

Efa Gruffudd Jones

Welsh Language Commissioner

20 November 2025

## **Annual Scrutiny of the Welsh Language Commissioner**

Dear Efa,

Thank you for attending the Committee's meeting on 12 November 2025 as part of our Annual Scrutiny of the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Committee would like to thank you and the Deputy Commissioner, Osian Llywelyn, for your time and for the evidence that you shared with the Committee. As we mentioned during the session, there are one or two further issues we wanted to raise with you, which we didn't have time to raise during the session, and these are dealt with below.

### **Budget considerations**

The Committee is very conscious of the effect of year-on-year real-terms reductions in Welsh Government revenue funding for your office and the limitations it might place on your functions and activities. The Committee noted the implications of this funding squeeze, specifically the 5 per cent cut to your budget in 2024-25.

The Committee noted your assessment of the requirement to restructure and change roles as a direct consequence of budget reductions. We were reassured that your staffing structure enables you to undertake your functions effectively. However, it is concerning that the office, since its establishment in 2012, has seen a 26 per cent reduction in the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

Whilst the Committee welcomes moves to bring more sectors within the Welsh language standards regime, this will undoubtedly increase workload for your office and impact on your capacity to do things in the same way. The Committee will pursue this with the Welsh Government.

### **Governance**

The Committee questioned you on the steps taken since your office was a victim of a cyber-attack a few years back. We acknowledge the work you have undertaken since then to ensure that all possible risks are being mitigated and are actively monitored.



We also discussed the timescales and costs involved in the development of the new case management system (CMS) and the need to learn lessons for future projects. We were pleased to hear that additional development requirements for the system would not incur additional costs and that support and advice structures are in place to support future procurement of digital and IT systems. Could you provide us with an update on the timeframe for completion of the new CMS, and outline how the system will facilitate a more effective and efficient process to dealing with complaints?

## HMP Berwyn

The Committee was interested in your update about the recent report from Cardiff University that found that Welsh speaking prisoners are prevented from using the language at HMP Berwyn.

We note that you are due to meet senior officials at HMP Berwyn on 17 November and that you will be able to update the Committee after this point. The Committee is interested to hear if you are able to draw any further conclusions from the meeting and whether you are likely to pursue an investigation into HMP Berwyn. We'd also be interested to know what representations you will make to the Welsh and UK Government about bringing HMPPS within the Welsh language standards regulatory framework.

The Committee also welcomes your efforts to bring other UK Government departments and bodies such as the DVLA, HMRC, the Department of Work and Pensions and the Cabinet Office within the Welsh language standards regime. UK Government bodies that provide key services to people in Wales should be providing them in accordance with Welsh legislation, and should be ensuring that the Welsh language isn't treated less favourably than the English language.

## Regulation and enforcement

It was with interest that we heard about your approach to regulation and enforcement of the standards, and that the shift to co-regulation was a decision based on principle rather than budgetary needs. The Committee also acknowledges your point that the number of complaints the Commissioner receives is not within your control, and that for a proportion of those complaints, there is no evidence of failure, or the matter has been resolved, and therefore no enforcement action is taken.

The Committee sees the value in preventative action to ensure that organisations do not fail in the first instance. We note your report, which states:

*"We are committed to acting proportionately, targeting our regulatory work and operating according to a number of specific measures, including our assessment of the organisation's likely risk of non-compliance."*

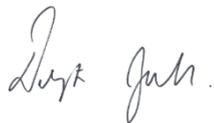
We of course acknowledge that as Commissioner, you must use your limited resources proportionately and we would accept that investigating a complaint that has been corrected would not represent a wise use of resources. Where there is evidence of failure, however, we believe that it is important that the Commissioner does investigate.



Thank you once again for your attendance at Committee and for your valuable insights.

I am copying this letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.