

CYNGOR CYMUNED **CWARTER BACH** COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Welsh Language Policy

Adopted: 18th July 2023
Revised May 2024

Cynllun Iaith Cyngor Cymuned CWARTER BACH Community Council Language Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Council serves the CWARTER BACH community in Carmarthenshire which consists of the villages of Upper Brynaman, Rhosaman, Cefn Bryn Brain and Ystradowen. It is a rural community located on the western boundary of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Some 68% of the population of about 2900 inhabitants are Welsh speakers.

The Council consists of 14 elected members and employs a clerk.

1. OPENING STATEMENT

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 **in Cwarter Bach**.

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 life of the area it serves
- to encourage the use the Welsh language by other public bodies which have dealings with the Council and to support and encourage the use of Welsh by organisations and businesses which provide services for the public in the area served the Council.

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.
- 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 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 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. If it is not known initial correspondence from the Council will be bilingual.
- 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 ensuring the translation of correspondence.
- 3.1.9. The Council's official correspondence will include a statement in both languages making it clear that correspondence is welcome in either Welsh or English.

3.2 Telephone Calls

- 3.2.1. The Clerk 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 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.
- 3.2.3. When the Clerk's post becomes vacant it will be advertised confirming that bilingual skills will be essential so that the Council can offer a bilingual service to the public.

3.3 Public Meetings organised by or on behalf of the Council

- 3.3.1. Contributions are welcomed in either Welsh or English at public meetings held by the Council. This will be stated clearly in the notices that inform or publicise the meeting.
- 3.3.2. All publicity for public meetings will be bilingual.
- 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 council meeting that would otherwise be conducted in English, this should be respected by providing appropriate translation arrangements. (a council member to translate)
- 3.3.5. At least one staff member or elected member will be present at public meetings to welcome the public and to deal with enquiries, questions or comments in Welsh.
- 3.3.6. Any written materials such as leaflets that are used in public meetings will be bilingual.

3.4 Council Meetings

- 3.4.1 The notice and agenda for the Council's meetings will be bilingual.
- 3.4.2 The minutes will be bilingual.
- 3.4.3 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.

3.6 Other Dealings with the Public

- 3.6.1 When the Council contacts the public via information technology, namely computers, website, e-mail or smart phones; this information will be available in Welsh and English for the public.

4. THE COUNCIL'S PUBLIC FACE

4.1 Corporate Identity

- 4.1.1 The Council's corporate identity will be bilingual.
- 4.1.2 The name and address of the Council will appear bilingually on correspondence and compliment slips, and any other promotional material.

4.2 Signage

- 4.2.1 All new information signs or those replacing previous signs on Council property will be bilingual, as will any other public information signs for which the Council is responsible. The two languages will appear side by side, with the Welsh version appearing to the left. Where this is not practical, the Welsh version will appear first. The size, quality, legibility and prominence of text will be equal in Welsh and English.

4.3 Publishing and Printing Material

- 4.3.1 All publications aimed at the public, such as documents, explanatory material or grant forms will be bilingual with both language versions forming one document. The versions will be printed side-by-side (back to back) where possible to facilitate easy cross-reference, distribution and offer language choice.
- 4.3.2. If Welsh and English versions are published separately, they will appear simultaneously, be distributed together (back-to-back) and be equally accessible.
- 4.3.3. All press releases will be bilingual (back-to-back) and will include a contact name for Welsh language interviews, and will specifically target local papers, website and social media
- 4.3.4. All Advertising and publicity activities will be bilingual.
- 4.3.5. Council advertisements and notices to be placed in the press, on notice boards or any other medium will be bilingual.
- 4.3.6 Job advertisements will appear bilingually in English/bilingual publications and in Welsh only in Welsh language publications with a footnote in English.

4.4 Statutory and promotional functions

- 4.4.1 In the information that is sent to those intending to apply for financial assistance towards local activities, the Council will make it clear that there is need for applicants to describe how they intend to reflect the linguistic nature of the community and their audience in the activities for which they require financial support. When considering applications, the Council will ensure that applicants have appropriately reflected the linguistic nature of the community and their audience in their application.
- 4.4.2 The Council will favour applications that have appropriately reflected the linguistic nature of the community and their audience.
- 4.4.3 The Council will also notify the applicant that the local language initiative (Menter Iaith) can provide advice and practical assistance in relation to the bilingual content of the activity, including information on grants available for this purpose.
- 4.4.4 When the Council is consulted on planning applications, the Council will encourage applicants to erect bilingual signs in locations such as offices, businesses and shops and supermarkets by referring to the linguistic nature of the area.
- 4.4.5 When the Council is consulted on the naming of streets, developments and new estates, the Council will support the use of standard or indigenous names when appropriate. Where only minor differences exist between the Welsh and English spelling of place, street, ward, or community names, the Council will support the adoption of the Welsh version. The Council will ask the opinion of the Welsh Place Names Standardisation Panel in any cases of uncertainty.

4.5 Services by Other parties

- 4.5.1 Any arrangements made by the Council to use a third party to deliver services to the public on its behalf will comply with the specific requirements in the Scheme as outlined by the Council. The Council will outline which relevant measures in the Scheme the third party will have to adhere to within the tendering or contract specifications.
- 4.5.2 The Third party will need to confirm that it has complied with the relevant aspects of the Scheme by letter.

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

5.1 Staffing

- 5.1.1 When the position of Clerk to the Council becomes vacant it will be noted in the advert that bilingual skills are essential for the post to ensure that the Council can implement the clauses contained in this Scheme.

5.2 Administrative Arrangements

- 5.2.1 This scheme has the full support of the Council.
- 5.2.2 The Clerk will be responsible for implementing the Scheme on a day-to-day basis within the Council. According to need, the Clerk will ensure that guidelines and instructions will be available to all who are involved in the implementation of the scheme.

5.3 The Translation Service

- 5.3.1 The Clerk will be responsible for the written translation needs of the Council, and will also be responsible for the standard of all Welsh text produced.
- 5.3.2 If the Clerk cannot complete the work within the timescale, the Council will employ an external translator.
- 5.3.3 The Clerk will be responsible for arranging simultaneous translation facilities for all the Council's needs.

5.3.4 When needed, this facility will be available for all public meetings arranged by or on behalf of the Council, and in any other Council meeting if that is the decision of the Council.

5.4 Monitoring

5.4.1 Responsibility for monitoring the Scheme will rest with the Clerk of the Council.

5.4.2 The Council will receive a brief annual report on implementing the Scheme

5.4.3. The Report will deal with every aspect of the Scheme.

5.4.4. The Council will welcome suggestions from the public (by letter or telephone communication) regarding improvements to any aspect of the Scheme.

5.5 Publicity

5.5.1. The Council will publicise the Scheme on its website.

5.6 Contacting the Council

5.6.1 Any comments, complaints or suggestions regarding the Scheme should be addressed to the Clerk of the Council.