



# Language and Economy Conference

Institute of Welsh Politics, Aberystwyth University  
17 September 2014

## Summary of proceedings

### Welcome:

**Kathryn Jones and Dylan Iorwerth**

Kathryn Jones welcomed the delegates to the conference. Before handing over to Dylan Iorwerth Kathryn explained that the two main aims of the conference were:

- 1) To define and unpack the meaning of 'language and economy'
- 2) To identify practical solutions to questions such as:
  - What action is needed at a national and regional policy level to ensure economic conditions that can support Welsh communities?
  - What is needed in order to promote enterprise, give status to the Welsh language and support employment for Welsh speakers within various sectors across Wales?

### Introduction:

**Edwina Hart AM**

A video address was given by Edwina Hart AM, Welsh Government Minister for Economy, Science and Transport. Ms Hart noted the importance of the issue of language and economy, referring to recent reports produced on the subject. She noted the importance of the Welsh language to clients and customers in Wales and that the status of Wales as a bilingual nation is of international significance. She wished the conference well and challenged the delegates to propose three actions for her department to consider with regard to promoting the Welsh language in relation to the economy.

## **The importance of the economy within ‘Moving Forward’:**

**Bethan Webb, Welsh Language Unit, Welsh Government**

Bethan Webb explained that ‘Moving Forward’ provides the context for her work and the work of her department and that it forms the basis of their collaboration with the Department for Economy, Science and Transport. She noted that Government interventions are merely a part of the jigsaw and that forums such as this conference make an important contribution to the discussion.

An outline was provided of the recent policy journey since ‘Y Gynhadledd Fawr’ and a number of task and finish groups commissioned by the Government. It was noted that language and economy is a broad subject that poses wide-ranging questions but that it is a priority area for the Government based on ‘Moving Forward’. In that respect, attention was drawn to the Government’s recent announcement regarding the availability of a capital fund to encourage the establishment of centres and initiatives to create social vibrancy. It was noted that the Government accepts that large-scale schemes are sometimes necessary in order to develop the economy, e.g. the Wylfa Power Station and the Energy Island, and that there is a challenge to be faced in balancing that necessity with the interests of the Welsh language. It was pleasing to learn that the developers intend to appoint language planners to advise them.

It was acknowledged that the education system is the most effective producer of Welsh language skills but that it is necessary to ensure that young people are given opportunities to use those skills in relation to work. Community development and local economic development were central to Chapter 3 of the ‘Moving Forward’ document, recognising the role of the *mentrau iaith* in those areas of work. Chapter 4 emphasised the actions of individuals, changing behaviour and marketing in order to promote use of the Welsh language. It is recognised that the Welsh language needs to be made more prominent within services. It was noted that the proposed pilot scheme in the Teifi Valley may provide an opportunity to do so. Technological developments were also important.

In future, the role of local authorities will be central in developing viable local economies that can support the Welsh language. Their relationship with the third sector, including the *mentrau iaith*, will also be crucial in that context. Finally, everyone, including the *mentrau iaith*, will have to bear linguistic considerations in mind when considering the Williams Report on local government reorganisation.

## **The Welsh Language and Economic Development:**

**Rhodri Llwyd Morgan, member of the Welsh Language and Economic Development Task and Finish Group**

Rhodri Llwyd Morgan gave an overview of the Welsh Government’s response to the report prepared by the Welsh Language and Economic Development Task and Finish Group. As Pro Vice-Chancellor at Aberystwyth University, he explained that Universities in north and west Wales have an essential role to play in this respect and that large capital schemes facilitated by Universities have a central place in the bigger picture.

It was noted that the evidence presented to the Task and Finish Group had included negative claims regarding the impact of the Welsh language on the Welsh economy, e.g. poor English skills, lack of inward investment and higher costs as a result of translation. Such claims had to be acknowledged and tackled.

One of the group's tasks in approaching its work was to define what is meant by 'language and economy'. The report refers to a number of aspects on the subject:

- The Welsh language as a marketing tool
- The Welsh language as a skill for work
- The importance of networks and the role of bodies working to promote the Welsh language
- The importance of the creative industries
- The need for area-based approaches
- The importance of laying a solid foundation
- Welsh-medium business support, e.g. the Teifi Valley scheme
- The influence of procurement and grants
- Economic data and policy formation.

