

Dear William Powell AM, Chairman of the National Assembly for Wales' Petitions Committee

I am writing in response to the latest correspondence between the Petitions Committee and the First Minister regarding the petition submitted by Dyfodol i'r Iaith.

We welcome the First Minister's comments regarding the importance of the Language Initiatives' work, and we agree wholeheartedly that the Initiatives have a key role to play to achieve the vision outlined in the latest policy statement, *Moving Forward*. We are also holding constructive discussions with Government officials regarding the new structures of local authorities, and the opportunities these present to the Development Initiatives.

We have already welcomed the extra funding of £750,000 that was earmarked recently to further develop the work of Language Initiatives. We fully recognise that we are facing challenging times in terms of the budget, but as we have already explained, transforming the future of the Welsh language as a community language is not a policy area that we can put on the back burner in anticipation of better times. Concerted and positive action on behalf of the Welsh language is needed now in order to build more robust foundations for the language in our communities, and we need to continue to increase investment in the language.

We would like to draw the Committee's attention to an important point raised in our previous letters, namely, the need to hold an independent assessment of the resources required by the language Initiatives to develop and operate to their full potential. Indeed, it is hard to believe that this has not been done previously. This

really needs to be done now, in light of the First Minister's statement on the importance of the initiatives, in order to enable the Government and the Initiatives to plan to develop the work more scientifically. We have yet to hear more about the Government and the Committee's views on this matter.

We feel that it is timely for Dyfodol i'r Iaith to meet you as a Committee to discuss its petition and to gain further support from the Committee to act positively on what people across Wales have supported by signing the petition. We would, of course, be very keen to come to meet with you.

Yours faithfully,
Meirion Ll Davies

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meirion Ll Davies', written in a cursive style.

On behalf of the Operational Committee of the Welsh Language Initiatives