

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Executive Board
<b>REPORT NO:</b>	HCCS/34/18
<b>DATE:</b>	12 June 2018
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Hugh Jones (People – Communities, Partnerships, Public Protection and Community Safety)
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Sue Wyn Jones (Tel: 292275)
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2017/18
<b>WARD:</b>	N/A

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Executive Board approval for the Council's Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report for 2017/18 prior to it being published on the Council's website.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Council, along with all other Councils in Wales, is required to draft an Annual Report for uploading onto its website as detailed in the Welsh Language Standards. Members will be aware that the Council's Welsh Language Scheme ceased to exist on 30 September 2016 when it was replaced by 171 Welsh Language Standards as outlined in the Final Compliance Notice.
- 2.2 A copy of the Annual Monitoring Report is attached as Appendix 1.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That Executive Board approve the 2017/18 Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report.**

### **3.2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) To ensure that the Council carries out its duties with regard to the Welsh language as outlined in its Welsh Language Standards.
- (ii) To enable the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report for 2017/18 to be published on its website as required by the Language Commissioner in accordance with Standards 158, 164 and 170.

## 4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Welsh Language Standards state that annual reports should be produced by 30th June to report on progress against compliance with the Standards in the following areas:

Service Delivery, Operational and Policy Making.

- 4.2 The annual report has been drafted to provide information about the Council's compliance in these areas. It will not be submitted to the Commissioner as the Council is expected to self-evaluate its compliance with the Standards and publish the reports on its website annually. However, the reports will continue to be presented to the Executive Board for approval prior to being uploaded onto the Council's website.
- 4.3 Over the last 12 months the Council has made good progress and has been successful in recruiting into Welsh essential posts and the delivery of a comprehensive programme of Welsh language events throughout the year. The Council has welcomed the opportunities the Standards present to increase the provision of services through the medium of Welsh, as well as the rights they offer to the public and our employees. We provide services to the most vulnerable people in our communities where accessing services in an individual's first language is especially important.
- 4.4 However, it acknowledges that there are still challenges and instances of non-compliance in the form of investigations from the Welsh Language Commissioner as well as complaints from members of the public. All such instances are thoroughly investigated, and remedial actions are put in place. The Council continues to make all staff aware of the importance of complying with the Standards and the contribution they make towards our aim of offering a truly bilingual service. The Standards, where appropriate, also support one of the well-being goals in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 "A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, which supports our aim to continue to improve how we deliver services in Welsh and English.
- 4.5 Members will be aware that the Council has a 5-year promotion strategy in place. This strategy outlines how the Council will promote the Welsh language and facilitate the use of Welsh more widely in the County Borough. Year 1 targets have now been completed and the strategy has been updated to include targets for 2018-19. The strategy was devised in partnership with relevant stakeholders and the Council wishes to acknowledge its thanks to those partners in helping shape and develop the strategy.
- 4.6 **Policy Framework** – Welsh Language – The Council Plan for 2017-22 states that "Welsh language and culture will be a cross-cutting theme across all priorities". The Standards also support one of the goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 "A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language" which furthers the Council's aim of providing services equally in both Welsh and English.
- 4.7 **Budget** – The Council's cash limited budget 2018-19 for Welsh Language is £308k.
- 4.8 **Legal** – The Welsh Language Standards have been introduced as part of the new Welsh Language [Wales] Measure 2011.

4.9 **Staffing** – N/A

4.10 **Equality/Human Rights** – The Council’s Welsh Language Scheme contributes to the equalities agenda and ensures compliance with the Welsh Language Act. Equality Impact Assessment Reference Number CCS/EIA00127/2016 is attached to this report.

4.11 **Risks** – Failure to comply with the Welsh Language Standards imposed by the Commissioner can lead to significant financial penalties in addition to the cost of compliance.

**5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 n/a

**6. EVALUATION OF OPTIONS**

6.1 Not applicable

**7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

7.1 This report has not been invited for pre-decision scrutiny

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>WEBSITE INFO.</b>
N/A		