

# WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY

The Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales it will treat Welsh and English on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how the Council will implement that principle in the provision of services to the public. The Council recognises that members of the public can express their views and needs better in their preferred language, that enabling them to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice rather than a concession and that the denial of that right could place members of the public at a real disadvantage.

The Council will therefore offer the public the right to choose which language to use in dealings with the Council.

The Council aims:

- to enable everyone who receives or uses the Council's services or contributes to the democratic process to do so through the medium of Welsh or English, according to personal choice.
- to encourage the use of the Welsh language in the community
- to encourage others to use the Welsh language in the community

## **2. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

### **2.1 New Policies and Initiatives**

2.1.1 In devising new policies and initiatives the Council will:

- assess their linguistic effect and ensure that they are consistent with the Welsh Language Scheme.
- promote and facilitate the use of Welsh wherever possible and will move closer to implementing the principle of equality fully at every opportunity.
- consult with the Welsh Language Board in advance regarding proposals that will affect the scheme, or the scheme of any other public body. The scheme will not be altered without the Board's agreement.
- ensure that those involved in formulating policy will be aware of the Scheme, and of the Council's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993.
- ensure that the measures contained in the Scheme are applied to new policies and initiatives when they are implemented.

## **2.2 STANDARDS OF QUALITY**

2.2.1. Services provided in English or Welsh will be of an equally high standard and equally prompt.

## **3. DEALING WITH THE WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC**

### **3.1 Written Communication**

3.1.1. The Council will welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

3.1.2. Correspondence through the medium of Welsh will not lead to any significant delay

3.1.3. Every correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh.

3.1.4. All correspondence following a telephone or face-to-face conversation in Welsh or a meeting where it was established that Welsh is the preferred language of the person, will be in Welsh.

3.1.5 All correspondence with a member of the public will be initiated in his/her preferred language if known.

3.1.6 All circular or standard letters to the public will be bilingual.

3.1.7 The Council will make arrangements to translate correspondence as needed in order to respond to correspondence promptly in the original language.

3.1.8 The Clerk of the Council will be responsible for translating correspondence.

### **3.2 Telephone Calls**

3.2.1 The Council will welcome telephone calls in Welsh or English.

3.2.2 If the Clerk is not bilingual, he/she will offer to arrange for a Welsh speaking Council member (if this facility exists) to return the call when a member of the public wishes to speak Welsh, or explain that the individual is welcome to continue with the call in English or send in their enquiry in written form in Welsh.

3.3 Public Meetings organised by or on behalf of the Council [namely meetings the Council arranges with the public, for example, road diversion, improve facilities or annual general meeting. Not the Council's regular meetings where members of the public can attend and listen, but not contribute without prior invitation – see 3.4.]

3.3.1. Any public meeting that is held to discuss the Welsh language, Welsh medium education, Council Tax or any information regarding local elections/by-elections will be bilingual.

- 3.3.2 All publicity for public meetings will be bilingual, and will invite those attending to notify the Clerk of their language choice in advance so that appropriate translation arrangements can be made.
- 3.3.3 The Council will provide translation facilities, according to need, for public meetings arranged by or on behalf of the Council.
- 3.3.4 When the Council is aware that a member of the public wishes to speak Welsh in a public meeting that would otherwise be conducted in English, this should be respected by providing appropriate translation arrangements.
- 3.3.5 Any written materials such as leaflets or acetates that are used in public meetings about the Welsh language, Welsh medium education, Council Tax or information about local elections/by-elections will be bilingual.
- 3.4 Council Meetings [namely the Council's regular meetings, which are open to the public, but where the public are not part of the meeting.]
  - 3.4.1 The notice and agenda for the Council's meetings will be available bilingually on request.
  - 3.4.2 The Council will respond to requests for information in relation to the minutes, or sections of the minutes in the preferred language of the individual.
- 3.5 Face-to-Face Meetings with the Public
  - 3.5.1 The Council will welcome meetings with the public in either Welsh or English and the Clerk will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to enable any member of the public who wishes to discuss matters in Welsh to do so with a bilingual officer or Member of the Council where this facility can be made available. If none of the officers or elected member can speak Welsh, the Clerk will politely explain the situation and offer the individual the opportunity to discuss the matter in English or send in their enquiry in written form in Welsh.

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