
LANGUAGE COMMITTEE : 29 JUNE 2026

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Meryl Roberts, Jina Gwyrfai, Gwilym Jones, Elfed Williams, Gwynfor Owen, Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, Beth Lawton, Cai Larsen and Llio Elenid Owen (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services and the Welsh language).

Officers: Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Services Manager), Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser), Nia Lewis (Language Adviser), Mari Edwards (Learning and Development Manager), Llio Mai Dafydd (Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Item 7: Mari Wynne Jones (Head of Adults Department), Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being), Stephanie Dabernig (Executive Assistant Head, Children and Supporting Families Department), Gwen Ffion Davies (Executive Officer, Children and Supporting Families Department) and Nia Wyn Evans (Workforce Support Team Leader, Leadership Team).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was resolved to elect Councillor Meryl Roberts as Chair of the Committee for 2026/27.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was resolved to elect Councillor Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn as Vice-chair of the Committee for 2026/27.

3. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Menna Baines.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

5. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 20 April 2026 as a true record.

7. A REPORT BY THE ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPARTMENT AND THE CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES' DEPARTMENT ON THEIR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS REALISING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023-2033.

The report was presented by the Head of the Adults Department and the Team Leader of the Leadership Team's Workforce Support. Attention was drawn to the following main points:

There was pride that the Departments are committed and persevering to promote the Welsh language as a living and active language in all aspects of their work. It was detailed that the 'More than Just Words' strategy (Strategic Framework for Welsh in Health, Social Services and Social Care) was central to the work of the Departments, to ensure that the proactive delivery of services in Welsh is realised in practice across the services.

It was reported that the Departments offer key resources to support the Welsh language. Attention was drawn to the new PERCCI (Person-Centred Community Care Inventory) data collection system. It was explained that it was a questionnaire designed for individuals with experience of receiving care, and it was confirmed that a Welsh version was available and it would be shared with service users shortly.

Reference was made to the 'Helpu'n Hun' app, which had been recently announced. It was detailed that it was software that provides a virtual occupational therapist service to enable individuals and families to receive advice on the ways in which they could try to support themselves from day-to-day.

An update was given that new Telecare equipment had been presented, and it was confirmed that the technology was now in Welsh. Members were reminded that the service was a means for individuals to call for help at any time, by touching a button or by activating a series of sensors that had been installed in the home.

It was confirmed that 'Beam Notes' had recently been trialled within the services. It was noted that this was mobile software that listens to conversations compiling minutes and a summary of the conversation. It was noted that feedback from the trial indicated that it was successful as the quality of the documentation was good. It was elaborated that the software was now being shared more widely across the Departments to reduce the administrative burden and pressure.

Pride was expressed that the Adults Department had introduced a resource to support front-line care workers in care homes to provide Welsh lessons, refresh the language and build confidence. It was reported that this resource would be available until the end of March 2027, but it was hoped that arrangements can continue in the future. Similarly, it was explained that the Department was working with Bangor University on the ARFer project, to look at how the language practices of workforce teams can be influenced, and that a befriending scheme was taking place among staff to promote the use of the Welsh language and increase confidence.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

Pride was expressed that the provision of the Flying Start service within the Children and Supporting Families Department had recently been expanded. In response to an enquiry about venues that offer the service bilingually rather than just in Welsh, the Executive Officer explained that there were two locations that communicate in English in some cases while the families familiarise themselves with the service. It was confirmed that this was required as the families do not necessarily have Welsh language skills. However, it was

ensured that these services convert to Welsh once the child has become familiar with Welsh and can communicate bilingually. It was assured that the Department will confirm with Members the further reasons as to why those locations are being designated as bilingual sites and to highlight this in future reports.

In response to an enquiry on the work of the Family Support Team in the field of Language Development, the Executive Officer explained that the service operated across the County, resulting in a positive impact on Gwynedd children and families. It was elaborated that the team operated by responding to requests for additional support from individual families rather than just childcare provision. It was confirmed that the Department will report back to Members on specific data about the Team.

