportunities for young people to stay in the local community.

Theme 4 looks at how the Council can promote the Welsh language by providing training for staff and promoting the bilingual ethos of the authority by promoting the Welsh language. This reflects the Council's commitment to tackle some of the key areas of work identified in terms of developing the Welsh language. Details of the process for monitoring and regulating this strategy are included in Section 6.

Summary of the Challenges

To enable us to find opportunities to increase the use of the Welsh language and the number of Welsh speakers, we also need to be able to recognize the challenges and obstacles that prevent that. We need to be able to identify the areas of the county, or the parts of life, where there is a reduction in people's use of the language in their daily life, and understand which factors can affect an individual's personal use of the language.

We know that the language continues to face historical challenges such as migration, young people moving out of rural areas to look for work, and the lack of transmission of the language from one generation to the next. In time we will see what impact Covid 19 has had on rural communities and the fact that people are taking advantage of the ability to work remotely.

The impact of the pandemic and the fact that Denbighshire has lost a total of -2.1% of its Welsh speakers during the last 10 years (2021 census), means it is more important than ever to ensure that the language is a living and thriving language within our communities.

In order to encourage that use of the Welsh language, it is necessary to consider the impact of the challenges, and how we can tackle them in order to increase the opportunities for people across the county to use and practice the language on a daily basis.

- Geographical challenges: Variations in the number and percentage of speakers across the county, and the variety of jobs/services available in some rural areas, mean that different solutions and interventions are required to protect the Welsh language.
- Language transmission within the family; Families not passing on the language to their children leading to the loss of Welsh as a home language.
- Loss of speakers after the age of 16: No solid progression of use when leaving education and young people stop using the language when entering employment and in their social life as adults.
- The status of Welsh as a business language: Lack of clear use of the Welsh language by businesses
- Individuals' confidence in their ability and skills: Lack of opportunities to use the language regularly when socializing and difficulties in using Welsh services can lead to a lack of confidence and reduced usage.

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The Welsh Language in Denbighshire – update required in accordance with 2021 census data.

Information coming from Denbighshire Language Initiative following an update of Denbighshire Language Profile.

National Policy and Legislation

The Welsh Language Act 1993 established the principle that Welsh and English are equal languages in public life in Wales. The Act placed a duty on the public sector to treat both languages equally when providing services to the public.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 gave the Welsh Language an official status, and the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner was created. The Welsh Government is working towards ensuring one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council supports this and it is reflected in the action plans within this strategy.

The Commissioner has a responsibility to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, with a key principle that Welsh and English should be treated equally. The Commissioner also has powers to investigate any public body not complying with the standards. The Standards were introduced in Denbighshire in early March 2016 and they replaced the previous Welsh Language Scheme.

Theme 1 - Children and Young People

The vision:

- That 40% of all seven year old pupils will have attended Welsh-medium education by 2032. Having a solid foundation in speaking and communicating in Welsh will increase the pupil's choice and confidence to follow a completely bilingual path in education, and on to employment and into the wider community.
- Increasing the use of the Welsh language among children and young people by giving access to Welsh-medium education and community activities and promoting opportunities for social interaction in Welsh.

Desired outcome:

- Better attainment in Welsh and in other subjects through the medium of Welsh at every key stage in every school.
- 32% of year 1 pupils receiving Welsh-medium education by 2027.
- 24% of students aged 14 - 16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh by 2027.
- More Welsh speakers under the age of 21 in Denbighshire in the 2031 Census
- More leisure and youth activities held through the medium of Welsh

Indicators:

- More nursery children / three year olds educated through the medium of Welsh.
- More reception children / five year olds educated through the medium of Welsh.
- More children continuing to improve their Welsh Language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
- More learners studying for Welsh qualifications (as a subject) and subjects through the medium Welsh.
- More opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language within different contexts in school.
- An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs ("ALN") (in accordance with the duties set out by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018)

- An increase in the number of teaching staff who can teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh
- Increase in the number of bilingual youth work sessions.
- Increase in the number of youth service staff who speak/learn Welsh.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Denbighshire County Council's aspiration is that by September 2032, 40% of all seven year old pupils will have attended Welsh-medium education. Having a solid foundation in speaking and communicating in Welsh will increase the pupil's choice and confidence to follow a completely bilingual path in education, and on to employment and into the wider community.

