



# monmouthshire sir fynwy

Monmouthshire County Council's  
Welsh Language Standards  
Annual Monitoring Report  
1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025



## Overview

This is Monmouthshire County Council's annual report on the Welsh language standards. Its purpose is to evaluate our compliance with the standards, and the ways in which we have promoted and facilitated opportunities to use Welsh and ensured that the language was treated no less favourably than English during the year. It was produced in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015, to meet the requirements of standards 158, 164 and 170.

## Further Information

This report can be found on the Monmouthshire County Council website: [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk). If you have any questions regarding the contents of this report, please contact us on the details below.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh, contacting us in Welsh will not lead to a delay in response.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.



This document is also available in Welsh

Related Documents

[Monmouthshire County Council 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027](#)

The cabinet member with responsibility for the Welsh language during 2024/25 was Cllr. Angela Sandles.

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## 1. Background

Monmouthshire County Council recognises the importance of the Welsh Language as an integral part of our cultural identity, heritage and community cohesion. Throughout the year 2024/2025 the council has been dedicated to fostering an environment where the Welsh language can thrive, and Welsh speakers are able to use the language in their everyday lives.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework that imposed a duty on Monmouthshire County Council, alongside other public organisations, to comply with standards relating to the Welsh language. The key principles of these standards are that:

- the Welsh language should not be treated any less favourably than the English language.
- we should promote and facilitate the use of the language

In 2015, Monmouthshire Council received a compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner. This document outlines the standards that the council must comply with. In total, there are 176 Welsh Language standards that apply to Monmouthshire Council. These standards are grouped into 5 categories, which are:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Promotion
- Record Keeping

The Welsh Language Standards require us to:

- Produce and publish on our website a 5-year strategy that sets out how we propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in our area. (Standards 145,146)
- Produce an annual report, in relation to each financial year, which deals with how we have complied with the standards and published on our website. (Standards 158, 164, 170)

The council's [compliance notice](#) can be found on our bilingual website.

## 2. Compliance

### Service Delivery Standards

<b>Standards Group</b>	<b>Actions Taken During 2024/2025</b>	<b>Actions to be Taken 2025/2026</b>
<b>Standards 1 - 7 Correspondence sent and received.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff reminded of requirements to the Welsh language in our correspondence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor compliance across the authority.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 8 - 22 Telephone calls made and received.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up until March 2025, Welsh phone calls to the council were managed through a hunt system, where callers were directed to a pool of Welsh-speaking officers from across the authority.</li> <li>In March 2025, following the procurement of a new telephony system at the Contact Centre, the process for handling Welsh calls was updated. Now, these calls are directed straight to a Welsh-speaking advisor at the Contact Centre. If no Welsh-speaking advisor is available, the system reverts to the old hunt group system to ensure that the call is answered as promptly as possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor efficiency of new system.</li> <li>Ensure that all staff are aware of the processes when receiving Welsh language phone calls.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 24 – 36 Meetings with the Public.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simultaneous translation provided in public meetings where required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor to ensure that the offer of simultaneous translation continues to be actively and consistently made.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 37 - 51, 69 - 70 Other bilingual documents.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff issued reminders of the need to state that documents are also available in Welsh.</li> <li>Compliance monitored</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise 'Welsh Tip' within the Compass Staff News- letter to remind staff of requirements.</li> </ul>