A quotation was provided from the Government's response, noting the synergy between language planning and economic development, "*Our response to this review recognises the synergy between nurturing economic growth, the provision of jobs, the creation of wealth, and the well-being of the Welsh language and will create a stimulus to better support business to exploit these relationships.*"

In conclusion, it was suggested that a partnership comprising of public bodies, language agencies and private businesses should be created to develop schemes that could be supported by European Structural Funds, including the Rural Development Plan, in order to strengthen the position of the Welsh language.

## **Language vitality and economic prosperity – what's the relationship?** **Wynfford James, on behalf of the Welsh Language Commissioner**

Wynfford James welcomed the fact that *A living language: a language for living and Moving Forward* noted the need to ensure greater understanding of the relationship between language planning and economic development, particularly in north and west Wales. However, recent policy documents were more superficial in their treatment of this matter and it was noted that the Government needs to emphasise the importance of strategic economic development to the viability of the Welsh language, rather than simply seeing the matter in terms of the use that is made of the Welsh language in the business sector. References to the potential of European funds and developing skills in the labour market were welcomed.

The importance of the recommendation made by the recent task and finish group was noted, as was the development of the three towns – Carmarthen, Bangor and Aberystwyth – through the co-ordination of language planning and economic development. Ensuring that the Welsh language is considered in working groups involved in the formation of economic development policy was also essential.

He referred to John Aitchison and Harold Carter's analysis of the socio-economic trends of the second half of the twentieth century, in particular population mobility, deindustrialisation and counter-urbanisation. He noted that the two academics believed that language planners should focus on the economy rather than linguistic rights. In doing so, he encouraged the adoption of area-based and sector-based strategic approaches. He outlined the scope of the subject, claiming that the economy has been ignored by both language campaigners and language planners.

It was noted that the Welsh Language Commissioner had responded to a number of policy consultations in this field – European Structural Funds 2014-20, the Rural Development Programme and Glastir – and that there are positive elements in the documentation and the intentions. However, considerations in relation to the Welsh language were often absent from other initiatives such as the plans for the City Regions and Economic Growth Areas. Therefore, the intention to review the remits of advisory groups and consider developments in the three towns is to be welcomed.

Looking to the future, it was noted that there are several foundations to build upon – the Welsh Language Commissioner’s recent study: ‘The Potential of the Welsh Language to Contribute to realising the aims of the European Funding Programmes 2014-20’, a study of LEADER 2014-20 and a paper recently given by the author to a seminar held by the Institute of Welsh Politics. He also noted the potential to learn from past good practice, such as the work undertaken by Antur Teifi in developing Trosol, Telemat, Golwg and other companies in the Teifi Valley. He also noted the significance of the programme of work for Economic Development and the Welsh Language announced by Andrew Davies AM in 2004 and the recent work of Mentrau Iaith Cymru in promoting the need to develop Welsh-medium labour market plans.

In conclusion, he quoted Geraint Talfan Davies who said: “We have done all the easy things for the language. The question is ‘What next?’.” Bill Clinton’s response would be, “It’s the economy, stupid!”

## **Welsh-medium Labour Market Plan:** **Meirion Davies, Menter Iaith Conwy**

Meirion opened his contribution by noting the error that is made when discussing the issue of language and economy, namely discussing ‘the Welsh language’ rather than making the discussion more tangible by referring to ‘Welsh speakers’. People provide the context and the challenge is to make people more enterprising in order to be able to support Welsh speaking communities.

Why a Welsh-medium Labour Market Plan? He quoted Professor Harold Carter and noted that what was needed was not a ‘language strategy’ but a ‘socio-economic sustainability strategy’ that gave Welsh speakers every opportunity to sustain their communities and networks by:

- reducing outward migration,
- identifying the demand for Welsh-language services and expanding Welsh-language services,
- linking the need to employment and training opportunities,
- identifying opportunities for economic development.

