



ONE MILLION WELSH SPEAKERS

A VISION FOR 2016 ONWARDS

**A PROGRAMME FOR
WALES' NEXT GOVERNMENT**

#etholiad16
#miliwn





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Introduction

There is no doubt that the 2011 Census results highlight the crisis facing the Welsh language. There has been a decrease in the number of Welsh speakers in every part of Wales. The greatest fall was in the areas where the Welsh language is at its strongest.

Since the findings of the Census, a number of commendable reports have been published which recommended policy changes to the Welsh Government. However, the majority of recommendations that call for genuine change have been ignored, such as the recommendation of the report of the Task and Finish Group on Welsh Language and Economic Development which proposed placing language conditions on all grants to business, as well as the urgent recommendations of Professor Sioned Davies's report regarding teaching Welsh.

That said, there are a number of promising developments in the pipeline, with many of these a direct result of Cymdeithas campaigns, including allowing county councils increase the tax on second homes, abolishing the short course version of the second language Welsh GCSE, and establishing Welsh as a material consideration in the statutory planning system.

In light of that context, we believe that the next election is a crucial one for the language. Collaboration across Europe offers an excellent opportunity to create a multicultural society along with other minority languages across the continent, and it is also an opportunity to build relationships and create an alliance of endangered languages in Europe by building unity and strength in our struggle for equal rights.

Turning our gaze back to Wales, and considering the scale of the challenge facing the Welsh language, we urgently need new ideas and purpose for the next Welsh Government's work programme.

As Professor Sioned Davies said in her report published in September 2013 regarding the situation of the Welsh language in education:

"If we are serious about developing Welsh speakers, and about seeing the Welsh language thrive, a change of direction is urgently required before it is too late... It is undeniably the eleventh hour ..."

The lack of action taken on Professor Davies's recommendations is staggering; however, in truth, one can use the same words to describe the Government's progress, or lack thereof, in all areas of policy associated with the Welsh language. The lack of an urgent response by the Government is hugely worrying, and means missing an opportunity to achieve what we all want to see, which is a thriving Welsh language.

A Challenge to the Political Parties

Therefore, in order to drive the agenda forward with the urgency that is required, we call on all political parties to respond by including proposals in their 2016 election manifestos which aim to meet the following three objectives:

1. increase the number of Welsh speakers to one million
2. stem out-migration and sustain communities while ensuring pathways to bring Welsh speakers back to their communities
3. use the Welsh language in all walks of life to ensure it is the natural language from cradle to grave

In discussions with numerous individuals, experts and other organisations, there appears to be strong support for the above three aims among those who are supportive of the Welsh language. We believe that by acting on all the proposals in this document, although it is dependent on many factors, that the goal of a million Welsh speakers living in Wales by 2051 is a realistic one.

Considering the Challenge

The findings of the Census show that two of the main objectives of the previous Welsh Government's language strategy *Iaith Pawb* were not achieved: the percentage of Welsh speakers not only decreased, from 21% to 19%, but so did the number of wards in which over 70% of the population can speak the language. Broadly speaking, it appears that there are around 3,000 fewer Welsh speakers every year.

