



## Cyngor Cymuned Blaenhonddan

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## WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

(Adopted at Council on 17 July 2017)

### 1 Opening Statement

- 1.1 The Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales it will treat Welsh and English on a basis of equality. This Scheme sets out how the Council will implement that principle in the provision of services to the public. At the time of adoption, there is no legal requirement on the Council to submit the Scheme for the approval of the Welsh Language Commissioner, but the Scheme has been prepared so that the Council can demonstrate its commitment to the principle, and will be the basis for any future review and any request for submission and/or approval.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that members of the public can express their views and needs better in their preferred language, that enabling them to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice rather than a concession and that the denial of that right could place members of the public at a real disadvantage. The Council will, therefore, offer the public the right to choose which language to use in dealings with the Council.
- 1.3 The Council aims:
  - 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 use of the Welsh language in the community

## **2 Blaenhonddan Community Council Services**

- 2.1 The Council maintains and runs six community centres and six playgrounds in its area, and is also responsible for two playing fields. It assumes responsibility for the maintenance of some public rights of way, and manages a small area of allotments.
- 2.2 The Council liaises with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Welsh Government, South Wales Police and various other public bodies on behalf of its residents, responding to consultations and other approaches, and ensuring that local views are properly conveyed and heard
- 2.3 The Council has eighteen Members, and fifteen part time members of staff, 3 of whom are based in the Council's Offices at Cadoxton Community Centre. Two Members of Council and two of the office staff are able to speak and write in the Welsh language.

## **3 Service Planning and Delivery**

### **3.1 *New Policies and Initiatives***

3.1.1 In devising new policies and initiatives the Council will:

- assess their linguistic effect and ensure that they are consistent with the Welsh Language Scheme.
- promote and facilitate the use of Welsh wherever possible and move closer to implementing the principle of equality fully at every opportunity.
- consult with the Welsh Language Commissioner when the Commissioner's role in relation to the Welsh Language Scheme has been clarified
- Ensure that those involved in formulating policy are aware of the Scheme, and of the Council's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

### **3.2 *Standards of Quality***

3.2.1 Services provided in English or Welsh will be of an equally high standard and provided promptly

## **4 Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public**

### **4.1 *Written Communication***

4.1.1 The Council will welcome correspondence in either English or Welsh.

- 4.1.2 Correspondence through the medium of Welsh will not, in itself, lead to any significant delay.
- 4.1.3 All correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh.
- 4.1.4 All correspondence following a telephone or face-to-face conversation in Welsh or a meeting where it was established that Welsh is the preferred language of the person, will be in Welsh.
- 4.1.5 All correspondence with a member of the public will be initiated in his/her preferred language if known.
- 4.1.4 The Council will make arrangements to translate correspondence as needed in order to respond to correspondence promptly and in the original language.
- 4.1.6 The Clerk to the Council will be responsible for translating correspondence.
- 4.1.7 The Council's official headed paper will include a statement in both languages making it clear that correspondence is welcome in either Welsh or English.

## **4.2 Telephone Calls**

- 4.2.1 The Clerk to the Council and other staff will welcome telephone calls in Welsh or English.
- 4.2.2 If the member of staff is not bilingual, he/she will offer to arrange for a Welsh speaking officer to return the call when a member of the public wishes to speak Welsh, or explain that the individual is welcome to continue with the call in English or send in their enquiry in written form in Welsh.
- 4.2.3 When posts become vacant they will be advertised confirming that bilingual skills will be desirable so that the Council can offer a bilingual service to the public.

## **4.3 Public Meetings**

- 4.3.1 All publicity for public meetings will be bilingual whenever practicable, and will invite those attending to notify the Clerk of their language of choice in advance so that appropriate translation arrangements can be made. In the event of an Emergency Public Meeting being called, all publicity will be in English.
- 4.3.2 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, provided that adequate notification has been provided to the Clerk in advance so that the appropriate translation arrangements can be made.
- 4.3.3 At least one staff member or elected member will be present at public meetings to welcome the public and to deal with enquiries, questions or comments in Welsh.

4.3.4 Any written materials such as leaflets, acetates or presentation slides that are used in public meetings will be available in both Welsh and English where practicable, or as soon as possible thereafter if needed.

#### **4.4 Council Meetings**

4.4.1 Council Meetings (namely the Council's regular meetings, which are open to the public, but where the public are not part of the meeting) are conducted in English.

4.4.2 The notice and agenda for the Council's meetings will be in English, but a version translated into Welsh will be provided on request, within a reasonable timescale.

