



William Powell AC/AM  
Chair of Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

12 June 2013

Dear William

Thank you for your letter dated 24 May about the petition from Sovereign Wales.

Easy access to information about the Assembly's work is at the heart of the Commission's goal of engaging with the people of Wales. I agree with the petitioners that communicating in a style that can be easily understood by everyone is crucial to the successful delivery of this goal.

I am proud of our record in providing clear documents and information. The following examples show how we already deal with the issues raised by the petition:

1. We have produced an Assembly Commission Style Guide for staff to ensure that the language used in our publications, and in all our information, is appropriate and consistent. I am enclosing a copy of the Style Guide for your information. The Style Guide is promoted to all new recruits as part of the induction process and is reviewed periodically based on our experience of using it.
2. We tailor our communications to suit the needs and preferences of particular audiences. This is particularly true for young people. For example, we have produced a version of our vision statement for young people so that the purpose of the organisation is better understood by them.

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh



3. The Equalities Team monitor the latest guidance and legislation in relation to accessibility. They ensure that we follow good practice from elsewhere in applying Plain English and Cymraeg Clir guidance within our information and publications.
4. The Assembly Commission's 2012-2016 Equality Plan includes an action to provide plain language training for staff. To date, our HR Learning and Development team have arranged the following courses for staff:
  - a. introductory effective writing courses, open to all staff and a more in-depth writing skills course;
  - b. e-Learning courses in Basic Skills Literacy Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3, Grammar Series and Writing skills;
  - c. additional writing skills courses for dyslexic staff.
5. During their induction period, translators are given training on style, grammar and the use of external resources (including Canolfan Bedwyr's Cymraeg Clir guidelines), with an emphasis on creating documents in Welsh that read naturally, rather than just a verbatim translation of the original. Translators conform to the Assembly's house style. They use various electronic aids such as translation memory software, websites such as the Welsh Government's Term Cymru website, and software applications such as Cysgliad. Each member of the team is a member of the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters, or is working towards becoming a member. The team also takes advantage of training sessions and workshops held by the Association. A recent example of such a session was called *Taro'r Cyweiriau* (Striking the Right Key).
6. Our Director of Legal Services is a champion of plain writing principles, and is working with her team to deliver plain English principles/Cymraeg Clir in relation to drafting legislation and other legal work.
7. The guidance provided to Assembly staff is also available to Assembly Members and their support staff, together with training as part of a Continuous Professional Development programme. This includes a number of courses that focus on communication skills, including effective writing, speech writing and delivery, presentation and public speaking.

I hope these examples go some way to reassuring you and the petitioners that we take this issue seriously. I acknowledge that there will always be room for further improvement and we will certainly consider carefully whether to include a formal plain English/Cymraeg Clir policy in our guidance.



I am grateful to you for bringing this matter to my attention and for making me aware of the petitioners' constructive suggestions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a horizontal line.

**Claire Clancy**

**Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc/Chief Executive and Clerk**

**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru/National Assembly for Wales**