An outline was given of recent demographic trends in relation to the Welsh language and reference was made to recent policy reports in terms of strengthening the relationship between language planning and economic development.

What is a Welsh-medium Labour Market Plan? A number of examples were cited where the principle is already being put into practice – child care schemes run by the *mentrau iaith* in south-east Wales, the Welsh language sabbatical scheme in education, the *Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol*, the outdoor training scheme run by Menter Iaith Conwy and the EgNi scheme. In addition, he drew attention to the increase in the number of Welsh speakers in Caernarfon

and Cardiff, claiming that the key factor in that increase was the availability of Welsh-medium jobs.

How to create a Welsh-medium Labour Market Plan? He outlined a model and action plan that could form the basis for developing a wide-ranging strategic approach in creating a Welsh-medium labour market, referring also to the services/skills Catherine wheel developed by Miguel Strubell (1999) and Harold Carter's seal of approval for the concept.

## **Panel Discussion**

In response to questions from the floor, the panellists made the following points:

- That we need to begin to consider Welsh speakers as a specific economic group and plan for them.
- That ensuring that businesses provide Welsh-medium services is quite acceptable but that we need to look much more strategically at ensuring employment that can maintain the viability of Welsh communities and develop enterprise and products based on the Welsh language and the culture of Wales.
- Referring to the intention to establish a pilot programme in the Teifi Valley, it was noted that Welsh-medium business advice has been available in the Teifi Valley for 25 years – it would be more fitting to ensure that the Welsh language has a place in the plans of the City Regions.
- That the field needs to be more specifically defined and that there needs to be greater understanding of the relationship between language planning and economic development, particularly amongst civil servants and policy makers – at a national and local level.
- Furthermore, that a critical mass of grass roots activists is needed in addition to politicians who understand the agenda and are prepared to drive it forward.
- That evidence regarding the interconnections and the benefits needs to be collated and that the evidence base needs to be strengthened through further research, using mainstream funding sources rather than relying on 'language' funding.
- Furthermore, that agreement is needed on methods of measuring the impact of economic developments – both negative and positive.
- That a holistic policy approach needs to be developed that deliberately combines housing, employment and language.
- That consideration needs to be given to establishing a National Policy Partnership to promote greater understanding of the relationship between language planning and economic development.
- That consideration needs to be given to creating regional language and economic development plans based on the model of the 'three towns' – Bangor/Caernarfon, Aberystwyth and Carmarthen – as well as including the Welsh language in the plans of the City Regions.

## Why Galeri?

### Gwyn Roberts, Galeri Caernarfon

Galeri Caernarfon was established as a company in 1992 under its original name of Cwmni Tref Caernarfon. The community enterprise was established in response to the town's desperate situation at the time. Whilst Bangor was described as the 'City of Learning', Caernarfon was nicknamed 'Tre Twp' (Stupid Town). One problem was that the strength of the Welsh language within the town was being linked to its economic failure. Challenging that perception and transforming the town's economy and the psyche of its inhabitants was the main reason for establishing Cwmni Tref Caernarfon. That underlying reason for the company's existence remains and continues to drive the company's activity. Having a clear focus on their *raison d'être* is key to the success of every business.

Between 1992 and 1999 Cwmni Tref Caernarfon bought 21 buildings within the town to let to local businesses. There are now over 50 tenants in those buildings. This means that Galeri – that opened its doors on schedule in April 2005 – has a strong financial foundation.

With regard to language policy, the company is administered through the medium of Welsh but its activities within the town are bilingually inclusive. It is well-known that Welsh is the 'norm' within Galeri and that has a positive impact on the confidence and language use of both its staff and its users.

Details were provided of the findings of a report prepared by Arad Consulting on the economic impact of Galeri:

- Galeri contributes over £3m to the local economy.
- Every pound spent in Galeri is worth £2 to the local economy.
- Only 20% of Galeri's funding is public money.
- Grant funding received from the Arts Council of Wales is maximised at a ratio of 1:10.
- It supports over 50 FTE posts, including 36 FTE staff.
- It hosts 16 companies and 40 other posts.
- It is a catalyst to further developments in Victoria Dock, e.g. the offices of Cwmni Da.
- It is a cultural and economic hub.

