



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Developing a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Collaboration with key partners in the development of the 5-year strategy to promote the Welsh language

Date: October 2018

Cardiff Council has undertaken a wide-ranging consultation process with key stakeholders and partners in developing its promotion strategy with a vision of creating a truly bilingual capital city for Wales.

BACKGROUND

Standard 145 of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015 requires the Council to produce and publish a 5-year strategy, outlining how it will promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language including a target to maintain or increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county.

The Bilingual Cardiff Strategy 2017-2022 is Cardiff Council's first Welsh language promotion strategy published in March 2017 following its approval by cabinet and full Council. It is a strategy that outlines the Council's priorities for the promotion and facilitation of the Welsh language in Cardiff together with its partners, with the aim of becoming a truly bilingual capital city for Wales.

Following the 'Big Conversation' held by the Welsh Government in 2013, in response to the findings of the 2011 census, the Council saw an opportunity to continue with the work of reversing the census results, and arranged the Bilingual Cardiff conference. In the conference, partners, stakeholders and individuals came together to celebrate the Welsh language in Cardiff, as well as to set out a clear and ambitious vision of creating a truly bilingual capital city.

The first 'Bilingual Cardiff' conference was arranged in 2014 and was a means of enabling partners to consider and articulate issues and priorities which, in turn, led to establishing the Hen Lyfrgell as a centre for the Welsh language at the heart of the city.

In addition, this established strong partnership foundations for the Bilingual Cardiff 5-year Strategy.

STAFF CONSULTATION

Prior to the public consultation, an internal consultation event was held in the form of a workshop with the Welsh language Coordinators, Welsh language Champions and policy officers, in order to draw up the main priorities for the strategy. Following this event, the Council published an internal consultation survey on the intranet to gather the opinion of the workforce and to further develop the strategic priorities. The draft strategy was considered by the Senior Management Team, the Bilingual Cardiff Members Working Group and the Cabinet before it was published.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A 6-week public consultation was held on the draft strategy between September and November 2016.

Specific questions were included as part of the consultation including the following examples:

In order to support the Welsh Government's vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050, we would need to increase the number of Welsh speakers (3+ years of age) in Cardiff by 15.9% from 36,735 (2011 Census) to 42,584 (2021 Census). Do you agree with our interim target?

Yes

No - it's too high

No - it's too low

Do you agree with the vision for a truly bilingual Cardiff?

Strongly Agree

Tend to Agree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Tend to Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Don't Know

As part of the consultation the Council held a workshop with 26 of its main partners and stakeholders. Amongst the participants were the Welsh Government, the Welsh Language Commissioner, Cardiff University, Public Services Board organisations, Menter Caerdydd and Urdd Gobaith Cymru. During the workshop, an action plan was developed in order to achieve the strategy's priorities. It was vital to ensure that each partner took ownership for relevant aims and were aware of their responsibilities. Quite often these aims built on work that was already underway. This was the first Strategy to bring together all the work already being undertaken in this area by so many

enthusiastic partners and gave all partners the opportunity to learn more about the work of other organisations.

OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION

254 responses were received during the consultation period. Of the responses received from the public consultation (223 responses), **70.3%** agreed strongly or tended to agree with the vision of a truly bilingual Cardiff. **53.2%** agreed with the target to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Cardiff.

SETTING A TARGET TO INCREASE THE NUMBERS OF WELSH SPEAKERS

Each local authority has a statutory duty to set a target to increase the number of Welsh speakers by the end of the strategy. As the Welsh Government (in August 2016) had published its vision of one million Welsh speakers by 2050, the Council was in agreement that the strategy and target should reflect this vision.

In order to support the Welsh Government's vision of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and for Cardiff to play its part in achieving this vision, the Council saw that it would need to increase the number of Welsh speakers (3+ years of age) in Cardiff by 15.9% from 36,735 (2011 Census) to 42,584 (2021 Census). The methodology used for this target was to use the yearly percentage increase needed in terms of the numbers of Welsh speakers in order to reach the 1 million target by 2050 (up from 562,016 in the 2011 census).