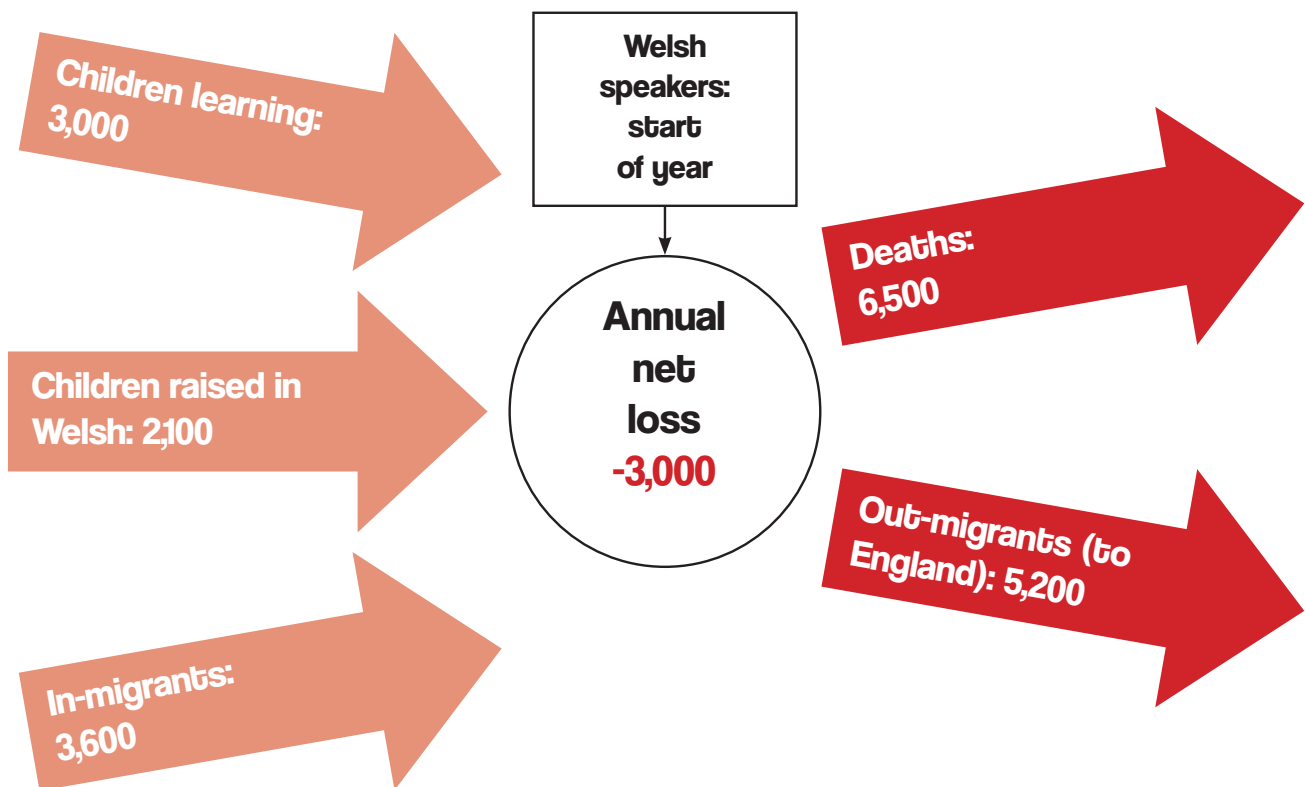
People and Spaces

Many of these things depend on two components: people and spaces.

There is a need to improve the language skills of our people - the fate of the language cannot be separated from the world of education and planning the workforce.

Additionally, there is a need to develop and strengthen contexts where Welsh is the natural language in that location - at work, at home and in the community.

Annual change in number of fluent Welsh speakers



not to scale

Building on four pillars to develop the Welsh language

In order to revitalise a language effectively we must build on four pillars:

1. Adequate legislation - including measures such as specifying Welsh language skills as essential for more jobs
2. Planning - a detailed plan which is easily understood by everyone in order to reach a clear goal, with clear steps along the way
3. Resources - how much is invested and in what projects
4. Support and Interest among the Public

It is impossible to make progress without movement on these four elements. Occasionally, it is too easy for politicians to avoid the more difficult decisions which are required by allocating funds to projects which would not be needed were there conditions on grants or robust regulations in place. If our politicians are serious about achieving these objectives, we need brave decisions, many of which would avoid the need for substantial new spending, and instead would make better use of existing spending.

I. One million Welsh speakers

The main proposals we are calling for which would enable the Government to achieve this target are the following measures:

Full Welsh-medium Education for All

We ask that the next Welsh Government implement the recommendations of Professor Sioned Davies's report, which was commissioned by the current administration but not implemented.

There is an enormous challenge ahead of us. All other things being equal, it is estimated that if primary education was conducted through the medium of Welsh only from tomorrow, it would take about 33 years before we reaching the target of 1 million speakers.

Currently, 21% of young people in Wales attend

Welsh-medium schools and leave school with the ability to communicate and work in two languages - English and Welsh. On the other hand, among the 79% of young people in our country who attend English-medium schools, very few pupils manage to acquire the Welsh language through that system.

The public wants to remedy that injustice. According to a poll conducted by YouGov, 63% of people in Wales agree with us that no pupil should be deprived of their heritage and the educational skill of being able to communicate and work in Welsh and English.

We note that it is widely accepted that there are serious problems with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans system. Those plans have not managed to ensure a significant increase in the number of children receiving Welsh-medium education.

Ysgol Pentrecelyn's recent troubles are a classic example of the weakness of the current system, namely that the system does not ensure continuous improvement in Welsh-medium provision. That goes for schools at all levels, from English-medium schools to some which are in the highest level in terms of their Welsh language provision. The aim to ensure that the Welsh language is a language for all, by increasing the Welsh medium provision in every school, as well as changes to the law, would be a way of improving the situation.

We believe that Professor Davies' key recommendations need to be implemented across the curriculum, which are:

- Establishing one continuum of learning Welsh that would replace 'Second Language' education
- It would require all schools, colleges and higher education institutions to increase the percentage of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh.

We further believe that there should be an aim to ensure that every pupil can communicate and work through the medium of Welsh when finishing primary and secondary school.

We believe that there should be legislation to set these principles in national law.

