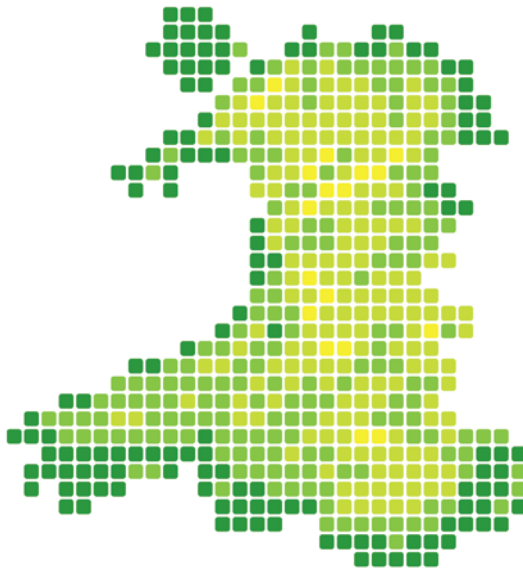


LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES



**Comisiwn Ffiniau a
Democratiaeth Leol
Cymru**



**Local Democracy and
Boundary Commission
For Wales**

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME
Prepared Under the Welsh Language Act 1993

March 2016

Date Approved:	March 2016
Approved by:	Commission Members
Review Date:	March 2018

**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR
WALES**

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

STATEMENT

**This scheme has been prepared under the Welsh Language Act
1993 and received the approval of the Welsh Language Board
under section 14(1) of the Act on 17 July 1998.**

**This scheme was revised and updated in March 2016, taking into
consideration the implications of the Welsh Language (Wales)
Measure 2011**

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

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March 2016

LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

Prepared pursuant to Section 12 of the Welsh Language Act 1993

1. INTRODUCTION

We, the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) are a public body established in 1974 and renamed under the terms of Section 2 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. This 2013 Act replaces the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. The statutory functions of the Commission are specified in Parts 3 and 4 of the 2013 Act (the 2013 Act is referred to in this document as 'the Act'). Our main task may be summarised as follows:

to review local government areas and electoral arrangements in Wales, with a view to considering whether or not to make proposals to the Welsh Ministers for effecting changes which appear to the Commission to be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

At present the Commission consists of a Chair, a Deputy Chair and 3 members, all appointed by the Welsh Ministers. An independent member of the Commission's Audit Committee is appointed by the Commission. We currently have a support staff of ten based at the Commission's offices in Cardiff.

We have adopted as a principle that, in the conduct of public business in Wales, we will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how the Commission will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales. It has been approved by us and has our full support.

The Commission has appointed the Chair its Welsh Language Champion with an open remit to work with the Commission staff to raise and improve our use of the Welsh Language.

The Welsh Language Standards (No 2) Regulations 2016, which came into force on 16 February 2016, establishes a framework for introducing duties on the organisations identified to comply with Standards relating to the Welsh language. As the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission

for Wales is among the organisations identified in the Regulations, it is anticipated that the Welsh Language Commissioner will issue a Compliance Notice during 2016. Once the Welsh Language Standards come into effect, organisations are no longer required to publish Welsh Language Schemes. The Commission is currently preparing for the transition from Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Standards; in the meantime, we will continue to monitor and review our Welsh Language Scheme.

2. SERVICE PLANNING

The Commission prepares an Annual Operational Plan, which sets out, within the statutory context, a programme of work, annual targets, performance indicators, standards and resources for each year. In planning the provision of services we are committed to:

- Maintaining those measures which promote and facilitate the principle of equality of use of the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme;
- Extending the principle to any new policy, activity or purchase, and ensuring that additional measures are developed which are consistent with this scheme; and,
- Monitoring the effectiveness of implementation of the measures set out in this scheme.

3. DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND STANDARDS OF QUALITY

Our main duty is to advise the Welsh Ministers on matters which affect county and community councils throughout Wales. We therefore consult, and have an obligation to take account of, the views of those authorities as well as other interested bodies and individuals. Extensive publicity is undertaken to ensure that our review work and consequent proposals are widely known. The nature of our work means that there is an emphasis on written reports and letters. We welcome responses to our consultation processes in the Welsh language.

To give effect to our Welsh language policy all initial letters, publications and publicity are bilingual. Desk instructions, standard templates and script compatible IT software are in use. The Commission has a translation contract in place, which provides a comprehensive translation service.

We have taken steps to provide an equal service in both languages. These steps are expressed as measures in the following sections. In two respects: in answering telephone calls and in dealing with visitors without appointment, the ability to respond in Welsh varies from time to time according to the linguistic skills of the staff employed at that time. The measures taken to address these circumstances are set out in the relevant sections dealing with communications and recruitment.