	<p>through website checks and translation requests made through the Cymraeg translation service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All forms for public use are created bilingually.</li> <li>• All official notices are produced and displayed bilingually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor compliance closely</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standards 52 – 60 Websites, Social Media, Apps, and Self-service Machines.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Websites and social media accounts monitored closely to ensure compliance by Website Officer and Welsh Language Officer.</li> <li>• When issues arise, the Welsh Language Officer liaises with the Website Officer and website authors to rectify any issues.</li> <li>• Welsh Language Officer logs compliance checks for websites and social media accounts and notes any actions taken.</li> <li>• The number of hits on Welsh and English are as follows:</li> </ul> <p><b>Recycling and Waste:</b></p> <p>English: 126,892</p> <p>Welsh: 320</p> <p><b>Council Tax:</b></p> <p>English: 44,421</p> <p>Welsh: 68</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor and log compliance.</li> <li>• Create mandatory training for website authors on how to use the Welsh language on digital platforms.</li> <li>• Create a log of any issues identified and any actions taken to resolve them.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Early Years, Childcare and Schools Education:</b></p> <p>English: 2,790</p> <p>Welsh: 59</p> <p><b>Welsh Medium Education:</b></p> <p>English :542</p> <p>Welsh: 67</p> <p><b>Community Hubs and Libraries:</b></p> <p>English: 27,316</p> <p>Welsh: 264</p> <p><b>Cost of Living</b></p> <p>English: 3,275</p> <p>Welsh: 103</p>	
<p><b>Standards 61 – 63 Signs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new street signs are either bilingual or monolingual Welsh. Names are carefully chosen to reflect the history and heritage of the area. The Welsh Language Officer works closely with the Street Naming Officer to help with this process.</li> <li>• To ensure accurate translations, all street naming translations are sent to an individual translator who is knowledgeable and experienced in translating street names.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh Language Officer to continue to work closely with the Street Naming Officer on the naming of new streets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standards 64 – 68 Reception Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receptions across the authority are monitored to ensure 'Cymraeg'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop targeted Welsh language training for reception staff to enhance</li> </ul>

	<p>posters are displayed indicating that Welsh can be used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh language skills assessed during interview for reception roles.</li> <li>• Internal Audit conducted a review of receptions' Welsh language compliance. The findings highlighted inconsistencies in Welsh language skills across reception services, with a full Welsh language service not always available.</li> </ul>	<p>existing skills and build confidence in delivering bilingual services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with reception service managers to establish clear plans for meeting public demand for Welsh language reception services.</li> <li>• Ensure all new reception posts are advertised as Welsh language essential to support consistent service provision.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor reception services across the authority.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 71 – 75 Awarding Grants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council has a policy for 'Awarding Grants and the Welsh Language'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 76 – 80 Awarding Contracts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council has a Welsh Language Requirements - Procurement checklist.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 81 – 82 Promoting Welsh Language Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh language services are actively promoted on the council's website and social media pages.</li> <li>• Social media posts created for important dates in the Welsh language calendar to promote the Welsh language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor social media to ensure that Welsh language services continue to be actively promoted.</li> <li>• Schedule promotions for key events / dates.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard 83 Corporate Identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff issued with bilingual e-mail addresses.</li> <li>• Ensure that all aspects of corporate identity are bilingual and that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that bilingual e-mail addresses are used across our website, documents and forms.</li> </ul>

<b>Standards 84 &amp; 86 Educational Courses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational courses are assessed to determine the need to be delivered in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to assess and monitor the need to deliver educational courses in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard 87 Public Address Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All public address systems are bilingual.</li> <li>• Monitoring compliance through visits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue reminders to staff of requirements.</li> <li>• Monitor for compliance.</li> </ul>

## Policy Making Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2024/2025	Actions to be Taken 2025/2026
<b>Standards 88 - 93 Policy Making.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on 'Welsh Language Impact Assessments' provided on the Democratic Services Section of the Hub.</li> <li>• Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken for all policy decisions.</li> <li>• Quality assurance meetings for Impact Assessments and feedback provided to report authors - Policy Team.</li> <li>• Integrated Impact Assessment template and guidance has been reviewed and updated.</li> <li>• Videos have been recorded providing officers with information on how to complete the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and will soon be made available on our learning platform Thingi.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos and further training to be uploaded on the Thingi learning platform.</li> <li>• Deliver workshops on completing effective Welsh Language Impact Assessments to support informed and compliant policy decision-making.</li> <li>• Quality assurance meetings to continue and monitor effectiveness on outcomes.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance of standards and issue further training to staff where issues are identified.</li> </ul>