Recommendation - Introduction of the Welsh-medium Education for All Bill in order to establish a continuum of learning Welsh, some Welsh-medium education for all and setting of other statutory targets

We believe that additional measures need to be taken in order to realise this vision, some of them through the proposed Welsh-medium Education for All Bill or other changes:

- Statutory targets that would, over time, ensure that all newly qualified teachers can carry out their work in Welsh, adding another year to the training period for candidates who are not Welsh speakers so that they become fluent where required.
- In order to ensure rapid progress in ensuring a sufficient workforce to be able to achieve this change, responsibility for training teachers should be given to the Coleg Cymraeg.
- Establish a committee of experts in order to ensure progress on the goal of normalising the language within the education system and move every school along the continuum of teaching through the medium of Welsh.
- Set a statutory target date for Welsh-medium only early years and foundation stage education throughout Wales.
- Set statutory target dates for the progressive introduction of Welsh-medium only primary education across Wales.
- Set statutory targets for the percentage of Welsh-medium teaching that each new school must achieve.
- Establish a teacher exchange programme with other countries, in particular those with minority languages in order to: (i) upgrade the skills of our workforce; (ii) benefit from the skills of other countries; and (iii) make progress on improving foreign language education.
- Set up a “Come back” to Wales scheme for teachers who work in other countries.
- Establish a plan with financial incentives to encourage people to move from the world of work to Welsh-medium teaching, through a scheme that enables people to work part-

time or those who have retired to teach through the medium of Welsh.

- Ensure that the investment as a result of the Donaldson report into Information Technology is accompanied by a programme to improve the language skills of the education workforce in order to introduce more and more of the subject in Welsh.
- Any ‘pioneer’ schools that are established as a result of Donaldson’s recommendations should lead the way on an agenda of introducing more and more of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh.
- Include a requirement in the Workforce Planning Bill that the Welsh language must be an essential skill for every member of staff who works in a Welsh-medium school, including all support staff.
- Establish centres to immerse newcomers (who have not previously been exposed to Welsh) in the language in every county, with the aim of ensuring that they operate on the same model as the system in Gwynedd.
- Divert the work of Welsh for Adults to focus on ensuring a sufficient number of teachers who can speak Welsh.
- Place the Welsh-medium education strategy on a statutory footing.
- Establish a programme to raise awareness of the benefits of multilingual education.
- Ensure that transport is free to Welsh-medium schools.
- No new school or education institution should open with a lower percentage of Welsh-medium education than the local education institutions, nor with less than 50% of the education provided being through the medium of Welsh.

Welsh-medium Education for Every Adult

In order to reach the target of one million speakers, we need to involve the workplace in a deliberate and coordinated way, as the supply of schools in itself will not be enough to make satisfactory progress within a meaningful timeframe.

There has been a step forward through the Welsh Language Standards with the introduction of the 'right' to learn Welsh at work. However, the wording of the Standards implies a loose interpretation of that 'right':

"You must provide opportunities during working hours ... for basic Welsh language lessons and further training for employees for free to develop their language skills."

There is a need to establish an absolute right to learn Welsh in every workplace, rather than 'providing opportunities' to learn in the public sector alone. However, even within the weak framework of the Standards, with deliberate planning, there is potential to make great progress in this area. Therefore, it is necessary to extend the Operational Standards to all sectors covered by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Recommendation - establish the right to learn Welsh, free in all workplaces, by extending the Operational Standards to every sector of the economy

As well as extending the legal rights of employees, investment is needed to ensure that the right to learn is being implemented in a meaningful way. We believe there should be a program to teach Welsh to instructors in the workplace. The instructors will be responsible for teaching co-workers in the workplace in order to create a fully bilingual workplace. Money and resources from the European structural funds could be used, as well as funds from Welsh for Adults in order to fund the programme. Some key sectors could be targeted where progress is needed for strategic reasons such as support staff in the field of education, child care, information technology and sports.

Recommendation - establish a program to learn Welsh at work 'Train the Trainer' in order to significantly increase the number of language learners

It should also be a right for all adults to receive Welsh education for free. It is not right that people who make Wales their home will have to pay to learn the language of our country. We therefore suggest that Welsh for Adults course should be completely free. Such an initiative would also increase the numbers studying Welsh as adults, which is currently at about 1%.

Recommendation - Welsh lessons should be offered free to all adults

Currently, the Welsh language is not recognised as an essential skill within the European structural programmes - programmes such as numeracy and literacy are in English. Therefore, the above recommendations can be financed by apportioning European funds to them.

Recommendation - change the terms of the basic skills education programmes funded by European structural funds to establish Welsh as an essential basic skill

Full Welsh-medium Further and Higher Education - a big leap forward for the Coleg Cymraeg

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (Y Coleg) came into being as a result of a Welsh Government decision, but its future will be decided within a year of the new term as its budget is only for five years. We could lose all the progress that has been made and return to the whim of universities to sustain Welsh lecturers, or, alternatively, there could be a big leap forward for the Coleg.

