



Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission AC2010(3)

Paper 2 Annex 3

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*Assembly Commission welcomes future direction for its
bilingual services*

The National Assembly for Wales Commission has welcomed and accepted the recommendations of the Independent Review Panel on Bilingual Services, published today (19 May 2010).

“The Assembly Commission wanted the best possible advice and expertise, and to gather opinions from a wide range of people, so we appointed this independent panel to look at the National Assembly for Wales’ bilingual services,” said Presiding Officer and Chair of the Commission, Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM.

“As Wales’s principal democratic institution, the Assembly has a duty to enable all citizens and Assembly Members to be informed about, and contribute fully to, the democratic process in either of Wales’s official languages – through Welsh or through English.

“The Assembly is already an exemplar organisation in its delivery of bilingual services to the public. The Commission is committed to remaining so by strengthening the position of Welsh in the work of the Commission and the Assembly, in a way that is effective, practical and relevant.

“A key strategic goal of this Third Assembly is to increase participation in the democratic process here in Wales. This is why we are pleased to follow the panel’s

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recommendations, particularly their proposals to make the records of our debates and proceedings more user-friendly by imaginative use of modern technology.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank the panel for its work in seeking the views of as wide an audience as possible.”

Key recommendations from the panel include the provision of a verbatim text record of proceedings to be published in the original language(s) spoken, together with a record of the contemporaneous translation of Welsh to English, as heard during Assembly proceedings.

The panel also recommended that Senedd TV should become the principal comprehensive stored record for researchers and future historians.

In addition, panel members would like more resources targeted at increasing citizen awareness and engagement, and at practical measures to increase the day to day use of Welsh in the Assembly.

The Assembly Commission believes that the panel’s report and recommendations provides an excellent basis from which to achieve the Assembly’s ambition to become a “truly bilingual institution” and to make the best use of modern information technology to make the business of the Assembly more accessible as well as delivering better value for money.

In addition, the Commission has confirmed that it will be examining ways in which detailed provision guaranteeing the equal status of the two languages in the business of the Assembly can be embedded in legislation and reflected in working practice.

Notes to Editors:

1. The independent panel was appointed to review the bilingual services of the National Assembly for Wales. In a statement last September, the National Assembly Commission gave a commitment that any changes recommended by the panel relating to arrangements for the translation of plenary proceedings would be implemented.

2. For a full copy of the report visit www.assemblywales.org

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3. For interview requests with the Arwel Ellis Owen Chair of the Independent Panel ring the National Assembly Press office on 029 2089 8646 or 020 2089 8039.

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