

Newport City Council

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032

Consultation Report

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan September 2022 – August 2032

Formal Consultation Period:
27th September – 22nd November 2021

Purpose

This report has been produced to outline the arrangements undertaken by Newport City Council in consulting on its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), and detail the feedback received during the consultation period.

This consultation report includes the following sections:

- Legislative Requirements
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Learner Voice
- Consultation Responses
- Responses from Key Stakeholders
- Next Steps

Legislative Requirements

Section 84 of *The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* requires a local authority to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019* require Local Authorities to **set a ten-year target** outlining the expected increase in Year 1 children who are taught through the medium of Welsh in the local authority's area during the lifespan of a Plan. These regulations also outline a need for Local Authorities to facilitate consultation with stakeholders in developing their Plans. This report outlines the engagement undertaken by the Council, and the stakeholder feedback received, in relation to the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for the period September 2022 – August 2032.

Stakeholder Engagement

Formal consultation commenced on 27th September 2021 and ended at midnight on 22nd November 2021. An invitation to take part in the consultation was issued to the stakeholders outlined below by email, and this included a link to the consultation page of the Council's website. This website page included links to all three versions of the plan that had been created: the full WESP, a shortened version suitable for children and young people and an executive summary.

- All neighbouring Local Authorities;
- The Headteacher and Governing Bodies of all Newport schools;
- Further Education Institutions in the Newport area;
- The Church in Wales, Diocese of Monmouth;
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese;
- The Catholic Education Service for England and Wales;
- The Welsh Language Commissioner;
- Newport's Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership;
- Estyn;
- Providers of Initial School Teacher Training across Wales;
- SNAP Cymru;
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations;
- Mudiad Meithrin;
- Youth Cymru;
- Bwrdd Syr Ifanc (Urdd Youth Council);
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board;
- Newport Serennu Centre;
- The Leader of the Council and the elected member Welsh Language Champion;
- All Newport City Council Heads of Services;
- Trade Union Representatives
- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol;
- Swansea University Welsh Language Society;
- Local Community Councils across Newport;
- Assembly Members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing Newport;
- Newport's Welsh Education Forum;
- Welsh Local Government Association;
- Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC);
- National Centre for Learning Welsh;
- Careers Wales;

- Education Workforce Council;
- Cymdeithas Yr Iaith;
- Cymdeithas Ysgolion Dros Addysg Gymraeg;
- Dyfodol I'r Iaith;
- NDNA Cymru;
- The Welsh Language Board;
- Institute of Welsh Affairs;
- Qualifications Wales;
- WJEC;
- Newport Scout District.

Distribution of Information

In addition to contacting identified consultees directly via email as outlined above, the consultation was regularly publicised through Newport City Council's social media channels. Information was also shared through Newport Matters, the staff newsletter and the Intranet Homepage.

Posters were designed and displayed at Newport Central Library, Community Hubs, Flying Start settings and via Early Years and Childcare providers. All settings displayed QR codes linked to the relevant page of the Council website and were provided with hard copies of the shortened version of the plan.

Drop-in Events

Due to the ongoing public health situation, and in keeping with Welsh Government guidance, there were no face-to-face consultation events arranged to support this consultation.

Learner Voice

The Council is committed to gaining the views of learners, and to support this pupil voice sessions were offered to all Newport Secondary schools, and this offer was taken up by six of the nine secondary schools across the City. Due to the current public health situation, this was facilitated through Question-and-Answer sessions held via Microsoft Teams, rather than face-to-face workshops. Details of the sessions conducted, in date order, are provided in the table below:

School	Attendees	Date
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	School Council	04/11/2021
St Joseph's RC High School	School Council	08/11/2021
Bassaleg School	School Council	11/11/2021
The John Frost School	School Council	12/11/2021
Newport High School	School Council	15/11/2021
Caerleon Comprehensive School	School Council	16/11/2021

A number of similar questions were asked by pupils over the sessions, and these are summarised in the following table:

Questions / Comments	Answer
Can the Welsh Language be introduced more thoroughly from a younger age?	Welsh language is increasingly used in primary schools and this will be embedded through the new curriculum.
Will the plan include support for parents of children in Welsh-medium education?	This is excellent feedback and will be reported to colleagues responsible for the Welsh-medium Promotion Strategy for consideration.
Are there any incentives for current/future pupils to learn Welsh?	Entering the job market as a bilingual applicant in Wales will give individuals an advantage over other applicants.
How will nursery children learn Welsh and English at the same time?	In English-medium settings children already learn to use incidental Welsh. In Welsh-medium settings English is not taught until year 3.
How would you encourage pupils to stay in Wales and join the Welsh workforce as Welsh is not a spoken language outside of Wales?	There are many benefits to employment in Wales but how this is promoted will need to be led by the Welsh Government.
Is there any support available to those further on in education to upskill their Welsh Language?	Upskilling is available through Urdd. However, Careers Wales are promoting the benefits that learning Welsh has within the job market. A Welsh-medium Promotion Strategy is being developed and will target increasing Welsh as a living language within many communities.

