

**Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol**

**Blaenau Gwent**

**County Borough Council**



**Corporate Linguistic Skills Strategy**

**2009 – 2012**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to providing equality in service delivery to every resident and community within its geographical boundaries. One way of achieving this is by providing those services in a range of language other than English. This commitment is backed by UK legislation in the form of various Acts of Parliament.

The Council's Welsh Language Scheme (as required by the Welsh Language Act 1993) not only describes the way in which the Council intends to provide its services to the public equally in Welsh and English, but also outlines the Council's intentions regarding developing Welsh on a wider level throughout the County Borough.

The Council also has a number of policies and strategies that are wholly or partly concerned with the Welsh Language. Aside from the Language Scheme and the associated staff guidelines, there are commitments to the Welsh Language in the Directorate of Education's Welsh Education Scheme, the Corporate Equalities Statement, the Race Equality Scheme, the Welsh Language Translation Policy, the Council's Procurement Strategy, the Single Plan, and the Community Plan.

In addition the National Assembly's strategy **laith Pawb** outlines its vision for the development of a truly bilingual Wales and the Council's Linguistic Skills Strategy demonstrates its commitment to these aims.

As an extension to the process of developing the Welsh Language Scheme and the Race Equality Scheme, the Council has produced a Linguistic Skills Strategy that has brought together various elements of human resources in more detail. It has also brought together the various aspects of equality of language choice in service provision, customer care, staff development and recruitment and selection in one strategy, which will take the Council forward in a positive and realistic way given the linguistic background of the County Borough.

This Linguistic Skills Strategy was agreed by Council on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009

### **Historical Overview of the Welsh Language**

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw a dramatic decline in the numbers of Welsh speakers in South East Wales with the Census of 1991 revealing that only 2.3% or 1,696 of the population aged 3 and over spoke Welsh and the number of Senior School pupils attending Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw, Pontypool was 16.

The Census figures in 2001 showed a massive increase, to 9.5% or 6,421 people who identified themselves as fluent Welsh speakers. (These figures are based on those aged 3 and over). This was mainly to do with the introduction of the Welsh Language Act in 1993 and the opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Brynmawr which opened in 1993 and now has 300 pupils.

## Linguistic Profile of Blaenau Gwent County Borough

This is the only information available from the 2001 Census on Language. There is no current linguistic profile of staff available, nor are there any figures on other languages that may be spoken within the County Borough. (Total population 67,795 in 2001).

<b>Population percentage and numbers who:-</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>
Understanding spoken Welsh only	2.2%	1,483
Speak, but do not read/write Welsh	1.9%	1,291
Speak and read, but do not write Welsh	0.6%	403
Speak, read and write Welsh - fluent	9.5%	6,417
<b>Total with a knowledge of Welsh to any degree</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>9,594</b>

## Partnership Working

The Council works closely with partner organisations such as the Welsh Language Board, the WLGA, Menter Iaith Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen a Mynwy (the newly established local Language initiative which it supports), Coleg Gwent and Grŵp Deddf (a South East Wales regional network) to ensure that the targets in the Language Scheme and more importantly, the needs of its Welsh speaking population, are met.

The Council also works closely with the Valleys Regional Equality Council and is a key player in the local Multi-Agency Diversity Forum which looks at issues of Racial Harassment and helps to determine the needs and issues of people who speak other languages.

The Council and partner-organisations such as Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID), the Deaf Association Wales (DAW) and the British Deaf Association (BDA) will work on developing British Sign Language (BSL) skills within the workforce of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to provide services and meet the needs of BSL users living in the County Borough.

## **2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

By implementing the Linguistic Skills Strategy, the Council will:-

- (i) Ensure that residents of the County Borough are given the services they need in their chosen language (see Section 3);
- (ii) Ensure that the Council's customers are treated equally whatever their language needs and however they interface with the Council (see Section 4);
- (iii) Ensure that the Council's staff have the appropriate training to enable them to deal effectively with customers, whatever their language needs (see Section 4);
- (iv) Ensure that Recruitment and Selection practices within the Council reflect the need to provide the above (see Section 6);
- (v) Ensure that internal monitoring is undertaken to provide meaningful statistical information to enable the Council to note areas of good practice and areas where further development may be needed (see Sections 8 and 9).

