

Contents

Section	Title	Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Complaints	4
3	Welsh Language Skills and Ability	5
	Speak	5
	Understand	5
	Write	6
	Read	6
	Fluent Welsh by Directorate	6
	Fluent Welsh by Contract Type	7
4	Welsh Language Training	8
5	Recruitment: Welsh Language Skills Requirement	9
6	The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy	10
	Objective 1:	10
	Objective 2:	11
	Objective 3:	11

2. Complaints

The Corporate Complaints procedure logs all complaints related to the Welsh Language and the Welsh Language Standards. Complaints can be made in any format (e.g. email, letter, in person, telephone, social media etc.). No such complaints were received via the Corporate Complaints system during the reporting period.

However, during the reporting period, t

Chart 3: Write Welsh

Write Welsh	Number of staff
Fluently	43
Moderately	131
Quite Well	24
A Little	310
No ability	1,712

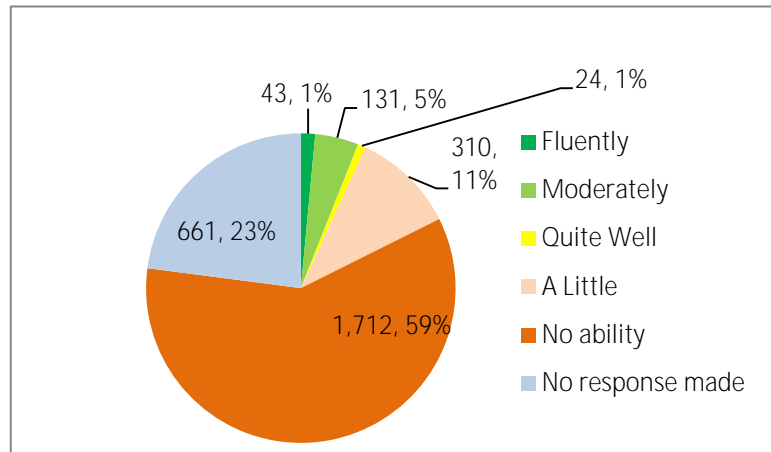
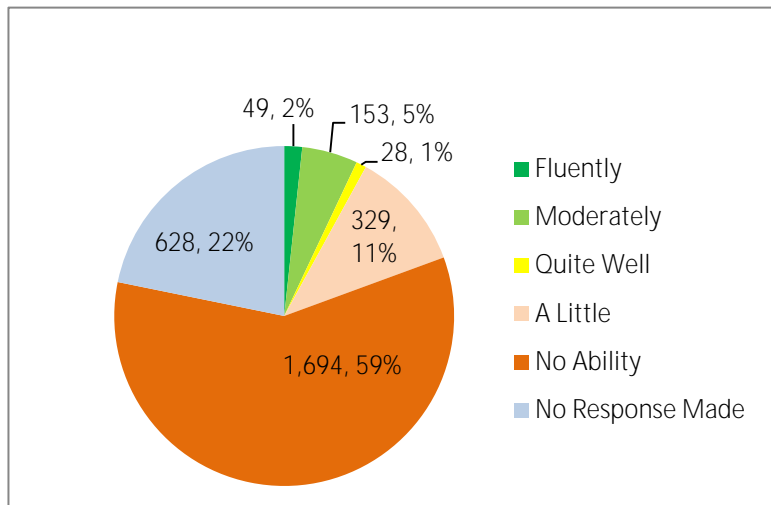
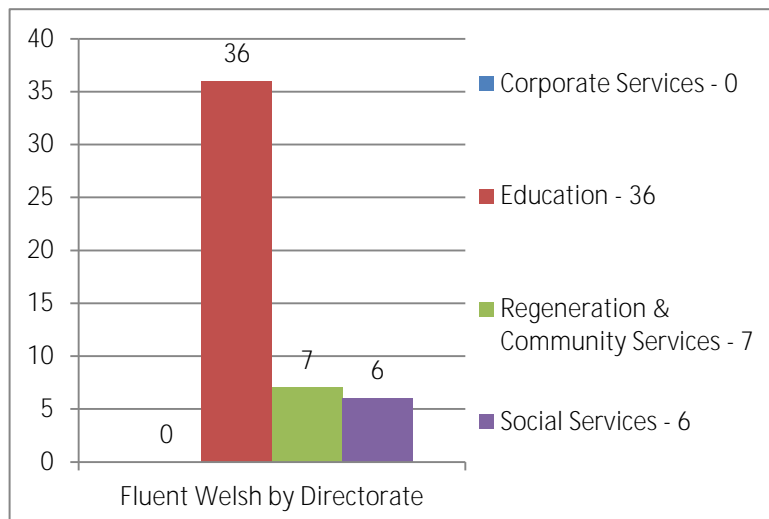


