



Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Evidence paper on Draft Budget 2025-26 – Welsh Language Budgets

Evidence session: Thursday 16 January 2025 – 9:15-10:45

This paper provides information to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee on budget allocations relevant to the Welsh language in proposals outlined in the draft Budget 2025-26, published on 10 December 2024. It also provides an update on specific areas of interest to the Committee.

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1. Commentary on Actions and detail of Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) allocations

The table below summarises the 2025-26 draft budget allocations as relevant to Welsh language policy.

Table 1 Cymraeg 2050 budget allocations 2025-26

Budgets Relating to the Welsh Language – Summary	2025-26					
	2024-25 Final Budget Restated (Sept 2024)	Baseline changes	Revised Baseline	Additional Allocations	Other Changes	Draft Budget (Dec 2024)
	£000s					
Central Services & Administration (CSA) MEG						
Fiscal resource (revenue)	37,157	76	37,233	4,596	50	41,879
Non-Fiscal resource (non-cash)	121	0	121	26	-9	138
Resource Total - CSA MEG	37,278	76	37,354	4,622	41	42,017
Education MEG						
Fiscal resource (revenue)	16,211	7	16,218	19	-1,100 ¹	15,137
Resource Total - Education MEG	16,211	7	16,218	19	-1,100	15,137
Total Resource - Cymraeg 2050	53,489	83	53,572	4,641	-1,059	57,154
Central Services & Administration MEG						
Capital	50	0	50	0	0	50
Total Capital - CSA MEG	50	0	50	0	0	50
Total – Cymraeg 2050	53,539	83	53,622	4,641	-1,059	57,204

This information is consistent with the budgets presented to the Committee last year, although budget lines are now split across two MEGs: the Education MEG (Welsh in Education and Cymraeg 2050 (LAEG) BELs) and the Central Services and Administration (CSA) MEG (Welsh Language and Welsh Language Commissioner BELs) following the Cabinet changes announced in September. Whilst excluded from the *Cymraeg 2050* budgets presented above, it is recognised that other BELs within the Education MEG (including the Education Infrastructure BEL and Teacher Development and Support BEL) and BELs across other Ministerial portfolios also support Welsh language policy delivery (see Other information section).

The total indicative budget for *Cymraeg 2050* as presented above stands at **£57.2m** for 2025-26, which includes fiscal resource (revenue) of £57.016m, non-fiscal resource (non-cash) of £0.138m and capital of £0.05m. Across both MEGs, this represents an increase of £3.5m on resource (6.7%), however this increase is impacted by the transfer of £1.1m within the Education MEG (see footnote 1). Taking the CSA MEG alone, there is an increase in

¹ Reflects an administrative transfer to the Teacher Development and Support BEL within the Education MEG to develop and deliver national professional learning for Welsh-medium practitioners and to develop the language skills of all practitioners.

resource of nearly £4.7m (12.5% increase) for 2025-26 when compared to the revised baseline for 2025-26.

As requested by the Committee, a detailed breakdown of 2025-26 draft budget allocations, together with 2023-24 final outturn and 2024-25 forecast outturn (as at Period 6) by MEG, Action and BEL is attached at [Annex A](#). This confirms the final outturn in 2023-24 for *Cymraeg 2050* budgets within the previous Education and Welsh Language MEG of just under £49m, together with a forecast for this financial year of £54m.

The revised baseline used for the 2025-26 Draft Budget is the 2024-25 Final Budget (restated September 2024) adjusted for recurring baseline adjustments for 2024-25 to support 2024-25 public sector pay award and increases to pension contributions from April 2024 due to a change in rate called Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience (SCAPE). This has resulted in baseline changes for 2025-26 for the Welsh Language Commissioner, Adnodd and *Cymraeg 2050* staff.

Welsh Language BEL

The purpose of the Welsh language BEL (within the CSA MEG) is to support the delivery of *Cymraeg 2050* in relation to Theme 2 and 3 of *Cymraeg 2050* – to increase language use and to secure the best conditions and infrastructure to deliver the strategy. The indicative budget for the Welsh Language BEL is **£38.534m** in 2025-26. This represents a cash increase of £4.55m (13.4%) in 2025-26 when compared to the revised baseline.

The funding in this BEL support activities to deliver *Cymraeg 2050*, including funding for key stakeholders to:

- deliver Welsh language training through the National Centre for Learning Welsh (NCLW);
- the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, following the transfer of this budget from the Welsh in Education BEL as part of the Cabinet restructure;
- Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru and Urdd Gobaith Cymru;
- increase the use of Welsh, through grants to key partners including: the network of Mentrau Iaith and Papurau Bro (Welsh-medium community newspapers); Merched y Wawr; Cymdeithas Eisteddfodau Cymru; Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru; and the Young Farmers Clubs Movement;
- *Cymraeg i Blant* (*Cymraeg for Kids*) via Mudiad Meithrin to support parents, prospective parents and other family members in using Welsh at home, transmit Welsh to their children, and to support children's linguistic development in a social and educational context;
- deliver the Welsh Language Technology Action Plan;
- national activities related to the Siarter Iaith which supports and promotes the informal use of Welsh amongst school-age children (with £0.5m now in *Cymraeg (2050)* LAEG BEL);
- *the* Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan; and
- research, evaluation and marketing in respect of the strategy.

