



Comisiwn Ffiniau a  
Democratiaeth Leol  
Cymru



Local Democracy and  
Boundary Commission  
For Wales

**WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2015 - 2016**

**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES**

**WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016**

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## **Introduction**

The Commission are responsible for the approval of this report; its drafting was undertaken by the Chief Executive, Mr Steve Halsall. The report has been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Language Commissioner's template for reports 2015/16.

The Commission are an advisory body responsible to the Welsh Government.

The Commission's Secretariat comprises 8 full time and 2 part time employees. Throughout the year, the Welsh Language Scheme has continued to operate well and there have been no problems experienced by the staff or complaints received from members of the public.

A review of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme received approval by Commission Members in March 2016. The Scheme is due to be reviewed in March 2018. The review was conducted to take into consideration the implications of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and organisational changes at the Commission. The Scheme is published bilingually on the Commission's website.

## 1. COMPLIANCE WITH THE WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

### *a. Report against each target within the timetable*

| Measure                                                                                                                               | Timetable Target | Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Maintain measures which promote and facilitate the principle of equality of use of the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme. | On-going         | <p>The Commission uses bilingual templates. The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all desk instructions, and these have been distributed to staff.</p> <p>The letters templates include a statement that the Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.</p> <p>Checklists are used by staff when conducting electoral reviews, which ensure Welsh language versions of Reports are quality assured and published according to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme.</p> <p>Staff members have access to Welsh language grammar and spellcheck facilities, such as 'Cysgeir' and 'Cysill', to improve confidence and encourage the wider use of written Welsh. Simultaneous translation facilities are provided at all public meetings.</p> <p>The Chair is a fluent Welsh speaker, and the Commission has appointed him Welsh Language Champion.</p> <p>The Chief Executive manages all new policies and initiatives personally and is the Scheme's monitoring officer.</p> <p>Two (20%) members of staff at the Commission's Secretariat are Welsh speakers.</p> |
| Ensure additional measures are developed to extend the principle to any new policy, activity or purchase.                             | On-going         | <p>The Commission prepares an annual operational plan that underpins the budget and expenditure for the year. The plan for 2015-2016 incorporated resources to fulfil the Commission's obligations specified in the Welsh Language Scheme.</p> <p>The Chief Executive managed all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Obtain the Welsh Language Commissioner's agreement to any changes.                                                                    | As necessary     | <p>A review of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme received approval by Commission Members in March 2016. The review was conducted to take into consideration the implications of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and organisational changes at the Commission. The Scheme will next be revised in March 2018. The Welsh Language Commissioner has requested that revised Welsh Language Schemes be published on organisations' websites without first obtaining the Commissioner's agreement. The revised</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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|                                                                                          |                     | scheme has been published on the organisation's website.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the measures set out in this scheme.      | On-going            | The Chief Executive monitored the appropriate use of Welsh at every stage of the reviews undertaken during the year. This is achieved through monitoring of review checklists, correspondence and telephone calls. Verbal reports on review progress (including the translation of relevant documents) are given by Review Officers to all staff, but particularly the Chief Executive, at monthly Team Meetings. The arrangements were considered to be effective because replies to consultation papers were received from principal councils, community and town councils, organisations and individuals in Welsh. The Commission receives telephone calls through the medium of Welsh.                                                                                  |
| Initial and covering letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual.                   | Already implemented | 100% of initial and covering letters were issued bilingually. When sending out initial and covering letters, the Commission uses bilingual templates. The Commission's IT system automatically generated all circulars and standard letters bilingually.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Letter templates are prepared in both languages and updated as necessary.                | Already implemented | At present, all letter templates are bilingual, and the IT system automatically generates letters bilingually. Any new letter templates that are prepared during 2016/17 will all be professionally translated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Replies to Welsh language correspondence to be in Welsh.                                 | Already implemented | 100% of Welsh correspondence was responded to in Welsh. The majority of Welsh correspondence was processed in accordance with a contracted translation service, with simple translations provided by Welsh-speaking staff members.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Same target time for replying to letters in Welsh as for replying to letters in English. | Already implemented | The Commission has responded to 100% of the correspondence received in Welsh within the nominated time scales. The Chief Executive was able to monitor this performance because the majority of Welsh correspondence was processed in accordance with a contracted translation service. Welsh-speaking staff members responded to occasional correspondence in Welsh or bilingually; this is monitored as the Chief Executive and/or Deputy Chief Executive are copied in to responses. Furthermore, the presence of two Welsh-speaking members of staff helped enable the Commission to respond well within timescales as correspondence received in Welsh can often be translated to English and passed to non-Welsh speaking colleagues for consideration without delay. |

