
**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: CARDIFF WELSH IN EDUCATION
STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP) 2022-2032**

Purpose of the Report

1. The Cabinet report (attached at **Appendix A**) will enable Members to carry out a pre-decision scrutiny on the responses received following consultation on the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The Cabinet report seeks authorisation to proceed to submit the final WESP to the Welsh Government for approval in line with Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019, following the completed public consultation.
2. This follows previous consideration of the WESP by this Committee in September and October 2021.
3. This report will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on the 24 February 2022.

Background

4. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 make provision for a local authority to prepare a ten-year Plan, with effect from 1 September 2022, subject to the Welsh Ministers' approval.
5. Cardiff's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) sets out a series of ambitious commitments to build on the progress achieved to date. These will ensure that every child in the city can receive an education in the language of Welsh, the number receiving their education in Welsh-medium schools will increase, and through the significant use of Welsh in English medium education all will have the opportunity to become confident in speaking Welsh.

6. At its October 2021 meeting, Cabinet considered the draft WESP 2022-2031 and authorised officers to proceed to undertake an eight-week public consultation on the content of the draft with the outcome to be presented to Cabinet prior to submission to the Welsh Government.
7. Regulation 9 of WESP Regulations 2019 and Welsh Government Guidance on WESPs January 2021 sets out the bodies with whom the Local Authority must consult with. It states that consultation should be with the public and other stakeholders (including elected Members, schools, parents, pupils, the relevant partner organisations and interested parties) ahead of submission to Ministers.

Summary of Issues

Consultation Process and Methodology

8. The Cardiff WESP consultation ran for eight weeks between 15 October- 13 December 2021.
9. The public consultation has largely been conducted online with a webpage to host the draft plan alongside the Bilingual Cardiff 5 Year Strategy consultation.
10. To ensure that all necessary information was easily accessible in one place and stakeholders had a single place to refer to with the Draft WESP 2022-31 document; an 'easy read summary' version and the Trajectory of Growth documents all provided on the webpage along with and an online survey to capture the views of interested parties.
11. The consultation was extensively promoted through the Council's communications team with targeted and frequent social media prompts to encourage engagement with links to the webpage for access to all relevant documents

12. Links to the plan (including the full draft WESP, the easy read summary version and the Trajectory for Growth) and survey webpage were also circulated to statutory stakeholders named in the guidance inviting them to respond including all elected members, schools, Cardiff's Welsh Education Forum member organisations, Estyn, the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Cardiff Youth Panel.
13. An online 'Big Welsh Conversation' interactive pupil survey open to all primary and secondary aged children and young people in Cardiff promoted through schools was held on the 10 December 2021.
14. For stakeholders who did not have access to digital platforms the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes via telephone was available

Response rate

15. In total 3,248 responses were received to the draft Cardiff WESP 2022-31 during the consultation period. This included 584 online survey responses and 9 email responses. 2,656 Children and Young People contributed their views regarding the use of Welsh in education and informal learning opportunities in Cardiff through 'The Big Welsh Conversation'.
16. The details presented in the Cabinet report and appendices represent the views expressed during the consultation process. These include the wider stakeholder survey, formal responses submitted via e-mail and the views expressed through the pupil consultation.
17. A summary of the responses received from all stakeholders setting out the key issues raised, and appraisal of views expressed, can be seen at *Appendix 2* to the Cabinet report.

Issues highlighted in the report to Cabinet

18. The following issues are highlighted in the Cabinet report, as at **Appendix A**:

- WESP Consultation Process (*points 6 – 13*)
- Responses received regarding the proposal during the consultation period (*points 14 – 16; plus Appendix 2*)
- Formal responses (*points 17 – 26; plus Appendix 3*)
- Feedback received through the online survey (*points 27 – 43; plus Appendix 4*)
- Children and Young People's views – 'The Big Welsh Conversation' (*points 44 – 50; plus Appendix 5*)
- In Summary (*points 51 – 57*)
- Local Member consultation (*point 58*)
- Scrutiny Consideration (*point 59*)
- Reason for Recommendations (*point 60*)

19. The draft Cabinet report also provides details on the following areas:

- Financial Implications (*points 61 - 62*)
- Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate) (*points 63 - 70*)
- HR Implications (*points 71 – 73*)
- Property Implications (*point 74*)
- Traffic and Transport Implications (*points 75 - 94*)
- EIA (*paragraphs 95 - 96; plus Appendix 6*)

20. The report is supported by a number of appendices covering:

- Appendix 1: Cardiff WESP 2022-2031
- Appendix 2: Summary of issues raised and analysis of responses
- Appendix 3: Formal responses in full
- Appendix 4: Public Survey Summary Report
- Appendix 5: Pupil Consultation 'The Big Welsh Conversation' Summary Report
- Appendix 6: Equality Impact Assessment

Recommendations set out in the Cabinet Proposals

21. The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the WESP 2022-2031 for submission to the Welsh Government Ministers.
- (ii) Approve publication of the WESP 2022-2031 on the Council's website following approval by Welsh Government Ministers.
- (iii) Delegate responsibility to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning for the development and implementation of operational plans together with Welsh Education Forum (WEF) partners to deliver the success measures set out in the strategy.

Way Forward

22. Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education Employment, Skills), Richard Portas (Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme) and Catherine Canning (Policy Officer: School Organisation Planning) will introduce the report to the Committee and be available to answer any questions Members may have.

23. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

Previous Scrutiny

24. The Committee previously considered this issue on the 21 September 2021, and 13 October 2021.

Legal Implications

25. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are

implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

26. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Review and assess the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with any information provided at the meeting;
- b) Provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director of Education and Lifelong Learning prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

17 February 2022