We need the collective support of our partners to achieve our *Cymraeg 2050* goals. Of the increase to the BEL, £3.5m relates to the reinstatement of funding reprioritised to reserves as part of last year's budget. This will be used to provide stability across the entire Welsh language sector to ensure that infrastructure is maintained, which is critical to support the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill and the [recommendations](#) of the

Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities. A further £1m will be used to support existing commitments against the BEL, including support for Welsh language technology and the Urdd's National Youth Theatre. The budget also reflects the £0.05m recurrent transfer in from the Education MEG to fund Welsh language digital support for the FE sector via the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. Further details on allocations to stakeholders is outlined in the 'Specific Areas' section of the paper.

Welsh Language Commissioner BEL

This budget (within the CSA MEG) supports the Welsh Language Commissioner, with further detail provided in the 'Welsh Language Commissioner' section.

Welsh in Education BEL

The Welsh in Education BEL (within the Education MEG) supports delivery of Theme 1 related to Welsh-medium and Welsh language education within *Cymraeg 2050*. The indicative budget for 2025-26 is **£6.537m**, a small increase (£0.019m) from the revised baseline specifically in relation to Adnodd, to provide them with additional support for the next round of public sector pay awards in 2025-26. The BEL supports:

- funding for Mudiad Meithrin to increase Welsh-medium childcare provision as a pathway into Welsh-medium education;
- the continuation of funding for the e-sgol programme (£0.6m per annum);
- the implementation of the 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs); and
- Adnodd, which became operational on 1 April 2023, responsible for commissioning bilingual teaching and learning resources in support of the curriculum and its qualifications.

Cymraeg 2050 (LAEG) BEL

The Cymraeg 2050 (LAEG) BEL was established from 2024-25 as part our new grant approach for pre-16 education grants with the creation of the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG), delivering on our Programme for Government commitment to reduce the administrative burden on local authorities. This strand of the grant combines funding for the Welsh in Education Grant, Professional Learning, late immersion provision and the Siarter Iaith, and will support delivery of the forthcoming Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill.

Whilst the budget reduces by £1.1m to £8.6m in 2025-26, this reduction relates wholly to an administrative transfer to the Teacher Development and Support BEL within the Education MEG. In October 2024, the Cabinet Secretary for Education announced her intention to bring together the current functions of the National Academy for Education Leadership and some of the functions of the regional consortia and local authority partnerships into a national body. This body will be responsible for designing and delivering professional learning and leadership support on a national level in response to changing practitioner and Welsh Government priorities. As a result, the £1.1m will still support professional learning for Welsh-medium practitioners and develop the language skills of all practitioners, but instead be allocated to develop and deliver national professional learning.

2. Other Information

Information on how spending and delivery of the Welsh language portfolio is monitored and evaluated to demonstrate value for money.

In terms of value for money, clarity over how we use our resources effectively is central to delivering the priorities set out in *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* and the Programme for Government. Once expenditure is planned in line with my priorities, I have well-established processes in place to ensure that resources are used effectively for the purposes intended. The governance and monitoring procedures in place reflect the nature of our relationships with delivery partners.

Progress against the [Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme for 2021 to 2026](#) is monitored annually through a process which includes the publication of an annual [Action Plan](#) at the beginning of the financial year, followed by an [Annual Report](#) at the year end to report back on the actions detailed in the Action Plan. Regular reviews to monitor expenditure and outcomes are undertaken to ensure that any available resources are reprioritised to deliver the strategy.

The Welsh Language Partnership Council plays a role in advising on progress towards the 2050 targets and the efficacy of our programmes and interventions. The Cymraeg 2050 Programme Board within the Welsh Government is tasked with assessing risks and identifying steps to mitigate them and mainstreams the strategy in each of the Government's policy areas.

Information on allocations (and their location) in your portfolio, as well as allocations in other Ministerial portfolios that directly impact on Welsh language policy delivery and support Cymraeg 2050 targets. This should include information on how the Cabinet Secretary plans to monitor the impact of spending decisions across ministerial policy areas.

Since launching *Cymraeg 2050*, we have been working towards a series of milestones to achieve our targets of a million Welsh speakers and doubling daily use of Welsh by 2050. We follow a trajectory that was developed based on the 2011 Census. At the outset, we committed to pause once we had the 2021 Census results in order to take stock and review our work plans and the trajectory to reach a million Welsh speakers as necessary. We are now considering the Census data alongside other sources of information for example the Annual Population Survey to ensure that we remain on track with our aim of doubling the daily use of our language and reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Following the 2024-25 draft budget scrutiny session with the Minister for Education and Welsh Language on 11 January 2024, the Committee requested further information on the budgets across government departments that are contributing to *Cymraeg 2050*. The response issued to the Committee on 5 March 2024 outlined that *Cymraeg 2050* is mainstreamed into all Welsh Government portfolio areas and there is already expenditure on the language embedded in delivery within many other ministerial portfolios, including health, housing and early years. It therefore recognised that it is not possible to identify total spending on the Welsh language across Welsh Government given the intrinsic nature of funding. For example, the culture and arts sector contributes to the delivery of *Cymraeg 2050* and information on the allocations for this sector is set out in the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership's evidence paper to this Committee. *Cymraeg 2050* officials

stay in close contact with colleagues across Government to monitor the impact of spending decisions on *Cymraeg 2050*.

Information on how, if at all, the review of the Welsh Government's Grant Scheme to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language has impacted on allocations for 2025-26.

The review of the grant scheme to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, provided an insight and evaluation of the grant processes currently in place by the *Cymraeg 2050* Division. Consideration of the findings and recommendations of the review is ongoing. The review highlighted the need for a longer funding period. Currently the grant is allocated on a yearly basis, and work will be undertaken in 2025-26 to examine the possibility of extending grant allocations for up to three years.