The Action Plan to deliver these aims and objectives together with the proposed timetable for implementation is found in Section 9.

## **3. LANGUAGE AND EQUALITY**

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has both a legal and moral duty to provide all services fairly and without discrimination to every resident and everyone who works in, or visits the County Borough.

Language has become part of the wider Equalities agenda as it has been recognised that in the case of a person's first language, no-one should be put in a situation whereby they are disadvantaged by being unable to use their first language to explain or defend themselves.

The Council's Disability Equality Scheme (as required by the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005) places an obligation on the Council to provide services in the medium of British Sign Language (BSL) which was recognised as an official minority language on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2003 by the UK Government.

The Scheme also makes it clear that anyone requesting documents not only in other spoken languages, but also in other formats such as audio, disk, Braille or large print is entitled to receive the information in their format of choice.

Language choice, especially in relation to children, is covered by various UN Human Rights conventions. All public authorities have a positive obligation to ensure that respect for Human Rights is at the core of their day to day work. This means acting in ways that positively reinforce the principles of the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Act makes it unlawful for a public authority to act in a way that is incompatible with a Convention Right. This covers all aspects of the public authority's activities – in their day to day work staff have a crucial human rights role to play, not only in ensuring that they always act in accordance with the Convention rights, but also in supporting a positive attitude to human rights issues throughout the community.

### **Welsh Language**

The duty regarding the Welsh Language arises primarily from the Welsh Language Act 1993, under which the Council has developed a Welsh Language Scheme and the Staff guidelines booklet which have been distributed to all service areas. In the Scheme, the Council has made the following commitment:-

**“We will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality”.**

The Council itself does not have a choice under legislation, but what it must do is ensure that the public has an equal choice between English and Welsh and allow the residents and visitors to the County Borough to choose for themselves.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, by including language in its Equalities statement has shown that it recognises an individual's choice in language matters.

### **Other Spoken Languages**

The duty regarding other languages arises from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 has mentioned in the Council's Race Equality Scheme, which makes it clear that anyone can request information or a service in any other language.

The needs of anyone who speaks other languages are similar to the needs of Welsh speakers to a great extent, but with the additional issues that in such cases, many people from ethnic minorities cannot speak English at all, or certainly not to a level where they can speak, read and write English well enough to complete a Council Benefit form for example.

### **British Sign Language**

It cannot be assumed that Deaf customers can communicate in English, so that unlike for Welsh speakers, BSL may be Deaf people's only language. Through the education system, Deaf BSL users may not have learnt to speak or lip-read English as a medium of communication.

It also cannot be assumed that all deaf customers use British Sign Language to communicate. There is a distinction between “d” deaf or “D” Deaf. “deaf” people will usually have an acquired hearing loss, or be hard of hearing. “Deaf” people strongly associate themselves with the Deaf community and culture and use British Sign Language as their main method of communication.

Research has shown that lip reading is only 33% accurate, which means if lip reading arrangements are the only adjustment made in service provision then potentially nearly 70% of the information can be lost.

Many adult Deaf BSL users can read and write an equivalent of the age of an 8½ year old and therefore may be in a similar position to those ethnic minority customers who cannot speak English.

The Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 places an obligation on the Council to provide services in the medium of BSL, therefore the Council must continue working towards providing, for example, public information in the format of videos in BSL or videos with in-vision signers and subtitles.

#### **4. DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC**

The Council has an established Contact Centre in existence – C2BG. They have a Dedicated Welsh speaking officer and have in place Typetalk and a Mini-com system for the Deaf Community. The establishment of this skills strategy will look to assess the number of bilingual Contact Centre staff that are required to deal with the requirements of the public.

