



WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

1. Opening Statement

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.

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.

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 help promote the use of the Welsh Language in the wider community.

2. Introduction to Haverfordwest Town Council

Amongst the Council's main duties are:

- To maintain the offices at the Old Wool Market
- To manage and maintain the Picton Centre and Sports Pavilion
- To manage and maintain the burial grounds of Upper Prendergast, Lower Prendergast and St Martins
- To maintain the Priory Saltings Meadow
- To act as Trustees to the Bridge Meadow Trust Haverfordwest
- To consider planning matters
- To suggest improvements to the town regarding highways etc
- To provide Christmas lights each year
- To provide financial assistance to various voluntary organisations and charities
- To appoint representatives to numerous local and outside bodies
- To liaise with the police to safeguard the community
- To safeguard public land in its keeping
- Provision and maintenance of waste bins, benches, bus shelter and town centre flower arrangements, where agreed

The Council's mission statement is:

To strive to make Haverfordwest an environment that its people will enjoy living in, that its young people will wish to remain in or return to and one that people will enjoy visiting.

The Council has 17 members representing five wards. The Council offices are based at the Old Wool Market, Quay Street, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1BG. The Council has a full time Town Clerk/RFO, two part time Administrative Officers, three part time Groundsmen/Caretakers and one part time Cleaner.

There is one School, Ysgol Caer Elen, offering education through the medium of Welsh.

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 will move closer to implementing the principle of equality fully at every opportunity.
- consult with the Welsh Language Board in advance regarding proposals that will affect the scheme, or the scheme of any other public body. The scheme will not be altered without the Board's agreement.
- ensure that those involved in formulating policy will be aware of the Scheme, and of the Council's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993.
- ensure that the measures contained in the Scheme are applied to new policies and initiatives when they are implemented.

Timetable: current practice and continuing

3.2. Standards of Quality

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

Timescale: current practice and continuing.

4. Dealing with Welsh Speaking Public

4.1. Written Communication

- 4.1.1. The Council will welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.
- 4.1.2. Correspondence through the medium of Welsh will not lead to any unreasonable 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 is 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 their preferred language if known.
- 4.1.6. The Council will make arrangements to translate correspondence as needed in order to respond to correspondence promptly in the original language.
- 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.
- 4.1.8. All circular and standard letters to the public will be bilingual.

Timescale: current practice and continuing

4.2. Telephone Calls

- 4.2.1. If the Town Clerk is not bilingual, they will offer to arrange for a Welsh speaking Council member 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.
- 4.2.2. When the Town Clerk's post becomes vacant it will be advertised confirming that bilingual skills will be advantageous so that the Council can offer a bilingual service to the public.

Timescale: current practice and continuing

4.3. Public Meetings organised by, or on behalf of, the Council

- 4.3.1. Any public meeting that is held to discuss the Welsh Language, Welsh medium education, Council Tax or any information relating to local Elections/By-Elections will be bilingual.
- 4.3.2. All publicity of public meetings will be bilingual, and will invite those attending to notify the Town Clerk of their language choice at least 14 days in advance so that appropriate translation arrangements can be made for Welsh speakers.
- 4.3.3. If it is evident at the beginning of a meeting that ALL those present speak Welsh, the meeting will be held in Welsh.
- 4.3.4. The Council will provide translation facilities for non-Welsh speakers, according to need, for public meetings arranged by or on behalf of the Council.
- 4.3.5. At least one staff member of elected member will be present at public meetings to welcome the public and to deal with enquiries, questions or comments in Welsh, provided that prior notice is given.
- 4.3.6. Any written materials such as leaflets acetates that are used in public meetings called to discuss the Welsh Language, Welsh medium education, council Tax or any information regarding local elections/by-elections will be or bilingual.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

4.4. Council Meetings

(Namely the Council's regular meetings, which are open to the public, but where the public are not part of the meeting)

- 4.4.1. The notice and agenda for the Council's meetings will be in English or bilingual on request.
- 4.4.2. The minutes will normally be in English or bilingual on request.
- 4.4.3. 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.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

4.5. Face to Face Meetings with the Public

- 4.5.1. Although the Town Clerk is not bilingual, the Council welcomes meetings with the public in either Welsh or English, and Town Clerk will ensure that appropriate arrangements are taken to enable any member of the public who wishes to discuss matters in Welsh to do so with a bilingual Member of the Council.