In addition, our regular discussions with grant partners have concluded that the financial challenges they face because of not receiving inflationary increases are negatively impacting their ability to retain staff and to fully implement their work programmes.

As a result of the uplift to the Welsh Language budget, we propose that partners receiving grants to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language receive a minimum 5% uplift in 2025-26. In addition, some organisations will receive additional support to help increase their impact on the *Cymraeg 2050* objectives. For example, we propose that the minimum grant allocation to the mentrau iaith will increase from £60k to £100k.

Commentary on commitments in the Welsh Government's Programme for Government in relation to the Welsh language, and an outline of current or provisional funding implications for these specific commitments:

Many of the Programme for Government commitments relating to the delivery of *Cymraeg 2050* are detailed throughout this paper for example:

- Create a Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan.
- Expand the Pupils Immersion Programme.

Below, we include additional information on some of the specific commitments requested by the Committee.

- Increasing apprenticeships in care and recruiting more Welsh speakers.

The main source of funding is the mainstream allocations for apprenticeship provider. Aligned to the wider post-16 delivery network, apprenticeship providers have been impacted by increasing costs over recent years. In response to these pressures, framework values increased by 5% in 2022/23 and 2023/24 and by 3.5% in 2024/25.

For 2024-25, we are investing £144m in the apprenticeship programme. This budget should enable us to maintain the number of targeted apprenticeships starts for young people during this Senedd Term. For 2025-26 draft budget we have maintained our investment in our apprenticeship programme at £144m.

The apprenticeship programme supports delivery via the medium of Welsh or bilingually. The funding model applies an uplift for apprenticeship provision delivered bilingually or through the medium of Welsh and apprenticeship providers have targets to increase delivery in priority sectors, including Health and Social Care, Childcare, Construction and Agriculture.

The role of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol has been expanded to provide targeted support for the further education and apprenticeship sectors. As a result of our additional investment in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol has provided funding for 21 assessors in priority apprenticeship sectors including Health and Social Care, Childcare, Business, Creative Arts and Hospitality.

The additional posts funded by the Coleg should lead to a continued growth in the numbers of apprenticeship learners accessing Welsh-medium or bilingual provision as part of their apprenticeship programme. We will be regularly monitoring the number of apprenticeships starts during this financial year; albeit we do not expect to have a full picture until year end.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh's Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) programme provides dedicated support for learners in the Health and Social Care and Childcare Sectors to Learn Welsh and improve their Welsh language skills. Further information on the Cymraeg Gwaith programme is set out under the 'Specific areas' section below.

- Legislation to strengthen and increase our Welsh language education provision.

There is no specific ring-fenced funding for implementing the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill, with costs being met from existing BELs within the Education MEG and the Central Services and Administration MEG.

The implementation of the Bill is a long term policy aim to contribute to the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Costs associated with this Bill will fall at different points between Royal Assent (expected in Summer 2025) and 2050 and I, along with other Ministers, will be required to make financial decisions during that time frame.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) detailing the costs and benefits arising from the provisions of the Bill was laid before the Senedd upon the introduction of the Bill on 15 July 2024. This set out total costs associated with the legislation of £103m over the 10 year appraisal period from 2025-26, which includes costs for the Welsh Government, local authorities, schools, Estyn and the National Institute for Learning Welsh, which will be established by the Bill. In line with the RIA, it is our assessment that the Bill will be affordable over the appraisal period.

- Implementing Welsh Language standards on public transport, health sector regulators, newly established public bodies, & water companies & begin work on implementing standards on housing associations.

During this Senedd term, Welsh Language Standards Regulations have already been approved for healthcare regulators and for water and sewerage undertakers who provide services to members of the public in Wales. In addition, legislation establishing the Corporate Joint Committees and Medr (the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research) has also included these bodies within existing Regulations.

Draft regulations to add more bodies to existing standards regulations were consulted upon earlier this year, and Regulations will be laid before the Senedd early in 2025. We are continuing to work through the standards programme outlined in the Programme for Government and are currently undertaking policy work to prepare standards for housing

associations. Subsequently, we will move on to preparing regulations for public transport providers.

The costs for the Welsh Language Commissioner of implementing these regulations will need to be met from the Commissioner's resource budget. The RIA, which will accompany the Statutory Instrument, will outline any financial implications of the regulations on the bodies subject to them.

- Supporting an increase in Welsh speaking spaces, including workplaces.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh

The National Centre's Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) programme provides courses ranging from online self-study taster courses to intensive learning courses. As well as increasing the number of Welsh speakers and Welsh language use, Cymraeg Gwaith also allows organisations to provide better Welsh language services to their users.

The strength of the Cymraeg Gwaith programme is its ability to respond to the needs of a diverse range of employers and workplaces. The Scheme has expanded in recent years to include a new Cymraeg Gwaith Academy, which is a dedicated resource to support employers. As a result, increasing numbers have been reached, leading to wider engagement and use of Welsh in workplaces across Wales. In 2023-24, 578 employers were supported under the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme.

2023-24 also saw the launch of a dedicated programme for workers in the Health and Care Sector. The National Centre has worked in partnership with local health boards to establish schemes to increase the Welsh language skills of the NHS Wales workforce, including the Codi Hyder scheme which aims to build confidence amongst NHS staff. During 2023-24, 1,514 employees were supported to develop their skills under the Health and Care Sector programme.

