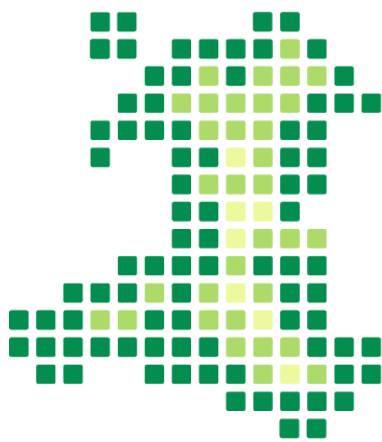




Comisiwn Ffiniau a
Democratiaeth Leol
Cymru

Local Democracy and
Boundary Commission
For Wales

WELSH LANGUAGE

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT 2022 – 2023

This document is available in Welsh

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1. Introduction and Background

Following the Welsh Language Act (1993), Welsh language service provision was defined by individually developed Welsh Language Schemes agreed between individual public bodies and the Welsh Language Board. This arrangement has now been superseded by nationally defined Welsh Language Standards, a selection of which the Welsh Language Commissioner can apply to a public (and, in time, some private) bodies.

The framework for the imposition of standards was defined under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011), with the standards themselves detailed in Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015. The standards applying to the Commission are defined in a Compliance Notice issued by the Office of the Welsh Language Commissioner in July 2016 with an effective date of July 2017. This notice is the current document governing the Commission's compliance.

This is the Commission's sixth Annual Report since standards became effective and provides an overview of the work carried out in relation to the Welsh Language Standards between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

2. Overview of 2022 - 23

The focus for 2022 – 23 was to ensure the Commission's continued compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

During the year, the Commission has increased its number of Welsh speakers within its workforce (36%) and continued to improve its ability to provide an effective Welsh Language service to its stakeholders. The Commission has also provided support to staff members who undertook Welsh Language courses through the provision of time off to attend classes as well as funding the cost of the courses.

Following a consultation with staff, the Commission has implemented hybrid working arrangements and staff are able to work from home and at the Commission's office premises. These arrangements have not impacted on the Commission's ability to continue to provide a Welsh language service to its stakeholders.

During the year no complaints were raised about the Commission's operation of the standards.

3. Operation of Standards

Service Delivery Standards

In terms of correspondence, all of the procedural letters and e-mails sent out as part of the reviews process have been produced in both Welsh and English and sent out at the same time. For other items of correspondence, a language preference system has been implemented. Where a preference is not known correspondence is produced in Welsh and English. The Commission continues to maintain a database that records the language preference of individuals that we correspond with. (Standard numbers 1 to 7).

Procedures in respect of answering the main telephone number are in operation and a Welsh Language answer service is in place (Standard numbers 8 to 22).

Procedures in respect of the necessary arrangements for holding meetings are in operation. When organising meetings, the Commission also works collaboratively with other public bodies who are subject to Welsh Language standards i.e. local authorities. (Standard numbers 24 to 30).

No public events were held by the Commission during the year (Standard numbers 31 to 34).

All documents produced for public use were published in both Welsh and English at and the same time (Standard numbers 36, 44 and 45).

No forms that were made available to the public were produced during the year (Standard numbers 46 to 47).

All of the pages on the Commission's web site are fully functional and available in both Welsh and English (Standard numbers 48, 51 and 52).

Social media usage is in both Welsh and English (Standard number 54 and 55).

All signs and notices have been produced in Welsh and English to the required standard. (Standard numbers 57 to 59, 65 and 66).

The number of the Welsh speaking staff in the Commission has enabled the Commission to provide a Welsh language reception service when required (Standards number 61)

All contract material was produced in Welsh and English and the appropriate handling procedures were followed (Standards numbers 72,73, 75 and 76).

The Commission continues to maintain in corporate identity in line with the Standards. (Standards numbers 77 to 79).

In respect of publicising the service delivery standards that apply to the Commission and how they are to be complied with, these can be found in the Welsh Language Standards Policy and Procedures document which is published on the web site and is available at the office. (Standard numbers 149 and 153).

The Commission's Welsh Language Complaints Policy is available on the web site and is available in the office. (Standard numbers 150 to 151).

This document constitutes the Commission's annual report in respect of service delivery standards (Standard number 152).

The Commission completed a self-assessment evidence request from the Welsh Language Commissioner during the year (Standard number 154).

