

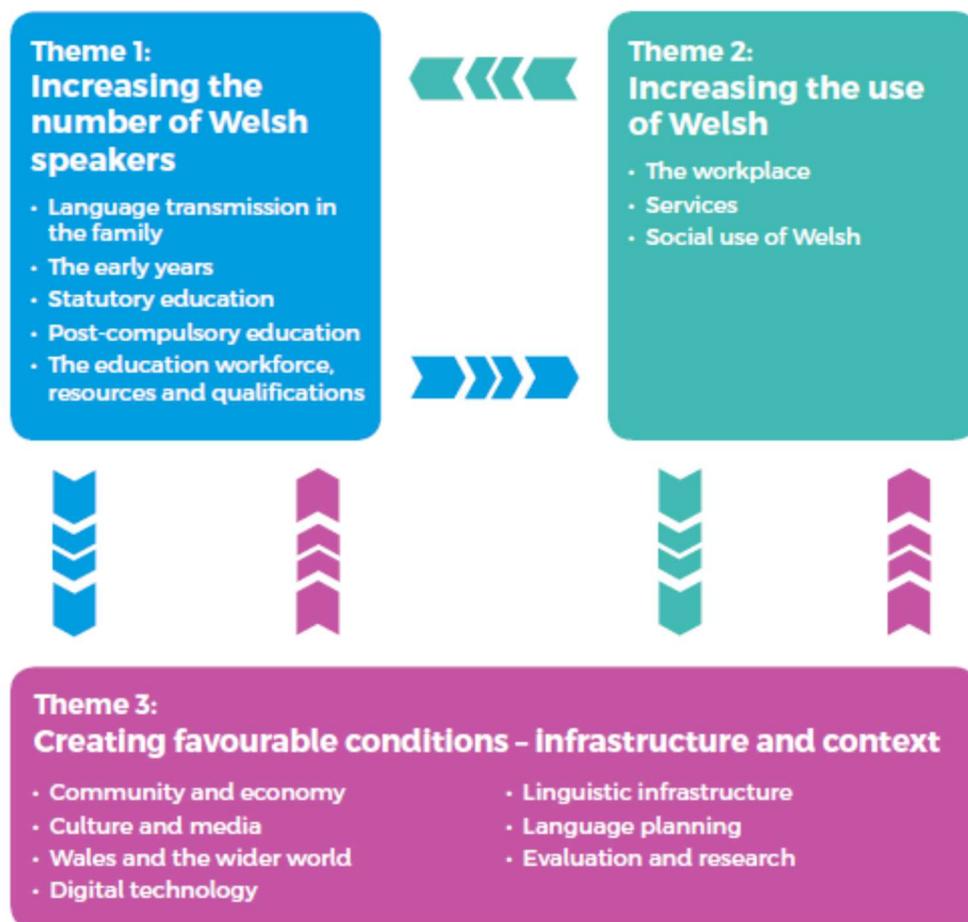
## A. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

*Cymraeg 2050* is our national strategy for increasing the number of Welsh speakers to a million and to double the number of people who use the language daily by 2050.

The Welsh Government is fully committed to the new strategy, with the target of a million speakers included in the *Taking Wales Forward* Programme for Government and *Prosperity for All: the national strategy*. A thriving Welsh language is also included in one of the 7 well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We also have a statutory obligation under the Welsh Language Standards to fully consider the effects of our work on the Welsh Language. This means that any Welsh Government policy should consider how our policies affect the language and those who speak it.

The *Cymraeg 2050* strategy has three themes:



The headings under each theme outline the scope of activities that can affect the language.

As a general rule, if your policy has the potential to impact on people, it will impact in some way on Welsh speakers and therefore on the Welsh language.

1. Welsh Language Impact Assessment reference number (completed by the Welsh Language Standards Team, email: Safonau.Standards@gov.wales):

03/03/2022

2. Does the proposal demonstrate a clear link with the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language? – *Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers* and the related Work Programme for 2017-2021?

The **Welsh Language Standards** are a set of legally binding requirements which apply to the Welsh Government. Under the Standards the Welsh language must be treated no less favourably than the English. The policy making standards under Part 4 section 29 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 require us to ensure that our policy making creates the best outcomes for the wellbeing of the Welsh language and users of the language. They require us to do three things:

- consider the effects or impacts of our policy decisions on the Welsh language (both positive and negative);
- consider how to increase positive effects, mitigate or reduce adverse effects and take all opportunities to promote the use of Welsh; and
- seek views on the effects on the Welsh language when engaging or consulting and to seek the views of Welsh speakers and users of the language.

These three matters have been considered for this Welsh Language Impact Assessment on the Strategy for an Ageing Society and its Delivery Plan.

### Context

Welsh Government commissioned the "Benchmarking the situation of older people in Wales" 2021 report which was produced by the Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research (CADR) in Swansea University.