In addition to the support outlined for education practitioners (see 'Specific areas' section below), our funding to the National Centre for Learning Welsh also supports a range of interventions for the post-16 workforce, including the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme delivered in conjunction with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. During 2023-24, 901 practitioners were supported to develop their skills, with 7 universities and 11 further education colleges committing to the scheme. A further 212 practitioners followed self-study courses with the help of a tutor.

The increase to the Welsh Language BEL in 2025-26 will support an uplift in the funding we provide to the National Centre. It is proposed that £2.625m will be allocated within the Welsh Language BEL in 2025-26 to support the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme, a 5% increase of £0.125m on the funding allocated for 2024-25. A further £1.758m will be allocated to the National Centre to support the Ymlaen Gyda'r Dysgu scheme, which provides free Welsh language lessons for young people aged 16-25 and the education workforce. This is in addition to the £1.1m which will be allocated from the Teacher Development and Support BEL in 2025-26 (see 'Specific areas' section below).

Cwmpas

During 2024-25, we have allocated funding of up to £0.35m to Cwmpas to continue their work of supporting people to establish new Welsh language spaces, i.e. cooperatives that encourage the use of the Welsh language at a community level. More information regarding Perthyn is in section 3 under the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan*. Out of the £0.35m allocated to Cwmpas, £0.15m provides a specialist advisory and support service to community groups, whilst the remaining £0.2m provides a small grant scheme to help develop new social enterprises and cooperatives. For 2025-26, in line with the proposed minimum 5% uplift for our grant partners, it is proposed that funding for the Cwmpas advisory and support element increases from £150,000 to £157,500.

We have continued to fund (£67,000) Bangor University to develop the ARFer programme – a behavioural pledge programme, which encourages Welsh speakers to use their language more frequently in the workplace. Bangor University have also received funding to develop an app to facilitate wider adoption of the programme thereby contributing to the creation of more bilingual and Welsh language workplaces.

Our ‘Leading in a Bilingual Country’ programme, which promotes the integration of *Cymraeg 2050* values and practices into organisational culture, has ended its pilot phase and we will launch a 5-year iteration of the programme in 2025-26. It’s a joint programme between Academi Wales and the *Cymraeg 2050* Division to an estimated sum of £380,000 over 5 years, subject to a forthcoming procurement procedure.

Welsh Government

In terms of the Welsh Government itself as a workplace, our internal Welsh language strategy *Cymraeg. It belongs to us all*, commits us to becoming a truly bilingual organisation by 2050. Since we published the strategy in 2020, we have:

- transformed how we offer Welsh learning to staff, by offering a more extensive and flexible programme, with methodologies to suit different learning styles.
- as a result, we have seen a 758% increase in staff pursuing formal learning at work (from 73 in 2020 to 627 learners in 2024),
- focused on leadership in the Senior Civil Service and getting senior leaders to model exemplar behaviour in their use of the Welsh language with staff; and
- revised exactly how we recruit in terms of Welsh language requirements, emphasising that Welsh language skills are an asset to working in the Welsh Government no matter what the role.

3. Specific Areas

Updates on allocations in the 2024-25 budget

An analysis of the impact of budget reductions across Ministerial departments on policy delivery and initiatives aimed at meeting Cymraeg 2050 targets.

The UK Government's budget on 30 October provided a much welcome investment for Wales, with our settlement being £1.7bn higher over 2024-25 and 2025-26. The additional funding allocated to Wales through the UK Budget has meant that all Ministerial portfolios have received an uplift in funding for 2025-26 to support our Government priorities. I am not aware of any budget reductions for 2025-26 across other Ministerial portfolios which will impact on delivery of our *Cymraeg 2050* targets.

Grant allocations from the Welsh Language BEL for key stakeholders that promote and support the Welsh language, including Mentrau Iaith Cymru, yr Urdd and the National Eisteddfod for 2024-25 and allocations to these stakeholders over the past 5 financial years.

The increased funding to the Welsh Language BEL will support all our grant partners, with a proposed minimum uplift in funding of 5% for 2025-26. This will provide support to these organisations to manage inflationary cost pressures and make plans for a pay award in 2025-26.

Mentrau Iaith

The annual core grant allocations for the network of mentrau iaith is £2.368m and has remained the same over the last five years. The grant allocation is distributed between 22 local mentrau iaith as well as funding for Mentrau Iaith Cymru, the umbrella organisation for the mentrau iaith. In 2022-23, an additional one off payment of 4% was provided to the mentrau iaith to help with inflationary pressures and wage increases. The mentrau iaith provides a wide range of activities to support the language in the community. These activities are usually developed after a language profile exercise has been undertaken to determine the linguistic needs of their local areas. The funding allocations for individual mentrau iaith range from £0.060m to £0.160m, with the minimum grant expected to increase to £0.1m from 2025-26. The total funding in 2025-26 for the mentrau iaith is expected to increase by £0.428m.

Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru

Since 2020, Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru (National Eisteddfod for Wales) has received revenue funding in excess of £1m per annum. Prior to this five-year period, the National Eisteddfod received approximately £0.6m per annum. The significant increase in investment has not only ensured that the Eisteddfod was able to fully recover from the pandemic, but also allowed it to expand its artistic programme and the reach of its community engagement activities that happen all year round. The strengthening of the organisation's structures has allowed it to forge new partnerships and deepen its work within each Eisteddfod area. The Eisteddfod also acts as a producer and catalyst for broader Welsh-medium arts and cultural activities, all while bringing Welsh communities closer to the language and supporting the delivery of *Cymraeg 2050*. We also provided the Eisteddfod with £0.640m in capital funding

in 2021-22 to strengthen the festival's infrastructure. In recent years, we have also supported the National Eisteddfod in broadening the festival's reach and accessibility by offering funded tickets free of charge for low-income families. The sum has varied year on year depending on the budget available and the needs of the local community. In addition to a proposed uplift of 5% for 2025-26, a further £0.2m is also proposed next financial year to support free entry to low-income families to widen access to new audiences to the language.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

