

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Date: October 2014
Time: 10:00-11:00
Title: Request for information from Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee to inform scrutiny of Draft Budget 2015-16

Purpose

1. To provide information on the Draft Budget 2015-16 in relation to the Welsh language as requested by the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee.

Timing

2. The draft budget was published on 30 September 2014

Response

3. The following information is provided in the order of the commissioning letter dated 5 August 2014 under the following headings:

- **Individual Budget Expenditure Lines for Welsh language funding**
- **Programme for Government commitments**
- **Key policies**, including: the delivery of the *A Living Language: A Language for Living* strategy; outcomes of *Y Gynhadledd Fawr*; funding allocations for the Welsh Language Commissioner; the expected impact of regulations making Welsh language standards under the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011* and the delivery of the Welsh Medium Education Strategy
- **Welsh language impact assessments**
- **Preventative Spending**
- **Provision for Legislation**

Individual Budget Expenditure Lines for Welsh language funding

4. As the Welsh language is a cross cutting theme, in addition to these BELs, other departments include expenditure on the Welsh language within the context of their own policy areas. Information about expenditure on the Welsh language within other departments is outlined elsewhere in this paper.
5. The table below provides a summary of the BELs relating to Welsh language funding:

BEL	2014-15	2015-16	2015-16	2015-16	2015-16
	Supplementary Budget June 2014	Indicative Plans Final Budget December 2013	Reductions	Transfers	New Plans Draft Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
6020 Welsh Language	8,914	9,049	-400*	-3,390	5,259
6021 Welsh Language Commissioner	0	0	0	3,390	3,390
5164 Welsh in Education	15,462	14,462	-600	4,737	18,599
4765 Strategic Investment BEL **	1,250	0	0	0	0
Total Direct Welsh Language spend	25,626	23,511	-1,000	4,737	27,248

* This includes a £300K reduction to the Welsh Language Commissioner budget. This was part of Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) 6020 in 2014-15 but transferred to a separate BEL in the second supplementary budget.

** Ring fenced for specific Welsh language capital projects (Paragraph 54)

6. The purpose of **BEL 6020** is to support the aims of the Welsh Language Strategy *A living language: a language for living* and the policy statement *A living language: a language for living – Bwrw Mlaen* which are:
 - To encourage and support the use of the Welsh language within families
 - To increase the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language
 - To strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community
 - To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace
 - To increase and improve Welsh-language services to citizens
 - To strengthen the infrastructure for the language
7. The purpose of the **BEL 6021** is to fund the position of the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Commissioner has wide ranging functions and powers which include:
 - working towards ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language
 - imposing duties on persons who come within the scope of the Measure to comply with standards relating to the Welsh language
 - conducting inquiries into matters relating to the Commissioner's functions
 - investigating alleged interference with an individual's freedom to communicate in Welsh with another individual.
 - promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language especially within the 3rd and private sectors
8. **BEL 5164** is for the implementation of the Welsh-Medium Education Strategy which include;
 - the planning of Welsh-medium education;
 - the delivery of practitioner training through the Sabbaticals Scheme and the Welsh in Education Grant;
 - the delivery of Welsh-language training through Welsh for Adults and Welsh second language;

- commissioning of teaching and learning resource; and
 - research, evaluation and marketing in respect of the Strategy.
9. 2015-16 will be the sixth year of implementation of the Strategy and the expenditure is planned in line with activities included in the Strategy's Implementation Programme.
10. The £4.737m increase in BEL 5164 is primarily due to recurrent transfers within the Education and Skills MEG. On a like for like basis, the relevant budgets have decreased by £600k between 2014-15 and 2015-16. The transfers impacting on the BEL are as follows;
- £9.867m in from Post-16 Education Action for Welsh for Adults funding in order to streamline process for the sector; and
 - A transfer out £5.13m of the remaining Welsh in Education Grant to the Education Standards Action, to create the new Education Improvement Grant for schools.

Information requested by the Children, Young People and Education Committee

11. You asked to see a copy of the information provided by the Minister for Education and Skills on budget provision to support the implementation of the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy and Local Authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPS). Please see Annex 1.

Programme for Government commitments relating to the Welsh language

12. You have asked for the following information with regard to the Welsh Government's Programme for Government:
- Details of the costs associated with the Programme for Government commitments relating to the Welsh language and/or any work being undertaken to assess such costs;
 - Whether these commitments are deliverable within the available portfolio budget and details of any areas where affordability is a concern; and
 - Information relating to how the delivery of the commitments for the Welsh language and their associated outcomes will be monitored and evaluated to demonstrate value for money.

