



 <p>GIG CYMRU NHS WALES Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales</p>	<p>Name of Meeting People and Organisational Development Committee</p> <p>Date of Meeting 17 February 2025</p> <p>Agenda item: 5</p>
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Welsh Language Update	
Executive lead:	Neil Lewis, Director People & OD
Author:	Sian Jones, Welsh Language Manager

Approval/Scrutiny route:	Submitted to the Leadership Team on 23 January 2025
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Purpose
<p>This paper gives a status report and update on Public Health Wales’ Welsh-language provision since our last update to the People and Organisational Committee Meeting (PODCOM) in January 2024*, including how we are meeting our statutory obligations, remedial actions we are taking, and our ambitions for the further development of a bilingual culture in the organisation.</p> <p>* Public Health Wales’ annual Welsh Language Standard Annual report and More than Just Words update have been presented to PODCOM in the interim.</p>

Recommendation:				
APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDER <input type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMEND <input type="checkbox"/>	ADOPT <input type="checkbox"/>	ASSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive assurance that Public Health Wales is a bilingual organisation, which offers a good quality service in Welsh to our customers, partners and stakeholders across Wales, has programmes of work in place to improve this and that where we face challenges in meeting legislation, we are striving to address them in a planned and systemic way. 				

Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	4 - Delivering excellent public health services
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	3 - Promoting healthy behaviours
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives

Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	There is no decision required here so an EHIA has not been completed.
Risk and Assurance	Some of our Welsh language standards remain a risk for some areas of the organisation and these are highlighted within individuals risk registers. The report highlights the complaints we have received since April 1 st 2024. (Welsh language risks are linked to risk 207 of the Corporate Risk Register and Risk 4 of the Strategic Risk Register)
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	<p>This report supports and/or takes into account the Health and Care Standards for NHS Wales Quality Themes</p> <p>Theme 3 – Effective Care Theme 4 – Dignified Care Theme 7 – Staff and Resources</p>
Financial implications	There are ongoing financial implications of the Welsh Language Standards, particularly with regard to translation costs, and our future translation processes have been outlined in this paper.
People implications	Recruitment to Welsh essential roles continues to be a challenge and is a workforce planning priority . Upskilling of staff within the organisation is also a focus within the work reported in this paper.



1.0 Purpose / situation

This paper gives a status report and update on Public Health Wales' Welsh-language provision since the last update to People and Organisational Committee Meeting (PODCOM) in January 2024, including how we are meeting our statutory obligations, remedial actions are taking, and our ambitions for the further development of a bilingual culture within the organisation.

The Welsh language plays an integral part in the culture of Public Health Wales, enabling our staff and service users to use their Welsh with us at every opportunity.

2.0 Background

Welsh Language provision in Public Health Wales is determined by various pieces of legislation and government policies. Our direct obligations are set out in the [Welsh Language Standards](#), which are a comprehensive set of standards explaining what we must do with regards to providing services in Welsh, both internally and externally.

The Standards came into force during 2019, and have been embedded well across the organisation with much awareness of the standards and their obligations amongst staff.

Public Health Wales' Welsh Language Group meets quarterly and includes a representative from each Directorate. Members cascade information about Welsh issues and undertake exception reporting back from their teams.

We have a Welsh Language Team which consists of a Welsh Language Manager and Welsh Language Advisor, and following a large piece of work to improve our Welsh translation processes, we welcomed our Welsh Translation Coordinator in September 2024 to lead on our translation processes. This is the first role with translation expertise to be recruited at PHW.

The Welsh Language Team sit within the wider Employee Experience team. The Executive lead for Welsh Language is our Director of People and OD and our non-exec lead is our Vice Chair.

There have been many developments in our Welsh language work over the past few months and this paper outlines examples of these.



3.0 Description/Assessment

Here are some of the Welsh language developments over the past year.

3.1 Welsh Language Standards

Public Health [Wales's Clinical Consultation Plan](#), sets out how we aim to increase the number of clinical consultations we offer in Welsh over the next 5 years to meet Welsh Language Standard 110. It was published in September 2023.

Since then, the Welsh Language Team have been working closely with the Screening Division and Help Me Quit team to ensure the targets within the plan are met and a bespoke monitoring tool on Sharepoint has been created to facilitate this.

The Welsh Language Commissioner's office have held numerous workshops and meetings regarding Standard 110 during 2024, and have expressed that they are content with our progress to date. Work on the plan will continue during 2025 – 2026 with our first progress report being published in late 2027.