Chart 4: Read Welsh



The above graphs show that the figures are very similar across all 4 skill areas. The percentage of staff that declare, they are 'fluent' is typically around 1% - 2% while the percentage who say they have 'no ability' is between 57%-59%. Nearly a quarter of staff (24%) consider themselves as having an ability to Understand Welsh, while only 17% have an ability to Write Welsh, with 1 in 5 noting an ability to Read Welsh.



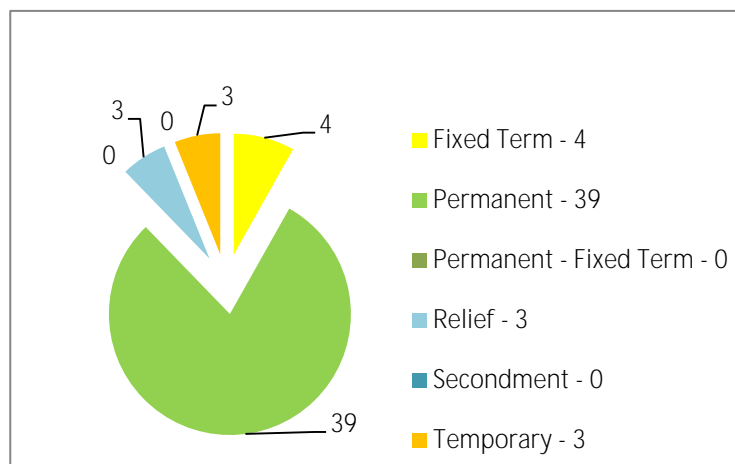
When comparing to the previous year's Annual Report, there has been a 23% reduction in the number of staff identifying as fluent Welsh Speaking (63 in 2017/18).

Corporately there is a fairly good foundation to encourage and support the development of our employee's Welsh Language Speaking Skills further, given that 165 staff declare they have a Moderate ability, 16 can do 'Quite Well' and 380 can speak 'a little'.

Fluent Welsh Speakers by Contract Type:

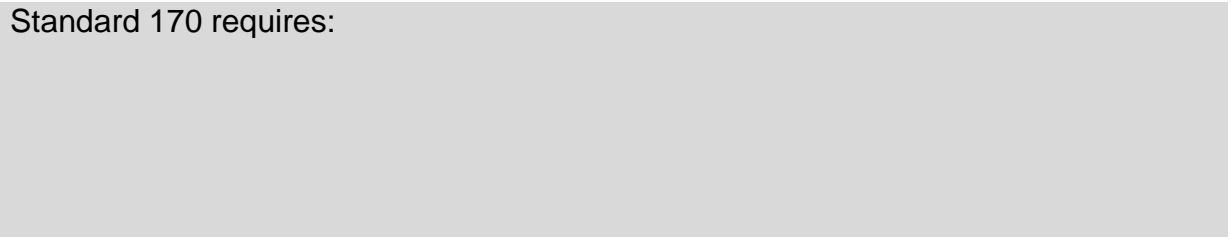
Contract Type	Fluently	Moderately	Quite Well	A Little	No ability
Permanent	39	165	16	380	0
Fixed Term	4	165	16	380	0
Relief	3	165	16	380	0
Temporary	3	165	16	380	0
Secondment	0	165	16	380	0
Permanent - Fixed Term	0	165	16	380	0
Total	63	165	16	380	0

When considering the Contract Type of those staff who identify as Fluent Welsh Speakers, the highest number (39) are on Permanent Contracts; with the remainder on Fixed Term (4), Relief (3)



4. Welsh Language Training

Standard 170 requires:



5. Recruitment - Welsh Language Skills Requirement

Standard 170 required the number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where:

- Welsh language skills were essential,
- Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post,
- Welsh language skills were desirable, or
- Welsh language skills were not necessary

During the scope of the reporting period a total of 135 posts were advertised by the Council; of which 20 posts stated that Welsh Language Skills were **essential** and 115 posts identified Welsh as '**desirable**'.