Welsh language strategy

13. The Programme for Government commitment **12/014** *'Remain committed to ensuring the Welsh language is a 'living' language, one which thrives in everyday use across our country'* is implemented through our Welsh Language Strategy 2012-17 - *A Living Language: a Language for Living*, the Welsh Language Strategy which was published in March 2012. It sets out a clear responsibility for the whole of the Welsh Government to lead on the Welsh language.
14. As such Programme for Commitment **12/014** encompasses the following commitments:
- 12/015** Ensure Welsh public services are accessible to people through the medium of Welsh

- 12/018** Seek to expand the opportunities for people to use Welsh across all public services in Wales
 - 12/020** Seek innovative ways of ensuring that the Welsh language is passed on through families and that users feel comfortable choosing Welsh.
 - 12/021** Work to ensure that community groups feel able to use the Welsh language as a part of their activities and are able to operate bilingually.
 - 12/022** Focus on increasing the use of the Welsh language in the electronic media and will seek to ensure that everyone has a choice to use Welsh wherever possible.
 - 12/023** Seek to persuade international businesses providing web and online services to make these available in Welsh.
15. The 'Welsh Language' **BEL 6020** of £5.259M, together with the 'Welsh Language Commissioner' **BEL 6021** of £3.390M supports the implementation of the Strategy across six strategic areas:
- 1. The family (**12/020**)
 - 2. Children and young people
 - 3. The community (**12/021**)
 - 4. The workplace
 - 5. Welsh-language services (**12/015, 12/018**)
 - 6. Infrastructure (**12/022, 12/023**)
16. The delivery of programme for Government commitment **12/014** and its subsidiary commitments through the implementation of our Welsh language strategy is being delivered within the available portfolio budget. Budget cuts have been implemented during the past two years and therefore implementation of some of the actions has been delayed or will be delivered over a longer period. Priority has been given to areas where the greatest outcomes can be achieved.
17. Funding distributed to partners to promote the use of Welsh is managed by the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Division. In line with the commitment made in the recent policy statement, *A living language: a language for living – Bwrw Mlaen*, arrangements are now being made to establish a project board to oversee the implementation of the Strategy and policy statement within Welsh Government. An Evaluation Framework for the Strategy has been prepared and specific evaluation projects will be commissioned in due course.
18. Programme for Government commitments **12/015** '*Ensure Welsh public services are accessible to people through the medium of Welsh*' and **12/018** '*Seek to expand the opportunities for people to use Welsh across all public services in Wales*' will be met by the introduction of Welsh language standards.
19. Standards are currently being developed that will allow the Welsh Language Commissioner to impose duties on Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities and National Parks. These standards will place duties on organisations in relation to:
- Service Delivery
 - Policy Making
 - Promotion of Welsh
 - Internal use of Welsh

- Record Keeping

20. These organisations have long standing experience of implementing statutory Welsh language schemes, therefore the majority of the costs involved with complying with standards are likely to be covered by existing budgets associated with complying with Welsh language schemes.
21. As part of the Welsh Language Commissioner's first standards investigation, the Welsh Government held a Regulatory Impact Assessment where the organisations were asked to note the costs of complying with standards, over and above the costs associated with complying with Welsh language schemes.
22. Standards are scheduled to be made by regulations in March 2015. It is therefore likely that the Welsh Language Commissioner will issue compliance notice in mid-2015 and standards will be in force a minimum of 6 months after receiving the compliance notice. The Welsh Government is likely to be required to comply with standards during the 2015/16 financial year.
23. The Welsh Government will not know exactly which standards it will have to comply with until it receives the compliance notice from the Commissioner. The Government's response to the RIA exercise was based on the proposed standards that were subject to the Commissioner's standards investigation.
24. Compared with the current cost of complying with its Welsh Language Scheme, Welsh Government noted no additional cost implications to comply with service delivery, policy making, operational and record keeping standards. A sum of £20,000 was noted as an additional cost for complying with promotion standards.
25. With regard to Programme for Government commitment **12/020** '*Seek innovative ways of ensuring that the Welsh language is passed on through families and that users feel comfortable choosing Welsh*' our current main initiatives in this area are *Twf*, *Tyfu* and *Mae dy Gymraeg di'n Grêt*.

<i>Budget BEL 6020</i>	<i>2014-15 Supplementary Budget £000</i>	<i>2015-16 Draft Budget £000</i>
Twf	655	655
Tyfu	143	143
Mae dy Gymraeg di'n Grêt	49	49

26. *Twf* is our largest initiative within this field and is an established and innovative programme delivered across north and south west Wales to encourage Welsh-speaking parents/carers to speak Welsh to their children. *Tyfu* and *Mae dy Gymraeg di'n Grêt* are our current initiatives which aim to support parents/carers to introduce Welsh to their children and raise parents'/carers' confidence to use Welsh with their children.
27. As we noted in our recent policy statement *Bwrw Mlaen* we believe it is important that families are aware of a single support path which promotes their use of Welsh and the use of Welsh by their children. We are therefore eager to develop

and build upon the present activity into a national programme. This will ensure that all of our initiatives and efforts within this area are aligned together to offer a wide and varied programme that will support families to live in Welsh.

28. With regards to Programme for Government commitment **12/021** '*Work to ensure that community groups feel able to use the Welsh language as a part of their activities and are able to operate bilingually*' we operate a grant scheme to promote the Welsh language. One of the scheme's aims is to support activities that strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community.