Our latest [Welsh Language Standards Annual Report](#) was published on our [Welsh Language web page](#) at the end of September 2024 and highlights our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards generally; best practice from across the organisation and the areas that we will focus on over the next year.

Each Directorate within PHW has a representative which sits on the Corporate Welsh Language Group and every year they present a detailed Action Plan which includes information on compliance with each of the standards to the Welsh Language Team. This supports the process of drafting the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report and the More Than Just Words Annual update, along with any other reporting requests we receive from the Welsh Language Commissioner or Welsh Government.

Our websites (Welsh Language Standard 39): Following a series of complaints and an investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner into our websites and non compliance with Welsh Language Standard 39 specifically, the Welsh Language Team have worked closely with the Digital Communication Team over the past year to put robust processes and guidance in place.

This [checklist](#) and [guidance](#) have been published for all staff and, although 2 further complaints on the Test and Post service were received during 2024, work on the new PHW website is progressing well and will eventually eliminate the risk of non compliance in the future.



The Welsh language team have sought clarity from the Welsh Language Commissioners office on some of our website guidance to ensure best practice is shared from the outset and this will be shared widely with staff in early 2025.

Governance Hub and Welsh Language Policy Making Standards: Public Health Wales, like many other public organisations in Wales, needs to increase compliance with the [Policy Making Standards \(standards 69 – 77\)](#) and this was considered with the Welsh Language Commissioner’s office during their investigation into this area of work in 2024.

The establishment of a Governance Hub within PHW will put in place what is needed to address this in future. Templates for a Welsh language impact assessment tool and guidance, which will enable us to assess the impact of our policy decisions on the Welsh Language, have been drafted by the Welsh Language Team and, once approved, will be shared and used from early 2025. Systematising their usage as part of the governance hub approach will be key.

3.2 Welsh Translation processes

One of the Welsh Language Team’s main priorities during 2024 has been taking forward work to improve our Welsh Translation process. Following the recommendations approved by the Business Executive Team in 2023, the team has worked closely with the Procurement team to procure a new framework provision of external Welsh Translation providers to replace the National Translation Framework which came to an end in 2023.

The tender process was completed in June 2024 and we now have a list of 9 external Welsh Translation suppliers which, along with our Service Level Agreement with the Shared Services Partnership Translation Unit, will meet our Welsh Translation needs. Our relationship with the Translation Unit at NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership continues to be positive and our contract with them continues to grow year on year.

Since our last PODCOM update, we have successfully recruited a Welsh Translation Coordinator, who started in post in September, and now leads on our Welsh translation processes, bringing in a wealth of experience and expertise to the organisation.

We are currently working on the development of a PowerApp dashboard to administer our Welsh Translations, ensuring that the process is much simpler and reduces administrative burden for our staff in the future. The new dashboard will launch in early 2025 and training sessions have been scheduled for those with responsibility for Welsh translation across the organisation.

3.3 Promoting the Welsh Language



The **Ymlaen staff network** has gone from strength to strength since its launch on March 1st 2023. It is now our largest staff network, with over a 100 members. The network have hosted a variety of events over the past year. The main purpose of the network is to promote the Welsh language and the use of Welsh across the organisation, in line with our [Internal Use of Welsh Policy](#). The past year has seen events being held with the Welsh Language Team at Welsh Government, Derek Walker, the Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner and Adam Pearce, author and translator of The Hobbit into Welsh, ensuring a variety of events for all interests.

The network co-chairs are working in partnership with the Welsh Language Team to hold our second [Welsh Language Week from March 3rd – 7th 2025](#).

3.4 Developing the Welsh skills of our workforce

We continue to encourage and support our staff to learn, develop and use their Welsh while they work for Public Health Wales and our data tells us that more of our staff are learning Welsh. This year, 24 members of staff signed up to 30 week courses starting in September 2024, which is a slight increase to the number registered last year.

During 2023 we heard news of an exciting opportunity for staff within the NHS in Wales to develop their Welsh and build their confidence to use it at work. Over the past year we have worked with Coleg Cambria, our Raising Confidence provider, to ensure that our staff have the opportunity to attend the bespoke sessions with a tutor. Despite some teething issues, the scheme is going strong with 33 members of staff taking part to date. Cohort 3 launched in January 2025.