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| 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 | 100% of persons or organisations working in Welsh or preferring to receive letters in Welsh were written to in Welsh. Either Welsh-speaking staff provided the written material or Welsh language documents were prepared using contracted translation services.<br>The Commission is currently undertaking a process of contacting all Community and Town councils in Wales to establish their language preference.<br>The Commission maintains a database of those wishing to deal with the Commission in Welsh. |
| Follow-up correspondence, following a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation in Welsh, will be in Welsh, unless requested otherwise.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Already implemented | 100% of correspondences, following face-to-face meetings/telephone conversations in Welsh, were issued in Welsh.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| A database to be maintained of those wishing to deal with us in Welsh.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Already implemented | The Commission maintains a database of those wishing to deal with the Commission in Welsh.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 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.<br>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 | 100% of telephone calls were answered bilingually. During the year all telephone calls received from Welsh-speaking members of the public were dealt with by the Chair or the Welsh-speaking members of staff. Routine telephone calls from the Chair to the Welsh-speaking staff are conducted in Welsh.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| A bilingual message will be recorded on the answering machine.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Already Implemented | The Commission has a fully bi-lingual answering machine at present. The answering machine was installed in November 2014.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Meetings will be publicised bilingually.<br>A Welsh-speaking member of the Commission or the Secretariat will attend public meetings.<br>Interpretation facilities will be provided at meetings when a requirement has been identified.                                                                                                                                                                           | As necessary        | The Commission did not hold any public meetings during the year. Procedures are in place based on previous practice, to facilitate the use of the Welsh language at public meetings as necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Meetings organised in advance will be held in Welsh if required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | As necessary        | The Chair of the Commission and/or Welsh-speaking members of staff have attended meetings with Welsh speakers during the year. Simultaneous translation facilities were provided at meetings where Welsh was required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh will be offered the service of an external translator by telephone if a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | As necessary        | We have not received any unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh this year. If the Commission had received unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh, and a Welsh speaking member of staff had not been available, the service of an external translator by telephone would have been made available.                                                                                                                                                                                            |

