

Introduction

Newport City Council aims to be an organisation that values and supports the use of the Welsh language amongst its staff. To do this, we must create an environment and culture where both languages are viewed equally, and staff feel empowered to use and develop their Welsh language skills.

As a public sector organisation, and in our role as a key Public Service Board member, we want to lead our city by example, and encourage the use of Welsh internally, increasing opportunities to see, hear and use the Welsh language, which will, in turn, improve the external visibility and profile of Welsh language across the city.

We recognise that staff will be at different starting points on their Welsh language journey. Some may have formal qualifications gained at school, some may be fluent, some may have basic linguistic courtesy skills, and some may have no Welsh at all. Whatever the level, we need to create a naturalised environment, and suitable training opportunities, to encourage staff to use their existing skills, learn Welsh, rekindle latent skills, and most importantly, grow their confidence in using the language.

We also recognise that Newport is a diverse city, and our staff is a diverse workforce, with many languages spoken both across our communities and within the workplace. Multilingualism enriches both internal and external culture and is also beneficial to educational development, mental wellbeing and the provision of culturally and linguistically sensitive services. Learning Welsh will also benefit those staff who wish to support their children in Welsh medium education.

Aims of Policy

This policy seeks to set out a cohesive approach to the recruitment, training and development of Welsh learners and speakers across the council, to help ensure the growth of the Welsh language within the workplace. This Policy will be reviewed annually and revised in line with any changes in workforce patterns, gaps or successes

Scope

This Policy will...

- Develop and encourage the social/informal use of Welsh between colleagues
- Create a supportive environment by setting out Cymraeg Clir principles
- Increase the demand and opportunities for staff to develop their Welsh language skills and confidence
- Increase the demand and opportunities for staff to develop their Welsh language skills
- Enhance the council's capability to provide a bilingual service through investment in the development of internal Welsh learners/speakers
- Promote the council as a workplace which is supportive of the Welsh language and Welsh speakers with a view to attracting more Welsh speaking staff

- Set out the ways in which we measure the Welsh language ability of our staff
- Set out the process by which we assess the Welsh language requirement of our job roles

School Based Employees

This policy does not apply to employees under the direct control of a Governing Body. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan will support schools with workforce development in terms of Welsh language (outcome 7).

To be read in conjunction with

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Principles

This Policy is underpinned by the **CUBE** principles:

Confidence – staff who speak Welsh, those learning Welsh and those who may have spoken Welsh in the past feel safe and trusted to develop their skills and for Welsh speakers

Understanding – we will ensure staff are well informed about the Welsh language – ensuring that they have an awareness of the history and culture of the Welsh language, the legislative standing created by the Welsh Language Standards, and the value that the Welsh language has

Building – we will develop a bilingual/multilingual culture across the council, and an environment where staff can learn and practice their Welsh language skills and feel comfortable using Welsh in the workplace

Educating – we will ensure that we offer a range of learning options that are fit for purpose and reflect the operational needs of the council, the needs of our staff and the range of teaching methods available

POLICY

Assessing Skills

The council recognises that the Welsh language is a skill, like any other job related skill and should be valued as such. In order to consistently assess the Welsh language skills of our potential and existing staff, the council has adopted the Association of Language Testers of Europe (ALTE) framework, set out at Appendix 1. This is also the framework used by the council to assess levels of language proficiency that are required to undertake job roles.

Information collected on the skills levels of our new starters, existing staff and colleagues leaving the organisation, will be hosted on our HR system, iTrent, allowing the council to better understand possible skills gaps and plan effectively for future recruitment and workforce development. Staff will be encouraged to update information held about their Welsh language skills on an annual basis using the ALTE framework.

All new starters will be required to have a basic level of linguistic courtesy – this includes being able to greet in Welsh, answer the phone in Welsh, and pronounce Welsh place names. Staff will be required to complete a short online training course to achieve this, within the first 6 months of commencing employment. This will be monitored, and a condition of a successful probationary period.

Recruitment

The council will utilise all available opportunities to advertise and promote itself as a bilingual employer. This will include the presentation of a bilingual corporate image, the promotion of a bilingual culture and the availability of Welsh speaking staff. We are committed to increasing the number of bilingual staff able to provide services in both Welsh and English.

All posts advertised by the council will include Welsh language Level 3 or higher as a desirable skill. This will only confer an advantage in instances where a recruitment decision needs to be made as there are two (or more) candidates of equal quality.

All Apprenticeship roles that are advertised will include Welsh Language GCSE grade A-C as desirable, working towards parity with our English language requirements. All Job adverts will be published bilingually.

For all new posts, or new recruitment into existing roles, an [individual assessment](#) will be carried out to determine the level of Welsh language proficiency required. A flowchart setting out this process is included at Appendix 2. Where a role is deemed Welsh language essential, recruiting managers will be supported to ensure potential for recruitment into these posts is maximised.

