

REPORT TO THE CABINET

19 May 2015

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ioan Thomas
Subject: Adopt and promote the [.cymru](#) domain name
Contact officer: Idris Jones

Decision sought

The Cabinet to approve the following:

- to buy www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru and www.gwynedd.gov.wales when they become available
 - to promote www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru alone for the website
 - continue to use Welsh and English endings for friendly addresses in order to direct customers to the page in their chosen language on the website (E.g. www.gwynedd.gov.uk/cynllunio and www.gwynedd.gov.uk/planning)
 - adopt only Welsh addresses (@gwynedd.llyw.cymru) for e-mails
 - adopt only Welsh addresses for generic e-mail addresses to be used on Welsh and English pages on the website (E.g. trethcyngor@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)
 - replace www.gwynedd.gov.uk addresses with www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru on materials and publications when they expire
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Opinion of local member

Not a matter for local members

Introduction

The international body, responsible for co-ordinating the world wide system for domain names, has approved the domain names [.cymru](#) and [.wales](#).

Gwynedd Council's current domain name is www.gwynedd.gov.uk and the ending for e-mail addresses is [.gov.uk](#). By adopting a [.cymru](#) domain name, the website address would be www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru and the endings for e-mail addresses would be @gwynedd.llyw.cymru. If [.wales](#) was also adopted the English address for the website would be www.gwynedd.gov.wales and the English ending for e-mail addresses would be @gwynedd.gov.wales

Reasons for recommending the decision

Gwynedd has been progressive in promoting the use of the Welsh language in all aspects of life over the years. Establishing the domain *.cymru* and *.wales* puts Wales and the Welsh language on the map in the digital world and by adopting *.cymru* Gwynedd would be a part of this, encouraging others to embrace a technical development which highlights the language.

Relevant considerations

1. Adopting and promoting [.llyw.cymru](#) and [.gov.wales](#) equally or promoting [.llyw.cymru](#) only.

1.1 Council website

The language setup, approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office, on the Council's website, which promotes the use of the Welsh language is:

- Welsh is the website's default language.
- If a customer types [www.gwynedd.gov.uk](#) into their browser, on their first visit to the website, they will go to the website's Welsh language homepage. At the end of their first visit a cookie is placed on their computer to remember the language of the website when they left.
- If a customer chooses to switch off their cookies this address will direct them to the Welsh language homepage every time it is typed in.

The Welsh Language Commissioner's Office has confirmed that it would be acceptable to promote [www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru](#) only for the Council's website as long as we ensure that [www.gwynedd.gov.wales](#) is also operational in the background.

1.2 Friendly addresses

Friendly addresses are used to promote certain information on the website, e.g. [www.gwynedd.gov.uk/cynllunio](#) and [www.gwynedd.gov.uk/planning](#).

There would be a need to continue to use the Welsh and English endings in order to direct customers to the information in their chosen language, therefore the friendly addresses above would change to [www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/cynllunio](#) and [www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/planning](#)

1.3 E-mail addresses

To ensure consistency the @gwynedd.llyw.cymru e-mail address alone would need to be adopted. A technical arrangement would ensure that any e-mail using @gwynedd.gov.wales would be re-directed to the appropriate officer's inbox.

1.4 Generic e-mail addresses used on the Council website

Generic e-mail addresses are used on the website in order to contact departments. E.g. trethcyngor@gwynedd.gov.uk is promoted on Welsh pages and counciltax@gwynedd.gov.uk is promoted on English pages.

In order to ensure consistency these will be replaced by trethcyngor@gwynedd.llyw.cymru only.

1.5 Redeirecting .gov.uk traffic

For a period of 3-4 years website traffic and e-mails from gwynedd.gov.uk can be redirected to gwynedd.llyw.cymru but after this the gwynedd.gov.uk address will not work.

2. New domain costs

Details of costs have not been provided to date but it is not expected that the cost per domain would be much more than the Cabinet Office's current cost for .gov.uk addresses. However, we would be buying two domains rather than one (.llyw.cymru and .gov.wales).

3. Marketing new addresses

In order to avoid excessive spending on marketing, materials and addresses on publications can be changed from www.gwynedd.gov.uk to www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru when they expire. The possible reorganisation of Council boundaries in a few years' time could also lead to the need for re-branding of materials and signs. As redirection arrangements will be operational for 3-4 years customers using the current domain will still be able to contact the Council and access the website during this time.

Next steps and timetable

The Welsh Government is the keeper of the .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domain names and it has announced that the names are likely to be available for Councils to adopt during the second quarter of 2015.

Views of Statutory Officers

Chief Executive:

Cabinet members will recall the full Council debating a Notice of Motion on the question of domain names in October, 2014. This recommendation does reflect the Council's wish to promote the use of the Welsh Language in the digital world.

Monitoring Officer:

I'm satisfied that developing the use of the new domain as outlined in the report is in keeping with the Council's policies. No further comments to add in relation to propriety.

Head of Finance:

As the report notes, there will be some direct costs to buy the new domains, but I am of the opinion that this purchase can be financed from existing budgets. Similarly, the report also outlines the indirect costs that will arise from having to change the website address and email addresses on materials etc. As this can be done over a period of some years, I am convinced that these amendments can be done within the budgets of individual services. I have no objection to the decision sought from a financial perspective.