

Efa Gruffudd Jones
Welsh Language Commissioner
Comisiynydd y Gymraeg



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Welsh Language
Commissioner**

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport
and International Relations Committee
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN
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25 November 2025

Dear Delyth Jewell MS

Annual scrutiny of the Welsh Language Commissioner's work

On my behalf and my Deputy, Osian Llywelyn, I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to come and give evidence to the Committee on 12 November 2025. Here's a response to your comments.

Budget considerations

We would welcome more resources. However, even if these were to diminish, we would continue to welcome bringing more bodies under the Welsh language standards. That is because we firmly believe that bringing more bodies and sectors under the Welsh Language Standards is good for the Welsh language. Doing so without an additional resource would put pressure on the office's resources, and mean that we would have to regulate more on the basis of risk.

Our responsibilities increase over time, and we need sufficient resources in order to do our work effectively. We have noted this in our [manifesto proposals](#) where we ask the next Welsh government to publish Welsh language standards regulations for Ministers of the Crown and non-ministerial departments of the United Kingdom Government, and ask for a clear programme for extending Welsh language standards to other sectors and organisations.

To date, as resources have diminished, we have prioritised resources for our regulatory functions, although we are seeing that our activities in other directions, including our work with the private and voluntary sectors, are also bearing fruit in terms of outcomes for the Welsh language and increasing opportunities for its use.

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Governance

We have a strong working relationship with the external provider who provides us with the case management system, and we have agreed on a delivery plan with them. This plan states that the development work in its entirety, along with training relevant staff on how to operate the system, will be completed by mid-March 2026. So, we expect that the system will be operational from April 2026, enabling us to take advantage of all its benefits from that date onwards.

The main benefits expected are as follows:

- Some tasks will be automated, saving staff time.
- Reducing the burden of day-to-day repetitive and administrative tasks.
- Ability to maintain more accurate records of our work and the deadlines we must adhere to.
- Ability to measure progress more easily against our performance indicators.
- Ability to more effectively track and document the results of any enforcement actions taken against organisations we regulate.

HMP Berwyn

I take my role as a champion for Welsh speakers seriously, particularly when it comes to the most vulnerable members of society. Following a visit to Berwyn Prison on 17 November where I had the opportunity to discuss the provision with staff and prisoners, I have decided to conduct a statutory investigation under section 17 of the Welsh Language Act 1993 into a possible failure by HM Prison and Probation Service to fulfill its Welsh language plan.

In addition, during the visit and following conversations with the prisoners, we heard about cases of individuals being prevented from speaking Welsh together. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 establishes freedom to use the Welsh language with others in Wales. I have asked for assurances that prisoners are aware that any individual who feels their liberty has been restricted can contact my office to request an investigation.

As I state above, our [manifesto proposals](#) ask the next Welsh government to bring bodies similar to the Prison and Probation Service under the Welsh language standards regime.

Regulation and enforcement

I would like to thank the Committee for the constructive comments and recognition of our regulatory approach. We emphasise once again that the change to co-regulation as a method is one based on principles, not on budgetary considerations.



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We have a dual role as a regulator: to educate, support and promote compliance, but also to enforce where necessary. Our desire is to work with organisations through a preventative and collaborative approach, to avoid situations where enforcement action is required. However, when there is no assurance or confidence that organisations are fulfilling their duties, we will act firmly using all our powers to ensure compliance.

I need to draw your attention to one issue relating to National Insurance. Note that the 2025-26 National Insurance increase is a budgetary issue (therefore it isn't included in the 2024-2025 Annual Report). Our expectation is to receive 85% of the increase, not 100% as I stated at the meeting.

Thank you for your interest in our work, and I look forward to further discussions.

Yours sincerely,

Efa Gruffudd Jones
Welsh Language Commissioner

cc: Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language