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| 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 | Following the enactment of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, the name of the Commission was changed. Commission signs (a 'pop-up stand' and 'roll-up banners') were replaced and all were bilingual, with the Welsh language appearing before the English language. All publication covers were bilingual, except when separate Welsh and English language publications were produced. When separate publications were produced, both versions were made available simultaneously, with both languages being afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence. Examples of these documents are available on the Commission's website. |
| Printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery will be bilingual. Both languages will be shown with equal prominence. | Already implemented | 100% of the printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery was bilingual, with both languages being shown with equal prominence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| All publications will be produced in Welsh and English.                                                                                                                                               | Already implemented | The following documents were published bilingually by the Commission during 2015/16: Pamphlets/Leaflets; minutes; consultation papers; booklets; guidance; Reports; and, Maps. A number of documents were produced bilingually. When separate publications were produced, both versions were made available simultaneously, with both languages being afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence. All of the organisation's publications are published bilingually.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Whilst considering names of electoral wards, we will consider advice provided by the Welsh Language Commissioner                                                                                      | Already implemented | Procedures were agreed whereby the Welsh Language Commissioner would be consulted on Welsh place-names during the review process. The Welsh Language Commissioner continues to be consulted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Welsh and English versions will be published simultaneously and will be equally accessible and of the same quality, format and prominence.                                                            | Already implemented | 100% of the Commission's publications were issued either bilingually or with Welsh and English versions being published simultaneously. Separate publications were equally accessible (in hard copy and on the Commission's website), and were of the same quality, format and prominence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Public notices issued to libraries in Wales will be bilingual. Both languages in public notices will be afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence.                                    | Already implemented | 100% of public notices were issued bilingually, with both languages being of the same quality, format and prominence. Review desk instructions and checklists ensure bilingual notices are issued, and staff members are regularly reminded of the Commission's commitments under the Welsh Language Scheme at monthly team meetings and ad hoc office discussions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Media notices will be bilingual and normally in one document.                                                                                                                                         | Already implemented | 100% of the Commission's media notices were issued either bilingually or with Welsh and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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| However, long notices may be prepared separately in Welsh and English and issued together.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                     | English versions being published simultaneously. Separate publications were equally accessible (in hard copy and on the Commission's website), and were of the same quality, format and prominence. Again, review desk instructions and checklists ensure bilingual notices are issued, and staff members are regularly reminded of the Commission's commitments under the Welsh Language Scheme at monthly team meetings and ad hoc office discussions.                                     |
| Public surveys will be conducted in both Welsh and English.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | As necessary        | No public surveys were conducted during 2015/16.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| A bilingual website will be maintained. Updates to the website will be applied in both languages at the same time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Already implemented | The Commission used their fully bilingual Internet site to disseminate their reports and other publications throughout the year. Welsh and English language versions are updated at the same time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Social media messages will be issued in both Welsh and English. These messages will be issued at the same time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Already implemented | 100% of notifications on social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) are issued in Welsh and in English simultaneously.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                 | As necessary        | 0 posts were advertised by the Commission during 2015/16.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Job descriptions will be available bilingually via a link on the Civil Service Jobs website.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | As necessary        | All job descriptions are available bilingually, with links to both versions equally accessible; however, as stated, no posts were advertised by the Commission during 2015/16.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| The language policy will be stated and the linguistic skills expected of the post holder will be specified in all recruitment information.<br>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. | As necessary        | Job applicants are advised of the language policy. The linguistic skills of potential post holders are specified in recruitment information, where required, and applicants' skills are assessed at interview.<br>The linguistic requirements of posts are considered carefully at Commission meetings prior to advertisements being issued.<br>However, as stated, no posts were advertised by the Commission during 2015/16                                                                |
| 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.<br>We will consider financial support, in appropriate cases, should staff wish to take up suitable language training.                                           | As necessary        | One member of the Commission's Secretariat began a formal Welsh Language course during 2015/16. The staff member has received the support and encouragement of Welsh-speaking colleagues.<br>Staff members were reminded that the Commission considers providing financial support, in appropriate cases, should they wish to take up language training.<br>Non-Welsh speaking members of staff are regularly coached by Welsh speaking staff regarding pronunciation and basic phraseology. |