In addition to these specific questions, pupils were keen to share their views that:

- There would be additional benefits if parents were able to learn Welsh alongside their children,
- The teaching of Welsh should commence as early as possible in school life,
- There should be more incidental Welsh woven into Secondary schools, and
- Welsh skills and knowledge gained in primary schools are lost when pupils move through secondary schools.

In each session, most pupils supported the proposal, although one pupil expressed some doubt over whether Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy is achievable.

The Council is very grateful to the staff and pupils who took part and would like to thank them for their valuable contributions to this process.

Consultation Responses

Overall, a total of 73 responses were received during the consultation period. 63 (86%) were received in English, 9 (13%) were received in Welsh and 1(1%) was received bilingually.

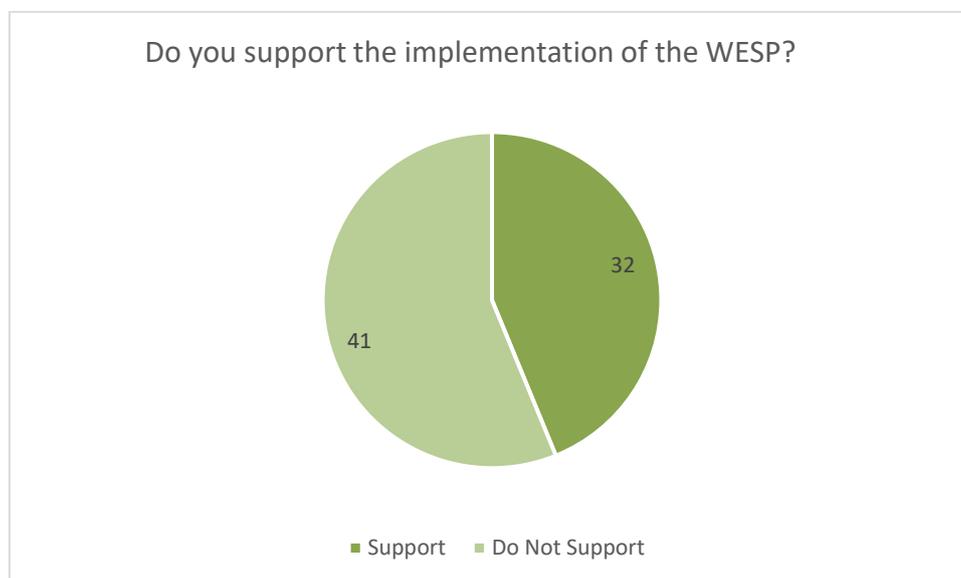
65 responses were made via the online response pro-forma, from the following stakeholder groups:

- Current/past/prospective parents/carers of pupils
- Residents of Newport
- Teachers and staff at Newport schools
- Academics at Higher Education Institutions

There were 8 written consultation responses submitted by email, from the following stakeholder groups:

- Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales)
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg / Parents for Welsh-medium Education (RhAG)
- Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)
- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (CCC)
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)
- A Resident of Newport

32 respondents (equivalent to 44%) supported the plan; 41 respondents (equivalent to 56%) did not support it.



22 (54%) of the 41 respondents who did not support the plan included comments which suggested that their response was more in relation to the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, rather than the Council's draft WESP.

These comments suggested that:

- The Welsh language is only used in Wales and the opportunity to learn other languages would be of more benefit to pupils;
- The teaching of Welsh would dilute learning in relation to core subjects;
- The strategy would result in the teaching of Welsh being mandatory for all pupils;
- Resources would be better used to support educational outcomes for all learners.

In response, Newport City Council is committed to supporting Cymraeg 2050. Cymraeg 2050 is Welsh Government's long-term vision for a Wales where the Welsh language thrives. The strategy aims to increase:

- the number of Welsh speakers to 1 million by 2050 and,
- ensure that the percentage of the population that speaks Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, increases from 10% (in 2013–15) to 20% by 2050.