There are also plans to consult the local Deaf Community on their preferred methods of communication.

One area where the Council can immediately offer a language choice is when a staff member answers the telephone. In the past this has proved difficult to take forwards as there has been no corporate style of answering the telephone as it varies from person to person, let alone between service areas. The current Welsh Language Scheme and guidelines encourage staff to answer bilingually and all main switchboard staff do so, but a newly introduced Communication Service Standard has declared that all officers answer the phone bilingually, thereby demonstrating the Authority's commitment to the Welsh Language.

If a call in Welsh is received, staff are aware of the need to transfer such calls to one of the 41 Welsh speaking officers in the Authority. These members of staff have agreed to deal with Welsh speaking calls for their and other departments.

If a call in any other language is received then Language Line will be used thus enabling the caller to be dealt with in their chosen language. Information has already been distributed to relevant officers but it must also be made available to all Council staff.

This service should be arranged in a similar way for Deaf customers: the Council's receipt of a fax or text message should initiate the forwarding of this to staff who have the appropriate level of BSL qualification (NVQ Level 4), or, staff who will access BSL interpreters or videophone, Minicom and Typetalk technology, and who can respond quickly.

If a visitor to any reception area wishes to speak in any language other than English, there are three options for providing the service, dependent on their requirements:-

- (i) **Welsh** – reception staff have a list of **41** Welsh speakers that they can contact.
- (ii) **Other Spoken Languages** - reception staff should use a Language Sign to allow the member of the public the opportunity to inform them in which language they wish to speak. Then either an appropriate staff member or the Language Line can be contacted.
- (iii) **British Sign Language** – The Authority has a dozen members of staff that have BSL qualifications though they only have basic skills which would not be appropriate in dealing with more complicated issues. There is an on-line BSL service that uses videophone technology that allows translation in a similar way to Language Line. Qualified Interpreters can currently be accessed via the Authority’s Disability Resource Booklet which can be found on the Internet and Intranet.

In planning any public meeting, staff members must inform the public that they can request to speak in Welsh, any other language or have the services of a British Sign Language interpreter. In order to do this however, they must let the organisers know in advance so that every effort can be made to ensure that these requirements are met.

Through the BSL Futures Project we jointly hosted a BSL trainee interpreter for 6 months with the Local Health Board which helped the Deaf Community become more confident in dealing with the Authority. They now attend every Forum and we provide BSL interpreters to facilitate this. Indeed these representatives are now becoming more involved in engagement issues with the Authority. The next step in this relationship is that the Authority in partnership with Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board have set up a Deaf Forum to deal with the needs and requirements of the Deaf community.

## **5 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **Welsh Language**

The Council currently encourages all its workforces and members to learn Welsh by offering a flexible package of morning, lunchtime, afternoon and evening classes, which enables managers and staff to choose the best option for their particular service area. It offers Welsh in the Workplace Training for all staff members and elected members. The training programme was originally developed by the Welsh Language Adviser in consultation with Coleg Gwent.

Other training offered are a series of two-day courses that are run by Coleg Gwent on behalf of Grŵp Deddf (a South Wales regional group of officers dealing with the Welsh Language). These two-day courses are aimed at giving basic Welsh Language skills and are open to councils from across the region as opposed to from one authority only (this helps in making staff understand that it is not only Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council that operates a language scheme and creates links and networks between organisations).

The training provision is kept under constant review and priorities are re-assessed where necessary. The effectiveness of the Welsh in the Workplace Training Programme is monitored, as is the progress of those learning the language. It is recognised that the speed at which officers and members are able to learn Welsh will have a direct impact on the targets given for implementing certain measures in the scheme. It is also appreciated that linguistic skills vary from Officer to Officer and that some may take longer than others to learn the language.

