



Welsh Language Strategy

(2017 – 2022)

Prepared in line with the requirements
Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

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Background

This draft five year strategy has been prepared by Torfaen County Borough Council as the methodology for promoting the Welsh language and facilitating the use of the language in Communities within the Borough in compliance with Standard 145 of Torfaen County Borough Council's Compliance Notice under the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015.

Our approach, as set out in this document, is structured around five focus areas which reflect the Welsh Government's current Welsh language strategy and draft Strategy for 2017. The strategy sets out our strategic priorities under each of these areas, and identifies the changes that we will need to make.

The Council recognises their duty to provide service in both Welsh and English but also collaborate to promote and encourage the wider use of Welsh in all aspects of the social and economic life of Torfaen. This is a strategy is not for any one organisation and delivering the strategy will therefore rely on partnership working: between public sector partners (PSB), the public, private sectors; and, most importantly of all, the residents and visitors to Torfaen.

Supporting young people, families and communities to learn Welsh and feel free to use the language will also be essential to the success of this strategy. Recent years have seen a steady growth in the demand for Welsh medium education. The education system and the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) will play a key role in ensuring the future growth of the language as we aim to increase the number of children – and parents – who have the opportunity to use Welsh, and increase opportunities to use the language outside the school gates.

Linguistic Profile

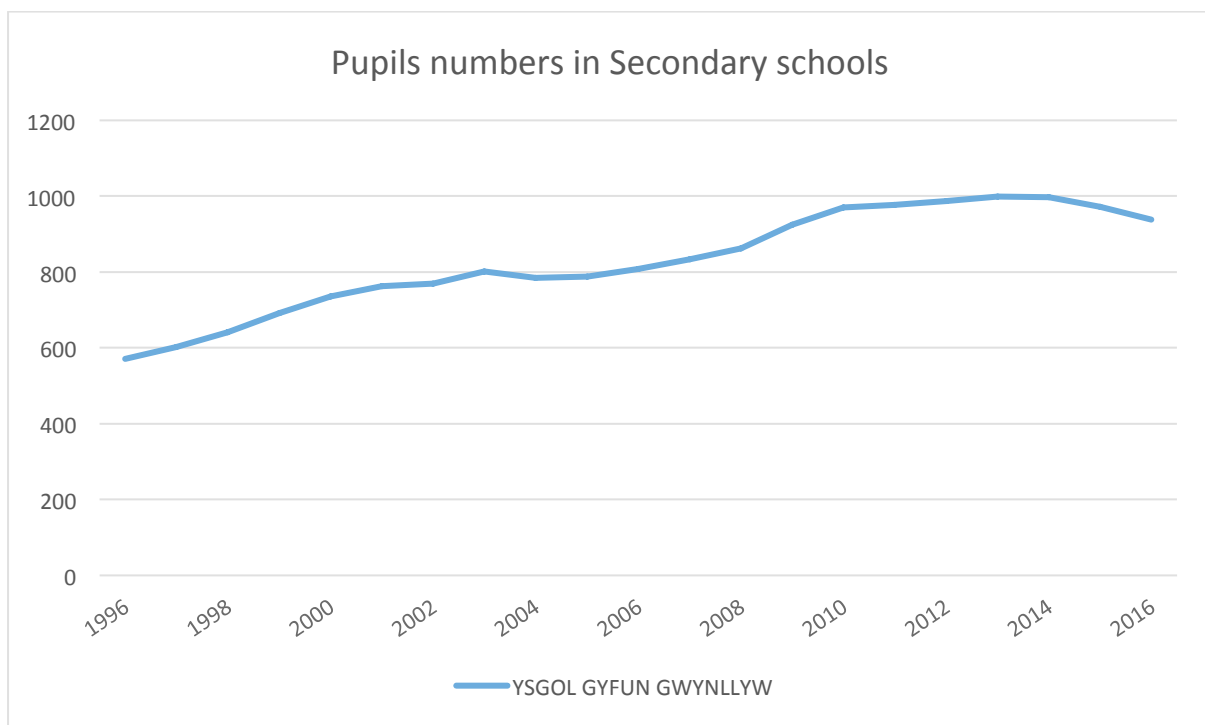
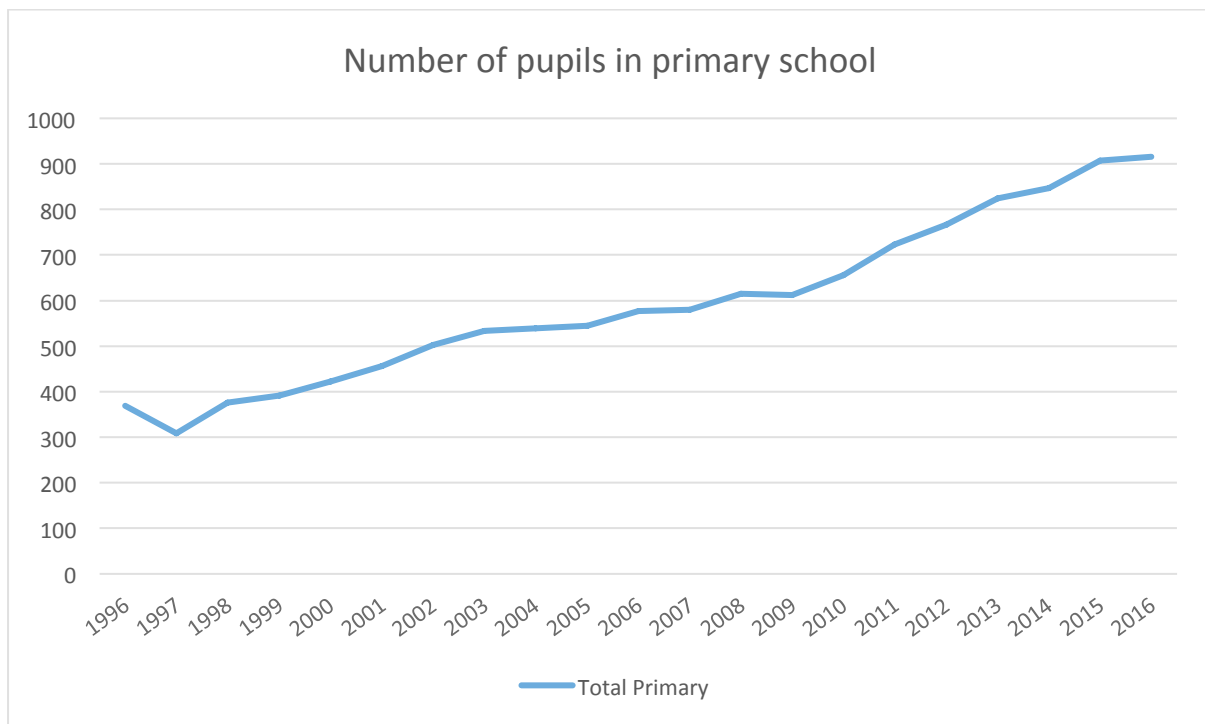
In 2011, 9.8% of Torfaen residents indicated that they were able to speak Welsh. The demographics of the area is very different to that of the traditional heartlands of the Welsh language i.e North and South West Wales. The table below illustrates the percentage and number of occupants within each Ward who are able to speak Welsh.

Ward	Population (3+)	Able to Speak Welsh (No.)	Able to Speak Welsh (%)
Abersychan	6794	776	11.42
Blaenavon	5823	581	9.98
Brynwern	1700	137	8.06
Coed Eva	2257	237	10.50
Croesyceiliog North	3358	352	10.48
Croesyceiliog South	1753	202	11.52
Cwmyniscoy	1376	124	9.01
Fairwater	5039	466	9.25
Greenmeadow	3900	436	11.18
Llantarnam	5341	442	8.28
Llanyrafon North	1955	219	11.20
Llanyrafon South	2662	251	9.43
New Inn	5831	500	8.57
Panteg	6944	607	8.74
Pontnewydd	6076	656	10.80
Pontnewynydd	1434	137	9.55
Pontypool	1771	132	7.45
St Cadocs & Penygarn	1493	129	8.64
St Dials	3519	323	9.18
Snatchwood	1990	192	9.65
Trevethin	3425	328	9.58
Two Locks	5998	681	11.35
Upper Cwmbran	5039	520	10.32
Wainfelin	2366	213	9.00
Torfaen	87844	8641	9.84