The Urdd is recognised as an integral partner in delivering *Cymraeg 2050*. Since 2020-21, the Urdd's core grant from the Welsh Government has increased from £0.990m to £2.4m per annum. Additionally, in 2022-23, we committed to providing an additional £0.2m per annum for 5 years for the Urdd to re-establish their National Youth Theatre, Y Cwmni up to the end of 2026-27. Over recent years, the Welsh Government has also funded the Urdd to support the government's international strategy. The Welsh Government's investment is used by the Urdd to provide a range of unique and dynamic opportunities for children and young people across Wales to use the Welsh language and to experience the language as a vibrant cultural component of Welsh life. The Urdd's gwersylloedd (residential camps) have also received significant capital funding from the Welsh Government in recent years; from the redevelopment of Pentre Ifan in Pembrokeshire to the opening of a new residential wing, canteen, and activity space at Llangrannog. For many children, their visit to the Urdd's gwersylloedd will be the first time they stay away from home independently, with Welsh culture and the language at the heart of their visits. Similar to the National Eisteddfod, the Welsh Government has also supported the Urdd Eisteddfod in broadening the reach and accessibility of the Eisteddfod by providing a grant to allow the Urdd to offer tickets free of charge for eligible families to enjoy what the Urdd Eisteddfod has to offer. In addition to a proposed uplift of 5% for 2025-26, a further £0.2m is also proposed next financial year to support free entry to low-income families to widen access to new audiences to the language.

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

The core grant allocations the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol for the past 5 financial years are shown below.

Table 2: Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol - Core Grant Allocations from 2020-21

BEL	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Welsh Language					£9,888,000	£9,888,000
Welsh in Education	£6,370,333	£7,303,000	£8,513,000	£9,838,000		£32,024,333
Total	£6,370,333	£7,303,000	£8,513,000	£9,838,000	£9,888,000	£41,912,333

The Coleg's core funding supports its higher education programme and its Welsh-medium scholarship scheme. In higher education, its funding directly supports Welsh-medium provision across universities and subject areas, with essential support provided through Coleg branches to lecturers, staff development and publications.

In the post-16 sector, the funding supports the delivery of the Coleg's Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan, which provides development grants in priority areas including Health and Social Care, Agriculture, Childcare and Public Services.

Within its core funding, the Coleg provides training and mentoring through Sgiliaith, to enable tutors and assessors to gain confidence in teaching bilingually and support for the apprenticeship sector. Additional grant funding from other areas is provided for digital and other resource development, the ambassador project and support for developing Welsh as a subject and Welsh-medium teachers.

In 2024-25, additional funding provided under the Co-operation Agreement was maintained at 2023-24 levels, with £2.825m provided to the Coleg and £1.675m to the National Centre for Learning Welsh. Maintaining the budget at 2023-24 levels allowed us to reprioritising funding to protect core services to support our ambitions for *Cymraeg 2050*. In particular, we were able to maintain funding linked to the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill, Mudiad Meithrin and the Welsh in Education budget to support Welsh language delivery.

As a result of our additional investment in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the Coleg has provided funding for additional practitioners in the FE sector as well as assessors in priority apprenticeship sectors including Health and Social Care, Childcare, Business, Creative Arts and Hospitality.

The draft budget for 2025-26 includes a proposed allocation of £10.382m for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, which includes an increase of £0.494m for front-line delivery. This additional funding will allow the Coleg to re-start the work of extending provision by expanding its programme of development grants for further education colleges and apprenticeship providers.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh

The National Centre's core grant allocations for the past 5 financial years are shown below.

Table 3: National Centre for Learning Welsh - Core Grant Allocations from 2020-21

BEL	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Welsh Language	£6,216,525	£10,337,100	£13,465,000	£14,885,000	£14,885,000	£59,788,625
Welsh in Education	£5,686,475	£2,913,000				£8,599,475
Total	£11,903,000	£13,250,100	£13,465,000	£14,885,000	£14,885,000	£68,388,100

The draft budget for 2025-26 includes a proposed allocation of £15.629m for the National Centre. This is an increase of £0.744m (5%) on its allocation for 2024-25 and is broken down as follows:

Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh)	£2,625,000
Ymlaen Gyda'r Dysgu (additional funding supporting provision for 16-25 year olds and education workforce)	£1,758,750
Operational Grant (running costs of the Centre)	£1,995,000
Recurrent Grant (grants for Learn Welsh providers)	£9,250,500
Total	£15,629,250

The National Centre's Recurrent Grant supports its mainstream Learn Welsh delivery through its network of 11 course providers across Wales. The number of people learning Welsh with the National Centre continues to increase and additional funding of £0.450m has been allocated for 2025-26 to support this delivery.

£2.625m will be allocated within the Welsh Language BEL in 2025-26 to support the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme, this represents an increase of £0.125m or 5% on the funding allocated for 2024-25.

The £1.759m for Ymlaen Gyda'r Dysgu builds on the additional funding provided under the Co-operation Agreement in 2024-25 and will be used to further extend provision for 16-25 year olds and the education workforce in order to provide free access to Welsh courses. As part of the offer, eligible learners aged 18 and over will be able to access the mainstream Learn Welsh courses in the community. Provisional data indicates that 1,633 young learners accessed provision during 2023-24.