4.4.3 The minutes will be in English but a version translated into Welsh, in whole or in part, will be provided on request, within a reasonable timescale.

4.4.4 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.

#### **4.5 Face-to-Face Meetings with the Public**

4.5.1 The Council will welcome meetings with the public in either Welsh or English and the Clerk will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to enable any member of the public who wishes to discuss matters in Welsh to do so with a bilingual officer or Member of the Council. If such arrangements are not possible, the Clerk will explain the situation and offer to discuss the matter in English or to receive the enquiry in written form in Welsh.

#### **4.6 Other Dealings with the Public**

4.6.1 The Council's website provides information through the medium of English but arrangements are in hand to provide a bilingual website during 2017/18, which will deliver information in accordance with this Welsh Language Scheme. In the meantime, the Clerk will arrange for a Welsh version of specific website content to be provided on request within a reasonable timescale.

### **5 The Council's "Public Face"**

#### **5.1 Corporate Identity**

5.1.1 The Council has adopted a bilingual corporate identity, and its name is "Blaenhonddan Community Council" and "Cyngor Cymuned Blaenhonddan".

5.1.2 The name and address of the Council does appear bilingually on official headed paper, compliment slips, e-mails and any other promotional material.

## **5.2 Signage**

5.2.1 In future, all new signs that are purchased for the Council's property will be bilingual, as will any other public information signs that are purchased, for which the Council is responsible. Where practical, the two languages will appear side by side, or as appropriate to meet design and linguistic requirements. The size, quality, legibility and prominence of text will be equal in Welsh and English.

## **5.3 Publishing and Printing Material**

5.3.1 All publications and printed material aimed at the public, excluding technical financial documents, will be bilingual with both language versions forming one document. The versions will be printed side-by-side where possible to facilitate easy cross-reference, distribution and offer language choice.

5.3.2 If Welsh and English versions are published separately they will appear simultaneously, and be distributed together and be equally accessible.

5.3.3 Public Audit and Election notifications will be bilingual. .

5.3.4 Job advertisements will appear bilingually in English language/bilingual publications and in Welsh only in Welsh Language publications.

## **5.4 Statutory and Promotional Functions**

5.4.1 In respect of any requests for financial assistance towards local activities, where appropriate, the Council will make it clear that there is need for applicants to describe how they intend to reflect the linguistic nature of the community and their audience in the activity(ies) for which they require financial support. In submitting proposals the bilingual element will be a matter for the applicant to consider and not for the Council to require as a condition of grant.

5.4.2 The Council will advise third parties that the local language initiative (Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot) can provide advice and practical assistance in relation to the bilingual matters, and in respect of grants that may be able to assist.

5.4.3 When the Council is consulted on planning applications, the Council will encourage applicants through the planning department of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council to erect bilingual signs in locations such as offices, businesses, shops and supermarkets by referring to the linguistic nature of the area.

5.4.4 When the Council is consulted on the naming of streets, developments and new estates, the Council will support the use of indigenous names, where appropriate. 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. The Council will ask the opinion of the Place Names Standardisation Panel in any cases of uncertainty. .

## **5.5 Services by Other Parties**

5.5.1 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, where appropriate. The Council will outline which relevant measures in the Scheme the third party will have to adhere to within the tendering or contract specifications.

5.5.2 The third party will need to confirm that it has complied with the relevant aspects of the Scheme in writing.

## **6 Implementing and Monitoring the Scheme**

### **6.1 Staffing**

6.1.1 When positions within the Council become vacant, it will be noted in the advert, where appropriate, that bilingual skills are desirable.

### **6.2 Administrative Arrangements**

6.2.1 This scheme has the full support of the Council.

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

### **6.3 The Translation Service**

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

5.3.2 If the Clerk cannot complete the work within the timescale, the Council will employ an external translator.

5.3.3 When needed, the Clerk will be responsible for arranging simultaneous translation facilities for all the Council's needs.

5.3.4 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.

### **6.4 Monitoring**

6.4.1 Responsibility for monitoring the Scheme will rest with the Clerk to the Council.

6.4.2 The Council will periodically produce a brief report on implementing the Scheme that will be displayed locally in its community centres with a copy being made available to the Welsh Language Commissioner if requested.

6.4.3 The Council will welcome suggestions from the public regarding improvements to any aspect of the Scheme

### **6.5 *Publicity***

6.5.1 The Council will publicise the Scheme through the local information notice boards.

### **6.6 *Contacting the Council***

6.6.1 Any comments, complaints or suggestions regarding the Scheme should be addressed to the Clerk to the Council at the address above.