Comparison in the number and percentage of Welsh speakers between 1981 and 2011

	1981	1991	2001	2011
TORFAEN	2,144 (2.49%)	2,119 (4.35%)	9,425 (11.10%)	8,641 (9.84%)

Here are the numbers of pupils in Welsh medium education within Torfaen.



This strategy will be based and monitored on local and national key performance indicators around Welsh language. These Key Performance Indicators are contained within the “How” section of this strategy. The recruitment and retention of staff to deliver services through the medium of Welsh will be important and recognising the language as a skill within the workplace. Torfaen Council, the PSB, partners, and individuals have a vital role to play in promoting the status of the Welsh language and in maintaining and widening the use of Welsh in all aspects of life

within the county. By means of this strategy, members of Torfaen Council intend to support the excellent efforts that are already undertaken throughout the county, as well as identifying ways in which the Council can further build on that work within the scope of our own influence.

The 2011 Census, in comparison to the 2001 Census, showed a decrease in the number of Welsh speakers despite Torfaen being host to the regional Welsh medium secondary School (Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw) and the opening of a third Welsh medium primary in 2010. This may be down to the Census not ascertaining the competency levels in Welsh.

To the contrary, the Welsh Language usage survey, commissioned by the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language commissioner during 2013-2015 indicate that the number of Welsh speakers in the area is nearer 23%, and is based on 105 Welsh speakers being surveyed out of a possible 9,000 residents. We therefore are unable to use this as a base mark for increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the area.

How

In this section we will look at five focus areas that are aimed at helping us achieve our main objectives, and suggest a number of steps to achieve our vision.

- a) Legislation and Policy
- b) Education
- c) The Norm
- d) Services and Events
- e) The Rights of the Public

These will help us deliver the following outcomes:

- Increase the use of Welsh by citizens with Welsh language skills
- Increase the number of Welsh speakers
- Increase the visual presence of the Welsh language
- Promote Welsh Culture

a) Legislation and Policy

Although the strategy is a new statutory requirement for the Council under the Welsh language standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, it builds upon the work already undertaken in Torfaen to meet the needs of the community.

The following section sets out the regulatory framework which, this new strategy compliments:

Welsh Language (No.1) Regulation Standards 2015 from 30th March 2016

All local authorities in Wales have a statutory duty to comply with the new Welsh language standards which explain how they the organisations should use the Welsh language in different situations. The duties which come from the Welsh Language Measure mean that organisations should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language, together with promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language.

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

The Act aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act will make the public bodies think about the long term effects, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. One of the seven Well-being goals listed in the Act is

“A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language”.

Welsh Government Welsh Language Strategy: A living language: a language for living

The Welsh Government's Welsh language strategy for 2012 to 2017 is aimed at the promotion and facilitation of the use of Welsh language in everyday life and its vision is to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales. The Welsh Government has recently launched a new draft strategy 'A million Welsh speakers by 2050' for consultation. Our strategy will complement the priorities of the Welsh Government's vision and work towards increasing the number of Welsh speakers in Torfaen.

Welsh Government: More than just words

This strategic framework for promoting the use of the Welsh language within Health, Social Services and Social Care. Ensuring positive wellbeing outcomes for individuals, something which underpins the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Codes of Practice under the Act require local authorities to ensure that the Welsh language is built into service planning and delivery of services and the "Active Offer" made to Welsh speakers without them having to request a service in Welsh.

