

Pontarddulais Town Council

Welsh Language Policy

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Statement

Pontarddulais Town Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. The scheme sets out how the Council will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public.

Objectives

To enable everyone who receives or uses the Council's services or contributes to the democratic process to do so through the medium of Welsh or English, according to personal choice

- To encourage the use of the Welsh language in the community
- To encourage others to use the Welsh language in the community

Introduction to Pontarddulais Town Council

Amongst the Council's main duties are:

- Maintain public footpaths;
- Consider planning matters;
- Suggest improvements regarding highways;
- Work with the police to safeguard the community;
- Provide Christmas lights;
- Provide financial assistance for various voluntary organisations and charities;
- Look after public seating and notice boards;
- Appoint representatives to numerous local and outside bodies;

There are a number of social, cultural and community groups that play a prominent part in the life of the community. The Council is working to promote community development and social activities and respond to local needs to improve the standard of life in the area.

The Council has sixteen elected Members, and the Clerk works part time from the office and his home. Eight Members and the Clerk are able to communicate orally through the medium of Welsh. Four Members are able to communicate in written form through the medium of Welsh.

Pontarddulais is regarded as one of the strongest Welsh-speaking communities in the City and County of Swansea. 38% of its 5,121 residents are Welsh speakers. Only the ward of Mawr, with 44%, has a larger percentage of Welsh speakers. The overall percentage for Swansea is significantly lower (22.5% have one or more Welsh language skills.)

There has been a steady growth in demand for Welsh medium education in Pontarddulais. Currently, 225 children attend Ysgol Gynradd Bryniago, the Welsh medium primary school in Pontarddulais. The majority continue their education through the medium of Welsh at Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr in Gowerton. Gorseinon College offers many Welsh courses for adults in the Pontarddulais area, and a CYD group holds regular meetings to give learners an opportunity to practise their Welsh in informal surroundings.

Pontarddulais has a strong musical tradition, and most of its choirs – such as Côr Meibion y Bont and Lleisiau Lliw - sing mainly in Welsh. The town has 3 Welsh chapels, who

organise many Welsh medium activities in the community. There is also a Merched y Wawr group in Pontarddulais, a bilingual patchwork club and a Welsh medium dining club (Clwb Cinio Glannau Llŵchwr). A Cylch Meithrin is held at St Teilo's Church, and a weekly Welsh medium youth club meets in Ysgol Gynradd Bryniago.

Service Planning and Deliveries

New Policies and Initiatives

The Council is committed to treat Welsh and English equally in any new policies and initiatives; the linguistic consequences of which will be assessed during the formulation process.

New policies and initiatives will be consistent with the scheme, will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh whenever possible and will move the Council closer to implementing the principles of equality at every opportunity.

Measures contained in the scheme will be applied to new policies and initiatives.

The scheme will not be altered without the agreement of the Welsh Language Board. The Welsh Language Board will be consulted in advance regarding proposals which will affect the scheme or the schemes of other organisations.

Any members of staff, councillors or external advisers involved in the process of formulating new policies and initiatives will be made aware of the Council's language scheme and the means of its implementation.

A working group of councillors shall be established to assess and evaluate the effects of the introduction of new policies and initiatives in relation to the language scheme. It will review the relevance of the scheme to its stated aims and objectives on an annual basis. The group is referred to as the Welsh Language Working Group. Other councillors may be co-opted as necessary.

If any measure currently not included in the Council's language scheme should become relevant in the future, the scheme will be amended accordingly.

Timetable: March 2009

Service Planning and Delivery

The Council will ensure that members of the public will be able to communicate with it in English or Welsh, according to personal preference, across the whole spectrum of its work.

The Council will achieve the commitments set out in the scheme by:

- Arranging that Welsh-speaking employees or councillors are available to assist when necessary;

- Employing professional external translators; and
- Adopting systems which facilitate service provision in the language chosen by the member of public.

To facilitate contact, the Council will provide the names and telephone numbers of designated Welsh speaking employees and councillors in the Council

Timetable: March 2009

Commitment to Standard

The Council will ensure that the standard of service delivery will be equally high in both languages. This commitment will be stated in relevant corporate documents, in recruitment advertisements and in other situations where statements on equal opportunities and quality of service are made.

The content of stated standards and their implementation will be monitored. Details concerning compliance with standards and monitoring procedures will be provided in guidelines issued to employees and councillors.

Timetable: March 2009

Dealing with Welsh Speaking Public

Written Communication

The Council will welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh.

All correspondence will be dealt with promptly, whether in Welsh or in English.

All correspondence with the Council requiring a reply will receive a signed reply in the language in which it was written.

Correspondence following a face-to-face or telephone conversation will be in the language of the conversation unless otherwise requested.

Correspondence initiated by the Council will be in the preferred language of the recipient, if known, or bilingually if not known.

A standard sentence will be incorporated into all official notepaper and compliment slips indicating that communication with the Council is welcomed in both languages.

All employees and councillors will be provided with guidance on language equality in relation to written communication.

Timetable: October 2009

Telephone Communication

The Council welcomes telephone calls in Welsh or English.

The Clerk will give a bilingual greeting and will welcome telephone calls to the office in Welsh or English.

Where there is an answerphone facility in operation the message on the answerphone will be bilingual and will invite messages to be left in either Welsh or English.

The Welsh Language Working Group will provide all employees and councillors with guidance on language equality in relation to telephone communication.

Timetable: March 2009

Public Meetings

Contributions are welcomed in either Welsh or English at public meetings held by the Council. This will be stated clearly in the notices that inform or publicise the meeting.

When the Council is aware that a member of the public wishes to speak Welsh in a public meeting that would otherwise be conducted in English, this should be respected by providing appropriate translation arrangements.