Performance standards including those arising from the Citizens' Charter are the same for both languages.

4. DEALING WITH THE WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

Correspondence

We begin each review by writing to the relevant county council, community councils, Members of Parliament, Assembly Members and other interested bodies. These addressees are again written to when draft and final proposals are published.

Measures:

- Initial and covering letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual, as will other letters sent to those whose preferred language choice is unknown.
- Our letter templates are prepared in both languages.

The Commission welcomes letters and e-mails written in Welsh.

Measures:

- If you write to us in Welsh we will reply in Welsh.
- Our target time for replying to letters and e-mails in Welsh is exactly the same as for replying to letters and e-mails in English.
- When we write to an individual, a group or an organisation who we know works mainly in Welsh or prefers to receive correspondence in Welsh, we will write in Welsh.
- Following a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation in Welsh, any follow-up correspondence will be in Welsh, unless requested otherwise.

- To enable these measures to be implemented, the links to our translation service are by telephone and e-mail. We keep a database of those wishing to deal with us in Welsh.

Telephone Calls

Telephone enquiries in Welsh are welcome. The availability of staff able to speak Welsh varies from time to time with staff turnover but we will always try to find someone who speaks Welsh to answer your query.

Measures:

- Staff members will receive training to enable them to provide bilingual greetings when answering all telephone calls.
- If you ring the Commission and wish to speak Welsh, but the person taking the call cannot speak Welsh, you will be transferred to a Welsh-speaking member of staff, if available. If no Welsh speaker able to deal with your enquiry is available, you will be given the choice of a Welsh speaker, who may be our external interpreter, 'phoning you back, or continuing the call in English.
- There may be times, however, when there is no one available who can answer your query in full - especially if it is specialised. (The same problem can arise with telephone queries in English.) In these cases, someone will ask you for details of your query, or they may advise you to send your query to us in writing. You will then receive a reply in Welsh by post.
- We have a bilingual message-answering machine.

Public Meetings

We periodically organise public meetings throughout Wales and welcome people using Welsh.

Measures:

- We will publicise meetings bilingually, making clear our language policy.

- We will ensure that a Welsh-speaking member of the Commission or the Secretariat attends public meetings.
- We will provide simultaneous interpretation as a matter of course at public meetings.

Other Meetings with the Public

As well as public meetings, there are occasions when other meetings with individuals and organisations are held.

Measures:

- When we organise a meeting in advance with an individual or organisation we will ask which is their preferred language. If they prefer to use Welsh, we will hold the meeting in Welsh if possible or offer to provide interpretation.
- Visitors without an appointment who wish to use Welsh will be offered the service of our external translator by telephone if a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available.

5. THE PUBLIC FACE OF THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Corporate Identity

The Commission has a bilingual identity and we have adopted measures to reinforce this.

Measures:

- The Commission's name, address and associated information are bilingual on our office signs, publication covers and all other forms of public display.
- Printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery all follows the same bilingual

format.

- Both languages are shown with equal prominence.

Publications

For each review we publish draft and final reports of proposals for public consultation. We also produce guidance notes and other publications from time to time.

Measures:

- We will produce all publications in Welsh and English.
- When considering the names of electoral wards, we will consider any advice provided by the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- The Welsh and English language versions will be published simultaneously. The versions will be equally accessible and of the same quality, format and prominence.

Public Notices

Public Notices are issued to libraries in areas under review to publicise the initial, draft and final stages of reviews.

Measures:

- Public notices issued to libraries in Wales will be bilingual.
- Both languages will be afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence on the notices we issue.

Media Notices

We issue notices to press, radio and television editors informing them of draft and final proposals.

Measure:

- We prepare bilingual media notices. These notices are normally in one document. However, long notices may

be prepared separately in Welsh and in English and issued together.

Public Surveys

It is occasionally necessary to conduct public surveys, for example to gather statistical information or to seek public opinion. An external organisation might be contracted to do this work.

Measure:

- We will conduct public surveys in Wales in both Welsh and English.

Web Site

The Commission's web site provides information about the Commission as well as access to publications concerning the reviews, minutes of meetings, annual reports etc.

Measure:

- We will maintain a bilingual web site with all web pages and documents being available in Welsh and English. Updates to the web site will be applied in both languages at the same time.

Social Media

We also provide information about the Commission on social media sites, including alerts regarding review publication and developments.

Measure:

- We will issue all social media messages in Welsh and English. These messages will be issued in both languages at the same time.

6. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

Staffing

The goal of the Commission is to have enough appropriately skilled Welsh-speaking staff to enable a full service to be delivered through the medium of Welsh. Our strategy towards the attainment of the goal

includes a review of team and post specifications taking opportunities to attract Welsh-speakers during recruitment and training.

Measure:

- We shall examine posts to consider whether it would be essential or desirable to have Welsh speakers, and specify this in the job descriptions.

Recruitment Advertising

Staff vacancies, including those of the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, are publicised on the Civil Service Jobs Website.

Measures:

- Job descriptions will be available bilingually via a link on the Civil Service Jobs website
- Our language policy will be stated and the linguistic skills expected of the post holder will be specified in all recruitment information.

Recruitment

The assessment of candidates' abilities is undertaken by using objective criteria to ensure appointments are made in each case on a fair and consistent basis.

Measures:

- Linguistic ability will be one of a number of skills to be borne in mind when appointing staff and will be assessed against the previously identified level of skills needed for the post.

Language Training

Language training plays an important part in increasing the number of staff able to work in Welsh.

Measures:

- We encourage and, in certain circumstances, may

require staff to take up suitable language training, for example, to assist with the pronunciation of Welsh place names.

- We will consider financial support, in appropriate cases, should staff wish to take up suitable language training.
- We will assess the need for specific vocational training through the medium of Welsh.

Administrative Arrangements to Facilitate the Scheme

The measures set out in this scheme are designed to give effect to the Commission's Welsh language policy. We have adopted the following additional administrative measures to support the implementation of the scheme as an integral part of our work.

Measures:

- The Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive have been given specific responsibility to ensure consistent implementation of the scheme.
- All members of staff have received detailed written guidance in the form of desk instructions which include the use of Welsh in the work of the Commission, and have been given copies of this scheme.
- We will ensure that the specification of new or replacement IT systems meets the needs of this scheme.
- Tenders for translation services, through the Welsh Translation and Interpretation Framework Agreement, will continue to be assessed for capability and quality of service as well as price.
- Translations will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure the quality of Welsh utilised in our publications is acceptable.

Services Delivered on behalf of the Commission by Other Parties

We recognise that the same standards should apply when work is done on our behalf as when it is done by our own staff.

Measures:

- Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties that relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales will be consistent with the terms of the scheme.
- The Commission will provide through contracting arrangements that the contractor implement any relevant elements of the scheme when dealing with the public.
- The Commission will specify the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts.

Monitoring

We shall be monitoring how well we are meeting our commitment to the principle of giving equality of treatment to the Welsh language through this scheme.

Measures:

- Each year the Chief Executive will prepare a report for the Commission showing performance in meeting the implementation of the specific measures we have adopted in respect of:
 - The Annual Operational Plan
 - Delivering services
 - Dealing with the Welsh-speaking public
 - Corporate identity
 - Staff recruitment and training
 - Services delivered by others
 - The timetable for implementation
 - Suggestions and complaints
- Performance will be assessed against targets in the timetable annexed to this scheme, supplemented by records of quantifiable items. The report will give reasons for any targets missed and indicate proposed remedial steps.

- The report will be supplied to the Welsh Language Commissioner's office. The report will be available free of charge to the public and available on the Commission's web site.
- We will include a summary of the report in the Commission's Annual Report. The Annual Report is submitted to the Welsh Ministers, laid before the National Assembly for Wales, circulated to Members of Parliament, Assembly Members, local authorities and other bodies and is publicised on the Commission's web site.

Publicity for the Commission's Welsh Language Services

In accordance with the former Welsh Language Board's guidelines, this scheme was advertised in the press and circulated widely. However we want the public to continue to be aware of the ways in which they can choose to communicate with us.

Measures:

- We will publicise our measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public in our Annual Report.
- All publications and publicity associated with the Commission's reviews - our main contact with the public - will make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. English language publications will advise the public that a Welsh language version is also available.