Torfaen County Borough Council: Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

The School Standard and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) places a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare and introduce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The Act enables Welsh Ministers to approve the Plan submitted, approve the Plan with modifications or reject the Plan and require the authority to prepare another. The WESP focuses on the targets in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy and local authorities are expected to report annually on performance against these targets. Increasing the number of Welsh speakers should start at an early age, and schools, both Welsh medium and English Medium schools have a large part to play in producing Welsh speakers and raising an awareness of what it means to be Welsh. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan produced by Torfaen Council is fundamental in shaping the linguistic profile of Torfaen in the future.

b) Education

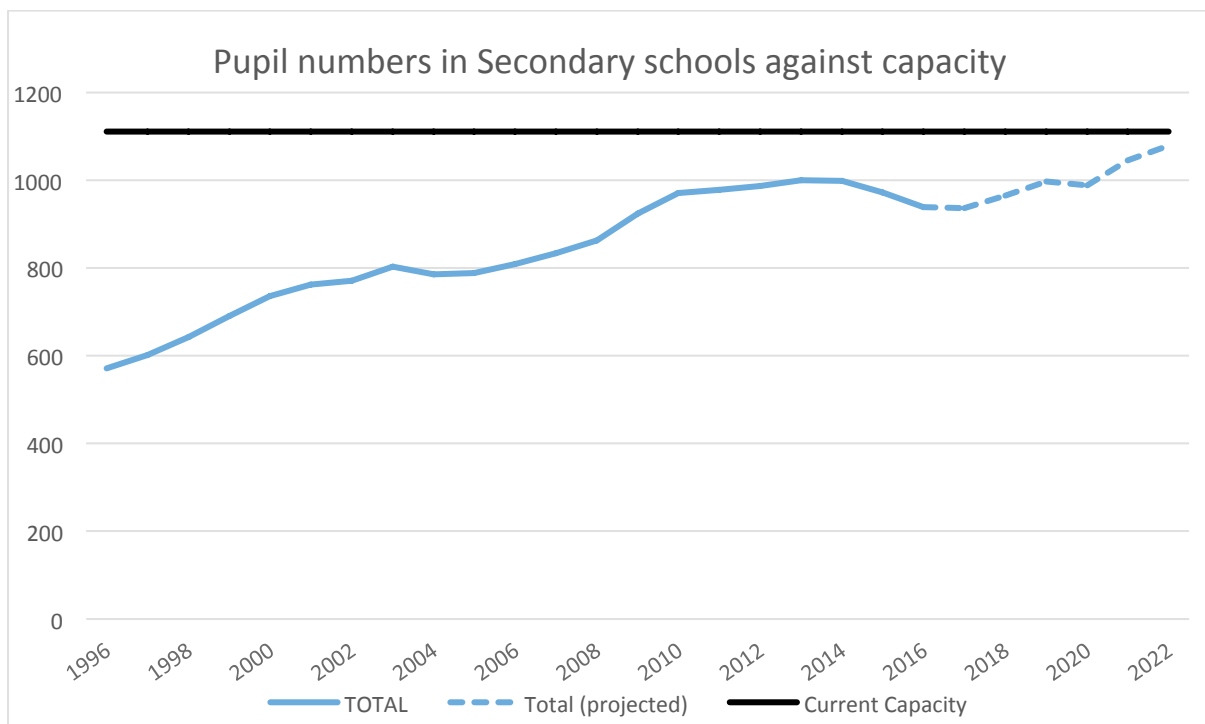
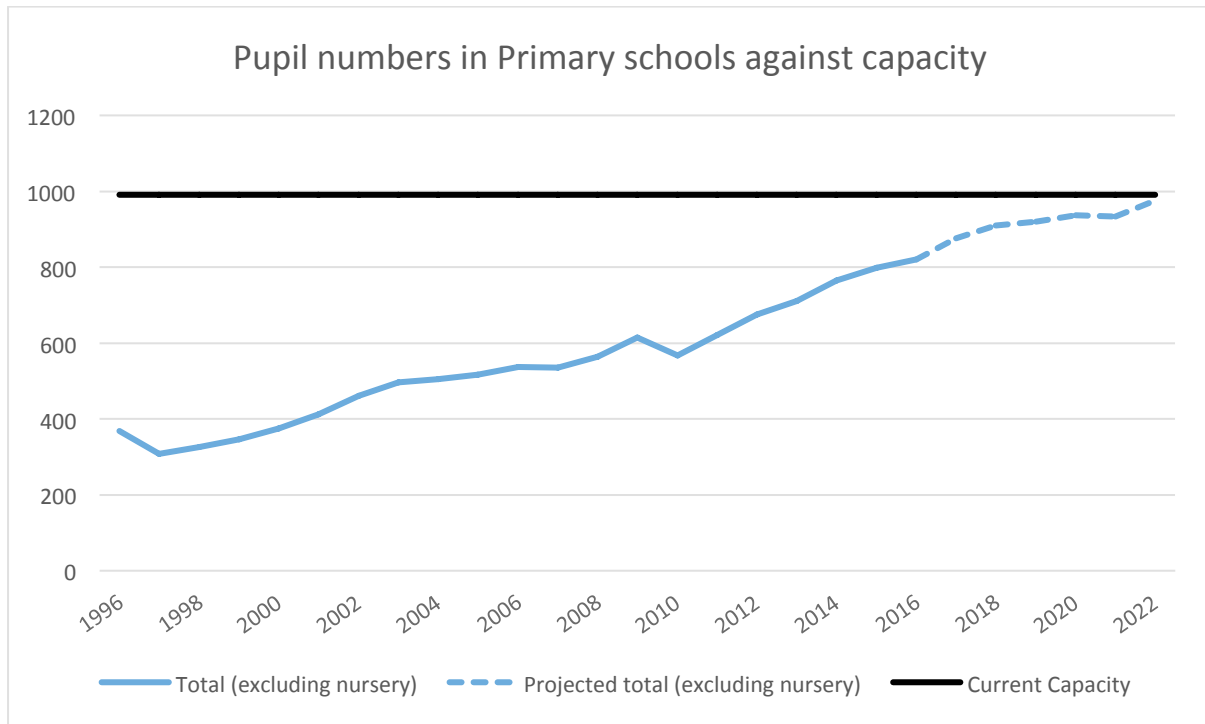
Learning the language at an early age is key to the success of this strategy and without sufficient numbers of parents opting to send their children through Welsh medium education, will have an impact on the number of professionals able to deliver services through Welsh and pass on those skills to future generations.