In September 2020, 28% of Year 2 pupils in Denbighshire schools were receiving Welsh-medium education. By 2032, in full consultation with stakeholders, Denbighshire County Council aspires to surpass the lower target of 37% proposed by the Welsh Government with the aim of being closer to the higher target of 41%.

In the period between 2010 and 2020, the percentage and number of pupils receiving Welsh-medium primary education in Denbighshire increased. This has coincided with investment in the schools' estate and implementation of schools reorganisation proposals. There are currently unoccupied places in Welsh-medium schools that could provide for 30% of all Year 1 pupils in Denbighshire, although this is not distributed evenly throughout the County. In some areas there are less than 4% unoccupied places available and therefore further growth will mean that changes will be required.

Denbighshire proposes to meet the growth target by increasing the capacity of Welsh-medium schools and changing the language designation of English-medium schools. The result of this will be a gradual increase in the availability of Welsh-medium education over the period of this plan, which is 10 years.

Youth Service

Denbighshire Youth Service runs various projects and activities for young people aged between 11 and 25. This work is carried out in youth centres and schools and community halls across the county. The service provides activities that enable young people to develop and improve their skills and knowledge and increase their confidence and self-esteem. The activities, which are free, include sports, arts and crafts, games, trips and

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visits. The service also provides educational programmes focussed on health and well-being, independent living skills and community citizenship and money management.

In order for the Welsh language to be seen as a living community language, it is important to show young people in particular that it is possible to use the Welsh language outside the formal structures of education and that it is a language that enriches their everyday life. For that purpose, it is important that the County Council's Youth Service provides opportunities for young people to converse through the medium of Welsh by providing a rich variety of bilingual activities and programmes across the county. The youth service recruits, trains and utilises first language youth workers and promotes training and development of Welsh language skills for all staff and volunteer members.

Denbighshire Leisure Ltd

The Council's Leisure services are now provided by Denbighshire Leisure Limited (DLL) – a Council owned Local Authority Trading Company (LATC). DLL aims to provide accessible, high quality leisure opportunities that attract high levels of participation and improve the wellbeing of Denbighshire's residents and visitors. DLL provides bilingual swimming and fitness sessions and work continues to improve their current offer, with the support of their recently appointed Welsh Public Relations, Communications and Media Officer. DLL will examine the Welsh language and the related standards during the year 2022/23, with the aim of building on good practice that is already in place in the company in terms of the use and availability of the Welsh language.

Denbighshire Welsh Language Forum

Denbighshire County Council works closely with its partners, as part of a county forum which considers the use of Welsh in activities across the county. There are many agencies operating locally that share the same priorities as us and it would be a mistake not to coordinate our efforts and take advantage of each other's resources and expertise to achieve one goal which is to increase the use of the Welsh language in Denbighshire.

Membership of the Denbighshire Welsh Language Forum is currently as follows:

- Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych
- Denbighshire County Council

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- Denbighshire Education Department
- Yr Urdd
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Cymraeg for Kids
- Merched y Wawr
- Young Farmers Clubs
- Popeth Cymraeg Ltd
- North Wales Centre of Welsh for Adults
- Coleg Cambria

Action	Responsibility	
<p>Completing new childcare facilities located on the same site as Ysgol Dewi Sant, Rhyl and Ysgol Twm o'r Nant, Denbigh, ensuring plenty of facilities.</p> <p>Merging our strategic group with the Welsh language forum so that the work of both groups are placed side by side to work towards the same goal and establish a closer connection with relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>Education Service</p> <p>Education Services / Language Forum</p>	
<p>Increase the number of Welsh-medium places available each year at Ysgol Gymraeg y Gwernant,</p>	<p>Education Services</p>	