The effort and commitment shown by staff will be the most important elements. A degree of patience and flexibility will be required on everyone's part and the support of Line Managers and colleagues is absolutely vital to increase the number of Welsh speaking staff. It is also recognised the valuable contribution which existing bilingual officers can make by helping and encouraging learners to practice their Welsh in work situations and this is something that the Equalities Officer and Translator are looking into. (Clwb Clonc has been set up to support Welsh Learners and those who have lost confidence in their language skills).

A session on language awareness in the staff induction session informs them of the Council's policy, why it exists, what training and resource help is available etc from the moment they join the Authority.

### **BSL/Signalong/Makaton**

As with conversational Welsh classes, there have been British Sign Language classes run by the Council since 1987 available to staff as part of the Staff development training programme.

Staff in Learning Disability also have access to MAKATON and SIGNALONG sign language classes, which are co-ordinated via Joint Training Arrangements with other South East Wales Social Services Departments. The Authority in the last year have supported 28 members of staff to undertake Makaton training specifically as a medium to communicate with people with a learning disability.

BSL interpreting must be ideally provided at the level of NVQ Level 4 or equivalent as a minimum and Communication support at Level 3 minimum. It is not sufficient to use staff who are learning BSL to Stages 1,2 though clearly any BSL ability will improve the current customer care situation and is already doing so.

As part of the action plan the possibility will be explored of having trained BSL interpreters in areas other than Social Services – it is often assumed that Deaf issues are simply based around Disability and the need for Social Services. The Deaf Community are being encouraged to act more independently thus requiring the Authority to be more organised in terms of providing BSL interpreters to deal with any of their issues.

## 6. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

### Welsh Language

Whilst the Welsh Language Scheme covers the method of advertising bilingually (section 4.8 of the scheme), this Linguistic Skills Strategy is aimed at the rationale behind the advertising.

To date, the council has not actively advertised for fluent Welsh speakers, other than in certain posts such as staff in Welsh medium schools or the post of Educational Psychologist, for example. Such advertising is a sensitive issue and this Linguistic Skills Strategy will attempt to outline a way of moving forward that allows the Council to fulfil its obligations whilst also avoiding positive discrimination and not excluding existing staff members from applying for posts for which they might otherwise be selected.

The Authority will examine service needs and ascertain the areas of priority for recruiting bilingual staff in order to meet the requirements of the scheme. In so doing, they will consider the situation where the recruitment of bilingual officers is essential in order to provide as full a service as possible. Where linguistic ability is considered to be essential or desirable, this will be stated in job advertisements.

In circumstances where it proves difficult to appoint suitable bilingual staff to posts where the ability to speak Welsh is considered essential, the practice will be either:

- to make an appointment which carries a **contracted** undertaking to learn Welsh to a specified standard and within a stated time with the support of the Council; or
- to re-arrange the service or identify alternative arrangements to provide the skill in the workplace by e.g using the linguistic skills of existing staff in that specific service area.

In the case of candidates for posts where Welsh skills are considered desirable, and a situation arises where two candidates are equal as to formal qualifications, experience, etc., the level of ability in bilingual skills will be regarded as an additional skill.

To satisfy both the principle of equality and the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme, together with allaying any fears that some groups may have with putting such a strategy into practice, in principle what this Linguistic Skills Strategy suggests is that in addition to the steps mentioned in the Welsh Language Scheme, the definitions “Welsh essential” or “Welsh desirable” are expanded to detail the level of ability required, by stating in a job advertisement that Welsh is essential **to the level required of that individual post.**

This allows many existing staff who are learners to use the language skills they have gained to further their career (in practice for instance, a receptionist would not need the same level of fluency in Welsh as would a Social Worker). Thus learners within the council are given the chance to progress and the council not only meets the needs of the Language Scheme but also gains a return on the investment made

in staff development. Such a move would demonstrate the Council's commitment to the Welsh Language.

### **Other Spoken Languages**

In the future we may need to consider appointing staff that possess community language skills e.g Polish, Chinese etc. This can only be considered after a survey of the linguistic profile of the County Borough has been done.