In cases where a post has been identified as Welsh Essential, but it has not been possible to source a qualified Welsh speaking candidate through the recruitment process then the following steps may be considered:

- advertising the post as a temporary appointment and reviewing methods of meeting the need in a different way – e.g. changes to delivery of the service;
- provision of Welsh language training to the person appointed to the post.

Welsh Essential posts may be re-designated as Welsh Desirable if they have been advertised twice and it has not been possible to recruit a Welsh speaker. However, Managers must ensure that their Team's capacity to provide high-quality Welsh language services are not adversely affected by the re-designation of individual posts as Welsh Desirable rather than Welsh Essential. In order to support continued provision of Welsh language services every effort must be made to exhaust all options and support can be provided by the service area HR & OD Business Partner.

Analysis

Each year, the council will review information held on staff's abilities in both spoken and written Welsh. This data will be reported on at organisational level within the council's Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report. This will

also be raised within workforce planning discussions between the Manager and their HR & OD Business Partner. They will discuss:

- the number of customer-facing posts within their team
- the number of Welsh Essential posts within their team
- the number of Welsh Essential posts currently filled by qualified Welsh speakers (proficiency of Level 3 or above)
- an assessment of the total number of Welsh Essential posts required to safeguard the provision of high-quality Welsh language services by the team
- proposed actions to meet any identified skills gaps through training and recruitment

Information collected as a result of Manager-led assessments and staff reporting will allow for comparative analysis of the council's capacity and the number of Welsh speaking staff required to support the delivery of high-quality Welsh language services. This analysis will Managers to take informed decisions in relation to:

- the number of posts in their team which should be designated as Welsh Essential
- the number of Welsh Essential posts currently filled by qualified Welsh speakers
- the current number of qualified Welsh speakers in their team and therefore the number of Welsh Essential posts that could be filled without further recruitment
- identification of staff members who wish to develop their Welsh language skills so they are qualified to work in a Welsh Essential post
- recruitment required to fill Welsh Essential posts
- the number of Welsh speakers in non-Welsh Essential posts

Welsh Language Training

As an organisation which recognises Welsh language proficiency as a skill, the council will support staff with an offer of free Welsh language training to all employees, unless demand outstrips supply, which would then lead to prioritisation based on need.

All staff members must complete training sessions relating to:

- Linguistic courtesy
- History of Welsh Language
- Culture of Welsh Language
- Welsh language legislation

All staff members will be given the opportunity to participate in training so they may reach a level of proficiency equivalent to at least Level 1. Level 1 training will allow staff to:

- Understand and use familiar everyday expressions if the speaker is talking slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
- Introduce yourself and others and can ask and answer questions about basic personal details, e.g. where someone lives, works, what they like doing, things they have and what they did.
- Understand very short texts where people are giving basic information about themselves or others, e.g. on forms.
- Pass on a simple message or make a simple request, e.g. by e-mail

Following completion of this training members of staff may decide to continue their journey to becoming fully bilingual by engaging with the more advanced Welsh language training courses provided, or supported, by the Council.

Current training opportunities will be listed on the council's intranet site and regularly updated. Options may include tutor-led classes, digital training and bespoke sessions for specific audiences. Managers are encouraged to discuss Welsh language training requirements and aspirations with their staff as part of their regular one to one supervision sessions.

As a PSB member, the council will also work with our statutory partners in developing consistency of the training offer across other public sector bodies.

Cymraeg Clir Principles

To increase staff confidence in using Welsh in the workplace, the council has set out the following Cymraeg Clir (Clear/Plain Welsh) principles:

When speaking Welsh, we will:

1. Use simple, concise, everyday language.
2. Use natural words and phrases.
3. Not worry about using the odd English word in a sentence if you cannot remember the Welsh
4. Use short sentences and keep to the principle: 'one sentence – one idea'
5. Try to avoid 'official' language that is full of jargon and technical terms (and explain any unfamiliar terms)

When writing Welsh, we will:

1. Use simple, concise, everyday language
2. Address our readers directly.
3. Use the natural words, phrases and structure of the Welsh language.
4. Use short sentences (no more than 25 words per sentence).
5. Keep to the principle: 'one sentence – one idea'.
6. Use active verbs to make your written work more lively and direct: e.g. 'Dechreuodd y cyngor 50 o brojectau' rather than 'Dechreuwyd 50 o brojectau gan y cyngor.'
7. Tell the reader clearly who is doing something when you use verbs: 'we', 'you', 'they'.
8. Use verbs rather than nouns.
9. Use informal verbs and pronouns.
10. Try to avoid 'official' language that is full of jargon and technical terms (and explain any unfamiliar terms)
11. Divide long sentences into shorter points or bullet points.
12. Use punctuation to help the reader understand.