Llangollen to 30 through capital investment.		
Work with English-medium schools to change their language designation in order to ensure a 5% increase in the percentage of year 1 pupils who receive Welsh-medium education.	Education Services	
Work with partners to ensure an increase in the number of staff who can teach through the medium of Welsh and teach Welsh as a subject.	Education Services	
The County Council will increase the youth work activities available for young people to take part in through the medium of Welsh by investing in staff training to increase their language skills and confidence in the Welsh language and promote the recruitment of more staff and bilingual volunteers in the future .	Youth Services	
The County Council will continue to develop the partnership with the Urdd and the Welsh Language Forum	Youth Services / Language Forum	

partners in order to expand the Welsh-medium activities available to young people in Denbighshire.		
The County Council will have a Welsh Language Champion within the Youth Service to support the staff to embed more casual Welsh in our sessions and to create activities to develop young people's confidence in using the Welsh language in a social setting and informal education.	Youth Services	
Design and publish a booklet to promote Welsh education and bilingual living in Denbighshire	Education Services / Language Forum / Communication and Marketing Team	By January 2024
Create a page on Denbighshire County Council's website to accompany the above booklet.	Education Services / Communication and Marketing Team	By January 2024
Explore the demand for Welsh-medium lessons (swimming/fitness classes) and put plans in place to provide those lessons where there is demand. The Council	Denbighshire Leisure Ltd	

will also work closely with the Urdd to accomplish this.		
Train more bilingual coaches in a variety of sports to be able to carry out activities through the medium of Welsh.	Denbighshire Leisure Ltd	By March 2027
Adopt Welsh Language Champions in all Leisure Centres to be responsible for promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and developing a Welsh ethos.	Denbighshire Leisure Ltd	By March 2024
Support administrative and frontline staff who can speak/learn Welsh within the leisure service to further develop their skills in order to aim to provide a completely bilingual service.	Denbighshire Leisure Ltd	By March 2027

Theme 2 - The Community

The vision:

- More use of the Welsh language in Denbighshire's communities

Desired outcomes:

- Promote more of the council's services offered through the medium of Welsh
- More opportunities to use the Welsh language in social activities.
- A better understanding of the effects of the Council's policies and decisions on the Welsh language and the benefits of bilingualism in communities.

Indicators:

- An increase in the number of people moving to Denbighshire who access information about bilingualism.
- The number of council policy decisions where the impact on the Welsh language was considered.

Promoting the Welsh language in communities

The Welsh language must be a living language, where it is normal to give people the choice of which language they use; where they have opportunities to access services and activities naturally through the medium of Welsh, and that Welsh is seen as a living language through our contact with our residents.

For this purpose, the Council will ensure that all its communication with residents is bilingual; is accurate in its meaning, and services provided through the medium of Welsh will be promoted through the residents' newsletter, the Council's website and social media accounts.

We will work with adult learners to promote opportunities to learn and enrich Welsh language skills through effective collaboration.

We will also strengthen our working links with other organizations involved in developing the Welsh language in Denbighshire, ensuring that people have a solid understanding of the benefits of bilingualism, the need to enrich the county's bilingual culture and to provide opportunities for the Welsh language to flourish organically.

Library Services

Denbighshire Library Services provides the statutory public library service and face-to-face services for customers on behalf of the Council from eight libraries in Rhyl, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan, St Asaph, Denbigh, Ruthin, Corwen and Llangollen. The Home Library Service provides a tailored service for people who are unable to access their local library due to frailty, disability or caring responsibilities. Libraries also provide a 24/7 digital service for downloading books, accessing information and ordering physical books; and providing facilities for people to access a range of support and advice services in their local community.

Bilingual frontline staff are available in all libraries to offer a Welsh service, and in many communities it is one location where people can go for a Welsh conversation.

A comprehensive stock of Welsh books for children and adults are available to borrow free of charge in each library. To ensure equality of access, the local library is the only place to acquire Welsh language large print books and talking books on disc. There are also books

on offer to Welsh learners and Denbighshire also has an extensive collection of Welsh books and magazines. The online catalogue and Pori app are bilingual and enable customers to manage their accounts and order books online.

The provision of Welsh digital resources, be it e-books, talking e-books and e-magazines, is constantly increasing thanks to the collaborative efforts of the library sector across Wales in collaboration with the Book Council. These are available for free download to library members.

A programme of bilingual activity is provided to promote reading including the Summer Reading Challenge, reading groups, and cultural events. Flying Start provision for children aged 0-3 introduces many families to the Welsh language for the first time and encourages them to raise their children bilingually and to consider Welsh-medium care and education.