The National Centre began offering free courses for teachers and other workers in the education sector in September 2022 and the additional funding has enabled the Centre to extend this provision for 2023-24. Provisional data from the National Centre shows that 1,613 individuals accessed provision during 2023-24. A further £1.1m will be allocated from the Teacher Development and Support BEL in 2025-26 to provide Welsh language learning for education practitioners. Further information on this allocation is set below.

Details on funding allocations in 2024-25 to develop Welsh language skills and capacity of the education workforce, and how the 2024-25 budget impacted on the work to deliver an increase in the number of teachers who can teach Welsh as a subject and teach through the medium of Welsh.

Within the Cabinet Secretary for Education's portfolio, there is funding available within the Teacher Development and Support BEL to support the implementation of our 10-year Welsh in education workforce plan. The total funding available in 2025-26 is £8.72m.

Approximately £3.8m will be prioritised to support the aims of the plan and will be mainly targeted at increasing the number of Welsh-medium teachers. Funding will be prioritised for the following activities:

- continuation of the primary to secondary conversion programme;
- continuation of the grants to schools to develop innovative solutions to addressing teacher shortages;
- funding to support the viability of Welsh A Level provision in schools and FE Colleges;
- the third year of the teacher retention bursary; and
- funding for CYDAG to support collaboration across Welsh-medium schools in a number of policy areas.

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol will continue to allocate £0.150m from their grant (Welsh Language BEL) in 2025-26 to develop two specific projects to continue to:

- deliver the Addysgu'r Dyfodol project to provide mentoring for undergraduate learners to support them to prepare for ITE through the medium of Welsh; and
- develop the Cadw Cyswllt network to engage with Welsh-speaking graduates studying in England and promote opportunities for them to return to Wales to prepare to teach.

Professional learning is a key feature of our approach to strengthening Welsh-medium teaching capacity and supporting practitioners to develop their Welsh language skills in line with the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership. We are working with our partners to ensure that practitioners are identified and supported to engage with professional learning in order to improve the teaching of Welsh in English-medium schools and to support all schools to move along a continuum.

Approximately £3.8m will be allocated within the Teacher Development and Support BEL in 2025-26 to the Sabbatical Scheme to deliver intensive Welsh language and language teaching methodology professional learning for practitioners. Courses are available on a range of levels for teaching assistants and teachers. The majority of this budget funds the supply costs related with releasing practitioners from schools to undertake the courses.

Funding allocated to the National Centre for Learning Welsh also delivers access to free Welsh language lessons to all education practitioners. During 2025-26, the Centre will continue to develop new bespoke provision to meet the needs of the sector. For example, a pilot course for secondary teachers in English-medium schools with some Welsh will be developed to be delivered flexibly and a short on-line confidence / 'gloywi' course for those teaching in a range of settings. £1.1m will be allocated from the Teacher Development and Support BEL in 2025-26 to support this work. This is an additional £0.5m in 2025-26 and is funded through the transfer out from the Cymraeg 2050 strand of the LAEG.

£5.9m will be allocated to LAs as part of the Cymraeg 2050 strand of the LAEG to support the delivery of local authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) and the ambitions of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill. This funding includes £1.4m for professional learning and £4.5m for the Welsh in Education Grant (WEG), which was re-established in 2023-24 following discussions with local authorities. With 30% match funding from LAs, the total value of the WEG is £5.85m.

We recently published an updated data analysis document that sits alongside the Welsh in education workforce plan. We are making some progress in supporting the increase in Welsh-medium teachers and to develop the Welsh language skills of practitioners, however, the impact of a number of the activities funded need to be measured on a medium to long-term basis. Over the next year, we will continue to monitor the immediate uptake in the funded activities and will also be working closer with local authorities to analyse the data on a local level to understand key trends and priorities to inform the National Framework proposed in the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill and revised targets.

An analysis of take-up and expenditure on the Iaith Athrawon Yfory scheme, as well as other schemes to incentivise people to enter the Welsh-medium teaching profession.

The Iaith Athrawon Yfory incentive scheme provides a £5,000 grant to students who undertake an eligible secondary postgraduate initial teacher education (ITE) programme enabling them to teach through the medium of Welsh. The scheme is available to both full-time and part-time students. The incentive payments totalling £5,000 is made in 2 instalments:

- £2,500 on successful completion of an eligible PGCE and the award of QTS.
- £2,500 on successful completion of induction in Wales (in a Welsh-medium secondary school or in any maintained secondary school if teaching Welsh as a subject)

Table 4 provides a summary of claimants and expenditure to date.

Table 4: Iaith Athrawon Yfory incentive scheme expenditure

Academic Year	QTS Payment instalment Claimants	Induction Payment instalment Claimants	Spend to date
AY2018/19	60	45	£140,000
AY2019/20	95	80*	£435,000*
AY2020/21	130	110*	£597,500*
AY2021/22	105	85*	£470,000*
AY2022/23	75	50*	£317,500*
AY2023/24	85		£215,000*
Total Claimants	550	Total spend to date	£2,174,500

Table notes:

- Claimant numbers rounded to the nearest 5.
- Only claimants who received a QTS payment instalment are eligible for the Induction payment instalment. In addition, to be eligible for the induction payment instalment, the teacher should have completed their statutory induction period working in a Welsh-medium or bilingual setting or in teaching Welsh as a subject in an English medium setting.
- * denotes that this figure is subject to change as the deadline for claiming the induction instalment has not passed (correct as of 25th November 2024)

The Priority Subject incentive scheme provides a £15,000 grant to students who study on a postgraduate ITE programme in specific subjects (priority subjects). The priority subjects include Welsh as a subject. The scheme is available to both full-time and part-time students. The incentive payments totalling £15,000 is made in 3 instalments for full-time students, or 4 instalments for part-time students paid at the following points during their ITE programme and early career:

Full-time students only:

- £6,000 following completion of the first term of the PGCE.

