



Aled Roberts
Comisiynydd y Gymraeg
Welsh Language Commissioner

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

19 July 2021

Dear Ms Jewell

Considering the Welsh language in the Committee's work

I am writing to you at the beginning of the sixth Senedd term to urge you to ensure that the Committee gives full consideration to the Welsh language in all aspects of its work not only when it considers specific matters relating to the Welsh language.

In the Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy the Welsh Government announced the vision of reaching a million Welsh speakers and increasing the percentage who speak Welsh daily to 20%. The strategy includes milestones to measure the success of its achievement, with the first milestone in 2021 and the next in 2026. As the Commissioner noted in his letter to the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee on 10 February 2021 we believe that it will be necessary to take a serious approach to holding the Government to account for the extent to which the Strategy is being achieved and the milestones reached. The Commissioner also referred to the importance of mainstreaming the Welsh language into wider legislation and policy. We are concerned that there is insufficient scrutiny of the impact of legislation and policy on the Welsh language in general. Indeed, Eluned Morgan, the previous Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and the Welsh Language, stated in a scrutiny session:

... I would suggest that actually, rather than just holding me to account when it comes to the budget, [...] that actually you ask the other Ministers, who've got huge amounts of

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money, what they're doing within their budgets in relation to the Welsh language.”
(Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee meeting, 25 February 2021)

I should emphasise that the Welsh language should not be seen as a cultural issue alone as it is a living language in all communities in Wales and a main language in many of them. Those communities face a number of social and economic challenges that in turn challenge the viability of the Welsh language in those communities.

The Commissioner published a manifesto document¹ for the 2021 election stating that a wide range of factors affecting the Welsh language need to be considered and outlined a number of policy interventions that should be introduced in different areas. The challenge for the new Government will be to act radically to ensure that we are on the right track to meet the 2050 targets and I believe that the committee has a vital role to play in the effort to ensure that it does so. One of the areas where there is real need for the Government to take action is to introduce Welsh language standards. These are the duties placed on public organisations to use and consider the language, ensuring quality and consistency in Welsh language services. To enable the Commissioner to impose standards, the Government must prepare standards and introduce regulations. The last set of regulations came into effect in June 2018. We have introduced a programme for the Government to consider for taking this work forward as soon as possible. It would be appropriate for the Committee also to ensure that this programme is introduced as soon as possible.

We will publish a number of significant reports over the summer, including our Annual Report, our 5-year Report on the position of the Welsh language and our annual Assurance Report on the performance of public bodies against Welsh language standards. I am sure that there will be an opportunity to discuss these reports with the Committee during the autumn term.

I hope that you will bear these comments in mind as you consider the committee's future work. I wish you every success in that work and look forward to contributing to it.

Yours sincerely

Gwenith Price
Deputy Welsh Language Commissioner

¹ [Manifesto \(positif.wales\)](https://positif.wales/)