Council Meetings

Council meetings, which are open to the public but where the public are not part of the meeting, are conducted in English.

The notice and agenda for the Council's meetings will be bilingual.

A bilingual version of the minutes will be available to the public on request.

The Council will respond to requests for information in relation to the minutes, or sections of the minutes in the preferred language of the individual.

Face to Face Meetings with the Public

The Council will welcome meetings with the public in either Welsh or English, and will ensure that appropriate arrangements are taken to enable any member of the public to discuss matters with the Clerk in Welsh should they wish to do so.

Other Dealings with the Public

The Council contacts the public via modern technology, namely computers and e-mail, and these mediums are available in Welsh and English for the public.

Timetable: March 2009

The Council's Public Face

Corporate Identity

The Council's name is Cyngor Tref Pontarddulais Town Council.

The Council will adopt a bilingual corporate identity by March 2009

The Council's name will appear in both languages on all external and internal signs, whether free standing or attached to, or painted on, buildings.

The Council will have bilingual letter headings, fax covers, compliment slips and where used, bilingual business cards, visiting cards and identification badges, in and on which the address will appear in both languages. All other goods and materials displaying the Council's name, logo, address etc. will also be bilingual.

The logo, where used, will include the name of the Council in both languages.

A standard sentence in both Welsh and English will be incorporated into all official notepaper and compliment slips indicating that correspondence in both languages is welcome.

All Welsh text will be produced or checked by competent writers of Welsh.

Timetable: March 2009

Signage

All new or replacement signs erected outside the Council's premises or attached to, or painted on, buildings will be bilingual; and all signs inside the Council's premises will also be bilingual.

Format, size, equality, legibility and prominence of text on signs will respect the principle of equality.

If separate signs are used for the two languages both texts will be equal in format, size, quality, legibility and prominence.

Timetable: March 2009

Published and Printed Material

All material printed and published by the Council for the use of the public will be bilingual. Publication of Welsh and English versions together in one document will be the norm. If the two language versions are published separately, both versions will be issued simultaneously, distributed together and equally accessible.

Both languages will be treated equally in key documents produced by the Council for the public.

All press releases will be bilingual and will include a contact name for Welsh language interviews, and will specifically target papurau bro (monthly community papers).

All advertising and publicity activities will be bilingual.

Council advertisements and notices to be placed in the press, on notice boards or any other medium will be bilingual.

Job advertisements will appear bilingually in English/bilingual publications, and will appear in Welsh in Welsh language publications.

Guidance on publishing and printing materials will be issued to consultants, designers and publishers. Copywriters and translators will be directed to the Guidelines on Bilingual Design published by the Welsh Language Board.

Timetable: March 2009

Statutory and Promotional Functions

In the information that is sent to those intending to apply for financial assistance towards local activities, the Council will make it clear that there is need for applicants to describe how they intend to reflect the bilingual nature of the community and their audience in the activity(ies) for which they require financial support. When considering applications, the Council will ensure that applicants have appropriately reflected the linguistic nature of the community and their audience in their application.

In submitting proposals the bilingual element will be a matter for the Council to consider and when appropriate could be a condition of grant.

When the Council is consulted on planning applications, the Council will encourage applicants to erect signs bilingually in locations such as offices, businesses and shops and supermarkets by referring to the linguistic nature of the area.

When the Council is consulted on the naming of streets, developments and new estates, the Council will support the use of bilingual names.

Where only minor differences exist between the Welsh and English spelling of place, street, ward or community names, the Council will support the adoption of the Welsh version.

Timetable: March 2009

Services by Other Parties

Any arrangements made by the Council to use a third party to deliver services to the public on its behalf will comply with the specific requirements in the Scheme as outlined by the Council. The Council will outline which relevant measures in the Scheme the third party will have to adhere to within the tendering or contract specifications.

The third party will need to confirm that it has complied with the relevant aspects of the Scheme by letter.

Timetable: March 2009

Implementing and Monitoring the Scheme

Staffing

The Clerk of the Council is bilingual. When that post becomes vacant the advert for the post will note that having bilingual skills will be desirable for the post to ensure that the Council can implement the clauses contained in this Scheme.

Timetable: March 2009

Administrative Arrangements

This Scheme has the full support of the Council.

The Clerk will be responsible for implementing the Scheme on a day-to-day basis within the Council.

Timetable: March 2009

The Translation Service

The Clerk will be responsible for arranging the written translation needs of the Council, and will also be responsible for the standard of all Welsh text produced.

The Clerk will be responsible for arranging simultaneous translation facilities for all the Council's needs.

When needed, this facility will be available for all public meetings arranged by or on behalf of the Council, and in any other Council meeting if that is the decision of the Council.

Timetable: March 2009

Monitoring

Responsibility for monitoring the scheme will rest with the Council's Welsh Language Working Group.

The Council will receive a brief annual report on implementing the Scheme that will be displayed locally (for example, the local press, local information boards, monthly papur bro etc) with a copy being sent to the Welsh Language Board. Also the Council will invite local Welsh speaking residents to offer their views on the service and how it could be improved, by placing a copy of the report in the local library.

The Report will deal with every aspect of the Scheme.

The Council will welcome suggestions from the public regarding improvements to any aspect of the Scheme via letter.

Timetable: March 2010

Publicity

The Council will publicise the Scheme regularly through its noticeboards.

Timetable: March 2009

Contacting the Council

Any comments, complaints or suggestions regarding the Scheme should be addressed to: Philip Aneurin John, Clerk to the Council, The Institute, 45 St Teilo Street, Pontarddulais, Swansea, SA4 8SY or phone 01792 884544 or email

pontarddulaistowncouncil@yahoo.co.uk