Policy Making Standards

No new policies or revisions of existing policies have occurred during the year that required the undertaking of a Welsh Language Policy Impact Assessment (Standards numbers 84 to 89).

Policy related research was commissioned during the year. This was in relation to providing the Commission with information for it to develop policies for the next Electoral Review programme. The commissioning took place in Q4 of 22/23 and the work will be undertaken in 23/24 (Standards numbers 91 to 93).

In respect of publicising the policy making standards that apply to the Commission and how they are to be complied with, these can be found in the Welsh Language Standards Policy and Procedures document which is published on the web site and is available at the office. (Standard numbers 155 and 157).

The Commission's Welsh Language Complaints Policy is available on the web site and is available in the office (Standard number 156).

This document constitutes the Commission's annual report in respect of policy making standards (Standard number 158).

In respect of publicising the policy making standards that apply to the Commission and how they are to be complied with, these can be found in the Welsh Language Standards Policy and Procedures document which is published on the web site and is available at the office. (Standard numbers 159).

No requests for any information relating to policy making standards were received during the year (Standard number 160).

Operational Standards

A use of Welsh at Work Policy is in place and a copy has been provided to all staff and Commissioners (Standard number 94).

The language preferences for all new and existing members of staff are gathered and acted on accordingly (Standards 95 to 100)

A procedure has been put in place to ensure that any new or revised staffing policies are published in Welsh and English (Standards 101 to 107)

Procedures for making and responding to complaints made by members of staff are in place and are included in the Use of Welsh at Work Policy (Standards 108, 108A, 110 and 111).

Procedures in respect of disciplinary matters are in place and are included Use of Welsh at Work Policy (Standards 112, 112A, 114 and 115).

The Commission has updated the shared access areas of its intranet that it has administrative control over to ensure that the information uploaded is available in Welsh. (Standards 118, 120 to 123).

An assessment of the Welsh language skills of all staff was undertaken and is being maintained and added to for new staff (Standard 123), Appendix 1.

All members of staff have been made aware of and encouraged at each monthly team meeting to take up opportunities for Welsh language training and in addition new members of staff are encouraged to attend Welsh language awareness training. All members of staff have been provided with a copy of the Use of Welsh at Work Policy and the Commission's Welsh Language Standards Policy and Procedures document so that they have an understanding of the Commission's duty to operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and how the Welsh Language can be used in the workplace (Standards 126 to 129).

Appropriate wording and instructions in respect of email signatures and contact details have been provided to all staff (Standards 130 and 131).

Staff recruitment for a review officer and team support officer was undertaken in 2022-23. (Standards 132 to 133B, 135 to 136).

No new signs were erected during the year (Standards 137 to 139).

In respect of publicising the operational standards that apply to the Commission and how they are to be complied with, these can be found in the Welsh Language Standards Policy and Procedures document which is published on the web site and is available at the office. (Standard numbers 161 and 163 and 165).

The Commission's Welsh Language Complaints Policy has been reviewed and is available on the web site and in the office (Standard number 162).

This document constitutes the Commission's annual report in respect of operational standards (Standard number 164).

The Commission completed a self-assessment evidence request from the Welsh Language Commissioner during the year. (Standard number 166).

Record Keeping Standards

The Commission received no complaints relating to its compliance with the Standards or the Welsh language was received during the year. (Standards 141 to 143).

A Welsh Language Standards Compliance Record has been created and maintained to ensure that a record of compliance with the standards is available (Standards 144 to 148).

In respect of publicising the record keeping standards that apply to the Commission and how they are to be complied with, these can be found in the Welsh Language Standards Policy and Procedures document which is published on the web site and is available at the office (Standard number 167).

The Commission completed a self-assessment evidence request from the Welsh Language Commissioner during the year (Standard number 168).

Appendix 1

Staff Welsh Language Skills: Standard 123

This table details the members of staff who had Welsh language skills at the end of 2022/23 (March 2023). The figures are based on the records kept in accordance with Standard 123.

Skills (Levels 0-5)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Listening	2	5				4	11
Reading	2	5			1	3	11
Speaking	2	5				4	11
Writing	4	3			2	2	11

Appendix 2

Recruiting to Posts: Standard 132

The table below shows the number of posts that were advertised in 2022-23 under each Welsh language skills requirement. The figures reflect the records kept in accordance with Standard 132.

Welsh Essential	0
Welsh Desirable	2
Welsh to be Learned	0
Welsh Not Necessary	0