Now is the time for that leap. To ensure that the Coleg has a secure future, it should be included in the new funding formula for higher education. Therefore, the government should set targets for increasing the proportion of higher education courses provided in Welsh and give that portion annually to the Coleg to distribute.

Recommendation - establish a new funding formula for higher education, earmarking funds to the Coleg Cymraeg to ensure an increased proportion of Welsh medium education

Moreover, the Coleg Cymraeg's responsibility should be extended. It should be responsible for developing further education through the medium of Welsh, by transferring the relevant officers from Colegau Cymru to the Coleg Cymraeg, and indeed giving the Coleg Cymraeg the responsibility for post-16 education in Welsh as a coherent continuum across the board. Indeed, this can be a pilot scheme for higher education and training in general by extending the comprehensive principle to higher education. This should be the case, instead of one class of workers going to areas such as care and social services through further

education course, and then an “upper” class of managers reaching these sectors through higher education courses.

Recommendation - the Coleg Cymraeg’s area of responsibility should be extended to further education, and post-16 education in general

The barrier could be broken down by enabling students to start in the sectors by studying Level 3 Further Education, work practically for some years and then receive in-service training courses to become senior managers. That would promote social inclusion and ensure an alternative route to be managers - with practical experience of what they managed. In this way, Welsh-medium education will be ahead of the game.

The pilot scheme would start in Welsh-medium education and training because the smaller numbers means that it makes sense to coordinate provision instead of neighbouring colleges, schools and universities duplicating courses in Welsh. To achieve this, the Coleg would have to have a role in arranging teacher training and training in general.

Another part of the normalisation process would be for the Welsh central and local government, services and agencies in areas such as the police, health and the environment to give research and feasibility contracts for studying different projects to the Coleg. The Coleg has a sufficient range of lecturers in all fields to direct such research. The government and public agencies should aim to increase proportion of their own research projects to be directed by the Coleg.

Recommendation - the Government and public agencies to aim to increase proportion of their own research projects to be directed by the Coleg Cymraeg

Higher Education

The recent controversy with the Pantycelyn student halls at Aberystwyth University has highlighted fundamental problems with the higher education system. A system that is moving further and further away from serving the learning needs of the community or Wales, and, instead, serving the market.

The situation with Pantycelyn halls is just one example of these serious problems. After all, at

the same time as trying to close its only Welsh speaking halls of residence, Aberystwyth University has opened a branch in Mauritius. We therefore believe education institutions should only receive funding if they serve Wales’ educational needs and that of their local communities as their main goal. We further recognise the danger of creating a world of Welsh education rather than Welsh speaking communities if these institutions and services aren’t rooted at the heart of our society.

Recommendation - higher education institutions that do not have the chief aim of serving Wales’ educational needs and that of the community should not be funded

Moreover, and due to the unforgivable actions of Aberystwyth University’s senior management and the importance of Welsh speaking residential halls, there should be a financial condition through the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales for Bangor and Aberystwyth Universities to protect and sustain JMJ and Pantycelyn halls. There should be a financial condition requiring other Welsh universities to establish Welsh medium halls based on proposals of the local branch of the Coleg Cymraeg which is accommodation that is self contained and includes social resources and catering. If Universities do not do this, assets should be transferred to the Coleg Cymraeg, with enough money for renovation, to re-open and open new Welsh speaking halls.

Recommendation - establish a financial condition through the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to sustain and increase the number of Welsh speaking halls whether through universities or the Coleg Cymraeg

II. Stem Out-migration

In terms of numbers of speakers, out-migration is one of the factors that has the greatest adverse impact on the Welsh language.

In October 2013, a summary of the results of the ‘Cynhadledd Fawr’ by Cwmni Iaith was published on behalf of the Government which said that population movement is ‘currently the biggest challenge’ that faces the language.

We recognise there are numerous factors driving out-migration, and many are related to the

economic weaknessness of Wales, but we believe that there are a number of practical steps the Welsh Government can take to overcome these serious challenges.

Property and Planning System

The importance of this area to the state of the Welsh language was recognised in the Welsh Government's Cynhadledd Fawr results, which reported for the need for:

"... effective procedures to conduct meaningful language impact assessments ... [and] the need to facilitate and support local people in their efforts to buy affordable housing for themselves and their families."

Although changes have been made through the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 which will mean some consideration of the Welsh language when deciding on new developments, it does not directly affect the existing housing stock.

