

# Language Planners Wales

- the professional forum  
for language planners in Wales.

Meeting held on 12 October 2007 in Aberystwyth.

## Brief notes

A successful meeting was held with around 30 participants from various fields.

A summary was given of the actions taken thus far, and it was noted that over 80 individuals had expressed an interest in the meeting.

### **Discussion on values and principles**

An interesting discussion was held which sought to establish the initial steps towards creating a set of common values and principles for a field which is so diverse in terms of its contexts.

Following a series of group discussions and a plenary discussion these points came to the fore in that there was general recognition that:

- languages and cultures have inherent value as an expression of the human experience;
- linguistic and cultural diversity is to be celebrated;
- power relationships exist between language groups in economic, political and social terms;
- language issues are linked to equality issues;
- one of the functions of the language planning profession is to act in support of the continued existence and development of languages and cultures with less power;
- the language and cultural identity of individuals and groups needs to be respected;
- education, learning and professional development are core values for the profession;
- intelligent meaningful debate and a diversity of views have value;
- there is fundamental value to informed planning and action.

### **Discussion on functions**

Following group discussions regarding the functions of Language Planners Wales, a broad agreement was reached in relation to the functions which were proposed. The proposed functions of Language Planners Wales have been refined as follows:

- to bring together individuals from different fields to enable them to network, share experiences and disseminate good practice;
- to promote the field as a professional discipline and seek to ensure that it is given recognition at the highest level;
- to provide a platform to develop and facilitate common professional development in the field;
- to act as a means of facilitating and providing a public platform for intelligent discussion amongst professional practitioners in the field;
- to act as a means of disseminating information amongst practitioners as regards language planning on a Welsh and global level.

Whilst arranging activities, it was noted that the discussion topics and fields of work should be varied whilst also striving to be inclusive (keeping everyone in the loop) and acting as a point of contact for networks in specific fields.

### **Discussion on education and training**

Following an open discussion on issues regarding education and training, the following points were noted:

- There is a need to develop a professional postgraduate qualification in language planning.
- This qualification needs to be professionally validated by the field.
- Consideration should be given to developing professional qualifications for different aspects of the profession and associated key posts.
- There is a perceived market for a qualification of this kind and it needs to be delivered quickly.
- Providers need to consider bilingual provision.
- There are diverse and wide-ranging occupational training needs which need to be met on many levels and in many fields.
- There is a lack of current information regarding the education and training opportunities which are available.

As a result, a forum will be held during the next meeting of Language Planners Wales which will provide a platform for educational institutions and training providers to set their stall for the field.

It is understood that a major conference is being arranged for the Justice sector on 7 December, therefore the date for the next meeting will have to be reconsidered.

It was agreed that *IAITH: the language planning centre* should continue to facilitate the forum.

**October 2007**