



Local Development Plan 2021 > 2036

Cardiff Council - May 2026

Cardiff Replacement LDP Examination

Hearing Session 5
Welsh Language

CD12 Council Statement in
Response to Inspectors Questions
in ID08e



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Cardiff Council
Replacement Local Development Plan
Examination

Hearing Session 5 – 09.30-13.00, 12 June 2026

County Hall

Welsh Language

Issue - Whether the LDP provides an effective and sufficiently ambitious framework to promote the Welsh language.

1. Opening and introductions

2. Does the LDP do enough to promote the Welsh language?

2.1. Should Policy SP15 be stronger and state proposals which would have a significant adverse or disadvantageous effect on the viability and vitality of Welsh language and culture will not be permitted unless there are specific measures to mitigate negative impacts?

Response:

The Council consider that the Plan certainly does more than the current adopted LDP to promote the Welsh language. This is the first time that a strategic policy on the Welsh language has been included in a Plan for Cardiff - and indeed for this part of Wales - a policy that declares Cardiff an Area of Linguistic Importance.

The Plan seeks to make as much use as possible of the guidance and direction available within legislative constraints and existing planning guidance and seeks to learn from the experience of other planning areas in Wales who have adopted planning policies and strategies relating to the Welsh language.

The policy will for the first time ensure that new major development proposals give conscientious consideration to the Welsh language at an early stage in the planning process, following the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance on policy decisions. There is also a particular emphasis in this policy on promoting the *prosperity and growth* of the Welsh language, as much as trying to protect the numbers of speakers we have in our communities. To that end, the Council consider that the Plan can be an important addition to the Council's other policies and strategies in the language sphere.

The policy itself states:

'SP15: ...Land use proposals that have a significant adverse or disadvantageous effect on the viability and vitality of the Welsh language and Welsh culture will not be permitted –

unless there are specific measures that strengthen the positive impacts and/or eliminate/mitigate the negative impacts.'

Further:

'6.127 Proposals will be expected to respect the Welsh language element when naming developments and also follow good practice in naming specific features in Welsh, as part of the place-making effort. The absence of use of Welsh will undermine the strategy and will contravene this policy.'

The Council confirm they would be happy to consider changing the emphasis of the policy wording with the aim of strengthening it if that would answer the concern raised.

The Council would also welcome seeing future Welsh Government action on relevant recommendations proposed in *The Report of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities on Town and Country Planning (February 2025)* particularly those recommendations that apply to the whole of Wales. That report was published after the preparation of this policy, but we see it as a purposeful and timely addition to this discussion.

2.2. How will the Council assess the robustness of Welsh language Situation Statements?

Response:

To aid this process the Council will prepare a Welsh-language SPG which will provide more detailed guidance on the formulation and procedure for assessing Situation Statements, as set out in 7.305. Based on recent years the rough assumption is that around 200 applications per year will be required to be screened. No more than around 12 to 15 of those applications would be expected to be considered for a Full Impact Assessment process with the likelihood that 2 to 3 of those each year may need to prepare a Full Impact Assessment and an Action Plan.

The screening would be carried out by the Planning Service in consultation with Bilingual Cardiff policy staff. As well as drawing on the expertise of other Council departments, it would also be possible to establish an advisory sub-panel of external Welsh language stakeholders from the external membership of the Bilingual Cardiff Partner Forum to assist with the assessment and screening of applications. Input from the Forum panel along with drawing on the expertise of external consultants would also be practical considerations in assessing the applications where it is deemed that a Full Welsh Language Impact Assessment is required and in evaluating those Assessments and any Action Plans arising from them.

3. Should the plan aspire to greater than 50% of new schools being Welsh medium?

3.1. The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022 to 2031 (WESP) states the Council's aim is for a truly bilingual Cardiff. It goes on to say *'We have made huge strides toward this vision, but we cannot rest. We still have more to do to ensure the capital of Wales is a place where Welsh is a vibrant living language that every young person has the opportunity to hear, speak and enjoy in every aspect of their lives and is recognised for its place firmly at the heart of our nation's capital.'* At paragraph 7.295 the LDP expects development to contribute to meeting WESP targets by applying the principles of sustainable neighbourhoods to ensure all learners have access to Welsh medium education provision.

- i. Is the aim to establish 50% of any new school provision on brownfield sites as Welsh medium sufficiently ambitious to enable the aims of WESP to be realised?

Response:

The Council confirm guaranteeing that 50% or indeed any higher percentage of new educational provision on brownfield sites will be Welsh-medium on its own would not be sufficient to achieve the current WESP targets. New brownfield sites during the Plan period will only lead to a relatively small percentage increase in the city's overall housing stock. However, these sites would be in addition to the large greenfield strategic sites identified in the current LDP that will also now roll-over into the Plan. This would mean that the "at least 50%" commitment of the current WESP would continue to be in play across all major development sites in the city over the new plan period.

The Council have not been able to meet the annual WESP targets for the first years of the scheme for several reasons. One being the overall decline in the birth rate, a second being the number of housing completions and the levels of construction activity on the existing greenfield strategic developments, in part due to impact of Covid. In addition, in planning new school places we also contend with both the right of parental preference and the practical issue of proximity of provision. Taken together, these factors mean for instance, that there is currently no immediate pressure on local education places in those strategic greenfield sites which would drive the need for new educational provision in those areas. The same would likely be true also for brownfield sites under the Plan, namely that the desired growth of Welsh-medium provision would be dependent to a degree on a combination of internal policy measures and external factors, some being beyond the direct control of the authority. However, we would continuously assess the situation with regards to the latest demographic data, number of completions and projected completions and uptake of school places each year and introduce measures to assist us in meeting our WESP Welsh-medium targets.

- ii. Should the requirement for Welsh medium schools be in Policy C4 rather than its reasoned justification?

Response:

The Council agree that this would strengthen the policy. However, it should be noted that the authority has other options other than the LDP for increasing the number of those learning Welsh. As well as the WESP and the close relationship between it and the Bilingual Cardiff Promotion Strategy, the Welsh Language and Education Act 2025 is a major new legislative development that will begin to influence the current WESP, which will be amended in 2026/7 to set new targets for the second half of the current WESP. The new Act, however, will provide for a new National Framework and WESP regime to be introduced at the end of the decade in accordance with the new Act timetable, with new WESP targets for authorities from thereon being set by Welsh Government. The Act will also have a significant effect on the provision of Welsh-medium education within our existing English-medium schools; therefore we expect the new WG WESP strategic plans as they evolve to be more all-encompassing than the current iteration and they will likely overlap with the second half of this Plan period.

The Council also note there is a need to update criterion iii of Policy C4 which can be included in the forthcoming Matters Arising Changes consultation, so it reads as follows:

- iii. Have regard to the Council's ~~requirement/ strategy to provide adequate Education facilities to cater for the planned growth in the proportion of the City's children and young people able to speak Welsh~~ **statutory duties under the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 to plan and secure sufficient school provision that supports progression, continuity and growth in Welsh language education, in order to increase the proportion of children and young people who are able to use Welsh confidently and independently.***
- iv. Would 'at least' enable the Council to secure more if it were deemed necessary?

Response:

The Council agree that this reference in paragraph 7.231 stating that the Council will 'Seek to establish at least 50% of new school provision on Local Development Sites as Welsh-medium' ensures sufficient flexibility to secure more if deemed necessary.

4. Action Points