The WESP demonstrates how the Council will contribute to achieving this goal.

Summary of Consultation Responses

Written responses were received from six key stakeholders: The Welsh Language Commissioner, Estyn, RHAG, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, UCAC and Mudiad Meithrin.

The Welsh Language Commissioner commented that the strategic document was excellent, and they welcomed the level of detail on specific action points. The response provides comments on each of the seven outcome areas included in the WESP.

Estyn's response states that on the whole, the rationale for the proposals is presented appropriately, that a number are ambitious and identify sensible considerations, and that the aspirations and proposals presented as part of the consultation are supported.

A summary of the comments received and the Council's response to these comments is outlined in the following tables:

Overarching Target / Vision. Number of Year 1 pupils who are taught through the medium of Welsh		
Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
There should be a close and ongoing inter-relationship between both Plans in their formulation, implementation and monitoring (5-year strategy and WESP)	RHAG	The Council has a strong working relationship between Education and the Policy and Partnership team. Both plans will have a strong relationship with each other and will be running side by side.
Dates for establishing the new schools would be helpful in order to obtain a more complete baseline and context for the comments.		The exact implementation dates cannot be determined at this time.
Newport City Council should aim beyond the maximum target range of 16% or 310 children receiving Welsh-medium education by 2031.		We note that the 6-percentage point (pp) increase is equivalent to a 100% increase on current provision. Any further

We would like to see Newport City Council aiming for the highest range set by the Welsh Government (16% and 310 pupils) if not exceeding that.	UCAC	increase beyond the 6pp would increase the risk of undermining current provision.
The table on page 4 suggests that the target for the number of pupils in Year 1 receiving Welsh-medium education by 2032 is 11.1% and 221. If so, that would be below the minimum range set by the Welsh Government of 12% and 230 pupils.		Our current PLASC data shows our WM cohort at 5.1%. The Welsh Government target requires us to increase by 6 percentage points which is equal to 11.1%.
If activity is dependent on there being sufficient resource allocated in the second Welsh-medium Capital Grant, what contingencies are being considered to meet the need if insufficient funds are available?	Survey Submission	Without the grant funding support the Council's ability to deliver on the WESP is limited.

Outcome 1: More nursery children/three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh		
Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
Detail sought regarding the level of childcare provision available and the likely impact of additional FS provision on WM childcare capacity.	Welsh Language Commissioner	There is currently Welsh-medium FS provision at Ringland, in 2022/23 there will be additional FS childcare spaces procured in Ifor Hael once the new provider has been identified.
Clarity requested regarding the proposed pupil growth relationship between Cylchoedd Meithrin and Reception capacity.		This has been noted and targets for this outcome have been revised to enable smooth transition into Welsh-medium primary education.
Consider changing Newport High School, St Julian's and John Frost. to reflect' communities and not the English-medium Secondary school clusters.	RHAG	Noted. Revision made.
Fflecsi service is not an accessible means of ensuring that children reach a provision at a specific time and for parents to collect them at a given time.		It is envisaged that the rollout of the Fflecsi service will assist some families, but we acknowledge that challenges remain and will work with local transport providers to consider other options to support access to WM schools.

<p>There should be more information about how the authority is raising awareness amongst new parents, or parents new to the area, about the options and benefits of Welsh-medium care and education.</p>	<p>UCAC</p>	<p>The role of the Welsh Language Promotion Officer will link with Health Visitors and improve the link with the 'Benefits of Bilingualism' booklet. The Family Information Service (FIS) promotes Welsh-medium Childcare and this includes both promoting the 3 Cylch Meithrin in Newport. The FIS do this in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. including WM provisions in all searches for childcare when parents ask for childcare options 2. Supporting and sustaining the Cylch Meithrin through workforce training and business grants. 3. The FIS also promotes Cymraeg y Blant, Cylch Ti a Fi's and signposts to the benefits of being Bilingual booklets when on outreach in the community. 4. The FIS commissions Language Support for Cylch Ti a Fi, Cylch Meithrin and English Settings through Mudiad Meithrin to increase the quality of the language spoken.
<p>In order to achieve the targets set for transfer rates for the next 5 and 10 years, an analysis of Mudiad Meithrin data would be beneficial in understanding the reasons behind the transition rates from the Cylchoedd Meithrin to the Welsh-medium schools and the challenges faced by parents, e.g. transport.</p>	<p>Mudiad Meithrin</p>	<p>We welcome the opportunity to work with Mudiad Meithrin to support this work.</p>
<p>It would be beneficial to consider planning for training, information and/or resources to raise awareness with childcare practitioners on the benefits of bilingualism to support sharing messages with families.</p>	<p>PACEY</p>	<p>This will be considered within our Promotion Strategy.</p>