A comment was received that it would be beneficial for the Departments' report to compare statistics over a number of years to see if any linguistic trends arise. The details of the data were given which confirmed that 41% of children aged 3 and over had chosen Welsh as their language of choice, and also data which indicated that 74% of enquiries to the Family Information team had chosen to receive correspondence through the medium of Welsh. In response to the comments, the Executive Officer confirmed that the data could be collected to show trends over time in the future report. Furthermore, the Executive Assistant Head noted that 41% of children choose Welsh as their preferred language because Welsh, English and families who have moved here from beyond Britain use the services and it was not a reflection of the proactive Welsh language service offer that the Department provides. It was stressed that the employees speak Welsh with the child, even if the parents are non-Welsh, if they feel that it is effective for their development. It was elaborated that staff and families were happy to change the language of communication to Welsh, once support provision had commenced, where this was possible.

In response to a request for data on the Adults Department's choice of service language, the Head of Department confirmed that plans were in place to strengthen how language data was recorded. Further details were given that these procedures were being strengthened with the new Mosaic system (child and adult care case management system) as all case information were recorded there.

In response to a query on the impact of the Adults Department's projects on the Welsh language, the Head of the Department explained that collecting data for specific projects was challenging. However, it was noted that the More than Just Words group would consider measures to try to assess the linguistic impact of the Departments' projects on the residents of Gwynedd. It was considered that this could include good news stories and could be data-specific in the future. It was expanded that the More than Just Words group ensures that all members of staff proactively offer Welsh-medium services across the Departments. Reference was made to a series of videos produced to encourage everyone to start any conversation through the medium of Welsh.

In response to an enquiry, pride was expressed that the first series of the Welsh language podcast 'Mam, Dad a Magu' had been a great success, and it was noted that it was hoped that a second series can be made in the future. It was explained that arrangements were in place to consult with families to find out what topics they would like the podcast to cover.

It was pointed out that the Departments had stated in their report to the Language Committee in 2025, that they were working with Coleg Meirion Dwyfor to spark interest within the care area in an attempt to recruit members of staff. In response to an enquiry for an update on this scheme, the Head of the Adults Department confirmed that the relationship with Coleg Meirion Dwyfor continues. It was pointed out that the Care Academy was now in its second year and pride was expressed that individuals had been

recruited to it and that individuals were confident that careers were available within the field of care and were proud that they could work through the medium of Welsh.

In response to an enquiry, the Head of the Adults Department confirmed that recruitment challenges remained, noting that it was an increasing challenge as current staff members reach retirement age. It was confirmed that a working group had been established in conjunction with health services, the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults Department with the support of the human resources service to attract more people to a career in care. It was noted that this working group sought to respond to statistics that indicate that fewer individuals are completing courses in the field. Furthermore, it was noted that the Departments had been successful in developing the skills of staff by encouraging and allowing time to complete courses within working hours, allowing people to remain within the County. Similarly, it was confirmed that the Departments had managed to appoint staff as they studied in the field of care, confirming that they would be eligible to work within a year. It was noted that those members of staff possessed Welsh language skills and were local to the area.

RESOLVED

To accept the report, noting the observations received during the discussion.

8. WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT

The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services and the Welsh Language, and the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser. Attention was drawn to the following main points:

Pride was expressed that there was an increase in the number of Council staff with Welsh language skills and there was also an increase in the numbers of individuals attending training to develop their language skills.

Members were reminded that the Cabinet and the Council's vision as a whole was to increase opportunities for Gwynedd residents to see and use the Welsh language in all aspects. A new section of the Annual Report was highlighted which shared examples of how each Department was doing this effectively.

It was confirmed that all Departments within the Council fully comply with Welsh language standards and contribute to the language strategy.

It was highlighted that the Welsh Language Team had been working with the Welsh Language Commissioner, ARFOR, Rhwydwaith, the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board and others in order to jointly-learn and provide a platform for the good work that was happening through the Welsh language in Gwynedd.

Reference was made to several exciting projects underway over the next year such as the Language Education Policy, the Welsh Language Programme Board and the Growth Charter: Welsh in the Workplace.

Attention was drawn to a correction in the report (Page 17 of the Annual Report) regarding data on the number of staff members reaching the Language Designations of their post and an overview of staff language levels. It was stressed that the figures included within the report were correct, but it was acknowledged that the percentages were not. The following information was confirmed for 2025/26:

- Staff achieving their Job Language Designations – 3269 (91.6%)

- Staff who do not meet the Language Designations of their post – 299 (8.4%)
- Staff with Welsh language skills (of any kind) – 3271 (99.3%)
- Staff with no Welsh language skills – 22 (0.7%)

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

In response to an enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser confirmed that it will be possible to add data for a period of 4 years within the report on issues such as language use and the number of staff reaching the Language Designation of their posts, to highlight any patterns or trends.

