

Mark Drakeford AS/MS  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS  
Chair  
Finance Committee

12 November 2024

Dear Peredur,

### **Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill**

I am writing to you following my attendance at your Committee on 23 October, to provide evidence in relation to the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill. I trust the Committee found the session to be informative.

At the Committee I undertook to providing further information to:

- clarify the cost of late immersion education and when in the appraisal period these costs will fall; and
- in relation to support and funding for the provision of Welsh language learning outside of schools, following the discussion about youth services.

### **Cost of late immersion education**

In the Regulatory Impact Assessment's (RIA) narrative, late immersion costs (Table 8) and workforce costs (Table 7) are discussed together. Workforce costs will fall between years 3-10. This is noted in Table 7 and is aligned with the overall cost table (Table 18). Late immersion costs should fall between years 4-10. The cost estimate is correctly based on years 4-10, which is aligned with the overall cost table (Table 18). However, there is a typographical error in Table 8 – 'years 2-10' should read 'years 4-10'. My officials will correct the RIA before it is laid before the Senedd prior to Stage 3 proceedings.

### **Support and funding for the provision of Welsh language learning outside of schools**

The Welsh Government supports and encourages a number of networks to offer opportunities for children and young people to use the Welsh language outside the school setting. At the Committee Members referred to opportunities provided via youth work and the Mentrau Iaith.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Youth work has a vital role to play in enabling all young people to use their Welsh with their peers in the community and online, building young people's confidence in using more of their Welsh. The Cabinet Secretary for Education recently published proposals for a new statutory framework for youth work in Wales. These proposals include a new youth work entitlement for young people, including clear expectations for youth work delivered in Welsh, as well as a revised strategic planning and reporting mechanism for youth work. There are clear links between these planning and reporting mechanisms and the proposals set out in the Bill, and these will need to be realised in order to provide rich opportunities for young people to use and enjoy the language.

The network of Mentrau Iaith provide a wide range of activities and support to help children and young people to use the Welsh language in informal settings, outside school. These activities include live music events, theatre workshops, sports and nature activities as well as numerous cultural and art activities. It is a requirement that all of the recipients of the grant to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language work closely together to plan and support and complement each other's work on a local basis. These discussions are undertaken in language forums which are mainly held in each local authority area. The Welsh Government provides a core grant of £2.4m to Mentrau Iaith Cymru.

Additionally, we provide annual grant funding of almost £125,000 to Wales' Young Farmers Clubs to create Welsh-medium activities for young people. These activities include a variety of agricultural and non-agricultural programs and events, such as the national Young Farmers Eisteddfod and local rallies. We also collaborate with a range of other external organisations across the youth work sector to promote the use of Welsh in youth work throughout Wales, providing more opportunities for young people to use Welsh within their communities.

I have also taken the opportunity in writing to you to clarify further matters, which were raised at the Committee session on 23 October:

- (i) Paragraphs 58 and 59 of the transcript state:

*Mike Hedges: Diolch, Cadeirydd. The RIA sets out transitional costs in Parts 1 to 5 of the Bill, which relate to Welsh Government staff time. Is it going to be new staff or is it opportunity costs of existing staff doing something different?*

*Mark Drakeford: These are opportunity costs.*

I wish to clarify that there are some additional Welsh Government staff costs in relation to Part 5 of the Bill, it is a transitional cost for staff who will be working on establishing the new body. These costs are outlined in Tables 15 and 16 of the RIA.

- (ii) Paragraphs 87 and 88 of the transcript state:

*Peredur Owen Griffiths: When it comes to workforce planning—and you've made the assumption that the headteacher will be doing this—and when it comes to additional support within the implementation of this, can you talk a little bit about how you've costed that into the RIA? And is most of it going to come from existing staff, or are you looking at creating new roles that will help support, or help with that workforce pressure?*

*Mark Drakeford: Well, the workforce pressure at the school level, Chair—we assume, as I said, that all the help that is currently available within the system will continue. And there are a whole series of programmes that the Welsh*

*Government already provides, primarily through my colleague Lynne Neagle. So, we have costed into the RIA the cynllun pontio. We have included the Welsh-medium workforce capacity development grant. We have included our plans—or the Cabinet Secretary's plans—to introduce a teacher retention bursary in the Welsh language field. We've assumed that the Open University's work—which is another way in which we are able to widen the pool of people who can come into the profession—continues.*

The wider programmes referenced in my contribution above are programmes that the Welsh Government already provides. Therefore, these costs have not been included in the RIA as these costs do not arise from the provisions of the Bill. The key workforce language support elements costed within the RIA are the current sabbatical scheme and the grants to the National Centre for Learning Welsh which relate to school practitioners. These equal £4.37m per annum.

I thank the Committee for their interest in this Bill and look forward to considering the Committee's report, in due course.

I am copying this letter to Buffy Williams, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

**Mark Drakeford AS/MS**

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Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language