

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee
Ymchwiliad i Gynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg | Inquiry into
Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

WESP 21

Ymateb gan : Sir Ddinbych Cyngor

Response from : Denbighshire County Council

Question 1 – What are your views on whether Welsh in Education Strategic Plans are contributing to the outcomes and targets set out in the Welsh Government’s overarching Welsh Medium Education Strategic Plan?

The progress made by Denbighshire County Council against the key outcomes demonstrates that the plans are contributing to the outcomes and targets set out in the Welsh Government’s Welsh Medium Education Strategic Plan.

If you believe that WESPs are not contributing sufficiently, how do you think this could be resolved?

More impact could be achieved if the WESP was less prescriptive and therefore focused on priority areas to meet the key outcomes.

Question 2 – What are your views on whether WESPs are (or have the potential) to deliver the required change at a local authority level (for example delivering provision to meet any increased demand for Welsh medium education)?

The 21st Century Schools Programme requires a significant capital commitment at a Local Authority level therefore has a higher profile than the WESP. Denbighshire County Council’s WESP influences our 21st Century Schools Programme and therefore is delivering change through increase provision for Welsh Medium education.

If you believe that WESPs are not, or don't have the potential, to deliver change, how do you think this could be resolved?

Question 3 – What are your views on the arrangements for target setting; monitoring; reviewing; reporting; approving; and ensuring compliance with delivering the requirements for WESPs (and the role of the local authority and the Welsh Government in this regard)?

The annual process of reviewing the WESP is more time consuming than necessary.

The Strategic Plans in their current forms are very prescriptive and restrict the Local Authorities Strategic Groups actions. Strategic Groups should be able to respond to changes and prioritise accordingly.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

WESP need to be more focused on local priorities to meet the key strategic outcomes and be flexible to respond to changes. There should be a clearer scrutinising, reviewing, prioritising and monitoring role for each Strategic Group rather than the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Governments role should be to challenge each WESPs performance against the strategic outcomes rather than scrutinising individual targets.

Using the peer review model may be more beneficial than the current arrangements.

Question 4 – What are your views on whether WESPs evidence the effective interaction between the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy and other relevant policies and legislation*? (*for example school transport policy; 21st Century Schools programme; A living language: a language for living – Moving forward policy statement; Flying Start; planning policy)

There are clear links in the WESP with 21st Century Schools Programme with capital investment in Welsh medium education provision to respond to an increase in demand. Key outcomes in the WESP relates to sustaining and increasing the number of pupils

learning through the medium of Welsh and continuing studying through the medium of Welsh. This assists the objective of “A living language: a language for living” of increasing the number with Welsh language skills in the workplace.

There is also a link between increasing Meithrin provision and Flying Start.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

Many people reading the WESP would not recognise any links to the policies unless the Local Authority specifically states it in their plan. Revamping the format of the Strategic Plan would assist the reader in identifying the work undertaken to meet policy objectives.

Question 5 – What are your views on whether the outcomes of WESPs deliver equal outcomes for all pupils, including for example, primary/secondary pupils or children from low income households.

The WESP is one of the key plans that ensure provision of a full education offer.

If you believe that the outcome of WESPs do not deliver equal outcomes, how do you think this could be resolved?

Question 6 – If you had to make one recommendation to the Welsh Government from all the points you have made, what would that recommendation be?

Welsh in Education Strategic Plans need to be less prescriptive and more focused on local priorities to meet the key strategic outcomes and be flexible to respond to changes.

Question 7 – Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered by the specific questions?

Currently the timeliness of monitoring arrangements is not aligned with the timescale of the targets.