In response to an enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser emphasised that the fact that 8.4% of Council staff achieved their post's Language Designation had no impact on front-line services. It was noted that the majority of staff members who do not meet the Language Designation were care workers or support staff in schools. The Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer added that individuals receive linguistic support soon after their appointment. It was highlighted that several individuals who do not meet the Language Designation already have Welsh language skills and are very close to reaching the expected standard, and it was confirmed that the encouragement and support was available for them to do so within their job. It was confirmed that increasing staff confidence in using the Welsh language was usually the factor that made the biggest difference.

In response to an enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser explained that there was ongoing monitoring of complaints the Council receives on Welsh language issues, to see if any specific themes arise. It was stressed that no theme has emerged in the past year.

In response to an enquiry, an update was received from the Language Adviser on the focus of the Youth Forum over the next year. It was detailed that it was hoped to establish several sub-groups with a focus on business and community issues during the year. Members were reminded that the Youth Sub-Group was already operational.

Gratitude was expressed for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report, noting the observations received during the discussion.

9. RESULTS OF A PILOT STUDY ON MEASURING THE USE OF WELSH IN PUBLIC PLACES PROVIDING SERVICES ON BEHALF OF CYNGOR GWYNEDD

The Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser presented the report. Attention was drawn to the following main points:

It was explained that the study introduced an innovative approach to measuring and observing the use of the Welsh language in indoor public spaces, in settings that provide Cyngor Gwynedd and Byw'n Iach services to residents.

Dr Rhian Hughes and Dr Cynog Prys from Bangor University were thanked for their help in carrying out the survey. It was noted that the street survey methodology used in the Basque Country had been adapted to collect data in a variety of service settings such as Siop Gwynedd receptions, libraries, leisure centres and call centres across three different locations in the County.

It was reported that the aim of the work was to establish a robust, independent and objective baseline for monitoring language use over time while also responding to the current lack of reliable quantitative data in this field.

It was highlighted that the results of the survey demonstrated:

- That the Welsh language remained a strong community language in many areas.
- That the use of the language decreased with increasing age:
 - 90.3% of the 2-15 age group
 - 69.8% of the 16-24 age group
 - 68.9% of the 25-64 age group
 - 58.3% of the group aged 65 and over
- That the context of situations, whether formal or informal, had a significant influence on language choice. It was elaborated that a lower use of the Welsh language can be seen in formal situations, which suggests the presence of diglossia within our communities. It was explained that diglossia occurs when two types of language exist side by side in society, with one being used in official, educational, or formal contexts (such as official documents), and the other being used in more informal contexts (such as in a conversation between friends or at home).

The members were updated that it was hoped that the survey will be carried out again, to receive consistent data which can be used to target locations for interventions where the need arises.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

In response to concern that the survey results do not reflect the true use of Welsh within communities, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser emphasised that the survey was a snapshot of language use. It was emphasised that all the facts were correct and that only three locations had been selected for the pilot, as they were areas where the Council's office and services are located.

In response to a query, it was theorised that the percentage of Welsh use within age groups decreases as people get older due to the effects of influx and outflux from the area. It was considered that the fact that very high percentages are found in the younger ages reflects the successes of the Education Department in providing effective Welsh-medium services. The advent of technology was considered to present a new challenge as it was necessary to ensure that all software allowed individuals to receive services in Welsh. It was emphasised that this challenge would be addressed by the Language Unit, when Cyngor Gwynedd's new website is operational in the next few months, and will receive ongoing consideration in the future.

In response to an enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser acknowledged that the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 was very challenging, whilst also noting that it was inspiring to be ambitious. It was emphasised that it was everyone's responsibility; be they businesses, organisations and individuals, to work towards the target and to make a strong effort to fulfil this.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

- 1. To accept the report, noting the observations received during the discussion.**
- 2. To support arrangements to carry out future research.**

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.10am.

CHAIR