Part-time students only:

- £3,000 following completion of the first term of the PGCE.
- £3,000 following completion the first year and the first term of the second year of the PGCE.

Both Full-time and Part-time students:

- £6,000 on successful completion of the PGCE and award of QTS.
- £3,000 on successful completion of induction in a maintained setting in Wales

Eligible individuals can avail themselves of each of Welsh Government's incentive schemes. In academic year 2024/25 and next academic year 2025/26, a total amount of £25,000 is available to those that meet the requirements of all three schemes:

- Priority Subject Incentive scheme (£15,000)
- Iaith Athrawon Yfory scheme (£5,000)
- Minority Ethnic Incentive scheme (£5,000)

An update on grant allocations in support of the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan, and an assessment on spend, impact and value of specific grants such

as Perthyn for initiatives that support the Welsh language in communities across Wales.

Creating a *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan* is one of the priorities of the Programme for Government. It was published in October 2022 and includes a number of interventions to support communities and address issues related to affordability, second homes and the Welsh language.

For 2024-25, a budget of £0.560m has been earmarked for the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan* as follows:

Perthyn

Cwmpas has been responsible for delivering Perthyn since 2022. It is a project aimed at providing support to Welsh-speaking communities with high numbers of second homes to develop social enterprises, community-led housing and Community Land Trusts. We allocated up to £0.350m to Cwmpas to deliver both elements of the project in 2024-25:

- The 'Perthyn Small Grants' scheme (£0.2m):
The small grant scheme is available to support Welsh-speaking communities with a high number of second homes to turn ideas into viable social enterprises. The response to the consultation on the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan* showed the need for a small pot of revenue funding to help communities develop their ideas to support their social, economic and linguistic needs. The total grant allocations available to each group is £10,000. To date, the Perthyn small grant scheme has supported a total of 47 community groups. Up to 16 community projects will receive financial support through the Perthyn small grants during 2024-25.
- A bespoke advice and support service (£0.15m):
The bespoke advice and support element of Perthyn is to support specific community groups to turn their ideas into viable social enterprises and community-led housing projects. The core element of this project is to help empower communities to develop solutions to the social, economic and linguistic challenges they are facing. This is done by providing an early-stage advisory service. Since establishing this project, we have seen new community groups being established as well as individuals becoming effective community leaders.

A further £0.210m is available to support other projects within the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan* (including research and evaluation of the plan) including the Commission for Welsh speaking communities, Cultural Ambassadors and the 'Fair Change Scheme'.

An update on grant allocations to support the Arfor 2 scheme, and any recent evaluation of impact and value for money.

Arfor funding for this financial year is £7m, with £2m of that being capital. The primary purpose of ARFOR 2 is to support the communities that are strongholds of the Welsh language to flourish through economic interventions that will also contribute to increasing opportunities to see and use the Welsh language daily basis in Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire.

The ARFOR 2 programme has sought to build on the experience of the earlier pilot programme and the independent evaluation undertaken of it, whilst also complementing

existing or planned interventions which are of relevance. The following strategic objectives were agreed for the ARFOR 2 programme which aims to:

- create opportunities for young people and families (35 years old or younger) to stay in or return to their local communities - supporting them to succeed locally through enterprise or developing a career and ensuring a livelihood that meets their aspirations;
- create enterprising communities - supporting commercial and community enterprises that aim to preserve and increase local wealth;
- maximise the benefits of collaborative activity – by establishing a mindset of learning by doing and continuous improvement, learning from an activity in one area to extend it to other areas; and
- strengthen the identity of communities with a high percentage of Welsh speakers - by supporting the use of the Welsh language and ensuring it is more visible, whilst emphasizing what is common across the region.

The programme comprises of five key elements:

- Llwyddo'n Lleol (Succeeding Locally)
- Cymunedau Mentrus (Enterprising Communities)
- Cronfa Her ARFOR (ARFOR Challenge Fund)
- Bwrlwm ARFOR
- Independent evaluation / Lessons Learnt

The programme is currently in delivery and the ongoing evaluation has yet to conclude. Discussions are taking place with partners regarding the future of the programme and the opportunities for mainstreaming the learning from it.

4. Welsh Language Commissioner

Allocations and commentary in respect of the budget allocation for the Welsh Language Commissioner in 2025-26, including any additional revenue or capital funding provided.

In line with Welsh Government planning assumptions, and to ensure a cross-government approach to funding of our Commissioners, we have uplifted the revenue budget for the Welsh Language Commissioner by 3% (£0.096m) to support funding the next round of public sector pay awards in 2025-26. We have also baselined into 2025-26 funding for public sector pay and increased pension costs in 2024-25 totalling £0.060m. This provides a total revenue budget for the Commissioner of £3.345m for 2025-26.

There have been no changes to the Commissioner's capital budget which remains at £0.050m for 2025-26.

The Commissioner's non-cash budget has increased by £0.017m to £0.138m in 2025-26, which reflects additional funding for the implementation of the accounting standards for leases IFRS16 (£0.026m) and to support depreciation costs as outlined in the Commissioner's estimate (-£0.09m).

Commentary on how the Commissioner's budget estimate for the financial year is reflected in the draft budget.