The Council's policy is that all posts are to be made Welsh 'Desirable' as a minimum requirement. Therefore no posts will ever feature that identify Welsh language skills as 'not necessary'. Also, no posts were listed in the reporting period where Welsh language skills were identified as skills that needed to be learnt when an individual was appointed to a post.

6. The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Standard 145 requires Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to produce a strategy detailing how it will promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language over the next five years¹.

The aims of the Blaenau Gwent's Welsh Language Strategy are linked with the Welsh Government's vision to create a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. In

Objective two of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy states: “To increase the provision of Welsh language education and informal activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language”.

Welsh Education Strategic Plan

Blaenau Gwent’s Local Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) was formally approved by Welsh Government in March 2018. The strategic objectives highlighted in the draft WESP document for the next three years can be summarised as follows:

Raise the profile and levels of participation for Welsh-medium education across the County Borough by 2020, to contribute to the vision for one million speakers by 2050.

Increase the early year’s provision offer to stimulate parental demand to enable growth across the County Borough.

Increase transition rates from Welsh-medium nursery provision to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg by 50% in 2020.

Work regionally with South East Wales Local Authorities to secure places for Blaenau Gwent learners in Welsh-medium secondary provision between 2017-2020 and beyond.

Improving Welsh medium learner outcomes by 2020 so that learners raise aspirations and improve their life chances.

http://democracy.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/aksblaenau_gwent/images/att5545.pdf

Seedling Provision

The Blaenau Gwent 21st Century Schools Band B Programme involves the delivery of a Welsh-medium seedling school. The seedling provision is focused on addressing the latent demand for Welsh-medium education identified within the Tredegar / Sirhowy valley, whilst also increasing the provision of Welsh-medium education within Blaenau Gwent, which is presently the only Council with 1 Welsh-medium primary school.

In October 2018, Blaenau Gwent Council received confirmation that they were successful in securing £6 million, awarded in line with the growth of the seedling school proposed under Band B, along with the development of a new 210 place Welsh-medium primary school, which will accommodate seedling pupils moving forward.

Objective three of W35BT1.6As in WL6(a)-3(u)-3(g)6(u-3(a)-3(t)6(e)-3()-341)-rogotion itracede

Political Leadership Engagement

The Leader of the Council / Executive Member for Corporate Services continues to hold portfolio responsibility for the Welsh Language and Equalities. Where appropriate, Welsh Language and Equalities is considered politically through Corporate Overview Scrutiny, Executive and where appropriate the Council.

Professional Leadership Engagement

The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) is made up of the Managing Director, Directors and all Heads of Service and includes all of the senior officers. CLT is the decision making body for the corporate element of the Council. CLT recently undertook an internal audit of corporate compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. All Heads of Service have been fully involved in the audit. Responsibility for effective implementation of the standards rests with staff across all directorates and departments.

The Education Transformation Team review and monitor the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) monthly; providing termly reports to the Welsh in Education Forum (WEF) and provides annual reports to Welsh Government. In addition, WEF development and progress reports are taken via the Council's political processes annually. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is also a key focus of the 21st Century Schools Programme Board and Admissions Forum.

Corporate Equality Network

The Corporate Equality Network (CEN) acts as the overarching equalities and Welsh language group for the Council, with a purpose to ensure that the Council as a whole is able to meet its statutory duties relating to the Welsh Language and the Equality Act 2010. The network is made up of key officers representing a range of departments/divisions of the Council with the responsibility of taking forward the equality agenda for the Council. The CEN has four current work-streams, one of which is Welsh Language.

The Policy Team

The Policy team support, advise and guide the political and professional leads on all matters relating to the Welsh Language. The Council's Policy Team continued to offer views and experiences in the key consultations, which during the reporting cycle included the Consultation on Draft Code of Practice.

Welsh Language Guidance for Staff

A range of short,