It would be beneficial to consider any targets or actions from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment that would support the outcome of increasing the number of 3-year-olds that educated through the medium of Welsh.		It has been agreed that the Family Information Service will share the CSA data with Education when it is available.
What evaluation is undertaken to understand transition rates between Cylchoedd Meithrin and Welsh-medium education?	Survey Submission	The WEF will consider ways to capture this information.
Further detail would be useful in identifying what 'Unknown Provision' might comprise.		Noted. A proposal will be forthcoming in due course.

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

Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
Clarity over dual stream proposal requested.	Welsh Language Commissioner	The definition in the WESP is the Welsh Government definition of dual stream provision.
This scheme is an opportunity to make Welsh-medium education a real choice for children in all areas of the City. Why limit target?	RHAG	We note that the 6-percentage point (pp) increase is equivalent to a 100% increase on current provision. Any further increase beyond the 6pp would increase the risk of undermining current provision.
A ward-by-ward analysis would be beneficial to see where the new school needs to be sited.		UCAC
It would be good to see mapping taking place to illustrate the gaps in provision, taking account of journey times.		
To what extent is the authority confident that planned immersion provision will be sufficient to meet future demand, given the outlook for increased demand?	Survey Submission	The sufficiency of the late immersion capacity at Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Gwenni will be monitored and if necessary further consideration can be given to expanding this provision.

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

Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
No comments raised.		

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

Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
The presentation of data in this section was not clear.	Welsh Language Commissioner	Presentation of data has been revised.
Is Coleg Gwent data for Newport only?	RHAG	The data is for the whole of Coleg Gwent. The targets are linked to the 7 priority areas and each campus has a different curriculum offer. If targets were per campus we not all Newport learners would be captured as learners who live in Newport may study on a Coleg Gwent campus elsewhere.
It would be good to see Welsh second language AS and A level data more prominently placed within the document and how these will be encouraged.		The EAS will work with partners, including the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, to promote Welsh at A Level. School Improvement Partners will discuss post 16 provision with schools. Bespoke subject specific support for centres who deliver Welsh post-16, with ongoing networking and professional learning opportunities. Collaboration facilitated within and across regions.
How pupils' interest in the subject is to be created and maintained needs to be identified. Full advantage should also be taken of the opportunities offered by the Coleg Cymraeg and other partners as part of a national scheme to promote Welsh as a subject (led by the Welsh Government).	CCC	This will be a challenge for the WEF over the coming years.
Effective collaboration with Qualifications Wales to ensure the availability of qualifications particularly in vocational areas, which are offered to pupils from the age of 14 onwards.		Noted.

A significant discussion is required about the educational provision for learners after they leave the compulsory sector. progression routes on to sixth forms / Further Education colleges and thereafter, where relevant, to universities and the world of work need to be addressed. The plans therefore need to take full account of the contribution of sixth forms, further education colleges and apprenticeship providers to the success of the Strategic Plan and, where relevant, set out progression targets clearly.		Noted
Online learning might help to address the geographical challenges identified.	Survey Submission	This can be explored.

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

Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
Alternative methods could be explored to create opportunities as we recover from the pandemic.	Estyn	We will explore this with partners.
Quantitative targets should be identified for youth or community work.	RHAG	We will explore this with partners.
How will you promote Welsh as a subject in English-medium secondary schools, and increase the use of Welsh, other than in study?	Survey Submission	This will be a challenge for the WEF over the coming years.

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs ('ALN')

Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
This outcome should use simpler language to explain different kinds of provision.	Welsh Language Commissioner	Noted.
Further clarification of proposed ALN provision at Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed is required.		Noted. We will review this at points during the WESP.
There is not enough analysis in this outcome as it stands to know what the current provision is to set a baseline for seeing improvement and progress in the Welsh language provision for supporting ALN pupils.	RHAG	Currently Newport does not have a Welsh-medium dedicated Learning Resource base, Special School or pupil Referral Unit. The wording within Outcome 6 has been amended to make this clearer.