The report includes measures relating to the Welsh Language shows that:

- Around 20 percent of older adults can understand Welsh and around 15% can speak, read and write Welsh.
- Amongst those older adults who speak Welsh, around a third prefer to speak Welsh compared to over half who prefer to use English.
- Of the older adults who speak Welsh, only 20 – 40% had spoken Welsh the previous week when visiting establishments such as the post office, bank or hospitality. When asked why, 61% of respondents said it was because the staff were unable to speak Welsh.

The Welsh language is relevant in all areas of Wales. Although the percentage that speak Welsh may be higher in more traditional Welsh speaking areas in the north and west, there are nevertheless high numbers of Welsh speakers in the cities in south east Wales. It is also worth noting regional variations in terms of the

percentages that can speak Welsh; for example, Barry has more Welsh speakers than Pwllheli.

A rights based approach which includes the Welsh language is key to the Strategy for an Ageing Society. Within the Declaration of Rights for Older People in Wales, it is made clear that older people have the right to use their language of choice to communicate. Where Welsh speakers wish to engage with health, social services or social care services staff in Welsh, they should be able to do so. As part of the strategy we have revised the rights guidance for the general public and for public bodies, the new guidance includes specific case studies which focus on the Welsh language and will be used in the campaign being run for us by Age Cymru.

As of March 2019, StatsWales reported that approximately 14,000 local authority staff in central management and support, social work and domiciliary services could speak Welsh which supports the findings from Swansea Universities Benchmarking report, re-enforcing that there is room for improvement in developing the Welsh language skills of staff providing services in Wales; be that health and care or simply visiting a restaurant. Under Aim 1 of the strategy, “Enhancing people’s well-being”, there is a commitment to make it easier for people to access Welsh language services wherever they are on their Welsh language journey. This is important for all services, but even more so in health and care as the quality of a person’s care may be compromised by not communicating with them in their first language. For many older people, using their Welsh is a matter of clinical need, especially those with dementia or who have had a stroke as they may lose their English language skills.

The supporting delivery plan which provides commitments to realise the ambition of the strategy pledges to increase the promotion of the active offer and delivery of More than Just Words; the Welsh Governments strategic framework for Welsh language services in health, social services and social care.

The delivery plan also commits to examine how intergenerational work can be used to help both younger and older people gain or improve Welsh language skills in line with our national policy on Welsh language transmission and use in families.

We will:

Analyse how we communicate with families and their extended members (beyond the direct caregivers) about their use of the Welsh language with the aim of maintaining and increasing the transmission of the Welsh language.

Analyse other interventions based on behavioural economics/behavioural psychology/science or other suitable methodology to see if there may be lessons to be learned for our Welsh language transfer Programme and its use in families.

**Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers** and the related **Work Programme for 2017-2021** is the Welsh Ministers’ strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language. The Cymraeg 2050 Strategy sets out the Welsh Government’s long-term approach to achieving the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Although the Strategy for an Ageing Society and its supporting Delivery Plan were not primarily designed to contribute to the achievement of the objectives under the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy, if successful many of the projects will have a positive impact. For example, intergenerational projects that promote Welsh language, more opportunities to socialise and volunteer through the medium of Welsh, and, ultimately,

more cohesive communities. The Strategy and Delivery Plan aim to take a proportionate approach to the Welsh language requirements of the Active Offer<sup>1</sup>, placing the emphasis on what matters to the individual.

3. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language, and explain how you will address these impacts in order to improve outcomes for the Welsh language. **How will the proposal affect Welsh speakers of all ages (both positive and/or adverse effects)? You should note your responses to the following in your answer to this question, along with any other relevant information:**

- ♦ **sustainability of Welsh speaking communities<sup>2</sup> (both positive and/or adverse effects)?**

We know that historically, the intergenerational transmission of Welsh has been problematic in some areas and some Welsh speakers, for many reasons, have not transmitted their Welsh to their children. So we will examine how we can use intergenerational work to help younger people gain or improve Welsh language skills in line with our national policy on Welsh language transmission and use in families.

- ♦ **How will the proposal affect Welsh medium education and Welsh learners of all ages, including adults (both positive and/or adverse effects)?**
- ♦ **How will the proposal affect services<sup>3</sup> available in Welsh (both positive and/or adverse effects)? (e.g. health and social services, transport, housing, digital, youth, infrastructure, environment, local government etc.)**

In Wales, the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh language standards provide the right to receive services in Welsh and require the Welsh language to be treated no less favourably than English. Public organisations also need to consider the impact of their policy decisions on opportunities to use the Welsh language.

**More Than Just Words** is the Welsh Government's strategic framework for developing Welsh language services in health and social care. One of the key principles of this is the Active Offer which means providing services in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. We have embedded the Active Offer throughout the

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<sup>1</sup> An 'Active Offer' simply means providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. The Welsh language should be as visible as the English language.

<sup>2</sup> These can be close-knit rural communities, dispersed social networks in urban settings, and in virtual communities reaching across geographical spaces.

<sup>3</sup> The Welsh Language Strategy aims to increase the range of services offered to Welsh speakers, and to see an increase in use of Welsh-language services.

Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. An individual's well-being, their wishes and feelings, and their rights to participate in decisions that affect them are at the heart of this Act. Our Codes of Practice require local authorities to make sure Welsh language services are offered to Welsh speakers without them having to request it. That means building rights into planning and delivery. Welsh language standards for the health boards and trusts support the drive to develop Welsh language services in health and social care provision.

We are also working with Social Care Wales to update the guidance on *Making Rights Work for Older People*. One version is for the public, the second is for health and social care providers. This includes a section on the Welsh language. We are commissioning Age Cymru to take this work out into the community in the New Year to raise awareness amongst older people and their providers.

The statutory Welsh Language Standards that apply to public bodies across Wales create the **regulatory** framework for delivering these services.

Many vulnerable people, such as older people who suffer from dementia or stroke, also lose their second language and many might not feel very confident to ask for services in Welsh. Providing an *Active Offer* is a vital part of successfully supporting such individuals.

Ensuring that people can use Welsh language services when and where they need them, in a way that suits their Welsh language ability; creating and maintaining opportunities to use our language and building capacity in Welsh language skills, are central to creating an age friendly Wales and we will work with partners to ensure Welsh language policy permeates all aspects of the strategy's implementation.

Making it easier for people to access Welsh language services and use their Welsh wherever they are on their Welsh language journey – we want to create an environment where everyone will want to use their Welsh and feel comfortable to do so in all aspects of their lives. This is important for all services, but even more so in health and care as the quality of care may be compromised by not communicating with people in their first language.

We will further improve access to services by: Publishing a new Performance and Improvement Framework to ensure all local authorities in Wales are collecting the same data to demonstrate their compliance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Local authorities will be required to collate data on the number of care needs assessments completed during the year where there was evidence of the Active Offer of Welsh, where the offer was accepted and where the assessment was undertaken using the language of choice.

A Task and Finish group has been established to review and update the strategic framework. The third version is due to be launched in April 2022.

- ◆ **How will you ensure that people know about services that are available in Welsh and are able to access and use them as easily as they can in English? What evidence / data have you used to inform your assessment, including evidence from Welsh speakers or Welsh language interest groups?**

## **Consultation and engagement**

The Welsh Language Standards require us to seek views on the effects on the Welsh language when engaging or consulting on policy, and to seek the view of Welsh speakers and users of the language.

### Engagement with Welsh speakers

The Strategy for an Ageing Society has been co-produced with older people and their representatives. This means older people have been involved in creating this document from the onset – they have informed its design and development and ultimately will be involved in its delivery. Between 2018 and 2019, we engaged over 1000 older people in a conversation about ageing by visiting national groups and local forums across Wales. We commissioned Age Cymru to carry out engagement events in North and South Wales asking older people '*what matters to you?*' The events were attended by Welsh Government officials and were held in November 2019 and January 2020. The events were promoted in English and Welsh and simultaneous translation was available at both. In North Wales, the event was hosted bi-lingually by Aled Jones from Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn. We also ensured Welsh speaking facilitators were available and two roundtable discussions were held through the medium of Welsh.

Further face to face meetings were planned following the arrangements outlined above, however the emergence of Covid 19 led to their cancellation and the work on the Strategy was suspended as officials focussed on the immediate need to protect life. In lieu of face to face meetings, Age Cymru carried out a survey of older people's views in June 2020 which was available in English and Welsh.

The Strategy was also discussed with officers from each local authority in Wales who lead on older people's policy and implementation. Officials travelled across Wales to meet with Ageing Well Networks and 50+ older people's forums to ensure we were engaging with a range of communities and Welsh speakers.

The engagement and surveys were shared with members of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing (MAFA), whose remit is to represent voice of older people in Wales and who have led the development of the Strategy. Under the auspices of MAFA, five working groups were convened to focus on the key areas that members felt we must get right in planning for an ageing population; transport; participation; housing; making rights real and planning for the future. Members of the working groups included older people, leading academics, and representatives from the public, voluntary and private sectors. The Older People's Commissioner was also represented on all groups. Each working group produced a report which formed the basis of the Strategy for an Ageing Society.

The Welsh Government's commitment to supporting everyone in Wales to age well is documented across all of the working groups – it must be stressed that this takes into account every older person; whether their first language is English or Welsh.

The Welsh language was not raised as a concern as part of the working group engagement, however the following points were noted:

- There is a need to raise awareness of rights among older people in a language that they understand;
- In relation to human rights and well-being, one of the 7 well-being goals from the Well-being and Future Generations Act 2015 is “A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation.
- In ensuring the rights of older people in care homes, their right to communicate in a language of their choice is fundamental.

♦ **What other evidence would help you to conduct a better assessment?**

The most up to date Census data will be available in 2022.

♦ **How will you know if your policy is a success?**

Our report, “Benchmarking the situation of older people in Wales” 2021, will provide us with a baseline for monitoring any improvements in the use of the Welsh language as we commission further updates.