So, what impact has Galeri had? It has had an impact on the perceptions of visitors to Caernarfon and has improved what the town has to offer its inhabitants and visitors. Galeri has succeeded in combining modernism with a sense of history, place, culture and language. It has encouraged further cultural events around the town. Galeri is a modern, confident, extroverted and Welsh place that has attracted positive attention from people all around the world. According to the *Architects Journal*:

*"Galeri is testament to how visionary clients and simple but spatially rich architecture can be constructed under challenging circumstances to make for a culturally and commercially more civilised world".*

As a result, Caernarfon has regenerated itself – and the Welsh language continues to be as prominent as ever in the town. The Welsh language is now synonymous with success. The process will continue – with or without government support and public money. Caernarfon's economy, its image and the self-esteem of its inhabitants have been transformed. Remembering why we exist is key to our success and will continue to drive us towards further successes in the future.

## **Venturing ahead in Waunfawr**

### **Menna Jones, Chief Executive, Antur Waunfawr Cyf.**

Antur Waunfawr is a social enterprise established in 1984 with the aim of creating employment and training opportunities for people with learning disabilities, being a good employer and protecting our environment, our culture and our language. These values have driven the company's agenda since the days of its founder, R. Gwynn Davies.

A vivid description was provided of the various projects undertaken by the business, including:

- The café
- The 'Sgubor Grefftau Arts and Crafts project
- A support service for users with special needs
- A park and groundsman project
- Community allotments
- The Menai Bikes project
- The Housing project - Tai Antur Waunfawr
- The Cynllun Cartrefu support service that enables people to live independently in their own homes
- The Warws Werdd and Caeryglchu recycling initiatives
- Community clothing banks and school collections
- John Evans Museum

Antur Waunfawr now employs 95 people and supports 60 workers with learning disabilities. As a not-for-profit company, any surplus is reinvested in developing further community projects. Antur Waunfawr also networks extensively with local cultural organisations across the communities of Gwynedd.

Antur Waunfawr is administered in Welsh and serves the community of Gwynedd through the medium of Welsh. Antur Waunfawr has a sound language policy that assists staff members to consolidate and improve their Welsh-language skills.

The social care sector is a major employer in our communities. An officer from Anheddau in Gwynedd was quoted as saying that there's "no need for high blown (and largely ineffective policies)! Part of the answer already exists."

Antur Waunfawr celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The organisation is looking forward to a prosperous future centred on operating through the medium of Welsh.

## **Cardigan Enterprise**

### **Cris Tomos, Cwmni Cydweithredol Cefn Gwlad Cyf.**

*A film was shown of the work being undertaken in Cardigan by Cwmni Cydweithredol Cefn Gwlad Cyf. (3CG) to purchase key sites and buildings in Cardigan town in order to develop capital and revenue that could stimulate the town's economic regeneration, in conjunction with other local initiatives such as the restoration of Cardigan Castle by the Cadwgan Cyf. co-operative.*

## Bro Ffestiniog – local and global

### Selwyn Williams, Pengwern Cymunedol

As a result of the Welsh Government's Communities First programme, a number of community and co-operative initiatives were established in the Bro Ffestiniog area – in addition to the numerous local initiatives that already existed in the area.

Those initiatives include Pengwern Cymunedol Cyf. who has bought and restored the old Pengwern hotel in Llanffestiniog. It is a co-operative that has, in addition to its local shareholders, over 60 volunteers who make a practical contribution to the initiative's success. The Pengwern Cymunedol initiative is typical of a shared vision that exists in the area, namely the desire to own the area's capital and resources for the social and economic benefit of the local inhabitants. The developments seen across the area are part of a process of cultural transformation witnessed there; a process of reigniting the mindset of self-sustaining enterprise.

Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog was established in order to co-ordinate the efforts of all the other local initiatives and add strategic value to all the activity. Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog is able to maintain a strategic overview of all the area's social needs as well as stimulate new activity. In preparing an Integrated Development Plan for the area it is hoped that agencies will devolve resources and responsibilities to the local level in order to be able to better provide for the area's needs.

Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog's aim is to serve as an example for other communities. The vision is to stimulate transformation from the bottom up, but doing so requires the support of a Welsh Government that serves its communities instead of focusing on capital.

Examples were given of how 'community' rhetoric had been highlighted in a number of policy initiatives introduced by both Westminster and Cardiff Bay governments in recent years. A critical analysis was proposed of the way in which the Communities First programme had been implemented in the area, noting that bureaucratic tendencies to centralise power had restricted opportunities to encourage local enterprise and the implementation of true community development. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the main purpose of the governments in Europe, Westminster and Cardiff Bay is to focus on capital and in particular international capital. The needs and prosperity of communities are of secondary importance to them. That creates a central tension in the role of community development officers funded by central organisations.

With regard to the involvement of the *mentrau iaith* in community and economic development, it was argued that they start from the wrong viewpoint. Language is a social product. Action must stem from the combined aspirations of the community, with language being just one aspect of the social experience that needs to be maintained and reinforced. A 'silo' approach to community development is one of the greatest weaknesses of the current system of government.

The New Economics Foundation and its recent report, *The Great Transition* (2010), proposes an alternative and holistic approach – an approach that requires a change in values, mindset and culture. Here the concept of 'community', the Welsh language and a Welsh identity plays a key part. Quoting Gramsci, Gwyn Alf Williams and Raymond Williams, an outline was given of the need to create a Welsh historical block in order to bring about social transformation. That transformation cannot occur simply on the basis of a Welsh identity – it must be a multifaceted block that encompasses everything that is Welsh.

The education system has a crucial role to play in creating that block – adopting an education that stems from a Welsh mindset and Welsh values in addition to Welsh-medium education. Currently and too often the Welsh language is considered only as a medium for

education. That is insufficient; a Welsh world-view must also be an integral part of that education.

In conclusion, it was stated that a change of mindset and culture at a local level can bring about change at a national and international level. Reference was made to a development in Sweden where a parallel independent parliament had been created alongside the state government through co-operation between local and co-operative organisations. To repeat a slogan – think internationally, act locally.

## **An economy that thinks in Welsh and speaks to the world**

**Euros Lewis, Wes Gleï Cyf.**

Euros expressed his concern about the attitude being expressed by the Welsh Government in relation to the Welsh language. They refer constantly to ‘speaking Welsh’ and the importance of being given the ‘choice’ to do so. He was concerned that this demonstrates a lack of understanding of the core dynamic that is central to the linguistic situation in Wales – namely the power relationship between two cultures.

Emphasising ‘choice’ demonstrates the mindset that the Welsh language is little more than a ‘*lifestyle choice*’. Seeing the Welsh language as a ‘way of life’, on the other hand, is a mindset that comes from a totally different direction. A ‘way of life’ stems from living with other people within a local community. A *lifestyle* is a ‘choice’ promoted by central political and commercial powers – for their own benefit.

Joshua Fishman was quoted as saying that any language revitalisation strategy must be based on an understanding of that language group’s local identity – i.e. its culture. Just as ‘*lifestyle*’ is not quite synonymous with ‘way of life’, the Welsh word ‘*diwylliant*’ is not synonymous with the English word ‘*culture*’. As is the case with ‘*lifestyle*’, ‘*culture*’ too is imposed from the top down – as something to covet and aspire to (amongst the ‘stars’). ‘*Diwylliant*’ however, comes from the bottom up, from the people themselves. *Diwylliant* creates change. The purpose of *culture* is to maintain the *status quo*. The key to *diwylliant* is the shared aspiration, “one root under the branches”, a basic agreement that one common goal lies under all the differences. Furthermore, *diwylliant* must be inclusive and holistic. *Culture* is uniform and exclusive.

To date, devolution has also been part of the problem rather than the solution as it has meant, to all intents and purposes, recentralising – relocating the centre – thereby strengthening the influence of the central *culture* on our local ‘way of life’. True decentralisation is needed in Wales in order to release the energy and creativity of people locally within their communities. Only then can we combine language and economy behind the drive to sustain communities and thereby create a fairer society. That is the great potential of thinking in Welsh – a potential that we should already be speaking about to the world.