## **7. THE LANGUAGE SERVICES GROUP**

### **Welsh Language**

A Welsh Speakers Group was established a number of years ago, made up of bilingual officers who are willing to act in a support capacity by providing assistance on Welsh matters to all Directorates. To date, the Group has operated in a very informal way but this needs to be reviewed and adjusted as required by the needs of implementing the Scheme.

The role of the Welsh Speakers Group is a varied one – the range of services required from the available bilingual Officers is extensive e.g.

- ◆ they may be asked to translate and respond to Welsh correspondence;
- ◆ respond to telephone enquiries;
- ◆ hold face to face conversations;
- ◆ attend different types of meetings;
- ◆ give media interviews;
- ◆ act as mentors in conjunction with the Welsh for the Workplace Training Programme;
- ◆ travel from one location to another (depending on what type of query has arisen)

and at the same time carry out their specific day to day workload.

To date, the Team has been a purely voluntary one; it is not the intention of the Strategy to force any Welsh speaker into accepting work that they are not prepared or able to undertake.

### **Other Spoken Languages and British Sign Language**

The principle of establishing such a Group can be extended to other spoken languages and British Sign Language and would again be based on the willingness and ability of staff and the approval of the relevant Head of Service.

It is therefore appropriate to consider the formation of an authority-wide Language Group, along the lines of the Welsh Speakers Group outlined above, to tackle a number of service delivery issues covered by the various Equalities schemes in place.

To formalise the Group, it is proposed to introduce a scheme whereby those who speak Welsh, Other Spoken Languages or can use British Sign Language and who accept Language Group duties over and above their normal work, are paid an allowance each month, so that it is clear to them and their co-workers that they are not being paid simply for speaking and using other languages.

This will ensure that it will be seen as an additional skill and/or requirement, much in the way that First Aiders are recognised at present.

This allows those who do not wish to use their language skills, the freedom to choose not to undertake duties over and over their day to day work. Group members will also be given work that only relates to their service area and not work from other Directorates (although given the low numbers of Welsh Speakers in some Directorates this may not be possible initially).

Heads of Service would also have to approve their staffing being on the Group as it does involve extra duties outside their normal functions.

Anyone appointed to a post where a language skill was specified in the job description and who was not undertaking extra duties, would not be eligible for the honorarium.

Standards of quality would have to be maintained and would be linked to the type of work that was expected of the individual Group Member. These standards can be achieved as the Language Services Group develops, using guidance from within the Council and from partner organisations. Members of the Group would need regular refreshers in order to maintain their skill levels.

Staff taking on the responsibility of BSL communication support/interpreting will need ongoing support and training and will need to have completed NVQ Level 4 to be able to deal competently with the Deaf Community or Level 3 to provide communication support.

## **8 AUDIT OF WORKPLACES AND POSTS**

There is a need to carry out two very important pieces of work;

- (i) A comprehensive Audit to establish the existing range and level of language skills of Council staff.
- (ii) Each Division to look at their staffing structures and decide where they will need Welsh speaking staff to deal with the public (Welsh essential/desirable), BSL and other languages.

These two pieces of work will provide the foundation upon which the implementation of the Linguistic Skills Strategy is built.

It will provide a body of objectively assessed requirements for the linguistic skills necessary to provide services to the public in the chosen language of the service user. From this basis the Authority can then move forward to compare the skills

required with the actual skills already available within the workforce, and thus identify any skills deficit.

This information will need to be monitored not only in regards to starters and existing staff as an initial exercise, but also on a regular basis to make sure that the location of those staff within the Council is kept up-to-date and to monitor leavers to ensure long-term accuracy of the information held.

## 9 ACTION PLAN AND TIMETABLE

The Linguistic Skills Action Plan will be developed in accordance with the Linguistic Skills Strategy, the Welsh Language Scheme and the Corporate Equalities Action Plan.