## Operational Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2024/2025	Actions to be Taken in 2025/2026
<b>Standards 99 – 104 Employment Documents.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welsh language versions of the following key policies are available on the staff intranet's Welsh language page: Fairness in the Workplace, Attendance Management, Hours and Leave, Discipline, Code of Conduct, and Performance Evaluation.</li> <li>Staff are regularly reminded of their right to receive employment-related documents in Welsh through updates shared in the Cymraeg Teams channel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to issue regular reminders to staff about their right to receive employment-related documents in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 105 – 111 Human Resources Policies.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, Welsh language versions of key HR policies are only accessible via the Welsh language section of the Hub and are not yet listed under the main Policy section of the HR page.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relocate the Welsh language versions of HR policies to the Policies section of the HR page on the staff intranet and provide clear guidance to staff on how and where to access them.</li> <li>Ensure that Welsh language versions of HR policies are reviewed and updated in parallel with their English counterparts to maintain accuracy and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 112 – 119 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are made aware of their right to complete the complaints / disciplinary process in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to ensure this is actively offered. Utilise the Cymraeg Teams Channel to ensure reminders are issued to staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 120 – 126 Staff Intranet and IT Resources.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cysgliad is available on every computer, providing Welsh language spelling and grammar checking, as well as an English- Welsh dictionary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to offer support to staff on using 'Cysgliad'</li> <li>Collaborate with the Hub officer to improve the layout and usability of the Welsh language section on</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Bach Software is provided on every computer to assist staff in typing more easily in Welsh.</li> <li>• Guidance provided on how to use Cysgliad / To Bach on Cymraeg Teams Channel.</li> <li>• A dedicated Welsh language page is available on the staff intranet, offering key documents and support.</li> </ul>	<p>the staff intranet, and broaden the range of support documents available to better assist staff in using Welsh confidently in their roles</p>
<b>Standard 127 Staff Language Skills.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on staff language skills is collected during the application process for new posts.</li> <li>• Welsh Language Officer receives information from HR about new starters and leavers and their recorded Welsh language skills. The list of Welsh speakers is updated on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate the reporting of Welsh language skills into an online system such as Thingi. Amend our Welsh language framework to use the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) for assessing Welsh language skills instead of the ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) framework. This change will align our framework with the preferred standard used by other organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards 128 – 133 Staff Training.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Welsh Language Officer, alongside the Equalities and Welsh Language Manager, plays an active role in the Corporate Induction process throughout the year by delivering Welsh language awareness training to new staff. During these sessions, the Welsh Language Officer provides valuable insights into the history and importance of the Welsh language, outlines the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh Language Officer to continue to be a part of the induction process.</li> <li>• Continue to advertise and promote Welsh training to staff.</li> </ul>

	<p>council's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards and explains the role employees play in supporting and promoting the language. Staff are also informed about the range of support resources available to them, including opportunities to learn Welsh and practical tools to help them use the language confidently in the workplace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh language courses at all levels are available to all staff members.</li> <li>• 53 staff members have been completed a Welsh course in 24/25.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Standards 134 &amp; 135 Wording and Logo for Staff Email Signatures</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff members have access to the translation service to ensure that email signatures are bilingual.</li> <li>• The 'Work Welsh' logo is available on the staff intranet as well as the Cymraeg Teams Channel for staff to include in their email signatures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to utilise the Cymraeg Teams Channel to share information with Welsh speaking staff.</li> <li>• Use the "Welsh Tip" section in the staff newsletter to remind staff of the requirement for bilingual email signatures and provide guidance on how to request a translation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standards 136 - 140 Recruitment Process</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please see the section on 'Recruitment'</li> <li>• The council classifies each new vacant post as being either Welsh language desirable or Welsh language essential.</li> <li>• All vacant posts are advertised bilingually, they include the Welsh language skills framework and Welsh language assessment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to make use of Welsh language recruitment sites. Welsh Language Officer to monitor the outcomes of these adverts.</li> <li>• Provide additional information for Welsh language essential posts to specify what kinds of skills will be needed for the role.</li> <li>• Create training for managers on Welsh language recruitment.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh Language Officer monitors new post adverts to ensure compliance.</li> <li>• All roles that are assessed as being Welsh Language Essential and some select Welsh Language Desirable roles are advertised on Welsh language recruitment sites.</li> </ul>	
<b>Standards 141 – 143 Internal Signage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance provided to staff for internal signage.</li> <li>• Signs monitored for compliance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor for compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard 144 Workplace Announcements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All announcements are recorded bilingually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor for compliance.</li> </ul>

## 3. Complaints

### Complaints from the Public

**Street Name Plate** - A complaint was received regarding the Welsh translation of 'Springfield Road' on a street nameplate in Abergavenny, where the word 'spring' had been mistranslated to reflect the season rather than a water source. The Welsh Language Officer and Street Naming and Numbering Officer investigated the issue and following consultation with a translator, agreed on the corrected version "Heol Cae'r Ffynnon." A patch with the revised name will be applied during the next round of nameplate updates. The original translation, made over a decade ago, predates current standards and no records exist explaining the initial decision for this translation. As a result, the Council continues to strengthen its translation process through collaboration between officers and a dedicated translator, ensuring consistency and cultural sensitivity in all future street naming processes.