Policy and decision making

There are a number of other elements of the Council's work that have a potential impact on the Welsh language.

One of the key elements of the Welsh Language Standards is the impacts that any policy or decision could have on the Welsh language, whether positive, neutral or negative. We will ensure that all services take this into account when making decisions, carry out impact assessments on the Welsh language where appropriate and identify opportunities to mitigate the negative effects of any decision.

The Council will consider the use of the Welsh language in key policy decision-making areas, and Planning will be one of those main areas of our work.

The Council published a policy on awarding grants (Standard 94) and a policy for implementing the Welsh language internally (Standard 98) during 2023. The policy on awarding grants has been developed in order to assist officers to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards when issuing grants on behalf of a County Council. The aim of the policy is to assist officers to ensure that consideration of the Welsh language is an integrated part of the grants process in Denbighshire County Council, as well as to ensure that those who make decisions are aware of their duties when making decisions.

All members of the Council's staff are required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards, which derive from the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and with the Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd

internal policy for implementing the Welsh language. There are further details about them. The purpose of the Welsh Language Standards is to make it easier for people to use the Welsh language in their day to day lives. This policy sets out how the Council intends to implement that principle when providing services to the public in Wales and also internally within the Council.

Planning

Denbighshire's Local Development Plan provides a vision of how new developments and land use will deal with the challenges facing the county over the next decade. As stated by the County Council in its Local Development Plan - 'By providing a coordinated framework to determine where, when and how many new developments can be developed, the Denbighshire LDP, through principles, aims to make the county greener, fairer and more prosperous with recognition that the Welsh language and culture are maintained and protected.' Planning Policy Wales together with Future Wales, The National Plan 2040 sets out the Welsh Government's land use policies. Some documents are supported by guidance in the form of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). TAN 20 provides guidance on the Welsh language and land use planning.

'More than Just Words' Framework

Language is important in health and care as the ability to respond to the needs of individuals is based on communication. Language is a key element of care, especially when discussing sensitive and emotional concerns.

'More Than Just Words' focuses on strengthening the provision of Welsh in health and social care. Here in Denbighshire, we continue to consider steps that will ensure increased opportunities for people to access social care services through the medium of Welsh. We will do this by continuing to provide and develop Welsh language services, including the recruitment of staff with Welsh language skills, ensuring that the Proactive Offer is evident from the first point of contact and ensuring that the Welsh language is mainstreamed in technology. The workforce development team will also continue to offer opportunities for staff to learn Welsh and develop awareness of the Welsh language and culture.

Action	Responsibility	Due by
Consider the impact of policy/decision making on the Welsh language and communities	All Council services	Review at the end of Strategy period
Our public libraries will provide access to Welsh leisure and educational reading material locally within communities, free of charge, including printed books, large print books, talking books, e-books, talking e-books, magazines, e-magazines and papers.	Library Services	Review at the end of Strategy period
Collaborate nationally as a sector to expand the Welsh-medium digital reading resources provision available free of charge to readers	Library Services	April 2028
Our libraries will provide Reading Well schemes that offer Welsh books to assist with mental health conditions and dementia, for adults and children, and expanding to	Library Services	April 2028

include provision for young people		
Collaborate nationally to develop and deliver further schemes such as Reading Friends and EmpathyLab	Library Services	April 2028
Promote the use of the bilingual app Pori (the national app of public libraries in Wales) which offers all library members access to their personal account to enable them to order and renew books, access and order print and digital books, find their nearest library, and check the availability of all Welsh books	Library Services	April 2028
Provide a programme of activities and events for children and adults that promote the Welsh language and Welsh culture (e.g. reading groups, Summer Reading Challenge, book launches and author visits) including in partnership with local and national agencies and organizations	Library Services	Review at the end of Strategy period
Introduce the Welsh language to parents of 0-3 year olds through the Flying Start Rhyme Time sessions in libraries and digitally	Library Services	Review at the end of Strategy period