The proposed timetable of the Linguistic Skills Action Plan will be implemented in line with any amendments to this draft Strategy following the consultation period.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome/PI</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>
To ensure that the Strategy is appropriate and achievable	Consult with internal and external partners on draft version of Linguistic Skills Strategy	Amendments made as suggested and draft sent for formal adoption	Nov/Dec 2008	Equalities Officer
Adoption of the Strategy on a formal basis	CMT/Executive/Council to approve Linguistic Skills Strategy and Action Plan	Toolkit formally adopted	Jan 2009	Equalities Officer/Head of HR
Ascertain the language skills present in the Authority	Carry out a Language Audit of Staff	A detailed picture of the language skills amongst staff	April 2009	Equalities Officer/ A Parker
Establish what Posts should be designated Welsh Essential or desirable within Directorates	Examine existing staffing structures and consider potential levels and type of contact with the public	A range of posts across all Directorates designated Welsh essential or desirable	April 2009	DMT's

Objective	Action		Outcome/PI	Timescale	Responsible Officer/s
Have an up to date record of staff language skills	Develop system of recording personal language skills		Database established that can be easily updated	April 2009	Human Resources
To ensure that the Authority can deal with queries from a wide variety of languages	Establishment of a Language Services Group		List of staff available on the Intranet to deal with queries in a variety of languages	February 2009	HR/Equalities Officer
Ensure all staff are aware of the Language services Group provision (i.e leaflet/Intranet/awareness session)	Distribute list of Language Services Group details to all Directorates		Public can be dealt with in their chosen language with the minimum of fuss	March 2009	Equalities Officer
To establish the minority language needs within the population of Blaenau Gwent	Work with VALREC to develop and monitor a database of minority groups and their language needs within the County Borough		Database established that can be easily updated	ongoing	Equalities Officer/Head of HR
To identify a list of preferred external Language providers	Tender for a language translation and interpretation provider for the County Borough		List of providers available to provide speedy language solutions	July 2009	Procurement Section

Objective	Action		Outcome/PI	Timescale	Responsible Officer/s
Ensuring front-line staff are trained in how to deal with customers with different language needs	Include language needs in the basic customer care training programme		Public can be dealt with in their chosen language with the minimum of fuss	ongoing	Service areas training programmes
Ascertain the demand or need for the provision of British Sign Language services in the County Borough	Monitor the take up across the Authority of BSL interpreters for the Deaf		To be able to provide an overall picture of the cost of providing BSL services in the County Borough	December 2009	Equality Officer/Service Areas

## 10 **APPENDICES**

List of appendices:-

- i) Language Services Group – Agreement Form
- ii) Staff Linguistic Skills Questionnaire
- iii) List of Partner Organisations

**Appendix (i) Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Language Services Group Agreement Form**

Name.....

Job title.....

Department..... Directorate.....

Tel. No..... Fax No.....

The language you speak/sign  
.....

From the following list would you be willing:		Yes	No
1	For you name to appear in the Council's Language Services Group Directory		
2	To wear a badge identifying you as being able to speak Welsh, or other languages, or able to use British Sign Language		
3	To respond to telephone queries		
4	To respond to and originate correspondence		
5	To conduct face to face conversations		
6	To attend meetings in your own Service Area:		
	a) site meetings		
	b) public meeting		
	c) one to one meeting e.g in someone's home		
	d) travelling from one location to another to deal with queries		
7	To attend meetings in other Service Areas:		
	a) site meetings		
	b) public meeting		
	c) one to one meeting e.g in someone's home		
	d) travelling from one location to another to deal with queries		
8	To undertake media interviews:		
	a) radio		
	b) television		
9	To attend meetings or events with partner organisations and/or businesses		

Your signature:..... Date:.....

Signature ..... Date:.....  
(Line Manager/Head of Service)

**Appendix (ii) Draft** NB This form will be distributed in a bilingual format

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**  
**Staff Linguistic Skills Questionnaire**

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to providing equal access to services to the public in English and Welsh, and in other languages and formats to those who request them. **If you can speak any language other than English or if you can use BSL**, please would you take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire so that we can find out what are the language skills that the Council’s staff possess.