Responsibilities

Newport City Council is committed to ensuring that staff feel supported in using the Welsh language internally within the organisation, and the implementation of this Policy is an organisational responsibility:

- **The Leader and Chief Executive** of the council will provide visible leadership which promotes the use of the Welsh language, internally and across our communities
- The council's **Corporate Management Team (CMT)** will agree and ensure implementation of this Policy
- The council's **Welsh Language Implementation Group (WLIG)** will ensure this Policy is aligned with relevant Welsh Language Standards, and that it is promoted across Service Areas
- **Heads of Service** will be responsible for briefing their managers on relevant responsibilities and ensuring compliance within their service areas
- The council's **Human Resources** team will coordinate all employment (including recruitment), learning, and development matters
- The council's **Employee Engagement** team will ensure that staff communication regularly updates staff on Welsh language developments and actively promotes opportunities to use Welsh in the workplace
- **Managers** will review their service need in line with workforce planning and will identify training needs through regular 'check in's' with staff.
- **Digital Services** will support the use of Welsh medium software packages where appropriate
- The **Welsh Language Officer** will provide advice and guidance on all Welsh language related matters
- **Employees** will demonstrate a commitment to promoting and utilising the Welsh language wherever possible. Welsh speakers and learners are also encouraged to add a Welsh language logo to their email signature

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Appendix 1

ALTE Welsh Language Framework

The aim of the Language Skills Framework is a key tool for Managers as they design and implement their workforce plans and covers the following key areas in the management of language skills:

- Determine the Welsh language skills required for workplaces, teams and jobs, across the Authority;
- Record and monitor staff Welsh language skills;
- Recruit people with the appropriate level of Welsh language skills for the post being advertised;
- Develop language skills and language awareness.

A number of Welsh public sector employers have adapted a widely recognised skills framework, the ALTE Framework (Association of Language Testers of Europe) to measure linguistic skills in Welsh. This provides a good reference for employers due to the fact that it is based on recognition of what individuals can achieve linguistically (in Welsh and English in this context). It is a way of measuring language skills according to the types of communication tasks that a person can achieve in speaking, understanding, reading and writing.

Levels	General description	Speaking / Listening	Reading	Writing
Level 1 / Entry	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and use familiar everyday expressions if the speaker is talking slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. • Introduce yourself and others and can ask and answer questions about basic personal details, e.g. where someone lives, works, what they like doing, things they have and what they did. • Understand very short texts where people are giving basic information about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to pronounce place names and personal names correctly. • Able to greet customers at reception or on the phone. • Able to open and close a conversation. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand everyday expressions and very basic phrases if the speaker is talking slowly. • Understand conversations about basic personal information, e.g. where someone lives, works, what they like doing, what they did. • Guess what is being said when someone is giving details about events, such as time and place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand short text about a familiar topic when it is communicated in plain language, e.g. basic signs, simple instructions, includes agendas <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand very short phrases, and can guess what some notices mean. • Understand short texts where people are giving basic information about themselves or others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to write personal names, place names, job titles and names of council departments. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write very simple phrases or sentences about yourself or others. • Pass on a simple message or make a simple request, e.g. by e-mail.