**Automated Responses** - A complaint was received regarding the lack of a bilingual response generated by the Council's 'My Monmouthshire' reporting system when a service request is completed. It was identified that Welsh-language submissions were triggering English-only replies. In response, the Welsh Language Officer collaborated with the digital team to investigate and resolve the issue. System updates were implemented to ensure the Welsh responses are now issued when Welsh forms are submitted. Additionally, staff were reminded of the Welsh Language Standards, and monitoring procedures have been strengthened to maintain bilingual compliance.

### Complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner

**Third Party Services** - Correspondence was received from the Welsh Language Commissioner requesting information about a third-party contract, following concerns raised by a member of the public regarding the absence of a bilingual service when contacting the provider for support. The Commissioner sought clarification on the nature of the relationship between the Council and the third party, specifically whether the company was delivering services on behalf of the authority. The service is operated under a concession agreement as part of a collaborative project involving several local authorities. The original procurement process, led by one of the partner authorities, included a requirement for bilingual service provision, including a bilingual help desk. This matter remains under investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

**Welsh Courses** - We were contacted by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office as a concern had been raised regarding access to Welsh language lessons for a part-time employee. The concern related to the employee's ability to attend a scheduled course due to their working pattern. In response, the Welsh Language Officer worked with the relevant teams and Dysgu Cymraeg Gwent to identify a more suitable class. A revised arrangement was agreed, allowing the employee to continue their learning. This resolution was shared with the Commissioner's office, demonstrating the Council's commitment to supporting staff in accessing Welsh language training.

## 4. Welsh Language Skills

The following tables presents data on staff who have recorded some level of Welsh language skills.

### Staff Welsh Language Skill Levels

Welsh Language Skill Level	Number of Staff (excluding schools)	Percentage
Fluent	48	12.2%
Advanced	7	1.8%
Intermediate	51	13.0%
Foundation	33	8.4%
Beginner	253	64.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	-

### Welsh Language Skills by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Welsh Speakers (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Learning, Skills & Economy	28	7.1%
Place	23	5.9%
Law and Governance	6	1.5%
Resources	19	4.8%
Social Care, Safeguarding and Health	129	32.9%
People, Performance and Partnerships	15	3.8%
Chief Executives – Housing, Rural Development & Strategic Partnerships	18	4.6%
Infrastructure	37	9.4%
Customer, Culture and Wellbeing	117	29.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	-

## Fluent Welsh Speakers by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Fluent Welsh Speakers (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Learning, Skills & Economy	2	4.2%
Place	2	4.2%
Law and Governance	4	8.3%
Resources	2	4.2%
Social Care, Safeguarding and Health	17	35.4%
People, Performance and Partnerships	3	6.3%
Chief Executives – Housing, Rural Development & Strategic Partnerships	1	2.1%
Infrastructure	1	2.1%
Customer, Culture and Wellbeing	16	33.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	-

## 5. Welsh Language Courses

The Council offers a wide range of Welsh language courses for staff at all levels of proficiency. These courses aim to increase the number of Welsh-speaking staff within the authority and boost their confidence in using the language in their work. Ensuring staff learn Welsh is crucial for the authority to provide equitable Welsh language services to our residents. Additionally, offering these courses helps the authority to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

The courses are facilitated through the National Centre for Learning Welsh and delivered by Coleg Gwent. They are funded by the Welsh Language Department and staff are provided with the time to complete these courses during their working hours.