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<p>Our One Stop Shops will provide support and advice about the Council's Welsh-medium services in our local communities</p>	<p>Library Services</p>	<p>Review at the end of Strategy period</p>
<p>One of the objectives of the New Local Development Plan is to support and improve the Welsh Language. When developing the New Local Development Plan, the Appraisal of Sustainability and the associated site assessment processes will assess what are the effects of the plan's spatial strategy, policies and allocations on the Welsh language. Where evidence shows an adverse impact, strategy revisions or mitigation measures will be identified.</p>	<p>Planning and Public Protection</p>	<p>The assessment will continue until the Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) is adopted by Denbighshire County Council. Once the Replacement LDP has been adopted, the policies will help to support and enhance the Welsh Language.</p>
<p>Increase the marketing of Welsh courses available in the community</p>	<p>Communication team and County Welsh Language Forum</p>	<p>Review at the end of Strategy period</p>
<p>Attendance at key county events in order to promote the Welsh language</p>	<p>County Welsh Language Forum</p>	<p>Review at the end of Strategy period</p>

Co-promote Welsh language events on partners' websites and social media	County Welsh Language Forum	Review at the end of Strategy period
Facilitate and support events of national importance which promote the Welsh Language and Culture.	All Council services and County Welsh Language Forum.	Review at the end of Strategy period
Share best practices and an enabling method across the system, including raising awareness of the proactive offer so that the offer is an integral part of the process of providing quality services.	Social Care	April 2028

Theme 3 - Business and Economy

The vision:

Recognizing the importance of a prosperous economy to the future of the Welsh language.

Desired outcome:

- The County Council and other economic development partners should recognize the importance of the future of the Welsh language to prosperous communities and should produce strategies to ensure that young people in particular have the opportunity to live and work in their local communities and contribute to their prosperity.

Indicators:

- The number of businesses in Denbighshire receiving training on the benefits of bilingualism through a targeted campaign.
- The number of businesses displaying Welsh promotional signs / materials within their business through a targeted campaign.
- The number of opportunities for young people to access work locally.
- More businesses recognizing the Welsh language as a specific skill and promoting the use of the Welsh language within their business

Economic and Social Background

According to the 2021 Census there were 95,800 people living in Denbighshire.

Denbighshire's economy is very diverse with over 3600 enterprises located in the county. In the north of the county, towns such as Rhyl and Prestatyn are key centres for retail, leisure and tourism sectors. The north is also home to St Asaph Business Park, where a number of important technological companies are located. In the south, the rural area is a network of small traditional villages which are important tourist destinations. The natural beauty of the landscape, which has been designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural

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Beauty, attracts visitors and residents alike. Most of the workforce is employed in Health and Social Work (25%), Wholesale and Retail (15%), Education (9%) and Construction (9%). The public sector, which includes health and social care, education and administration, is the largest employer in the county, with a higher proportion of the population working in this sector than in any other local authority area in the UK.

Jobs in the business sector tend to be in areas such as retail, leisure and tourism, and these are generally low-paid, seasonal jobs.

Action	Responsibility	Due by
Develop a Welsh in Business webpage on Denbighshire County Council's website	Economic Development and Business	April 2024
Actively promote the use of the Welsh language through a monthly Business Bulletin published for the business community	Economic Development and Business	Review at the end of Strategy period
Raise awareness of the provision of Welsh training for Adults who work in the business community.	Economic Development and Business	Review at the end of Strategy period
Commission a bilingual Welsh language training to be provided to businesses.	Economic Development and Business	Review at the end of Strategy period
Create a Welsh in Business booklet to highlight best practice in promoting the	Economic Development and Business	April 2025

Welsh offer within the business community.		
Raise awareness of the Welsh language as an additional skill and encourage businesses to increase their use of the language.	Economic Development and Business	Review at the end of Strategy period

Theme 4 - Council internal administration

Denbighshire's economy relies heavily on the public sector. The county has a higher proportion of people working in the public sector than any other part of the UK, particularly within health and social care. The County Council is one of the largest public bodies in terms of employment, approximately 5,000 people are employed by the Council.