We therefore believe there is a need for legislation that will control housing prices to make them affordable to local people in order to reduce out-migration and therefore its impact on the Welsh language:

- Establish Local Needs as a base for the property and planning system
- Establish the Right to Rent for Locals
- Provide the first opportunity for local people to buy property as a means of controlling property price
- Protect and strengthen the system of setting conditions for housing in order for it to be earmarked for local people
- Establish a Welsh language development continuum

In addition, it should be noted that four omissions from the recent Planning Act that need addressing:

- establish a system of statutory language impact assessments for individual applications
- ensure that housing targets reflect local needs rather than national projections that are highly damaging to the Welsh language
- ensure that there is further consideration to

sustain community life in the property and planning system

- ensure that the presumption is that only Welsh medium schools will be built as a result of any 'planning gain'

Recommendation - introduce an Affordable Housing for All Bill that would include a number of measures to make the existing housing stock affordable for locals, as well as embed a system based on local needs, including establishing the right to rent, give the first opportunity for local people to buy houses and establish that developments based on local needs should be the main principle that guide our housing and property policies.

Other Measures

A number of related measures are needed to prevent and undo a negative pattern of out-migration. Therefore, the next Welsh Government should do the following:

- Reinstate the tuition fees policy that was adopted in 2005 (but which was abolished a few years later) in order to encourage students from Wales to study in the country
- Instead of using the Government's limited borrowing powers to invest in a new M4, we should invest in sustainable transport projects across Wales which would promote better local connections with a good proportion going to projects in Wales' rural communities
- Procurement Bill - measures to ensure that more public contracts go to local businesses
- Sustaining Services Financing Fund - a fund to keep community assets open and for small developments in rural areas
- Establish a rule that ensures that loans from Finance Wales (or its successor body) gives a fair share to areas across Wales
- Establish a legal obligation to invest in economic development projects in a geographically balanced way
- Ensure community understanding is a core part of the curriculum of all schools
- Implement a recommendation of the report

on the Economy and the Language to place a language condition on every grant given by the Government to business

A number of other measures in other sections of this document will contribute to stopping out-migration, such as ensuring that more bodies are administered internally in Welsh.

Workforce Planning

A lack of coordination in terms of workforce training is a very serious problem, not only for the Welsh language, but for our society as a whole. There is a serious deficiency in providing for workers in areas such as health, with many examples of Welsh speakers rejected by universities here but accepted elsewhere.

We support Mentrau Iaith Cymru's efforts to establish a 'Welsh Language Labour Market' with help from European structural funds to improve the transition between education and the world of work and to ensure that key sectors improve their Welsh language provision, substantially preventing out-migration of local young people who are looking for work. For example, Menter Iaith Conwy has done important work in the outdoors adventure industry thereby ensuring that local people are filling jobs in the tourism field.

There are some key areas where there must be a significant increase in the workforce's language skills to ensure that (i) more Welsh speakers are created; and (ii) more Welsh language spaces, especially for young people, are created.

There are examples of Welsh speaking employers taking a leading role in training the future workforce, and we believe that the potential of these examples to other sectors can be extended and built upon.

We recognise the need to move faster to allocate more posts as ones that require Welsh as an essential skill. We were told by Colegau Cymru that it would be advantageous to have more detailed targets in some key areas. We therefore believe that Welsh should be an essential skill for all new employees in the following sectors so that they conduct or can conduct, all their work in Welsh:

- Welsh sports coaches who train people under 18 years of age;

- Newly accredited sports instructors;
- Workers in early years education and childcare
- Youth workers
- Care workers

We accept there is room to discuss and elaborate further on the details of the precise targets regarding the above, but we believe that the exact details could be a part of the discussion when publishing a Workforce Planning Bill that these would tackle these key issues.

Recommendation - introduce a Workforce Planning Bill that would establish clear targets and responsibilities to ensure an increased supply of Welsh speaking workers, and building on the Welsh language labour market led by Mentrau Iaith Cymru

Certainly, we need to transform the way we look at training and education so that they can serve the needs of our communities rather than the vagaries of the market. We need a revolution in the way we fund and structure our universities so that they serve the community rather than searching the world for people who are willing to pay the highest fees possible.

In addition, the next Welsh Government should do the following:

- Ensure that a Welsh language organisation runs the 'Welsh Language Labour Market' project, with powers to change the provision in the higher and further education sector in order to improve the transition between education and the needs of the community.
- The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales should not be giving money to an education institution unless it has a main aim of serving the educational needs of their communities and local populations.
- Establish a Medical School in Bangor in order to improve the supply of Welsh speaking staff in the health service
- Other sectors should build on the strengths and potential of the Mudiad Meithrin training program "Cam wrth Gam" so that employers take a more central role in the planning of a Welsh language workforce

III. Using the Welsh language in all areas life

Reaching this goal will require actions in each of the four pillars mentioned at the beginning of this document as key areas to ensure growth of the language.