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS/COMPLAINTS

We welcome suggestions for improvements to our measures for dealing with the Welsh speaking-public. If we do fall short of the commitments we have made in this scheme, we hope that members of the public will tell us. Should you have a suggestion for an improvement or a complaint about the Commission's services in Welsh please write to:

The Chief Executive
Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales
Hastings House
Fitzalan Court
CARDIFF

CF24 0BL

or telephone 029 2046 4819

or fax 029 2046 4823

or e-mail ldbc.wales@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

TIMETABLE AND TARGETS

Measure	Timetable Target
Maintain measures which promote and facilitate the principle of equality of use of the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme.	On-going
Ensure additional measures are developed to extend the principle to any new policy, activity or purchase.	On-going
Monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the measures set out in this scheme.	On-going
Initial and covering letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual.	Already implemented
Letter templates are prepared in both languages and updated as necessary.	Already implemented
Replies to Welsh correspondence to be in Welsh.	Already implemented
Same target time for replying to letters in Welsh as for replying to letters in English.	Already implemented
Write in Welsh to an individual, a group or an organisation known to work mainly in Welsh or prefer to receive letters in Welsh.	Already implemented
Follow-up correspondence, following a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation in Welsh, will be in Welsh, unless requested otherwise.	Already implemented
A database to be maintained of those wishing to deal with us in Welsh.	Already implemented
Staff members will receive training to enable them to provide bilingual greetings when answering all telephone calls.	On-going
Callers wishing to speak Welsh will be transferred to a Welsh-speaking member of staff or an external interpreter will 'phone them back, or the call can be continued in English.	Already implemented
In cases when there is no one available who can answer the query in full, callers will be asked for details of the query, or they may be advised to submit the query in writing. A reply in Welsh will then be sent by post.	Already implemented
A bilingual message will be recorded on the answering machine.	Already implemented
Meetings will be publicised bilingually.	Already Implemented
A Welsh-speaking member of the Commission or the Secretariat will attend public meetings.	Already Implemented

Interpretation facilities will be provided at meetings when a requirement has been identified.	As necessary
Meetings organised in advance will be held in Welsh if required.	As necessary
Unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh will be offered the service of external translator by telephone if a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available.	Already Implemented

The Commission's name, address and associated information will be bilingual on office signs, publication covers and all other forms of public display.	Already implemented
Printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery will be bilingual.	Already implemented
Both languages will be shown with equal prominence.	Already implemented
All publications will be produced in Welsh and English.	Already implemented
Whilst considering names of electoral wards, we will consider advice provided by the Welsh Language Commissioner	On-going
The Welsh and English versions will be published simultaneously and will be equally accessible and of the same quality, format and prominence.	Already implemented
Public notices issued to libraries in Wales will be bilingual.	Already implemented
Both languages in public notices will be afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence.	Already implemented
Media notices will be bilingual and normally in one document. However, long notices may be prepared separately in English and Welsh and issued together.	Already implemented
Public surveys will be conducted in both Welsh and English.	On-going
A bilingual website will be maintained. Updates to the website will be applied in both languages at the same time.	Already implemented
Social media messages will be issued in both Welsh and English. These messages will be issued at the same time.	Already implemented

Posts will be examined to consider whether it would be essential or desirable to have Welsh speakers and this will be specified in the job descriptions.	On-going
Job descriptions will be available bilingually via a link on the Civil Service Jobs website	On-going
The language policy will be stated and the linguistic skills expected of the post holder will be specified in all recruitment information.	On-going
Linguistic ability will be one of a number of skills to be borne in mind when appointing staff and will be assessed against the previously identified level of skills needed for the post.	On-going

We encourage and, in certain circumstances, may require staff to take up suitable language training, for example, to assist with the pronunciation of Welsh place names.	As necessary
We will consider financial support, in appropriate cases, should staff wish to take up suitable language training	As necessary
The need for specific vocational training through the medium of Welsh will be assessed.	On-going
The Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive will ensure consistent implementation of the scheme.	On-going
All members of staff will receive detailed written guidance in the form of desk instructions which include the use of Welsh in the work of the Commission, and will be given copies of this scheme.	On-going
The specification of new or replacement IT systems will be required to meet the needs of this scheme.	On-going
Tenders for translation services will continue to be assessed for capability and quality of service as well as price.	On-going
Translations will be monitored by staff to ensure the quality of the publication.	On-going
Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties which relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales will be consistent with the terms of the scheme.	On-going
The Commission will provide through contracting arrangements that the contractor implement any relevant elements of the scheme when dealing with the public.	On-going
The Commission will specify the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts.	Already Implemented
Each year the Chief Executive will prepare a report for the Commission showing performance in meeting the implementation of the specific measures we have adopted.	Annually in April
The report will give reasons for any targets missed and indicate proposed remedial steps.	Annually in April
This performance report will be supplied to the Welsh Language Commissioner. The report will be available free of charge to the public.	Annually in May
A summary of the report will be included in the Commission's Annual Report.	Annually in September
The Commission's Annual Report will publicise our measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public.	Annually in September
All publications and publicity associated with the Commission's reviews - our main contact with the public – will make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. English language publications will advise that a Welsh language version is available.	On-going