In the year 2024/2025, the number of staff who attended Welsh language courses at the relevant levels are as follows:

Language Level of Course	Number of Staff Completing Course 2023/2024	Number of Staff Completing Course 2024/2025
Mynediad 1 / Entry 1	23	26
Mynediad 2 / Entry 2	10	10
Sylfaen 1 / Foundation 1	1	9
Sylfaen 2 / Foundation 2	2	3
Canolradd 1 / Intermediate 1	2	0
Canolradd 2 / Intermediate 2	1	3
Uwch 1 / Advanced 1	1	0
Uwch 3 / Advanced 3	0	2
Hyfedredd / Proficiency	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>53</b>

## Staff completing courses per directorate 2024/2025

Directorate	Number of Staff	Percentage %
Learning, Skills and Economy	10	18.9%
Place	4	7.5%
Law and Governance	0	0%
Resources	3	5.7%
Social Care, Safeguarding and Health	9	17.0%
People, Performance & Partnerships	8	15.1%
Chief Executives – Housing, Rural Development & Strategic Partnerships	6	11.3%
Infrastructure	2	3.8%
Customer, Culture & Wellbeing	11	20.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>-</b>

Standard 128, requires the Council to provide training in Welsh for staff in the following areas, if they are provided in English:

- Recruitment and interviewing;
- Performance management;
- Complaints and disciplinary procedures;
- Induction;
- Dealing with the public; and
- Health and safety.

Staff are asked whether they would like to receive these training sessions in Welsh.

We utilise our Welsh Language Teams Group to actively remind staff that they are able to access the above training though the medium of Welsh.

## 6. Recruitment

### Posts Advertised During 2024–2025

	2023- 2024 Number	2023- 2024 %	2024- 2025 Number	2024- 2025 %
Vacant/new posts advertised	649	-	384	-
Vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills essential'	24	3.7%	9	2.3%
Vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'	625	96.3%	375	97.7%
Vacant/new posts advertised specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh-language skills when someone is appointed to the post'	0	0	0	0
The number of vacant/new posts advertised that 'did not require Welsh language skills'	0	0	0	0
The number that did not include an assessment	0	0	0	0
The number not stated	0	0	0	0

### School Posts Advertised During 2024–2025

	2023-2024 Number	2023- 2024 %	2024- 2025 Number	2024- 2025 %
<b>Schools</b> vacant/new posts advertised	117	-	299	-
<b>Schools</b> vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills essential';	20	17.1%	15	5.0%
<b>Schools</b> vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'	97	82.9%	284	95.0%
<b>Schools</b> vacant/new posts advertised specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh language skills when someone is appointed to the post'	0	0	0	0

The number of <b>schools</b> vacant/new posts advertised that 'did not require Welsh language skills'	0	0	0	0
The number that did not include an assessment	0	0	0	0
The number not stated	0	0	0	0

The job application process is fully accessible in Welsh, in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards, and all job vacancies are advertised bilingually. As part of the recruitment process and in compliance with Standard 136, every vacant post must be assessed for the necessity of Welsh language skills. The council classifies each new vacant post as Welsh language desirable at a minimum.

For positions that involve a high degree of interaction with the public or where there is a lack of current Welsh language skills in the service area, these roles are assessed as Welsh language essential. For these essential posts, we encourage managers to specify in the job description the types of Welsh skills required. This approach aims to encourage applications from individuals who have learnt the language, as learners often lack the confidence to apply for Welsh language essential roles due to uncertainty about the tasks they will need to perform in Welsh.

Additionally, we include the Welsh language skills framework in every job advert. We also utilise Welsh language recruitment sites to advertise posts that are assessed as Welsh language essential, as well as some Welsh language desirable posts. By advertising roles on these dedicated recruitment sites, we make it easier for Welsh speakers to find our vacant posts, and we have successfully appointed Welsh speakers as a result.

In January 2025, the Council launched a new e-recruitment system aimed at streamlining processes and enhancing the recruitment and onboarding experience for both hiring managers and prospective employees. The system is fully bilingual, and job advertisements are regularly reviewed by the Welsh Language Officer to ensure ongoing compliance with Welsh language requirements across all stages of the recruitment process.

## 7. Customer Service

### Welsh Language Phone Calls

Between 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 there were 69 calls made to the Welsh language line.

The following table provides a departmental breakdown of the nature of enquiries for the years 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025.