Rights

A robust and comprehensive legislative framework is a key part of increasing the use of the Welsh language and also securing more contexts and spaces where Welsh is the main language.

It is of huge disappointment that the current Welsh Government, in its 5 year term, has yet to fully implement all its powers under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. While the government and other public agencies are trying to negotiate with companies such as Google and Microsoft to ensure Welsh provision on devices that are now such an important part of people's lives, especially young people, there are statutory powers available that would make a difference but have not been used. The Government's and the Welsh Language Commissioner's failure to implement the Standards in, for example, the telecommunications field, has resulted in less use of the language as there are fewer opportunities to use Welsh on smart phones, online and on other devices.

Recommendation - urgent action to implement the full powers under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, including setting Standards for all private and voluntary sectors covered by their provisions

In addition, it is clear from the implementation of the legislation passed in 2011, and problems highlighted by reviews, such as the Welsh Language Commissioner's banking report, that there are a number of elements of the Welsh Language Measure 2011 that need amending.

Recommendation - Revise the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 in order to extend its scope, establish a general right to receive services in Welsh and improve the process of setting Standards on bodies

- Place a general right to the Welsh language in the Measure to give a better steer for the language standards, that would establish a general right to receive services both verbally and in writing
- Extending the Welsh Language Measure (2011) to include the whole of the private sector, including banks and supermarkets
- Establish Welsh as Wales' own language
- Give responsibility to the National Assembly to appoint the Welsh language Commissioner, rather than the Welsh Government
- Establish financial independence for the Welsh language Commissioner by funding the role in the same way as the Auditor General with the money coming directly as a percentage of the block grant.
- Strengthen the clauses in the Measure on the freedom to speak Welsh, in order to punish organisations who are operating illegally
- Ensure that all bodies that could be included under the current language legislation have language standards placed on them
- Place 'operational standards' on each body that comes under the framework of Standards so that all workers in Wales have rights to the Welsh language
- Standards to promote and encourage should not be limited to local government and the Welsh Government only, "promotion standards" should be placed on all companies and organisations.
- Establish rights for people to challenge the Standards on the grounds that that they don't adequately protect or promote their rights to the Welsh language. Individuals should have the right to challenge the government, the Commissioner and the Standards imposed on bodies on the grounds that they do not realise their rights, in the same way that companies have the right to challenge under the existing law.
- Abolish the £5,000 limit on the amount that the Commissioner can fine bodies for breaking the Standards.

- Simplify the process of setting Standards on bodies by using the expertise of the Commissioner to produce the Standards rather than civil servants who do not specialise in the work.
- There should be a general statement in the Bill that the people of Wales have a right to use the Welsh language as far as reasonably possible under the circumstances.
- Other basic rights should be established including: the right to Welsh education; the right to receive services, information, facilities and goods in Welsh when dealing with the public, private or voluntary sector; the right to use and learn Welsh in the workplace; the right to respect and to be equal and not discriminated against or disadvantaged when accessing or using the Welsh language. It should be the duty of the Commissioner to protect and promote those rights.
- The Standards should be considered regulations which detail the universal right; there should be a duty on the government and the Commissioner to set standards that are as transparent as possible from the perspective of the individual who wants to use the language.
- Establish Cyngor y Gymraeg (Welsh Language Council) as a corporate promoting body separate from the Commissioner. This could be easily achieved by renaming the 'Welsh Language Partnership Council' to 'The Welsh Language Council' and give it the resources and independence from the Government to make the promotion of the Welsh language more effective.
- Remove the legal uncertainty regarding making more jobs Welsh essential

A New Multi-platform Service

A multi-platform broadcaster should be created that will create content in order to increase the use of the Welsh language, especially amongst young people. It would operate primarily online, but on radio and television as well, helping S4C and Radio Cymru and release the current burden on the existing broadcasters of trying to serve the whole audience.

Recommendation - establish a new multi-platform broadcaster

The broadcasting regulator, Ofcom, needs to be devolved to the Welsh Government. This would lead to greater political scrutiny in the media on what is happening in Wales, which will ultimately increase democracy.

The basic right for people to receive daily news through the medium of Welsh needs to be satisfied on every platform. Therefore, the new multi-platform broadcaster should have a news service that is independent from the BBC.

Working Internally in Welsh

Welsh medium work places are essential as spaces not only to maintain the Welsh language but also to increase its use and the number of speakers.