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| The need for specific vocational training through the medium of Welsh will be assessed.                                                                                                                           | On-going | No members of the Commission's Secretariat requested to undertake vocational training through the medium of Welsh. Had such a request been made, the Commission would have considered the request and provided it, if appropriate.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| The Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive will ensure consistent implementation of the Scheme.                                                                                                           | On-going | <p>The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all desk instructions and checklists, and the office systems are such that the Chief Executive is the monitoring officer and approves the majority of output from the Secretariat.</p> <p>The Chief Executive monitored the use of Welsh at each stage of a review.</p> <p>The Chief Executive managed all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Chief Executive drew new Scheme initiatives to the attention of staff members.</p>                                                                                                              |
| 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 the Welsh Language Scheme. | On-going | <p>All members of staff received information about the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme, including advice about correspondence, as part of the Commission's desk instructions and reviews checklists. As the Commission's Secretariat has only 10 members of staff, with the majority working in an open-plan environment, the dissemination of information is easily achieved, and staff members are particularly well-informed about the Commission's commitment to the Welsh language.</p> <p>The Scheme is held in an Index of policies, regulations, codes and instructions, and may be accessed by all staff via their computers. Staff members were notified of the Commission's recently revised Welsh Language Scheme at a monthly team meeting.</p> |
| The specification of new or replacement IT systems will be required to meet the needs of the Welsh Language Scheme.                                                                                               | On-going | New / replacement IT systems are purchased through Welsh Government providers / contractors. LDBCW is able to access systems that meet the needs of the Scheme.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Tenders for translation services will continue to be assessed for capability and quality of service as well as price.                                                                                             | On-going | Translation Services for the Commission are under contract and will be reviewed when this contract comes to an end in 2017.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Translations will be monitored by staff to ensure the quality of the publication                                                                                                                                  | On-going | Welsh-speaking members of staff at the Commission routinely quality assure translations. A monitoring sheet has been established, wherein any issues/concerns are reported. The Business Support Manager regularly reviews the monitoring sheet. Meetings have been held with translators where                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                         | monitoring concerns have been raised. Checklists are used by staff when conducting electoral reviews, which ensure Welsh language versions of Reports are quality assured and published according to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties which relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales will be consistent within the terms of the scheme.<br>The Commission will provide, through contracting arrangements, that the contractor implement any relevant elements of the scheme when dealing with the public.<br>The Commission will specify the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts. | On-going / as necessary | The Commission issued a new contract for an Online Consultation Portal in 2015/16. The use of Welsh was specified within the contract, as the company in question provides services to the public in Wales on the Commission's behalf. The Portal contract will not be reviewed until 2018.                                                                                                                                                            |
| A summary of the report will be included in the Commission's Annual Report.<br>The Commission's Annual Report will publicise our measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Annually in September   | A summary of this report will be included in the Commission's Annual Report, which will be published in September 2016. The Annual Report will publicise the Commission's measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 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                | All publications / publicity associated with the Commission's reviews make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. Publications are produced either bilingually or simultaneously in Welsh and English. Future English language publications will advise that Welsh language versions are also available. Publications include a line advising the public that the Commission welcomes communications in Welsh and in English. |

## 2. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHEME

### a. *Report on requirements in relation to the Welsh language in contracts, explaining any arrangements to review or strengthen the consideration given to the Welsh language*

As stated above, the Commission issued a new contract for an Online Consultation Portal in 2015/16. Where appropriate, the Commission specifies the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts. The use of Welsh was specified within the above contract, as the company in question will provide services to the public in Wales on the Commission's behalf.

Due to the nature of the Commission's work, the majority of services to the public are provided directly by staff members at the Commission's Secretariat. Where services are provided to the public on behalf of the Commission (for example, when simultaneous translation is provided during public meetings), those tendering are made aware of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme.

Reference to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme will be made in future tender documents and contracts.

**b. *Evidence that there are robust governance and internal scrutiny arrangements in place for the language scheme***

The Chief Executive managed all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with. This is achieved through monitoring of review checklists, correspondence and telephone calls. Verbal reports on project progress (including the translation of relevant documents) are given by staff to all colleagues, but particularly the Chief Executive, at monthly Team Meetings.

The role of the Chair as a fluent Welsh speaker has been important, as the Commission has appointed him Welsh Language Champion. In addition, two (20%) members of staff at the Commission's Secretariat are Welsh speakers who are available to: answer queries from colleagues pertaining to the Welsh language; answer queries from Welsh speaking members of the public; and, quality-assure Welsh language publications.

