



Welsh Language

Topic Paper No 17 – Summary

Introduction

The Welsh language is an important part of Flintshire's cultural and community identity. The Welsh language is a planning consideration in the creation of land use policies and in the decision-making process on planning applications. In developing Local Development Plan's (LDP's), all local planning authorities should consider whether they have communities where the use of the Welsh language is part of the social fabric. If so it is necessary to show how the needs and interests of the Welsh language have been taken into account in the plan preparation.

Context

The Wales Spatial Plan 2010, identifies the important role the Welsh language plays in our communities and notes that it is important to promote the language. It states that developing the Spatial Plan Area in accordance with the vision of Iaith Pawb of creating a modern bilingual community is a key priority. The vision for north-west Wales tries to sustain a sense of place and sustain and promote the culture, heritage and the Welsh language.

Planning Policy Wales (6th edition) states that where Welsh Language forms part of the social fabric of the area, local planning authorities should take this into account in the formulation of land use policies. It further states that the planning system can contribute to its well-being

Technical Advice Note 20 "Planning and the Welsh Language" (October 2013) places greater emphasis on assessing impacts of development on the Welsh Language when preparing Local Development Plans (LDP) and

that an assessment of impact should be included as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of a plan. There is considerable emphasis in TAN 20 on the preparation of the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) and to ensure its conclusions are reflected in the land use policies of the LDP.

TAN 20 also includes the possibility of using mitigation measures to reduce adverse linguistic effects. This, it is advised, can be facilitated through using a Section 106 Agreement or Community Infrastructure Levy schedule.

The Role of the Plan

A linguistic assessment should be carried out on the Strategy Options (Pre-Deposit LDP) as part of the LDP Sustainability Appraisal. This may lead to the inclusion of a policy which seeks further, more detailed, analysis on certain types of planning applications depending on their location and scale of development.

Key Plans and Strategies

- Wales Spatial Plan 2010 update.
- Flintshire's Community Strategy 2009-2019 (2009)
- Single Integrated Strategy
- Planning Policy Wales, edition 6, Welsh Government, (March 2014):
- Technical Advice Note 20: The Welsh Language, The National Assembly for Wales, (2013):
- Planning and the Welsh Language: the Way Ahead, Local Authority Consortium, (December 2005):
- Iaith Pawb A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales 2003

Issues to be addressed by the Plan

A policy will be included in the LDP to take into account the needs and interests of the Welsh language where this has been identified as an important component of the local community. The policy could relate to planning applications over a certain threshold within these sensitive locations. For Example 20.8% of the population of Wales can speak Welsh. In Flintshire as a whole this figure is 13.2% of the population. Welsh speakers are mainly located in the following wards (over 20% of the population) which may therefore be sensitive to developments impacting on the Welsh Language: Caerwys 20.3%, Ffynnongroyw 22.9% Halkyn 20.7%, Mold South 30.6 %, Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor 26.2%, Treuddyn 24.4% and Whitford 20.7%

It is possible that mitigation measures will be sought rather than issuing an outright planning refusal for linguistic reasons alone.

The policy may require a **Community and Linguistic Statement** for minor developments and for larger developments a more comprehensive **Community and Linguistic Impact Assessment** to assess what mitigation may be required. Mitigation measures may include:-

- Affordable housing provision;
- Phasing of housing proposals;
- Education provision and places;
- Signage and place names (including marketing name, street names and other signage);
- Employment initiatives and training;
- Contribution to community facilities and groups;
- Funding for Welsh courses or other related initiatives active in the Community.

Potential Land Use Policies / Proposals

New Development should integrate with existing settlements and retain the character, culture and sense of place that makes Flintshire special.

The UDP does contain Policy STR 9 Welsh Language and Culture which states that any development should have regard to and where appropriate reinforce the Welsh Language and cultural identity. New guidance from the Welsh Government in the form of TAN 20, suggests more focused and specific policies should be contained in the LDP to deal with the potential detrimental effects of new development on the language. LDP policies should raise awareness of the issues and identify where in the county detailed studies and mitigation measures may be required.