## How can we kick start further enterprise? Alun Jones, Chief Executive, Menter a Busnes

It was noted that Menter a Busnes has been encouraging Welsh speakers to venture and establish businesses for 25 years. Encouraging further action by individuals and groups is not easy but Menter a Busnes now has considerable experience in the field.

In addition to that experience, and contrary to the claims made by some people, there is relatively sound research regarding the relationship between language and economy. Reference was made to a number of significant publications, including:

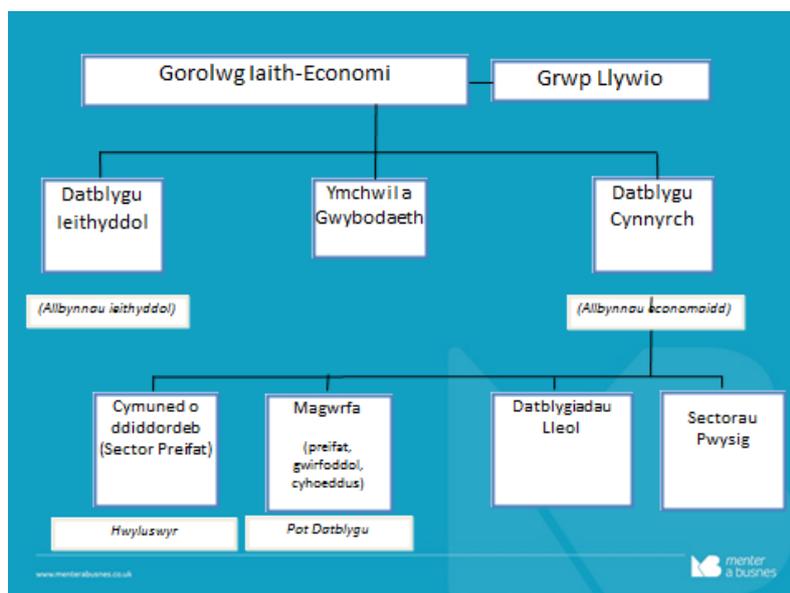
- Datblygu Economaidd a'r Iaith Gymraeg: Adroddiad Cynnydd Grŵp Trafod Iaith ac Economi (2002).
- Capitalising on language and culture, Scoping Study; Menter a Busnes (2005).
- Gwerth: papur safbwynt ac ail-safleoli, Adam Price, Grŵp Iaith Economi (2011).

Reference was made to the concept of the '*wicked problem*' developed by Rittel and Webber (1972) – which are complex problems that withstand simple solutions. Language revitalisation and economic development are themselves '*wicked problems*'. Together they create a '*super wicked problem*'. Considerable co-ordinated effort is therefore needed to solve a '*super wicked problem*'.

One central and critical solution to promoting and stimulating enterprise is creativity. "*Creativity drives economic growth*", (Florida and Tingall: 2004). To a large extent, therefore, stimulating economic growth is a cultural matter – the relationship between culture and economy is certainly a close one in many respects. For example, telling the story is of paramount importance in creating a product and a brand and in marketing that product, e.g. Hiut Jeans, Cardigan. Associating the Welsh language and culture with a product can very often contribute an element of creativity to a product and businesses, e.g. Cwrw Llŷn.

Therefore, we need to grow businesses and initiatives that are rooted in Welsh culture and that contribute to economic growth and to the growth of Welsh culture. Examples were given of recent cultural developments, both compatible and incompatible, in relation to Owain Glyndŵr's Senate-house in Machynlleth in order to illustrate the relationship between language, culture and economy.