PRIORITIES AND STRUCTURE

The approach adopted for the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy was structured to reflect the strategic areas outlined in the Welsh Government's language strategy at the time (Iaith Byw Iaith Fyw).

- Family, Children and Young People,
- Community,
- Infrastructure,
- Workplace,
- Welsh Language Services.

Following the consultation, the above strategic areas were combined to create 3 strategic areas

- 1) Family, Children and Young People
- 2) Community and infrastructure, and
- 3) Welsh Language Services and the Workplace.

THE VISION FOR A BILINGUAL CARDIFF

“Our vision is to develop a truly bilingual Cardiff. A Cardiff where our citizens can live, work and play, as well as access services and support in Welsh or English equally. A capital city where bilingualism is promoted as something completely natural, and where the Welsh language is protected and nurtured for future generations to use and enjoy.”

The Strategy acknowledges its position within the national strategy and clearly outlines its responsibilities in terms of increasing the number of Welsh speakers. The vision also outlines how a Bilingual Cardiff would look, feel and sound, and the Strategy is based on three strategic areas with relevant priorities and targets for action.

The strategy ensures that each partner plays a part in the vision and brings them together in collaboration to use the expertise and ability of a number of partners, maximising Cardiff's position as a capital city.

One of the strategy's strengths is that it is a strategy for the whole of the city, and not just one organisation. Delivering this strategy will depend on partnership working: between public sector partners, between the public and private sector, education, as well as its citizens. The success of the strategy depends on strong collaboration between partners and a strong governance structure.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

A robust governance structure was established to achieve and monitor the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy action plan, including establishing a Bilingual Cardiff Forum representing over 35 organisations.

The Forum meets every quarter with the aims and functions to:

1. Ensure that each representative is responsible for monitoring the actions relevant to their organisation.
2. To provide feedback on a quarterly basis to the Bilingual Cardiff Member Working Group in the Council and implement relevant actions.
3. To contribute to consultation responses in relation to the Welsh language on behalf of the Forum.
4. To share good practice and identify opportunities for partnership work for the benefit of the Welsh language in Cardiff.

As part of its terms of reference the Bilingual Cardiff Member Working Group will provide regular updates to the Cabinet on work with the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy.

THE STRATEGY'S IMPACT

In setting a clear vision and target in terms of increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers in Cardiff, the strategy provides a clear direction to the Council's agenda for the Welsh language. In creating and raising awareness of the 'Bilingual Cardiff' brand, the Council hopes to influence new partners and ensure that organisations work towards the same vision within their various areas. So much positive work has been achieved by organisations across Cardiff, and the strategy is a means of reporting on this work and raising awareness of city councillors and the public about this work.

On a practical level, the strategy has also allowed the Council to go beyond the requirements of the Welsh language standards in some specific areas. For example, the Welsh language standards require that the Welsh language must appear first on official signs and notices. In order to promote the Welsh language and ensure consistency, the Council has committed to displaying the Welsh language first on any display material produced. Furthermore, the Council has committed to ensuring that events where the Council provides financial support displays bilingual material, e.g. RHS Flower Show, the Winter Festival, the Volvo Ocean Race. The inclusion of this requirement within the Strategy has allowed the Council to go beyond the statutory requirements, where this would only apply where it funded over 50% of the event.

The Strategy also provided an opportunity to evaluate how the Council could improve its Welsh language training provision for staff, and as a result it has appointed a new Welsh language tutor to provide Welsh language training and training through the medium of Welsh for Council staff.

HOW CAN THIS WORK FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS?

The following factors were key to the strategy's success:

- setting a clear vision in terms of the Welsh language as a living language within the organisation and throughout the city itself
- ensuring that key stakeholders and partners have ownership of the strategy and its aims
- effective internal and external consultation processes on the strategy

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THE COMMISSIONER'S VIEW

Cardiff Council has clearly set out its commitment to contributing to the Welsh Government's vision to achieve one million Welsh speakers. I welcome the way in which the Council has proactively sought to ensure that key stakeholders and partners not only contribute to the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy but also take ownership of it. The impact of the Strategy is already visible and I look forward to seeing further progress against its aims and targets in the coming years.