

PENTYRCH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1 Statement	3
2 Introduction to Pentyrch Community Council	3
3 Aims and Objectives of the Scheme	3
4 Service Plans and Delivery	3
5 Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public	4
6 The Council's Public Face	5
7 Implementing and Monitoring the Scheme	6
8 Publicising	9
9 Timetable	9

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

1 STATEMENT

This Welsh Language Scheme has been prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993

Pentyrch Community Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales it will treat the Welsh and English languages 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 Wales.

2 INTRODUCTION

Pentyrch Community Council (called the Council in this Scheme) serves the villages of Pentyrch, Creigiau, including Capel Llanilltern, and Gwaelod y Garth. The Council consists of 13 Councillors representing the villages 6:5:2 respectively. The Council meets once a month. The meetings are advertised in advance and the public invited to attend. The Council area is covered by two County Council wards - Pentyrch and Creigiau. Last census figures indicated 14.2% of Creigiau and 15.9% of Pentyrch residents are Welsh speakers.

The Council is responsible for two graveyards, three community woodlands, two parks, Creigiau Recreation field, the Garth Common and several small pockets of grass areas within the villages. In addition to this the Council provides and maintains all the bus shelters, public seats and notice boards in the area.

It is active on behalf of local residents in seeking to bring pressure on the County Council to carry out its functions and duties particularly in relation to highways, footless (pavements), public footpaths, street cleansing and the provision of amenities. It seeks to help promote and support voluntary leisure and charitable activities and has an interest in any matter which can affect the lives of local residents - planning matters are a particular concern.

The Council is solely funded through the Council Tax and employs two part-time office workers, one full time handyman and three casual labourers. It serves a population of over 6000 residents.

Both Gwaelod y Garth and Creigiau schools have Welsh units which serve the immediate community and surrounding areas.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

By implementing the scheme the Council aims:

- to treat both the Welsh and English language on the basis of equality.
- to enable everyone who receives or uses the Council's service to have the opportunity to do so through the medium of English or Welsh.
- to provide an equally efficient standard of service in both languages.
- to promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's area.
- to monitor the Scheme and to ensure that standards are maintained.

4 SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

4.1 New Policies and/or Initiatives

4.1.1 The Council will assess the linguistic implications of any new policies or initiatives when formulating them

4.1.2 The Council will use all new policies and initiatives to promote and facilitate the equal use of Welsh wherever possible and to move the organisation closer to implementing the principle of equality at every opportunity.

4.1.3 Any new policies and initiatives will be consistent with the scheme.

4.1.4 The Welsh Language Board will be consulted in advance regarding proposals which will affect the scheme. The scheme will not be altered without the Board's agreement.

4.1.5 Those involved in policy formulation will be aware of the scheme, and of the Council's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993

4.1.6 The measures contained in the scheme will be applied to new policies and initiatives when they are implemented.

4.2 Delivery of Services to the Public

4.2.1 The measures set out in the scheme will apply to all the services delivered by the Council to the public.

4.2.2 Members of staff will be made fully aware of the requirements of the scheme.

4.2.3 Whilst it may not be practicable to give immediate responses in Welsh, every effort will be made to reply within a reasonable time.

4.2.4 The aim will be to provide a high standard of service in every aspect of the Council's public work, in writing and orally, through both the English and Welsh language. The standard of this service will be reviewed on a regular basis with the objective of continually improving the standard.

4.2.5 The service provided by the Council will promote and facilitate the equal use of English and Welsh wherever possible.

4.2.6 The Council will aim to ensure that all aspects of its service to the public will be available through the medium of Welsh by:

- adopting procedures which will enable the provision of services in the language chosen by the service users;
- providing a translation service within the Council and employing external translators if necessary.

5 DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC

5.1 Written Communication

5.1.1 The public will be invited to correspond with the Council in either English or Welsh. Every letter received in Welsh will receive a signed reply in Welsh within the agreed time limit.

5.1.2 The Council will correspond in Welsh following a face to face or telephone communication in Welsh and also with those who are known to prefer corresponding through the medium of Welsh.

5.1.3 The time targets for replying to letters will be the same in English or Welsh (within 15 working days of receipt of the original letter).

5.1.4 When necessary a professional translator will be employed by the Council

5.1.5 All circular and standard letters to the public will be bi-lingual.

5.2 Telephone Communication

5.2.1 All external telephone calls will be greeted both in English and Welsh.

5.2.2 Provision will be made for any member of the public wishing to converse in Welsh to do so. When a non Welsh speaking member of staff answers the call, the situation will be explained courteously and the necessary arrangements will be made as soon as is possible. If a Welsh speaker is unavailable the caller should be given the choice of a Welsh speaker returning the call as soon as possible, or continuing in English.

5.2.3 When a telephone enquiry necessitates written correspondence the caller will be given the option of receiving a reply in English or Welsh.