Once we know what language skills are present in the workforce, we will contact those people and ask if they would like to use their skills on behalf of the Council in any way. But don’t worry, by completing this form you **are not** committing to using those skills if you do not wish to do so.

**SECTION A**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pay Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Division** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Department/Section** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact phone number** \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B**  
**Language Skills**

**B1.** Do you speak, read or write any language/s **other than** English? *(please tell us below):-*

---

**B2.** What is your ability in that language/those languages? *(please note your ability below):-*

	<b>A little</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Quite Well</b>	<b>Fluently</b>
<b>Understanding</b>	<input type="text" value="a1"/>	<input type="text" value="a2"/>	<input type="text" value="a3"/>	<input type="text" value="a4"/>
<b>Speak</b>	<input type="text" value="b1"/>	<input type="text" value="b2"/>	<input type="text" value="b3"/>	<input type="text" value="b4"/>
<b>Read</b>	<input type="text" value="c1"/>	<input type="text" value="c2"/>	<input type="text" value="c3"/>	<input type="text" value="c4"/>
<b>Write</b>	<input type="text" value="d1"/>	<input type="text" value="d2"/>	<input type="text" value="d3"/>	<input type="text" value="d4"/>

**B3.** Are you able to use British Sign Language and if so to what level(s)?

Yes

No

*Please list course(s) and level(s):-*

---

**SECTION C**

**Duties in the workplace**

**C1.** Do you do the following whilst carrying out your day to day duties :- *(please tick all that are relevant)*.

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Daily</b>
<b>Speak on the telephone or face-to face with the public</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> a1	<input type="checkbox"/> a2	<input type="checkbox"/> a3	<input type="checkbox"/> a4
<b>Read correspondence etc. from members of the public</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> b1	<input type="checkbox"/> b2	<input type="checkbox"/> b3	<input type="checkbox"/> b4
<b>Write correspondence or other material for use by the public</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> c1	<input type="checkbox"/> c2	<input type="checkbox"/> c3	<input type="checkbox"/> c4

**C2.** If you do any of the above, how often do you use your language skills in the workplace? *(please tick all that are relevant)*.

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Daily</b>
<b>Speak</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> a1	<input type="checkbox"/> a2	<input type="checkbox"/> a3	<input type="checkbox"/> a4
<b>Read</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> b1	<input type="checkbox"/> b2	<input type="checkbox"/> b3	<input type="checkbox"/> b4
<b>Write</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> c1	<input type="checkbox"/> c2	<input type="checkbox"/> c3	<input type="checkbox"/> c4

**SECTION D**

**Language Training**

**D1.** Are you learning Welsh, BSL or any OTHER language at the moment?

Yes

No

*(If YES please list course(s) and level(s) below:-*

---

**D2.** If "OTHER" please tell us which language: -

.....

**D3.** Would you be interested in learning or improving your Welsh or BSL Skills

Yes

No

*If "YES" please contact Jo Thomas on 355002 or Alan Burkitt on 355108 for further information*

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Thank you for completing this form, your help with this survey is greatly appreciated.  
Please return it to the following address: -

**Alan Burkitt, Equalities Officer, Human Resources, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale, NP23 6XB.**

**Tel: (01495) 355108 Fax: (01495) 355787**

**E-mail [alan.burkitt@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:alan.burkitt@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)**

**This form is available in alternative formats on request.**

### **Appendix (iii) – List of Partner Organisations**

- Access for all Forum
- Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board
- British Deaf Association (BDA)
- Coleg Gwent
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
- Deaf Association Wales (DAW)
- Gr p Deddf
- Menter Iaith Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Mynwy
- National Deaf Children's Society
- Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)
- Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)
- Valleys Race Equality Council (VALREC)
- Welsh Assembly Government
- Welsh Language Board
- WLGA