As the Commission's Secretariat has only 10 members of staff, with the majority working in an open-plan environment, the dissemination of information is easily achieved, and staff members are particularly well-informed about the Commission's commitment to the Welsh language. Furthermore, staff members are reminded regularly of the implications of the Scheme, for example via team meetings, desk instructions and checklists.

The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all revised desk instructions and review checklists, and the office systems are such that the Chief Executive approves the majority of output from the Secretariat. The Commission's IT system automatically generated all circulars and standard letters bilingually.

The Chief Executive monitored the appropriate use of Welsh at every stage of the reviews undertaken during the year. The arrangements were effective because replies to consultation papers were received from principal councils, community and town councils, organisations and individuals in Welsh.

A review of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme received approval by Commission Members in March 2016. The review was conducted to take into consideration the implications of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and organisational changes at the Commission. All staff members were made aware of the revised Scheme during a team meeting. The revised Scheme was available in Commission meeting papers to which all staff have easy access.

**c. *Summary of valid complaints received and action taken***

Members of the public are encouraged to forward suggestions for improvements or complaints about the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme. No complaints were received about the Welsh service provided during the reporting year.

**d. *Evidence of arrangements for ensuring the quality of Welsh language content on the corporate website / plans for increasing and improving Welsh language content***

The Commission's website is fully bilingual. Staff members at the Secretariat are responsible for updating the Commission's website, and are reminded regularly of the Commission's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Scheme. Desk instructions and checklists help ensure that all content on the corporate website is bilingual. Furthermore, all publications are quality checked by Welsh-speaking members of staff at the Commission prior to publication on the website.

**3. WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**a. *Information on the Welsh language skills of the workforce and a report on the data***

As the Commission's Secretariat is small, the language skills of staff are known without the need for a survey. The Commission's Chair (20%) and two Secretariat staff members (20%) are Welsh speaking. A further member of staff has commenced a formal Welsh language evening course.

0 posts were advertised during 2015/16.

**b. *Evidence of investment in Welsh language training and an explanation of other action taken to improve workforce skills***

One member of the Commission's Secretariat began a Welsh Language course during the year. Staff members were reminded that the Commission considers providing financial support, in appropriate cases, should they wish to take up language training.

Welsh speaking members of staff at the Secretariat provide guidance and tuition to non-Welsh speaking colleagues regarding the pronunciation of Welsh place names and basic greetings, as required.

**c. *Evidence of provision of language awareness training***

Staff members of the Commission's Secretariat undertook Welsh language awareness training during the year. As stated above, the Commission's Secretariat has only 10 members of staff, with the majority working in an open-plan environment, and the dissemination of information is easily achieved; therefore, staff members are particularly well-informed about, and supportive of, the Commission's commitment to the Welsh language.

#### **4. MAINSTREAMING THE WELSH LANGUAGE**

**a. *Information on arrangements for assessing the impact of policies on the Welsh language and any action taken to review arrangements to ensure appropriate assessments are conducted***

The Chief Executive manages all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with. Furthermore, the Commission's Chair, as a fluent Welsh speaker, has been appointed Welsh Language Champion.

When policy decisions are made, the Commission routinely considers the impact such decisions may have upon the opportunities for persons to use Welsh or treat Welsh no less favourably than English; this is particularly so as the positive image of the Welsh language is thoroughly embedded in the day-to-day operations of the Secretariat. During the reporting year, all policy documents were published bilingually.

When the Commission consults upon policy decisions, the consultation and covering documentation is published bilingually, with responses welcomed in Welsh or English (examples of such documents can be viewed on the Commission's website).

#### **5. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

**a. *Identify risks and priorities for next year***

The Commission prepares an annual operational plan that underpins the budget and expenditure for the year. The plan for 2015-2016 incorporated resources to fulfil the Commission's obligations specified in the Welsh Language Scheme and for the transition to Welsh Language Standards. The Commission's annual operational plan for 2016-17 will also incorporate resources to ensure the Commission's obligations under the Scheme will be fulfilled.