The Council therefore has a central role in providing leadership and setting an example in a variety of very diverse areas. A central part of this is that the Council can offer strong leadership in terms of developing the Welsh language and promoting the area's unique culture and identity. In this context, it is important to consider the Council's role as a service provider for a bilingual community but also as a significant employer. This is recognized in the Council's Economic and Community Ambition Strategy which states - 'The intention of the Strategy is to build on the economic strengths provided by Denbighshire's strong Welsh identity and culture, and to encourage businesses, residents and visitors to use the Welsh language.' In order to respond to the reduction in the number of Welsh speakers over recent decades, the County Council needs to be more proactive by setting higher expectations of itself as a body that can lead the way to raise the status and increase the use of the Welsh language in the county. Over a period of time, this approach could lead to the development of a workforce ethos and culture that would reflect the bilingual nature of the communities the Council serves.

In time, this would enable the Council to develop with confidence to start naturally providing bilingual administration in the future. These are the results of an audit in 2022 of the staff's language skills:-

Level	Listening and Speaking	Reading and Comprehension	Writing
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	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Level 0	388	15%	466	18%	714	27%
Level 1	970	37%	954	36%	773	29%
Level 2	306	12%	239	9%	261	10%
Level 3	158	6%	153	6%	138	5%
Level 4	167	6%	182	7%	109	4%
Level 5	167	6%	161	6%	138	5%
No information	487	18%	488	18%	509	19%
Total	2,643	100%	2,643	100%	2,643	100%

In order to build on these foundations, it is important that the County Council recognizes the Welsh language as a skill within the workforce, and helps staff gain confidence to use the Welsh language by supporting them to further develop their skills to enable them to naturally work bilingually and to encourage and support staff with no Welsh language skills to learn the language over a period of time.

Welsh Language Champions

Within each Council Service there is a Welsh Language Champion and meetings are held regularly to monitor progress against the Standards as well as to share good practice and to act as a critical friend. The members have detailed understanding of the Standards' requirements and the associated strategy as well as conducting secret shopper exercises. We will work closely with the Champions in order to promote and facilitate Welsh language events and activities within the Council.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd

As well as supporting the Council's current staff, we continue to give the Council's recruitment and workforce policies detailed consideration in order to support the aim of developing as a bilingual body. This includes categorizing posts and promoting the need to set language requirements in job descriptions. In response to the Standards, the Council has put procedures in place to develop and outline how it plans to develop a bilingual workforce, develop staff language skills and adopt a recruitment policy that will enable the Council to normalize the use of the Welsh language in its day-to-day administration and in the services it provides.

Action	Responsibility	Due by
Continue to develop the role of the Welsh Language Champions service	Welsh Language Champions	Review at the end of Strategy period
Promoting and marketing Welsh language courses	Welsh Language Officer / Human Resources	Review at the end of Strategy period
Ensure that all staff complete an e-learning module on Welsh Language Awareness	All Council staff	Review at the end of Strategy period
Organizing national annual days that celebrate the Welsh Language - e.g. <i>Shwmae Su'mae</i> Day	Welsh Language Officer and Welsh Language Champions	Review at the end of Strategy period
Organise internal campaigns to double the levels of the day-to-day use of the Welsh language.	Welsh Language Officer and Welsh Language Champions	Review at the end of Strategy period

Categorize all Council posts in relation to Welsh language skills	Human Resources and Welsh Language Officer	April 2025
Organise events and activities to encourage staff to take part and keep momentum in learning Welsh e.g. <i>Paned a Sgwrs</i> sessions, Staff Eisteddfod etc.	Welsh Language Officer and Welsh Language Champions	Review at the end of Strategy period

Monitoring and Regulation

The Welsh Language Strategy is a corporate strategy and the associated Action Plan is a combination of all the approaches related to promoting the use of the Welsh language in Denbighshire. As a result, a number of different Council departments will implement the action plan, as well as some partner organisations.

All actions within the action plan will be included in the relevant service business plan and will be monitored by the lead member and head of service. The general leader on the Welsh Language Strategy is the lead member with responsibility for the Welsh language.

The Council's audit committees will have an important role in monitoring the Strategy, as will the Welsh Language Steering Committee within Denbighshire. We will review our objectives and actions annually and we accept that it may not be possible to accomplish all we hope to do as circumstances change. We will always be transparent about any changes we make, and report any changes and the rationale behind them.

The Council has strong performance management arrangements in place which will be relevant in monitoring and reporting on progress against the Corporate Plan. This will include a robust performance framework that displays indicators, performance measures and activities with clear targets and expectations that will match our ambition for our communities.