Department	Number of Welsh Calls 2022-2023	Number of Welsh Calls 2023-2024	Number of Welsh Calls 2024-2025
Recycling and Waste	17	27	33
Communications Team	5	2	0
Council Tax / Rates / Finance	4	9	10
CYP / Education	3	2	5
Highways	4	4	12
Welsh Language Officer	4	3	0
Countryside	1	0	0
Grants	0	1	0
Grass routes / Passenger Transport	2	0	4
Social Care	2	5	1
Planning	2	1	0
Licensing	1	0	0
Leisure Centre	0	0	1
Reception	0	0	1
Human Resources	3	2	1
Environmental Health	1	0	1
Elections	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>69</b>

For the majority of the reporting year 2024/25, Welsh telephone calls to the council were directed to a hunt group system, consisting of a pool of Welsh-speaking officers, as has been the process for many years. However, in March 2025, this system was updated so that Welsh calls are now transferred directly to a Welsh-speaking member of staff in the Contact Centre. This change was made possible by the procurement of a new telephony system.

In addition to our telephony services, we offer a fully bilingual app, My Monmouthshire, where customers can make payments, report incidents, and request services in Welsh. We also provide a fully bilingual chatbot, available 24/7, allowing customers to access support in Welsh at any time. During office hours, our staff monitor the chatbot to assist with any queries that the chatbot is unable to resolve.

## 8. Promotion

### Welsh Tip

To promote the Welsh language among staff, we have included a bilingual Welsh Tip feature in the staff Compass newsletter. Each tip highlights specific Welsh Language Standards and provides practical guidance on how to comply with them. Additionally, we provide information about the support available to staff such as provision for learning Welsh and Iaith Gwaith lanyards. Welsh language campaigns are also promoted within the newsletter such as the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Defnyddia dy Gymraeg' campaign. These tips are designed not only to help staff understand and adhere to Welsh language standards but also to encourage the use of Welsh in the authority's daily operations.

### Cymraeg Teams Channel

The Cymraeg Teams channel continues to be a valuable resource for both Welsh-speaking and Welsh-learning staff members. All staff, regardless of their language ability are welcome to join the channel. To encourage participation and inclusion, all posts by the Welsh Language Officer are made bilingually.

This channel provides a platform for staff to interact, practice their language skills, and build a supportive community within the authority. It is a hub for sharing useful Welsh language resources and information, as well as promoting courses delivered through the medium of Welsh.

By fostering a sense of Welsh language community, the channel ensures that Welsh-speaking staff receive the support they need from the Welsh language department. It also helps to integrate the use of Welsh into daily operations, promoting a bilingual working environment.

### Diwrnod Shwmae

To promote and raise awareness for Diwrnod Shwmae, we launched a competition for staff to test their knowledge through a quiz. The quiz featured questions on simple Welsh language phrases, the history of the language, language legislation, and Welsh language standards.

The winner of the quiz received two tickets to see Welsh folk band Calan perform at the Borough Theatre. These tickets were generously donated by the Borough Theatre. The primary aim of the quiz was to promote the Welsh language among council staff and to encourage participation in Diwrnod Shwmae by utilising their Welsh language skills.

Additionally, by awarding the winner tickets to see a Welsh language band perform locally, we provided an opportunity for them to experience the language outside of the workplace and within the community. This initiative not only supported the use of Welsh in the council's operation but also fostered a deeper connection to the language and culture.

## 9. Conclusion

### Welsh Language Classes

In the reporting year 2024/25, a total of 53 staff members completed a Welsh language course, marking an increase from the previous year, 2023/24, when 40 staff members completed a course. Initially, an additional three staff members had enrolled in the Welsh courses; however, two had to unenroll due to personal circumstances, and one staff member left the authority but continued their course at their new employment.

When examining the registrations for each level, we observed a slight increase in those completing Mynediad / Entry 1 course, the very first level of learning, with 23 completions in 2023/24 and 26 completions in 2024/25. The number of staff completing the Mynediad / Entry 2 course remained consistent at 10 members for both 2023/24 and 2024/25. Notably, there was a significant increase in those completing the Sylfaen / Foundation 1 class, rising from 1 completion in 2023/24 to 9 completions in 2024/25.