The Commission revised its Welsh Language Scheme in March 2016; this is currently undergoing translation/checking prior to publication on the Commission's website. The Commission has been preparing for the Welsh Language Commissioner's Standards Investigation, having submitted its evidence to the Welsh Language Commissioner in February 2015. The Commission has received a Draft Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner, and is preparing its response for submission before the consultation deadline in May 2016. The Commission is currently preparing an Action Plan to facilitate the transition from Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Standards.

A number of Commission desk instructions and letter templates have been revised; requirements under the Welsh Language Scheme were considered as part of that process. Furthermore, it is intended to include reference to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme (and, in due course, the Welsh Language Standards by which the Commission will need to comply) in future tender documents and contracts.

**b. *Examples of relevant good practice***

The Commission is encouraged by the fact that no complaints were received about the Welsh language service provided during the reporting year.

The Commission is currently undertaking a process of contacting all Community and Town councils in Wales (who are among our primary stakeholders) to confirm whether they would prefer to receive correspondence / documentation in Welsh, English or bilingually.

Two (20%) members of staff at the Commission's Secretariat are Welsh speakers and are available to: answer queries from colleagues pertaining to the Welsh language; answer queries from Welsh speaking members of the public; make contact with stakeholders whose preferred language is Welsh; and, quality assure Welsh language publications.

The Commission use bilingual templates. Desk instructions have been distributed to staff, to ensure that all aspects of the Commission's work are issued bilingually. Checklists are used by staff when conducting electoral reviews, which ensure Welsh language versions of Reports are quality assured and published according to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme. Staff members have access to Welsh language grammar and spellcheck facilities, such as 'Cysgeir' and 'Cysill' to improve confidence and encourage the wider use of written Welsh.

The Commission did not advertise any roles during 2015/16; however, if it had it would have indicated the desire for Welsh language.

During the year all telephone calls received from Welsh-speaking members of the public were dealt with by the Chair or the Welsh-speaking members of staff. Routine telephone calls from the Chair to the Welsh-speaking staff are usually in Welsh.

The Commission's website is fully bilingual, and all notifications on social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) are issued in Welsh and in English simultaneously.

Simultaneous translation facilities are provided at all public meetings.

Following the enactment of the Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013, the name of the Commission was changed. Commission signs (a 'pop-up stand' and 'roll-up banners') are in place and are bilingual, with the Welsh language appearing before the English language.

The following documents were published bilingually by the Commission: Pamphlets/Leaflets; newsletter; minutes; consultation papers; booklets; guidance; Reports; receipts; and, Maps. Where Welsh language and English language documents were published, both versions were made available simultaneously, with both languages being afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence. Examples of these documents are available on the Commission's website.

Welsh-speaking Commission staff members have access to the Welsh Speaker badges/stickers; they are encouraged to wear these when outside of the office on official business to encourage Welsh-speaking members of the public to initiate conversations in Welsh.

Two new Commissioners were appointed in September 2015; part of their induction process included awareness of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme. Both Commissioners reported that they were particularly conscious of the organisation's and staff members' supportive attitude towards the Welsh Language Scheme following induction.

***c. Evidence of efforts to monitor the quality of Welsh language services and / or service user surveys***

The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all current desk instructions and the office systems are such that the Chief Executive is the monitoring officer and approves the majority of output from the Secretariat.

The Commission revised its Welsh Language Scheme in March 2016; this is currently going through the translation/checking process prior to publication. The Commission has been preparing for the Welsh Language Commissioner's Standards Investigation, having submitted its evidence to the Welsh Language Commissioner in February 2015. The Welsh Language Commissioner published a report in June 2015; The Commission has received a Draft Compliance Notice and is preparing its response, which will be sent to the Welsh Language Commissioner before the May 2016 consultation deadline.

The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme, which is published on the website, invites readers to submit suggestions for improvements. To date, no suggestions have been received.

All Welsh language publications are quality assured by Welsh speaking members of staff at the Secretariat prior to publication.