



Mike Hedges MS  
Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1SN

10 December 2025

Dear Mike,

**British Sign Language (Wales) Bill**

Thank you to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for your scrutiny of the British Sign Language (Wales) Bill ("the Bill") during Stage 1 and for the report which was published on 4 December 2025. I have set out my response to the Committee's conclusions and recommendations at Annex A.

It has not been possible for me to accept all of the Committee's recommendations, and I have provided reasons for this in the detailed response at Annex A.

Lastly, I wanted to make you aware that I will also be writing to the Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee with respect to their Stage 1 Report, and will copy the letter to you at that time. I have already shared with you my response to the Finance Committee's Stage 1 report.

Regards

**Mark Isherwood MS**  
**Member of the Welsh Parliament for North Wales**

## Annex A

### Response from Mark Isherwood, MS to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee's Report on the British Sign Language (Wales) Bill

**Recommendation 1.** The Member in charge should table an amendment to the Bill to require that the statutory guidance issued under section 3, and any future revisions to it, are laid before the Senedd.

**Response: Reject**

I have considered this recommendation carefully, and have discussed the issue with the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice. On balance I am rejecting the recommendation.

As the Committee has itself set out, the laying of Welsh Government guidance of this nature would be unusual, and guidance of this sort would not normally be directly scrutinised by the Senedd. Whilst this is the case, and as I outlined in my evidence to the Committee, I do expect that Senedd Members and Senedd committees will have a close eye on the guidance and on how the legislation in its entirety is implemented, and I believe that would be the case whether the guidance is laid or not.

As you may be aware, the Equality and Social Justice Committee has made two recommendations in relation to the BSL guidance required under the Bill. The first of these relates specifically to adding a requirement within the Bill that the guidance is published at the same or similar time to the National BSL Strategy. The second recommendation relates to adding a duty to consult on the guidance.

I will be accepting these recommendations, bringing forward the required amendments at Stage 2. If accepted, this would place a requirement on the face of the Bill that the guidance is published. While this falls short of the LJC Committee's call for it to be laid, it will place the guidance in the public domain as soon as it is available.

**Recommendation 2.** The Member in charge should consider the merits of specifying a minimum and maximum number of members that should sit on the panel.

**Response: Accept**

I will be very happy to consider the merits of specifying a minimum and maximum number of members that should sit on the panel. If it is felt necessary, or appropriate, I will bring forward amendment at Stage 2 to include a minimum and maximum number on the face of the Bill.

**Recommendation 3.** For clarity, the Member in charge should table an amendment to section 8(1)(c) to reflect the full names of the specified Welsh NHS Trusts by reference to their corresponding establishment orders.

**Response: Accept**

As I outlined to the Committee during Stage 1, I don't believe there would be any confusion caused from the wording of section 8(1) of the Bill. However, as this is purely a drafting issue I will bring forward amendments at Stage 2 to reflect the full names of the specific Welsh NHS Trusts.