5.2.4 Any answering machines installed by the Council will relay bilingual messages.

5.3 Council and Public Meetings

- 5.3.1 Contributions will be welcome in English or Welsh during the Public Session of Council's meetings. When a statement is issued in Welsh this must be followed by a brief translation in English. Notices advertising public meetings will include this information.
- 5.3.2 All publicity for the meetings will itself be bilingual.
- 5.3.3 Welsh speakers will be present at all Council's meetings, unless prevented from doing so by unforeseen circumstances. They will be available at the start of meetings to deal with any queries on arrival. However only statements made during the meeting will be minuted.
- 5.3.4 Meetings on Council premises: If the preferred language of the person is known to be Welsh, the Council will seek to ensure that the person is met by a bilingual member of staff or Councillor.
- 5.3.5 Members of the public attending a site meeting will be offered, in advance, the provision of a bi lingual meeting. If a preference for communications to be through the medium of Welsh is indicated, then provisions will be made for either a bilingual member of staff or Councillor to attend.
- 5.3.6 The Council does not own any translating equipment or employ a translator. Enquiries have been made into the alternatives and costs involved but found to be unjustifiable at this time. If demand for the service is shown then the appropriate action will be taken.
- 5.3.7 In view of its limited budget the Council does not feel justified in spending monies on the translation of the monthly minutes of Council meetings. As stated in 6.3.6 the Council does not own any translating equipment or employ a translator, this situation will be reviewed if demand can be shown.

6.1 THE COUNCIL'S PUBLIC FACE

6.1 Corporate Identity

- 6.1.1 The Council's name is Cyngor Gymuned Pentyrch/ Pentyrch Community Council.
- 6.1.2 The Council will adopt a fully bilingual corporate identity.
- 6.1.3 The Council's name and address and other standard information used on its stationery materials, goods and vehicles will be bilingual.
- 6.1.4 All documents for publication will be translated and proof read by the translator or an external translator if necessary.

6.2 Signs

- 6.2.1 The Council's adopted logo is already bilingual and appears on benches and signs provided by the Council. It is Council's intention to continue this practice on new or replacement equipment.
- 6.2.2 The size, quality, legibility and prominence of text on signs will respect the principle of equality.
- 6.2.3 If separate signs are used for the two languages, they will appear together and be equal in terms of format, size, quality, legibility and prominence.
- 6.2.4 When the Council is consulted about highway and public information signs it will support the principle that signs be fully bilingual.
- 6.2.5 When the Council is consulted about names for new developments, it will support the principle that Welsh names be adopted. Where the difference between English and Welsh versions of a name is merely spelling, the Council will support the adoption of the Welsh form.
- 6.2.6 All advertisements and notices in the press, on notice boards or on any other medium will appear bilingually.
- 6.2.7 Advertisements for job vacancies will appear bilingually.

6.3 Publishing and Printing Material

- 6.3.1 All comments from the Council in the newsletter will be both in English and Welsh. Articles in the medium of Welsh and English will be invited for inclusion in the newsletter.
- 6.3.2 All information leaflets provided by the Council will be available in both English and Welsh.
- 6.3.3 The Council's official note paper is already bilingual and includes a statement in both languages making it clear that correspondence in both languages is welcome.
- 6.3.4 If Welsh and English versions of a document are published separately they will be equally accessible.
- 6.3.5 All publications aimed at the public will normally be bilingual with both language versions forming one document.
- 6.3.6 All documents for publication will be translated and proof read by the translator or an external translator if necessary.

6.4 Forms and explanatory material

- 6.4.1 All forms and explanatory material published by the Council for use by the public in Wales will be bilingual with both language versions forming one document.
- 6.4.2 Written guidance on the correct procedures will be issued to staff involved in designing and producing forms.

6.5 Press Releases

- 6.5.1 All press and media releases will be bilingual.
- 6.5.2 All releases will include a contact name for Welsh Language interviews.

6.6 Advertising and Publicity Activities

- 6.6.1 Advertising and publicity activities will be conducted bilingually in a way which treats both languages on a basis of equality.
- 6.6.2 All publicity material will be bilingual.
- 6.6.3 Any marketing or advertising campaigns carried out by or on behalf of the Council via the Press, television, radio etc will be fully bilingual.
- 6.6.4 Promotional literature prepared for the tourist market will be bilingual.
- 6.6.5 Posters and information boards will be bilingual.
- 6.6.6 Any public surveys carried out by the Council will be bilingual along with any response mechanisms linked to campaigns to promote information.
- 6.6.7 Any public exhibitions staged by or on behalf of the Council will be bilingual.

7 IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

7.1 Staffing

- 7.1.1 At the present time it is not practicable to employ additional staff in order to comply with "ideal" situations. It is intended that until the demand for a bilingual service has been determined, the Clerk will have the support of the bilingual Members of the Council.
- 7.1.2 Future recruitment of staff will consider the need for bilingual employees. Where the ability to work through the medium of Welsh is considered desirable for any post, this will be specified when recruiting to that post.
- 7.1.3 The ability to speak Welsh will not result in preference given to a candidate if a more suitable non Welsh speaker has applied.

