

Sixth meeting of the Cross-Party Group on the Welsh Language;
Minutes, 4 December 2013, 8.15 a.m.

1. Introduction by the Chair, Keith Davies AM
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the previous meeting
<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=7621>
4. Determining the topic for the next meeting and future discussion topics
5. The First Minister of Wales and the Minister with responsibility for the Welsh language, Carwyn Jones AM
6. Any other business

In attendance:

The First Minister of Wales and the Minister with responsibility for the Welsh language, Carwyn Jones AM

Keith Davies AM, Mike Hedges AM, Aled Roberts AM, Suzy Davies AM, Simon Thomas AM, Alun Ffred Jones AM, Rhun ap Iorwerth AM

AMSS Keith Davies AM, Julie Morgan AM, Plaid Cymru

Members of Celebrating Our Language who had confirmed their attendance:

Ceri Owen (Parents for Welsh Medium Education, or RhAG), Colin Nosworthy (Cymdeithas yr Iaith), Penri Williams, Dr Huw Thomas, Dr Hywel Glyn Lewis, Gill Griffiths (Merched y Wawr), David Wyn Williams, Emily Cole (Mentrau Iaith Cymru), Gwyn Williams (Office of the Welsh Language Commissioner), Meinir Jones (Office of the Welsh Language Commissioner), Dai Bryer (Director, South Wales District, Urdd Gobaith Cymru), David Wynn Williams (Cymdeithas yr Iaith).

Apologies

Janet Finch-Saunders AM, Bethan Jenkins AM, Aled Powell (Cymdeithas yr Iaith), Tegwen Morris, Siân Lewis.

Other agenda items

Item 3. The minutes of the previous meeting, published on the Assembly website, were agreed.

Item 4. Future discussion topics (suggested during the previous meeting) were also agreed. These include:

The planning Bill, Flying Start, teaching/learning Welsh as a second language, Welsh for adults, ethnic minorities and the Welsh language, the mentrau iaith, TWF/Growing with Welsh.

In addition, the group agreed to revisit topic areas addressed in last year's meetings, namely: the future of Welsh-speaking communities; education; the Welsh Language Commissioner/the Welsh Language Measure; the media and the Government's Welsh language strategy.

It was agreed that several areas require attention, and it was suggested that two discussion topics should be merged at the next meeting, namely the planning Bill and Flying Start.

Item 5. Discussion with the First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM, on the Welsh Government's Welsh language strategy. A number of elements were touched upon, including Welsh-medium education, teaching/learning Welsh as a second language and the Gynhadledd Fawr.

Reference was made to the Government's Welsh education marketing campaign, *Live in Wales: Learn in Welsh?*, which targets families with children under 3 years old and looks to share information about Welsh education and shatter some common assumptions.

The First Minister noted that the Government has a duty to promote Welsh education, but that local authorities must be relied upon to provide Welsh-medium education on the ground. He emphasised that they have a greater duty than ever before to meet demand, noting his confidence that every local authority takes that responsibility seriously and his certainty that we will see growth in the field of Welsh education.

Reference was made to the fact that there is a difference between providing school places and providing local schools. He emphasised the need to ensure that schools are opened on the most local basis possible.

On the subject of teaching/learning Welsh as a second language, he received a report in September on how to improve provision in this sector, and he intends to respond to the recommendations included in it in the new year.

It was suggested that individuals are central in driving the current situation and in establishing good practice. An announcement is expected in the new year.

The First Minister made reference to the Gynhadledd Fawr, the findings of which were weighed up in a report by Iaith Cyf, as well as the Government's recent response. He added that that was only an initial response and that he was waiting for the recommendations of the task and finish group on the mentrau iaith, which will report back in the spring, before responding again.