

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE
15th December 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: **County Councillor Phyl Davies**
Portfolio Holder for Education and Property

REPORT TITLE: **Welsh-medium Education Strategy**

REPORT FOR: **Decision**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report requests Cabinet approval of the new Welsh-medium Education Strategy as set out in Appendix A/B which will form the basis of the Council's new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2021 – 2031.
- 1.2 The report is supported by the following appendix:
 - Appendix A – Welsh-medium Education Strategy (Cymraeg)
 - Appendix B – Welsh-medium Education Strategy (English)

2. Background

Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

- 2.1 On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.
- 2.2 The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October 2019 and March 2020.
- 2.3 The Strategy sets out a new vision for education in Powys, which is as follows:

'All children and young people in Powys will experience a high quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.'

- 2.4 The Strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:
 - *A world class rural education system that has learner entitlement at its core*

- Schools that are fully inclusive, with a culture of deep collaboration in order to improve learner outcomes and experience
- A broad choice and high quality of provision for 14 – 19-year-old learners, that includes both academic and vocational provision, meeting the needs of all learners, communities and the Powys economy
- Welsh-medium provision that is accessible and provides a full curriculum in Welsh from Meithrin to age 19 and beyond Provision for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN) that is accessible as near to home as is practicably possible, with the appropriate specialist teaching, support and facilities that enables every learner to meet their potential
- A digitally rich schools' sector that enables all learners and staff to enhance their teaching and learning experience
- Community-focused schools that are the central point for multi-agency services to support children, young people, families and the community
- Early years provision that is designed to meet the needs of all children, mindful of their particular circumstances, language requirements or any special or additional learning needs
- Financially and environmentally sustainable schools
- The highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development

3. Welsh-medium Education Strategy – a vision for increasing the numbers of fully bilingual learners in Powys.

- 3.1 In 2021, the Council will produce a detailed WESP for the next decade. The Strategy attached at Appendix A/B provides a vision to ensure well planned provision for increasing the opportunities for a growing number of children and young people in Powys to become fully bilingual.
- 3.2 The implementation details of how this vision will be achieved will be detailed in the WESP, but will be based on the delivery of the following:

Towards 2030: What needs to be done to increase the opportunities for more young people in Powys to be fully bilingual by 2030.

- Every family will be clear about the opportunities for bilingual and Welsh language learning that will be available for their young infant well before the time when they make choices about schools. The local authority and its partners will ensure co-ordinated sign-posting of provision for the parents of young children across Powys, and ensure that the option of Welsh medium provision is known to all and provision from early years will be available in each part of Powys. This should include the notion of an “active offer” i.e. when queries are made about admissions to schools or childcare (no matter the background or location of the families), an effort is made

by all officials to explain the benefits and availability of WM education.

- *There will be early years and primary provision in each of our 13 secondary localities to enable parents to make a realistic choice of a bilingual/Welsh medium provision for their child. Increasingly, there will be more than one provider available in each of the 13 localities. These providers should all seek to align with the work of Mudiad Meithrin and wrap around care support.*
- *There will be a planned programme of immersion available to support families who are new to the area to help their child settle into a bilingual/Welsh medium provision, and a means to support parents and learners already in a Powys school who would like to switch to a bilingual / Welsh-medium provision during the child's primary education or at transition to secondary school.*
- *Dual stream schools will be available where there is no practicable option to have a single-stream school, but in the main the local authority will have developed schools as clearly defined single-stream providers. New bilingual/Welsh-medium provision might be developed through opening a new Bilingual/WM school, facilitating a time-limited dual stream or a 'seedling class*' in order to support their establishment.*
- *Every primary year 5/6 class learning in Welsh will be part of a cohesive transition arrangement to a specified Bilingual/Welsh medium secondary school, with significant collaboration between the secondary and its primary partners to secure effective transition for all learners.*
- *Children with special educational needs will be well supported in Welsh, either in their local Bilingual/Welsh medium school or through effective collaboration with a more specialist setting in Powys.*
- *At secondary school, every learner who is studying in Welsh will be able to access the entire Curriculum for Wales through the medium of Welsh, supported by effective collaboration across the sector to ensure that no Bilingual/Welsh medium setting is too small to offer the whole range of the curriculum in Welsh. In addition to accessing the curriculum in Welsh, the learners should also be able to benefit from a school environment that immerses them in Welsh culture, art, drama, music and where the daily life and business of the school is conducted in Welsh.*
- *At post-16, through collaboration across schools and with other providers, there will be an extensive offer of subjects available in Welsh, in line with other parts of Wales.*

- *The Bilingual/Welsh medium sector across Powys will work as an extended collaboration with the local authority (and with others across Wales) to develop the curriculum offer and entitlement, the support for learners with additional needs, the development and learning of the workforce and the leadership of both schools and the local authority.*
- *The local authority will ensure that centrally managed services offer a more equitable service in both languages to support learners (and staff) in our schools in areas such as youth services, ALN support, leadership development and professional learning.*

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 It is not possible to identify the resource implications of implementing this Strategy until further detail is available within the WESP.
- 4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the report, the implementation of the strategy will be considered and funded through the Transforming Education in Powys Programme.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Legal: The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view.
- 5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “ I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report.”

6. Comment from local member(s)

- 6.1 n/a

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 7.1 n/a

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Welsh-medium Education Strategy as the basis for the development of the Council’s new Welsh-in Education Strategic Plan.

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