- 7.1.4 Every effort will be made to encourage staff at all levels to acquire bilingual skills.
- 7.1.5 Staff learning Welsh will be encouraged to use their Welsh in the workplace.
- 7.1.6 At the present time no members of staff are Welsh speaking. However a number of Councillors are bilingual and are able to assist staff in implementing a bilingual service.

7.2 Administrative Arrangements

- 7.2.1 This Scheme has the full support of the Council.
- 7.2.2 The responsibility for implementing the Scheme within the Council will rest primarily with the Council's Welsh Language Committee and the Clerk, who will:
- ensure that guidelines and instructions are available to all staff involved in the implementation of the scheme;
 - monitor the implementation of the scheme;
 - provide an annual report on implementation to the Welsh Language Board.

- 7.2.3 The Council will ensure that specification for new, replacement or adapting computer programmes will enable the organisation to implement the commitments in its scheme.

7.3 The Translation Service

- 7.3.1 The written translation need of the Council will, in the first instance, be the responsibility of the bilingual members of the Council.
- 7.3.2 If the services of the bilingual Members are unavailable a suitable external translator will be employed by the Council.

7.4 Statutory Functions

- 7.4.1 When the Council is consulted on planning applications, it will encourage applicants to erect bilingual signs on premises in the villages such as offices and shops by referring to the bilingual nature of the area.
- 7.4.2 The following is to be included on all letters accompanying a grant payment. "Pentyrch Community Council implements an approved Welsh Language Scheme and request that applicants consider the bilingual nature of the community in relation the particular event/activity that is to be held".

7.5 Monitoring

- 7.5.1 The implementation of the scheme will be monitored.
- 7.5.2 Responsibility for monitoring the Scheme will rest with the Council's Welsh Language Committee and the Clerk. On approval of the full council, a report will be provided annually to the Welsh Language Board.
- 7.5.3 The monitoring process will include regular review of the following matters:

Future Planning - ensuring that any new policies, publications, computer programmes and procedures adopted by the Council will be consistent with the Scheme.

Organising and Delivering Services - monitoring the implementation of arrangements made to deliver the Council's services in Welsh and their effectiveness.

Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public

- monitoring response times to correspondence in Welsh and the quality of the translation services.
- Monitoring the implementation of bilingual telephone communication.
- Monitoring the arrangements for meetings

Public Face - monitoring the implementation of the introduction of bilingual publications, forms, signs, notices and other printed materials.

Staffing - monitoring the need for specific bilingual staffing positions.

Timetable - monitoring achievement against the scheme's timetable.

Grievances - monitoring the number and nature of complaints received regarding the Council's bilingual service and suggestions for improvements.

7.5.4 All publicity concerning the scheme will state the name of the person to whom complains concerning its implementation should be made. All complaints received will be acknowledged in writing, recorded and dealt with as appropriate.

7.5.5 The Council will invite and welcome suggestions from the staff and the public for improvements to any aspects of the scheme. All suggestions received will be acknowledged in writing.

7.6 Targets

The Council will endeavour to attain all original targets set by the Scheme. The Council will measure the implementation of the Scheme against the stipulated targets. The Council will review targets annually and reserve the right to amend targets if required subject to the Welsh Language Board's prior approval.

7.7 Publishing Information

7.7.1 Reports on the implementation of the scheme will be published annually. The report will compare performance with standards and targets set out in the scheme. These will involve matters such as:

- percentage of, and time taken to respond to correspondence in Welsh.
- percentage of publications produced bi-lingually;
- percentage of telephone queries in Welsh
- percentage of requested site meetings via the medium of Welsh

7.7.2 The report will be available to interested parties in the Council office and will be advertised via local notice boards.

8 PUBLICISING THE SCHEME

8.1.1 Information concerning the Scheme will be provided to the public in bilingual notices displayed on Council noticeboards, post offices, shops and halls.

8.1.2 The publicity material will confirm that the Council offers a full service through the medium of Welsh.

8.1.3 The Scheme will be advertised in the Council's newsletter.

8.1.4 Copies of the Scheme will be available to interested organisations, individuals and the general public in the Council office.

8.1.5 The Scheme will be circulated to all employees.

9 TIMETABLE

9.1.1 Many of the policies listed in this Scheme have already been adopted by this Council and have been in place for a number of years. All new policies will be implemented as previously indicated.

9.1.2 The Council will need to determine the demand for translation services. It will have to decide whether initial provisions are adequate, particularly at meetings, or if further action will have to be taken either by employing a translator or installing translation equipment. Obviously the costs involved in either of these projects will have a bearing on any decisions. It is important that costs involved can be justified, therefore it is proposed that no action will be taken until after the first years review and reports have been undertaken.