The consultation will target new parents to assess the preference of parents to opt for Welsh medium education, enforce the benefits of bilingualism and address some of the barriers that English speaking parents may have in sending their child to Category A Schools.

The borough is host to 3 Welsh primary schools and one regional secondary school. (Catchment Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Newport). The table

below shows the growth of Welsh medium education over the past decade as well as projecting this trend for the life of the strategy.

Projected numbers are based on 2016 parental preference trends, which are reviewed annually. The council monitors demand for Welsh Medium Education provision closely to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet demand.



The projected figures are based on the continuum of the current status quo and does not factor any promotion of bilingual education in the Borough.

The continuum of students in post 16 Welsh medium education, through schools, further education and universities is vital to ensure the language skill being maintained and transferred to the workplace, thus supporting the Welsh language services offered by organisations.

The Norm

Due to the demography of the area and the decline in the number of Welsh speakers in the Torfaen/Gwent over the past century, it is important that those who have Welsh language skills i.e. School leavers, adult learners, and migrants from other parts of Wales i.e any customer contacting the council through the medium of Welsh are encouraged and we must ensure :

- The Workforce is able to deliver Welsh language Services.

- Increase the use of Welsh Language within Posters

- Promote Welsh Culture i.e.

St Dwynwen's Day

25 January -

The patron saint of Welsh lovers

St Davids Day

1 March

The patron saint of Wales

The Urdd Eisteddfod

Whitsun Half Term

Cultural Youth Festival

The National Eisteddfod

First week in August

Cultural Festival

Owain Glyndwr Day

16 August

Celebrating the life and work of the last native Prince of Wales

Shw Mae Day

15 October

National Activities to greet and use the Welsh language

- Increase opportunities for the use of Welsh in the community i.e. Quizzes, Concerts, Twmpath, Get Togethers

- Encourage parents to pass on the skills to their children

The ethos of "not having to ask for a service in Welsh" will allow the use of Welsh to become the Norm in South East Wales

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Standard 145 of Torfaen's Compliance Notice requires the Council to set a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in the borough

Torfaen will use the number of Welsh speakers based in the 2011 Census data and current number of pupils within Welsh medium education as a starting point.