Another offer by the Learn Welsh Centre for the NHS in Wales in the new 'Croeso' scheme, which is aimed at those who currently have no Welsh skills recorded and will give them an introduction to Cymraeg. The course, also provided by Coleg Cambria, will enable us to meet the aim within the [More Than Just Words 5 year action plan](#), that all NHS Wales staff will have a basic level of Welsh by 2027. We look forwards to launching this scheme in late January 2025.

3.5 Welsh Language Commissioner's office

Our relationship with the Welsh Language Commissioner's office has continued to be positive with our latest [annual report](#) being well received in September and a successful annual meeting held in March.

Since November 2024, we have a new main contact within the Commissioner's office, who is approachable and realistic in expectations and we look forward to working with them over the next year.

In January 2025, we compiled and submitted our response to the Commissioner's updated [Enforcement Policy](#). We welcome the revised policy, which has a new

focus on co-regulation between the Welsh Language Commissioner's office and organisations operating Welsh Language Standards, such as ourselves.

3.6 Welsh Language skills data successes

Our records show that 95% of the Public Health Wales workforce have recorded their Welsh language skills on ESR. Also, 92.8% of the workforce have completed the Welsh Language Awareness mandatory training module on ESR. This data is very positive and the latter surpasses Welsh Government's target of 90%, which we are very proud of.

3.7 Welsh language complaints

During 2024, Public Health Wales received two formal complaints from members of the Public via the Welsh Language Commissioner's office.

Both complaints (**CS1283 and CS1243**) were regarding the quality and consistency of the Welsh content on the [Test and Post platform](#), which is accessible to users via the [Sexual Health Wales](#) website.

The complaints are similar to others received in the past regarding the platform and the issues and risk involved have been identified and escalated.

Our responses to the Welsh Language Commissioner's office on both complaints were satisfactory to them but the Commissioner has requested an update on our website work more generally, and on how the Test and Post Platform issues will be rectified as part of this work by March 2025.

The Welsh Language Team and Digital Communications teams will work together on the update in February and give the Commissioner's office assurance that we are on track with building our new website, which will be fully compliant with Welsh Language Standard 39 by the end of March.

4.0 Our priorities over the next year

Over the next financial year, our main Welsh language priorities will be:

1. To continue to progress the achievement of the targets set out in Public Health [Wales's Clinical Consultation Plan](#), in line with Welsh Language Standard 110, and increase the number of clinical consultations we offer in Welsh over the next 5 years.
2. To continue to implement the new Welsh translation process and provision and to constantly review and improve them



3. To continue to work closely with and support colleagues in the Communications team on the web estate remediation work to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and give assurance to the Welsh Language Commissioner’s office.
4. To support Directorates to complete and submit the Compliance Action Plan to feed into our annual reports.
5. To ensure our learn Welsh opportunities for staff continue to be accessible and that our staff have the opportunity to take part in all aspects of the Learn Welsh Scheme for the Health & Care Sector. This includes our staff in Screening locations and laboratories.
6. To deliver a successful Welsh Language Week between March 3rd – 7th 2025, which will raise awareness and the use of Welsh across the organisation
7. To work closely with the Governance Hub team to ensure the Welsh language impact our policy decisions are considered and that we have robust processes in place to assess this.
8. To increase the number of Welsh speaking members of staff we have via our recruitment, workforce planning and development opportunities.

3.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This work has been put together following the five ways of working, as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act, in the following ways:



Hir-dymor

Long Term

The work outlined in this paper is concerned with embedding long-term changes in systems and procedures, in line with our People Strategy



Atal

Prevention

Embedding Welsh-language procedures will prevent our organisation from failing to provide the service that is expected of us by the Welsh speakers we serve.



Integreiddio

Integration

The work of the Welsh language team provides an integrated response to a number of cross-cutting frameworks, including the Welsh Language Standards, the More Than Just Words initiative, and the Health and Social Care Standards.



The Welsh language team are working closely with teams across PHW to help them to ensure they are meeting their obligations, providing practical help and support where needed

Cultural work across the organisation described in this paper aims to increase the number of staff who can feel a sense of ownership of the Welsh language

1. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- **Receive assurance** that Public Health Wales is a bilingual organisation, which offers a good quality service in Welsh to our customers, partners and stakeholders across Wales, has programmes of work in place to improve this and that where we face challenges in meeting legislation, we are striving to address them in a planned and systemic way.