A number of organisations in Wales work internally in Welsh such as Gwynedd Council. There are many examples of people who have learned Welsh to a fully fluent level because they came to work for the council. A number of employment policy experts have concluded that Gwynedd's policy has led to a growth in the number of Welsh speakers in some areas of the county, bucking the general decline. In March 2014, the Carmarthenshire County Council cross-party working group adopted the following Recommendation -

“OBJECTIVE: To increase the use of Welsh in the workplace and make the Council's internal administration more bilingual, with the aim of administering mainly through the medium of Welsh over time”

In December 2015, Councillor Sian Gwenllian resigned from the management board of Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd as a result of its decision to drop language requirements for many jobs. The body was established by Gwynedd Council to run its housing stock. Two hundred and fifty language activists protested on the 24th of January 2015 in an effort to overturn the decision of the housing association in Gwynedd to not include the Welsh language as an essential skill for high layer management positions.

At a meeting with officials of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg in 2013, the Permanent Secretary, Derek Jones, said he supported the idea of increasing

the number of Welsh Government departments administering internally through the medium of Welsh.

We agree with recent comments by the Welsh Language Commissioner that all Welsh Government civil servants should have Welsh language skills. We also believe that key areas in the workforce, such as education staff, sports, youth work, health, early years education and care, should be identified as having Welsh language skills essential for all workers in the field.

Recommendation - set Bilingual Workforce Targets in Wales. We call on the next Welsh Government to lead the way by establishing a bilingual workforce continuum for public bodies in Wales. All organisations must therefore aim to have a certain percentage of their workforce who are able to speak Welsh, and to aim to work mainly through the medium of Welsh in the end.

Local Government Reorganisation

The purpose of local government re-organisation plan should be to empower the people of Wales.

Welsh has been in a weak position in many of our Local Authorities and, from the evidence we have collected, this remains the case within many of the 22 present councils. It is a major concern that fundamental weaknesses remain, and we see the proposed reorganisation as an opportunity to combat the authorities' dire failings to provide full services through the medium of Welsh. There is an urgent need to address this failure and this is another opportunity to do so.

The number of organisations who operate internally through the medium of Welsh needs to be protected and expanded. We are aware that this is currently happening in only one authority, which is Gwynedd Council, therefore, this provision need to be strengthened urgently. This would realise the rights of workers to work in Welsh.

As these changes take effect, the units will necessarily increase in size, and thereby strengthen the sense that accountability is distant. The link between the elector and the provider will weaken, and this will have a detrimental effect on democracy. We believe there is a need to regenerate and strengthen democracy, especially at a very local level. We see that this is a good

opportunity to bring the democratic process closer to the people and to put more responsibility in the hands of the Community Councils.

We see local services as critical to the viability of communities and the Welsh language and we view the reorganisation in that light.

We need to create a consistent set of language standards across public services, the third sector and the private sector in order to improve services in Welsh, which will ensure transparency to the public.

Recommendation - that any reorganisation of local government increases the number of authorities working through the medium of Welsh, with clauses in legislation to guarantee this

The Welsh language in the Community

It is imperative to maintain and establish spaces where Welsh is the main language - these may be vary from community centres to online spaces.

We therefore believe that:

- Dedicated Welsh language accommodation for students should be established in every university in Wales with the assets in the hands of the Coleg Cymraeg or the universities
- Over time, Government grants for youth clubs and extra-curricular activities for children should only be given to Welsh speaking activities
- There should be a requirement on all youth clubs to have Welsh medium staff; this will assist local authorities to meet their obligations under the Standards
- All pre-school provision should be moved to a single pre-school provider which will be a Welsh speaking institution. This, over time, will move all pre-school provision to Welsh-medium only.

Money and Tax Powers

There is a serious misunderstanding about expenditure on the Welsh language. Currently, the Government's mainstream budgets seriously under-invest on the Welsh language. Spending on the English language is not seen as cost, but spending on Welsh language services is seen as an additional cost.

The Welsh Language Commissioner should be commissioned to make an independent assessment of the impact of language expenditure across all Government departments. We are not calling for an assessment on the effectiveness of the tiny fraction (approximately 0.15%) of the budget that is spent on specific projects to promote the language, but for an assessment of the current expenditure's language impact in terms of major service budgets, such as the health service.

Recommendation - Commission the Welsh Language Commissioner to conduct an independent assessment of the language impact of mainstream Welsh Government expenditure, and implement its recommendations to ensure a better language impact of current expenditure across all Government departments and the bodies it sponsors

However, in terms of that meagre spending on specific projects to promote the Welsh language, we agree with Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymraeg that the next Welsh Government should spend at least 1% of its budget on such projects which is precisely the figure that is spent in the Basque Country at present. Each organisation should allocate at least 1% of its budget in order to develop and promote the language, and do so on top of their Welsh-medium provision.

Recommendation - Welsh Government to set out a program to increase spending on the Welsh language to 1% of the budget, with an additional expectation for the organisations it funds to earmark 1% for promoting the language

Spending Priorities / Savings

Again, we believe that expenditure should prioritise projects that will supply people who speak Welsh as well as naturally Welsh-speaking spaces.