The projected percentage will be set by school growth and past census data trends linked to the anticipated population growth.

c) Services and Events

We believe that having the support of the Welsh Language Community in Torfaen is vital to ensure that the services are used and events are well attended.

The Welsh Language Standards will ensure that Council literature and services are available through the medium of Welsh and by supporting the LSB, which has representation from all public services operating in the Borough of Torfaen, with practical support and advice as each sector goes through the legislative process by Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

In order to deliver services in Welsh it is imperative that we have the staffing with the necessary language skills. Staff will be offered Welsh Language training and ensuring that the skills learnt are maintained

Through our revised language skills assessment brought about by the Welsh Language Standards, the Council will be in an informed position to identify officers able to assist with queries through the medium of Welsh.

We will continue to work with Registered Social Landlords and third sector organisations to encourage the use of Welsh and assist in Translations.

d) The Rights of the Public

Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 the language was given official status in Wales, which allows:

- Welsh speakers to use the language in dealings with the Council
- Treatment of the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language;
- Validity of the use of the Welsh language;
- Promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language;
- Freedom of persons wishing to use the Welsh language with one another;

Measuring Success

The Council, with the assistance of Partners from all sectors, and the support of the Welsh speaking community in Torfaen, will aim to increase the percentage of Welsh speakers from 9.8% in 2011 to 15% by 2022.

These factors have been taken into consideration in reaching this target:

- Percentage of Welsh speakers in 2011 (Census)
- Number of Children leaving Welsh medium education in year 11 and 13
- Number of Welsh learners year on year
- Population growth
- Capacity of Welsh Medium Primary and Secondary Schools

The results of the 2022 Census will be compared to the target set and a report, in accordance with Standard 146 of the Welsh language standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, will be published and will include:

- To what extent we have followed the strategy and have reached the target set
- An assessment containing the following information -
 - the number of Welsh speakers in Torfaen, and the age of those speakers;
 - a list of activities that were arranged or funded during the previous 5 years in order to promote the use of the Welsh language.

Outcomes

Target	Method & Outcome
<p>Increase the use of Welsh by citizens with Welsh language skills</p>	<p>Monitor the number of visitors who chose to use Welsh language when conducting their business</p> <p>Monitor Welsh language events and ensure they are well attended</p> <p>Assist partner agencies promoting the Welsh language</p> <p>Increase the number of officers to deliver services through the medium of Welsh</p> <p>Ensure that staff with no Welsh language skills are able to deal with any request for services in Welsh</p>
<p>Increase the number of Welsh speakers</p>	<p>Increase the number of persons able to speak Welsh to 15% by 2022 (based on the methodology above)</p> <p>Ensure that Welsh classes are well attended</p> <p>Promote the benefits of Welsh medium education/bilingualism</p> <p>Provide opportunities for parents to develop their Welsh language skills to assist their children to acquire and gain confidence in their ability to use the Welsh language.</p>
<p>Increase the visual presence of the Welsh language</p>	<p>Ensure that posters, leaflet, social media communication etc. is distributed and promoted bilingually.</p> <p>Promote Welsh language events</p> <p>Provide non-Welsh with opportunities to partake in Welsh language events</p>
<p>Promote Welsh Culture</p>	<p>Assist partners to Promote Shw Mae Day, National and Urdd Eisteddfod, St Davids Day, St Dwynwen's day, Owain Glyndwr Day</p>

<p>Deliver Welsh Awareness to Members, staff and partners</p> <p>Promote the Welsh language as a unique selling point when dealing with organisations outside of Wales.</p> <p>Introduce the Welsh language to new and emerging communities as a way of integrating into Welsh culture</p> <p>Promote Welsh language learning and Welsh medium education.</p>