Timetable: current practice and continuing

4.6. Other Dealings with the Public

- 4.6.1. When the council contacts the public via information technology, namely computers, e-mail or touch screens, this information will be available in Welsh for the public, upon request.
- 4.6.2. The website will display information in English and bilingual as required.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

5. The Council's Public Face

5.1. Corporate Identity

- 5.1.1. The Council has already adopted a bilingual corporate identity and the Council's name Cyngor Tref Hwlfordd.
- 5.1.2. The name and address of the Council appears bilingually on official headed paper and compliment slips and any other promotional material.

Timetable: current practice and continuing

5.2. Signage

(This guideline is relevant to Council office signs, if an office exists, and any external public signs)

- 5.2.1. All new information signs or those replacing previous signs on Council property will be bilingual, as will any other public information signs for which the Council is responsible. The two languages will appear side by side, with the Welsh version appearing to the left. Where this is not practical, the Welsh version will appear first. The size, quality, legibility and prominence of text will be equal in Welsh and English.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

5.3. Publishing and Printing Material

- 5.3.1. Publications aimed at the public, such as documents and explanatory material dealing with the Welsh Language, Welsh medium education, council tax, information about local elections/by-elections and grant forms will be bilingual and 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, be distributed together and be equally accessible.
- 5.3.3. All press releases will normally be in English and will include a contact name for Welsh language interviews if needed.
- 5.3.4. Advertising and publicity activities dealing with the Welsh Language, Welsh medium education, council tax, information about local elections/by-elections will be bilingual.
- 5.3.5. Council advertisements and notices dealing with the Welsh Language, Welsh medium education, council tax, information about elections/by-elections to be placed in the press, on notice boards or any other medium will include all the information bilingually.
- 5.3.6. Job advertisements where Welsh is essential will appear in Welsh in all publications with an explanatory sentence in English as a footnote in bilingual and English medium publications.
- 5.3.7. Job advertisements will appear bilingually in English/bilingual publications and in Welsh only in Welsh language publications with a footnote in English.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

5.4. Statutory and promotional functions

- 5.4.1. This Council will encourage bilingual statutory and promotional functions at every opportunity.

- 5.4.2. As a minor authority, this Council, when consulted on naming of streets, developments and new estates, will support the use of standard or indigenous names when 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 Welsh Place Names Standardisation Panel in cases of uncertainty.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

5.5. Services by other parties

- 5.5.1. Any third parties used to deliver services to the public on behalf of the Council will be encouraged to comply with the specific requirements of the scheme as outlined by the Council.
- 5.5.2. The third party will need to confirm that it has complied with the relevant aspects of the scheme by letter if applicable.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

6. Implementing and monitoring the scheme

6.1. Staffing

- 6.1.1. When the position of the Town Clerk to the Council becomes vacant it will be noted in the advert that bilingual skills would be advantageous for the post to ensure that the Council can implement the clauses contained in this scheme.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

6.2. Administrative Arrangements

- 6.2.1. This scheme has the full support of the Council.
- 6.2.2. The Town Clerk will be responsible for implementing the scheme on a day-to-day basis within the Council. According to need, the Clerk will ensure that guidelines and instructions will be available to all who are involved in the implementation of the scheme.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

6.3. The Translation Service

- 6.3.1. The Town Clerk will be responsible for the written translation needs of the Council. Responsibility for the standard of any Welsh text produced will fall to any two bilingual members of the Council if available or an approved bilingual agency.
- 6.3.2. If the Town Clerk cannot complete the work within the timescale, the Council will employ an external translator.
- 6.3.3. If it is the decision of Council that simultaneous translation services are needed, the Town Clerk will be responsible for arranging the necessary facilities.

Timescale: from date of scheme approval

6.4. Monitoring

- 6.4.1. Responsibility for monitoring the scheme will rest with the Town Clerk to the Council.
- 6.4.2. The Council will receive a brief annual report on implementing the scheme that will be displayed locally with a copy being sent to the Welsh Language Board. Also, the Council will invite local residents to offer their views on the service and how it could be improved, by placing a copy of the report in a public place.
- 6.4.3. The report will deal with every aspect of the scheme.

6.4.4. The Council will welcome suggestions from the public (by letter or telephone communication) regarding improvements to any aspect of the scheme.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

6.5. Publicity

6.5.1. The Council will publicise the scheme.

Timetable: from date of scheme approval

6.6. Contacting the Council

6.6.1. Any comments, complaints or suggestions regarding the scheme should be addressed to the Town Clerk, Haverfordwest Town Council, Old Wool Market, Quay Street, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA61 1BG; Email: townclerk@haverfordwesttown.co.uk; Telephone: 01437 763771.

7. Review of Policy

7.1. This policy will be reviewed as necessary by the Council. However, the policy will also be examined when a formal complaint is made to identify any areas requiring improvement.

Policy re-adopted: April 2021