- Target Welsh for Adults resources at moving bodies towards working internally in Welsh, thus helping to designate more jobs as Welsh essential
- Educating Key Workers, such as teachers and support staff in education, sports, and health care in order to ensure growth in the use of the Welsh language and ensure adequate services.
- Pilot projects in areas of growth in order to restore the language in geographical areas
- Free Welsh for Adults courses
- More resources for grassroots organisations such as the Menterau Iaith, the Urdd and Merched y Wawr
- Menter a Busnes and Menterau Iaith to combine forces to create Menterau Iaith a Gwaith
- Provide funding for youth clubs only to organisations that work in Welsh
- Mainstream the Welsh language in the Flying Start and Communities First programmes

Whilst we have welcomed the existence of capital funds for the establishment of Welsh language centres through the 'Bwrw Mlaen' fund, we believe that there are a number of weaknesses in the program, and that there is an opportunity to further develop the program. It was cause for disappointment to hear that a number of community applications were not successful under the existing scheme. We therefore believe that a new fund should be established that would ensure: (i) more social opportunities for young people, especially in rural communities; (ii) more rural areas benefiting from the expenditure; and (iii) smaller grass-roots organisations seeing the most benefit. We believe a fund should be established for smaller projects in order to maintain and increase the number of spaces where Welsh is the main language.

Recommendation - Establish a Community Facilities and Sustaining Services Finance Fund, to offer relatively small amounts of money to community groups such as Merched y Wawr to maintain services and spaces where Welsh is the main language of the location or group

Language Transmission

Language transmission between parents and their children is absolutely essential to ensure the growth of the language - transfer rates in Wales are relatively low. Investment is needed in marketing campaigns and awareness raising in order to improve this situation. Furthermore, according to the statistician Hywel M Jones: *“There is some evidence that the rate of transmission is associated with the socio-economic status of the family, with the rate dropping to an extent with lower status.”* This conclusion underlines the importance of schemes aimed at tackling poverty and reinstating the language, such as Flying Start.

Recommendation – there should be substantial investment in projects, such as Twf, to improve the transmission of language between parents and children

Taxation

A Land Value Tax should be created in order to prevent developers from inflating land prices and making housing less affordable

A tax should be introduced on advertising, and on the profits of large companies such as Google, Facebook and Sky, in order to fund a new Welsh language multi-platform service.

IV. Governance

From our regular dealings with the Welsh Government over the years, we believe there are many ways to improve the internal processes of the Government in terms of the creation and development of policy for the Welsh language.

We believe benefits have come from the First Minister taking responsibility for the Welsh language, but we believe that the Welsh Language Unit should be moved to be part of the First Minister’s department, rather than the education department, to improve the mainstreaming. Furthermore, we believe that the First Minister should have an expert adviser tasked with ensuring expertise and support at the highest level to support policy development.

As stated above, we believe a Welsh Language Council should be established in order to plan in

detail the promotion of the language, amending the existing arrangements of the Welsh Language Partnership Council.

As stated above, we believe that any reorganisation of local government should lead to an increase in those working internally in Welsh.

We agree with the Welsh Language Commissioner that there are problems regarding the way the language is taken into consideration when developing legislation and regulations. We therefore agree that all civil servants in Wales should have Welsh speaking skills, and that there should be clauses regarding the language in every piece of legislation.

Conclusion

The proposals outlined in our vision document are a package of policies that are based on detailed discussions, both internally and with experts in the field of language policy. Of course, we do not claim to have a monopoly on all the policies that are going to ensure that the Welsh language thrives over the coming years, but we very much hope that the publication of the document and the proposals it contains demonstrate the historical importance of the 2016 election for the Welsh language and Wales’ communities in general.

When discussing a number of the proposals, several consistent themes have arisen: regarding, for example, the need to plan the workforce in a much more purposeful way, and the need for challenging, ambitious targets in order to ensure Welsh medium education for all. Geographical considerations, and the varying needs of different kinds of communities, have come up consistently, when discussing planning, education and language rights. We believe that it is possible to look at the model proposed in our Alternative Planning Bill and Property Bill, of a ‘Welsh language development continuum’ as a concept that could be extended to other areas, and we hope it will provide the basis for a detailed discussion of such ideas over the coming months.

**Uned Cyswllt y Cynulliad / Assembly Contact Group,
Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg
July 2015**

Dwi eisiau bod yn un mewn miliwn!
I want to be one in a million!

I want to:

increase the number of Welsh speakers to one million

stem out-migration and sustain communities while
ensuring pathways to bring Welsh speakers back
to their communities

use the Welsh language in all walks of life to ensure
it is the natural language from cradle to grave

#etholiad16

#miliwn