The Commissioner submitted a Financial Estimate for 2025-26 to Welsh Ministers on 23 October. I have examined the Estimate, and it was laid in the Senedd on 10 December.

The 2025-26 Estimate requested an additional revenue allocation of £60,000 to the 2024-25 allocation of £3.189m, bringing her revenue budget for 2025-25 to £3.249m. This was to fund increased employer pension contributions and the pay award. In this instance, I am pleased to be able to award the Commissioner an allocation of £3.345m.

5. Capital Expenditure in relation to the Welsh Language

Progress on expanding capacity and opening of new Welsh-medium schools, the distribution of the Welsh Medium Capital Grant and progress to date across local authorities in Wales.

Details of any other capital expenditure to support and promote the Welsh language.

The Welsh-medium capital budget is funded from the Education Infrastructure BEL of the Education MEG. Its aim is to increase capacity in Welsh-medium schools, establish new Welsh-medium provision, support late immersion provision as well as support learners of all ages to improve their skills and confidence in Welsh.

A Welsh-medium capital funding grant was established in 2018 to support *Cymraeg 2050* and WESP implementation. Over £128m of Welsh-medium capital funding has been approved to date to increase Welsh-medium education provision across Wales.

This funding aims to increase the capacity of Welsh-medium schools, establish new Welsh-medium provision and support Welsh-medium late immersion provision as well as helping learners of all ages improve their skills and confidence in Welsh.

There are commitments in the WESP to open 23 new Welsh-medium schools and expand 25 that already exist. Since 2022, Band B investment and the Welsh-medium Capital Grant have supported 39 projects to increase Welsh-medium provision across Wales, including:

- 14 new schools have opened or been relocated to increase their capacity to accept more learners.
- 25 projects to expand Welsh-medium provision have been completed which also include some childcare projects.

The next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme is designed to go hand in hand with the 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. Careful collaboration has taken place with Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme officials to ensure that plans for the 9-year Rolling Programme reflect the requirements and targets of the 10-year WESP. All authorities' schemes have been approved, except for Torfaen, who haven't submitted their scheme yet.

Future Welsh-medium Capital Grant funding will be targeted to fund priority areas such as Additional Learning Needs (ALN), immersion, temporary expansion and adult education.

It is important that when we consider local authorities' school planning proposals, that we continue to look at the bigger picture, e.g. the impact of moving or introducing new Welsh-medium education provision on a local community; travel needs; suitable Welsh-medium nursery provision. All of these matters need to be considered and examined carefully to assess their impact on Welsh-medium education.

6. Summary

The budgets as relevant to the Welsh language in Draft Budget for 2025-26 is presented to the Committee for consideration.

Mark Drakeford MS

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

7. Annexes

Annex A – Budgets relating to the Welsh Language breakdown by Action and BEL for 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26

Resource

		2023-24	2024-25			2025-26							
Action	BEL Description	2023-24 Final Outturn	2024-25 Final Budget (June 2024)	2024-25 1st Supp Budget (Oct 2024)	Forecast Outturn (Period 6)	2024-25 Final Budget Restated Sept 2024	Baseline changes	Revised Baseline	Transfers to/from other MEGs	Transfers Within MEG	Additional Allocations from Reserves	Transfers to Reserves	Draft Budget (Dec 2024)
£000s													
Central Services & Administration MEG													
Welsh Language	Welsh Language	26,271	33,968	33,925	33,925	33,968	16	33,984	50	0	4,500	0	38,534
	Welsh Language Commissioner	3,279	3,189	3,183	3,183	3,189	60	3,249	0	0	96	0	3,345
	Welsh Language Commissioner - Non Cash	187	121	147	147	121	0	121	0	0	26	-9	138
Total Welsh Language BEL (CSA MEG)		29,737	37,278	37,255	37,255	37,278	76	37,354	50	0	4,622	-9	42,017
Education MEG													
Pre-16 Education LA Support	Cymraeg 2050 (LAEG)	0	9,700	9,880	9,880	9,700	0	9,700	0	-1,100	0	0	8,600
Total Pre-16 Education LA Support BEL (Education MEG)		0	9,700	9,880	9,880	9,700	0	9,700	0	-1,100	0	0	8,600
Welsh in Education	Welsh in Education	19,238	6,511	6,424	6,865	6,511	7	6,518	0	0	19	0	6,537
	Welsh in Education - Non Cash	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Welsh in Education BEL (Education MEG)		19,242	6,511	6,424	6,865	6,511	7	6,518	0	0	19	0	6,537
TOTAL BUDGETS RELATING TO THE WELSH LANGUAGE		48,979	53,489	53,559	54,000	53,489	83	53,572	50	-1,100	4,641	-9	57,154

Capital

		2023-24	2024-25			2025-26							
Action	BEL Description	Final Outturn	Final Budget (Sept 2024)	1st Supp Budget (Oct 2024)	Forecast Outturn (Period 6)	2024-25 Final Budget Restated Sept 2024	Baseline Adjustments	Revised Baseline	Transfers to/from other MEGs	Transfers Within MEG	Additional Allocations from Reserves	Transfers to Reserves	Draft Budget (Dec 2024)
£000s													
Central Services & Administration MEG													
Welsh Language	Welsh Language Commissioner	94	50	50	50	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Total Welsh Language Commissioner BEL (CSA MEG)		94	50	50	50	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Education MEG													
Welsh in Education	Welsh in Education	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Welsh in Education BEL (Education MEG)		13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL BUDGETS RELATING TO THE WELSH LANGUAGE		107	50	50	50	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	50