Finally, a model was proposed that may offer a way forward in terms of marrying the aims and objectives of language planners and those responsible for economic development in Wales:



## Discussion groups

The following comments were made as part of the feedback from the discussion groups:

- Need to highlight the sound and useful evidence available with regard to: (a) the relationship between the viability of the Welsh language and economic matters, and (b) the economic value of the Welsh language – and build on that evidence.
- Need to open a constructive dialogue between language planners and those responsible for economic development in order to create a consensus regarding the development needs of both areas and the common ground that they share.
- Need to establish an independent observatory to highlight the relationship between economic development and language planning.
- Need to develop an intersectoral partnership that can implement a Welsh-medium labour market plan in specific areas and sectors.
- The Welsh Government needs to consider the challenges facing rural areas as a whole when considering the aim of supporting Welsh communities, including conducting language impact assessments.
- Specific and practical initiatives are needed to facilitate grass roots developments and the growth of local indigenous businesses.
- Need to develop an effective infrastructure in terms of transport and broadband in order to enable rural communities to continue to be competitive.
- More detailed and more extensive strategic guidance is needed from the Welsh Government, e.g. the inclusion of the Welsh language as an economic opportunity within the strategies of the City Regions and the development of a language-related economy in Carmarthen, Aberystwyth and Glannau Menai.
- It was noted that the relationship between the Welsh language and the economy is not only a rural issue but also an issue that is relevant to the whole of Wales.

## Comments in conclusion

**Dylan Iorwerth, Editor/Director, Golwg Cyf.**

Having listened to the contributions made during the day we can identify **two central principles**:

- There is a need for **strategic planning** that considers both economic development and language planning, i.e. promoting the Welsh language and its communities forms part of multifaceted community development.
- Whilst there is much that a government can do, there is also a need to **act independently** of government.

## Understanding

There was agreement that further research is needed to exactly illustrate the two-way relationship that exists between language and economy. Where research existed, the evidence needed to be collated and the message needed to be shared.

The purpose of all this was:

- To change the mindset of governments at all levels and other organisations involved in economic development.
- To inform some of the strategies and processes, e.g. procurement processes, planning strategies, the creation of City Regions etc.
- Once we have understood the factors that have a positive or negative impact on the language, we will also be able to understand which interventions are most effective.

But there are questions: Should we concentrate on specific areas and sectors? Should the work (e.g. in relation to sectors) be tailored to different areas?

## **Methods**

With regard to status, businesses need to be influenced to use the Welsh language and need to be supported to do so, e.g. through technology etc. On the other hand, more Welsh-speaking individuals should be encouraged to enter the business world – the key is to ensure the right support at the right time. But the main emphasis was on community development.

## **Community development**

Promoting co-operative enterprise locally offers additional benefits:

- Wider ownership (literally and psychologically).
- Impact on a community's use of language.
- Impact on a community's economic activity.
- Continuity and development – one success story provides the opportunity to move on and develop further ideas.
- Mindset – the process itself promotes a mindset that stimulates further activity.

The relationship between community development, economic development and language planning is relevant to urban areas as well as more rural areas. In areas where the Welsh language has been weak but is now on the increase, economic activity can lead to opportunities to use the language and to higher levels of confidence. In the 'traditional' heartlands, development is necessary on all levels to address the complex problems of housing, employment, community resources etc as well as the economy.

How, therefore, can further work be undertaken in terms of community development? Networking: locally, nationally and internationally. Networks can bolster, share ideas and support.

## **Specific opportunities**

Finally, some opportunities came to the fore:

- The Williams Commission – local government is critical in terms of setting a linguistic example and in terms of economic activity, e.g. Cyngor Gwynedd. Re-organisation, where it occurs, will offer an opportunity to set new and high expectations.
- Economic development grants – there is no need to think in terms of language grants; economic development grants of all kinds are available for economic activity that will also promote the language.

- Welsh-medium labour market plan – there was general support for the idea; not only in terms of its direct impact but also in terms of being a catalyst for the kind of co-ordinated action that is required.

## **Vote of thanks**

**Elin Royles, Institute of Welsh Politics, Aberystwyth University**

Elin Royles offered a vote of thanks to the contributors, the delegates and the organisers and hoped that the day would stimulate further productive discussions on a subject that is of central significance to the survival of the Welsh language.

**Note:** full versions of the papers and presentations can be found on IAITH's website: [www.iaith.eu](http://www.iaith.eu)

**IAITH: welsh centre for language planning  
Institute of Welsh Politics**

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