Welsh language courses are promoted to staff throughout the year, with a specific promotion campaign starting in June to prepare for courses beginning in September. These courses involve 2 hours of lessons each week and run for approximately 32 weeks during term time only. The Welsh Language Officer conducts regular informal evaluations with those undertaking Welsh courses to gather feedback on their progress. If any issues are identified, the Welsh Language Officer collaborates with the Welsh in the Workplace officer at Dysgu Cymraeg Gwent to resolve them. Additionally, a feedback survey is conducted towards the end of the courses to gain a better understanding of course satisfaction.

To support staff in using their Welsh language skills in a meaningful and public setting, several learners took part in the council's Christmas carol service. As part of the event, they confidently recited a Welsh-language poem, marking a significant milestone in their language journey. This experience not only helped build their confidence but also demonstrated to colleagues that Welsh is actively used within the authority. It served as a positive example of language learning in action and helped promote the availability of Welsh language courses to other staff.

### Contact Centre: Implementation of New Telephony System

In March 2025, the council updated its processes for handling Welsh calls. Previously, for most of this reporting year, callers wishing to speak to the council in Welsh were transferred to a hunt system that included various Welsh speaking officers across the authority. However, with the procurement of a

new telephony system by the Contact Centre, Welsh calls are now directed straight to a Welsh speaking advisor in the Contact Centre.

This new system ensures that Welsh speakers can directly connect with a staff member who is fully trained to handle a wide range of topics, such as Council Tax, Highways, and Grass Routes, allowing their enquiries to be addressed entirely in Welsh. When a caller selects the Welsh language option, their call is prioritised in the queue for Welsh speaking Contact Centre staff. Given the higher proportion of English-speaking staff, this prioritisation, or 'queue jumping', is justified to ensure Welsh language callers receive timely assistance.

If no Welsh-speaking member of staff is available to answer calls, the system reverts to the old hunt system to ensure that calls are dealt with without delay. There is also an answerphone function where callers can leave a message, and their call will be returned as soon as possible.

Currently, we have one fluent Welsh-speaking member of staff at the Contact Centre, along with two staff members who are learning Welsh through the Welsh in the Workplace courses. Despite our efforts to recruit an additional Welsh speaker through Welsh language essential vacant role adverts, we have not yet been successful.

We hope that the new telephony system will encourage more people to use Welsh when interacting with us, aligning with our Welsh Language Strategy's objective to increase opportunities for public service interactions in Welsh. We will monitor the efficiency of this new system to ensure compliance with the standards and to continually improve our services.

## Welsh Language Standards Internal Audit

At the close of the 2024/25 financial year and the start of 2025/26, the authority's Internal Audit team conducted a non-opinion review of the council's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. A memorandum summarising their findings has been produced, and we are currently developing an action plan to address the issues identified.

Observations undertaken as part of the review did observe many areas where compliance could be demonstrated with the standards. Staff seemed to be aware of messages in staff communications and the offer of learning Welsh at work. However, there was some inconsistency with how the standards were applied across the Authority.

Some key areas for development were identified, including opportunities to enhance bilingual communication in automated email responses, improve consistency in signage, and strengthen processes for handling Welsh language calls across certain services. Additionally, there is scope to ensure that advertising and publicity materials reflect equal treatment of the Welsh language, and to align the English and Welsh versions of the council's website and mobile app (My Monmouthshire) more closely.

Throughout the 2025/26 financial year, we will focus on implementing the necessary actions to strengthen our compliance with the Standards. A detailed account of the review findings, the resulting action plan, and the progress made will be included in our next Annual Monitoring Report for 2025/26.

### Welsh Language Translations

During the reporting year, the council explored alternative approaches to delivering translation services as part of its broader budget-setting process. This review was prompted by sustained financial pressures and a marked increase in demand for translation, which has led to annual expenditure exceeding the allocated budget. The options considered included continuing with existing external providers, establishing an in-house translation team, and exploring collaborative arrangements with neighbouring authorities such as Torfaen County Borough Council.

In evaluating these options, careful consideration was given to the potential impact on small Welsh businesses, the quality and timeliness of service delivery, and the need to maintain full compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. This work has been underpinned by an Integrated Impact Assessment which includes the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and remains ongoing as we work towards a sustainable, efficient and high-quality translation model that meets the needs of our communities.

A final decision on the future delivery model is yet to be confirmed, and a full update will be provided in the next Annual Monitoring Report.