Will regional educational psychology collaboration take place?		There is a national shortage of Welsh speaking specialist ALN services including Educational Psychologists however by the end of the first 5 years of this plan, the aim is to secure cross consortia collaboration to provide specialist ALN support such as Educational Psychology and Teacher Advisors.
It would be beneficial to have more detail on the collaboration at regional consortium level (or between consortia?) referred to.	UCAC	
We are disappointed that no further data is being presented, and an analysis of it, in relation to the existing specialist ALN workforce able to work through the medium of Welsh – in the context of the current requirements of the system.		This has been noted.

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

Comment	Raised By	Next Steps
Outcome 7 relies on collaboration with key partners. Clarity sought on the performance and monitoring arrangements for this outcome area.	Welsh Language Commissioner	Progress is reported through the Welsh Education Forum which is chaired by the Chief Education Officer.
It would be a benefit to analyse the Welsh language skill needs of the education workforce in English-medium schools.		
It would be good to see a detailed analysis by the authority of staffing needs to accompany the growth outlined in the Plan.	UCAC	This work will include an analysis of the SWAC data at annual reviews of this strategy to forecast staffing needs over future years.
How many more teachers and support staff will you need to deliver the plans for the growth set out in your plan? What plans do you have to share the analysis here with the Government and the Education Workforce Council to ensure that there is sufficient supply of qualified staff to meet demand?	CCC	
There would be insufficient workforce to meet the targets within the overall strategy.	Survey Submission	

<p>You should include targets for the teaching workforce in Newport schools under outcome 7 - increasing the capability of teachers is surely essential?</p>		
<p>Places on the Welsh Language Sabbaticals Scheme are limited, and it would be helpful for the authority to specify the level of demand for the training (or similar) to identify the extent to which the provision meets needs.</p>	<p>Estyn</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>It would be beneficial for the authority to evaluate whether current and planned professional development responds to the linguistic needs of the individual workforce and the needs of the relevant organisation.</p>		<p>Noted.</p>
<p>There are no details on how many Welsh-medium staff are required over the period of the plan.</p>	<p>RHAG</p>	<p>Within the first year of this plan, the Council will establish a working group made up of officers from the Education Service and the Human Resources team in company with Welsh-medium Headteachers and the EAS to conduct a workforce needs analysis for the Welsh-medium education growth model outlined within the 10-year strategic plan.</p>
<p>There is also a need to promote posts where Welsh should be essential on Welsh job promotion platforms such as Golwg, Lleol, Swyddle and Safle Swyddi as well as eTeach and the Council's website.</p>		<p>The Council's Welsh Language Skills Policy makes a commitment to promote the organisation as a workplace which is supportive of the Welsh language and Welsh speakers with a view to attracting more Welsh speaking staff. It will use all available opportunities to advertise and promote itself as a bilingual employer including advertising on relevant Welsh medium platforms as part of recruitment campaigns where Welsh skills are essential.</p>

Priority areas identified on page 43 of the draft plan do not match the priority areas in the Welsh-medium Further Education and Apprenticeships Action Plan	CCC	We will discuss this with partners on the WEF.
It is worth noting the lack of childcare workers within the Early Years sector under this outcome. With the vision to open new Cylchoedd Meithrin we face the challenge of appointing qualified Welsh language staff.	Mudiad Meithrin	The working group that will be established could be extended to include Early Years provision.
Continued support is needed from the council to fund the Welsh Language through Croesi'r Bont and Clebran, and to identify Welsh-medium settings that could run a Cylch Meithrin session within the setting where children are immersed in the Welsh language.		The Council will continue to work with Mudiad Meithrin to identify opportunities for new settings.
For adult learners there needs to be a course or number of courses that link to achieving the standards of Welsh speaking required for employment.	Survey Submission	We will consider this with external partners on the WEF.
It is not very clear nationally who is taking the lead on which elements of workforce development, and it may help to reflect this in the WESP.		We will continue to have discussions with Welsh Government in relation to this matter.

Post-consultation assessment of the WESP

The draft WESP has been reviewed to take account of the feedback received during the consultation, and as a result minor adjustments have been made to specific target areas. The consultation responses received lead us to believe the WESP is considered appropriate and should be progressed for approval. The revised WESP will now be referred to Cabinet for consideration, and once approved will be submitted to Welsh Government.

To request a hard (paper) copy of this document please contact Newport City Council's Education Transformation Officer on 01633 656656 or email school.reorg@newport.gov.uk