	<p>themselves or others, e.g. on forms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass on a simple message or make a simple request, e.g. by e-mail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use some familiar everyday expressions, e.g. greetings, thanks. • Pronounce place names and names of people. • Talk about basic personal things in an informal situation, e.g. interests, family, work, what you did yesterday. • Talk about basic topics, e.g. the weather, time, prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually find details, such as time and cost, in advertisements or notices 	
<p>Level 2 / Foundation</p>	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand sentences when people talk slowly about everyday situations e.g. basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment, and what they have done or would do. • Hold a basic conversation with someone else on a common everyday topic e.g. work, hobbies, preferences, things which have happened or future plans. • Understand messages about everyday things and basic letters/emails. • Write short notes to friends/colleagues e.g. to pass on a message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand the core conversation. • Able to receive and understand simple messages on normal patterns, e.g. time and place of a meeting, request to talk with someone. • Able to convey basic information and simple instructions. • Able to open and close conversations and meetings bilingually <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand when people talk about everyday situations, e.g. personal information, work, what they have done or would do, provided they talk slowly. • Understand when people ask you or others to do something, and when they are asking about future plans, e.g. requesting a meeting. • Hold a basic conversation with someone else on a common everyday topic, provided the other speaker helps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand most short reports and instructions within the expertise of work, if there is sufficient time allowed. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand messages about everyday things, and some very basic letters or e-mails, e.g. asking for something, or asking to pass a message on. • Understand short pieces of texts or very simple books, e.g. books for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to produce a simple short message on paper or email for a colleague within the Council or a familiar colleague outside the Council <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short note to a friend or colleague, asking for something, thanking them or explaining something, e.g. absence from work. • Write a short text about a familiar topic, e.g. personal experience, or work-related experience.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask and answer questions on familiar topics, e.g. work, hobbies, preferences, things which have happened or future plans. 		
Level 3 / Intermediate	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main points when someone talks about common or everyday topics, or when things to do with work are discussed e.g., in conversation, or in a small group meeting. • Hold an extended conversation with a fluent speaker on a familiar topic to do with everyday life e.g. hobbies, travel or immediate work-related topics. • Describe experiences and events, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. • Understand straightforward short articles or emails on everyday topics to do with work. • Write a letter/email on most topics, asking for things, giving information, inviting someone or organising an event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand and participate in most normal day-to-day conversations in the office. • Able to offer advice to the general public on issues relating to the post. Referring to specialised or technical terms in English. • Able to contribute to a meeting or a presentation on general issues relating to the post; referring to specialised or technical terms in English. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand information being given about common or everyday topics, or when things to do with work are being discussed, e.g. in conversation, or in small group meetings. • Usually understand the main message and details, provided people speak clearly, e.g. when announcements are made or when listening to news bulletins. • Hold an extended conversation with a fluent speaker on a familiar topic, e.g. interests or work. • Express a view and exchange information on a range of topics to do with everyday life, e.g. hobbies, travel or immediate work-related topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand most of the reports, documents and correspondence that would be expected to be discussed in the normal course of work. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand straightforward short articles on everyday topics of interest, or to do with work. • Guess what words mean from the context, when the topic is familiar. • Understand most e-mails and work-related documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to prepare informal messages and reports for internal use <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can write a letter on most topics, asking for things, giving explanations, describing experiences, inviting people, or organising an event. • You can write fairly accurately on most familiar topics, e.g. related to interests or work-related. • Understand most e-mails and work-related documents.

<p>Level 4 / Advanced</p>	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually follow most conversations or discussions, even on topics you are not familiar with, unless someone is speaking with a strong unfamiliar accent e.g. in a conference. • Talk confidently with fluent speakers on familiar topics related to everyday life or work, and can express your views, engage in discussion, and speak at length about general topics e.g. in a meeting, or in a one-to-one situation. • Understand most correspondence, newspaper articles and reports aimed at fluent Welsh speakers with the aid of a dictionary, and scan through long texts to find detail. • Write short articles, reviews or reports on a variety of subjects of a general nature, or which are work-related, and respond accurately to most types of correspondence from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to contribute effectively in internal and external meetings in the context of the work subject. • Able to understand differences in tone and dialect. • Able to argue for and against a particular case. • Able to chair meetings and answer questions confidently. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually follow most conversations or discussions, even on topics you're not familiar with. • Understand most TV and radio programmes for first language speakers, unless they're speaking with a strong unfamiliar accent. • Talk confidently with fluent speakers on familiar topics related to everyday life or work. • Express views, engage in discussion, and speak at length about general topics, e.g. in a meeting, or in a one-to-one situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand formal correspondence and reports. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand most correspondence, and scan through long texts to find details. • Understand most newspaper articles and reports aimed at first language speakers, with the aid of a dictionary. • Understand novels and other texts, provided they are not written in a very formal or very colloquial style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to produce business correspondence, short reports, emails and promotional literature with editing assistance <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short article, review or report on a variety of subjects of a general nature, or which are work-related. • Write detailed and well-structured texts, which are appropriate for the reader. • Respond accurately to most types of correspondence from colleagues or external contacts.

	internal or external sources.			
Level 5	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. • Speak at length about complex issues, present arguments, and lead discussions. • Summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. • Express yourself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, adapting your style according to the audience e.g., in an informal or formal context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to contribute fluently and confidently with regard to all aspects of daily work, including negotiating and advising on technical, specialised or sensitive areas. • Can contribute to meetings and provide presentations fluently and confidently <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily follow all conversations and discussions between others, on all sorts of topics. • Understand all kinds of spoken Welsh, including lectures or complex discussions. • Express myself fully and precisely, even when discussing complex issues. • Adapt your language style according to the audience, e.g. when speaking in a formal context or talking to colleagues. • Speak at length about a complex issue, presenting arguments, and leading the discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to understand reports, documents and articles linked to the normal course of work, including complex concepts expressed in convoluted language. <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand nearly all written texts with ease, with only occasional reference to a dictionary. • Read long texts, e.g. reports, articles, to find relevant details and understand nearly all types of writing, e.g. formal or informal, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to produce business correspondence, short reports, emails and promotional literature to an acceptable level with the aid of standard language tools. • Able to draw up detailed notes while taking a full part in the meeting <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write extended texts, reports, articles, minutes or other types of writing in a style appropriate to the reader. • Write in formal or informal Welsh as necessary. • Write with a high degree of accuracy on a wide range of topics.

Appendix 2 - Flowchart