<i>Budget BEL 6021</i>	<i>2014-15 Supplementary Budget £000</i>	<i>2015-16 Draft Budget £000</i>
Grants to promote the Welsh language	3,664	3,652
Additional spend under <i>Bwrw Mlaen</i>	400	800
Technology Action Plan	250	250
Total	4,314	4,702

29. *Bwrw Mlaen* includes a commitment to invest an additional £1.2 million over the next two years to build on this activity. This is broken down as £400,000 in 2014-15 and £800,000 in 2015-16.
30. This includes £750,000 for the Mentrau Iaith over two years as well as the establishment of a fund to promote innovation in areas with a high percentage of Welsh speakers and others of strategic importance.
31. The Welsh Language and Technology Action Plan supports Programme for Government commitments **12/022** '*Focus on increasing the use of the Welsh language in the electronic media and will seek to ensure that everyone has a choice to use Welsh wherever possible*' and **12/023** '*Seek to persuade international businesses providing web and online services to make these available in Welsh*'.
32. The budget of the Technology Action Plan is £250,000 per annum over the three financial years from 2013-2016. The available budget has been sufficient to make a difference in addressing market failure with regards to technology in the Welsh language.
33. All grants are monitored in line with the Grants Centre of Excellence guidelines against outcome based targets.

Welsh-medium Education Strategy

34. The information on the budget supporting this strategy is at paragraph 8. The targets and objectives of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy support the delivery of the Programme for Government commitments, specifically to '*Deliver the Welsh-medium Education Strategy*' and to '*seek to increase the number of people speaking & using Welsh in our education system*'. (**12/016, 12/017, 3/022, 3/023 and 3/024**)

35. As indicated previously the Welsh language is a cross cutting theme and as such in addition to this budget allocation, other departments support the development of Welsh within the education system. Although not easily quantified the total monetary support for the Welsh language in education is significantly higher.
36. Expenditure is planned in line with those activities included in the Strategy's Implementation Programme, which include;
- the planning of Welsh-medium education;
 - the delivery of practitioner training through the Sabbaticals Scheme and the Welsh in Education Grant;
 - the delivery of Welsh-language training through Welsh for Adults and Welsh second language;
 - commissioning of teaching and learning resource; and
 - research, evaluation and marketing in respect of the Strategy.
37. The programme for Government commitments are being delivered within the available portfolio budget.
38. The Strategy contains fixed five-year and indicative ten-year targets based on outcomes, which will be used to monitor progress in implementing the Strategy. A three-year evaluation of the Strategy commenced in October 2012. The evaluation will feed into a comprehensive review of the Strategy, which will be undertaken after the initial five-year period in 2015.
39. There is also a commitment in the Welsh-medium Education Strategy to monitor progress made against the targets contained in the Strategy and to publish an Annual Report. The fourth Welsh-medium Education Strategy annual report was published on 17 July 2014¹.

Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care - More than just words

40. The Welsh Language Unit in DHSS has a small programme budget to support the development of Welsh language provision in health and social services and the implementation of *More than just words*. This strategy supports the delivery of the Programme for Government commitment **4/104 (2012)** '*Develop and implement a new Welsh Language Strategy for the NHS to consolidate and accelerate progress to ensure patients have better access to services in their first language*'
41. It is not possible to be specific about any other spend by DHSS on the Welsh language as this would be mainstreamed as part of the general spend on health and social services.
42. These commitments should be affordable within the available portfolio budget as there are no substantial additional costs associated with the implementation of *More than just words*. A lot can be achieved by attitude and the wish to improve

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/wmesreport/?lang=en>

and by ensuring that Welsh language provision is considered at the outset of planning / developing services rather than as an afterthought.

43. There is an implementation manager in post and an implementation group monitoring delivery progress on *More than just words* and reporting to the Welsh Language in Health and Social Services Task Group. As stated above much of *More than just words* can be achieved without substantial additional costs. However if there were any relevant issues associated with value for money, these would be considered by the implementation group.

Housing strategy

44. **12/019** *'Continue to deliver funding for new affordable homes in Wales as this is a vital contribution to sustainable communities that can support the future of the Welsh language'*.
45. The Social Housing Grant (SHG) is the main capital grant provided by Welsh Government for the provision of affordable housing. It is primarily used to fund housing schemes to meet local housing need and priorities. Local Authorities are responsible for choosing the schemes that are taken forward and also their housing association partners, who are then paid SHG to develop, own and manage the affordable housing.
46. The budget for SHG is £57.5 million and in addition to this the new Housing Finance Grant will provide over 1000 affordable homes across Wales by the end of 2015/16. The £4 million a year funding will be equivalent to £60 million upfront capital investment and will lever in at least an additional £60 million from the Housing association sector.
47. Rural Housing Enabler projects (RHE) were first successfully piloted 10 years ago and they have been operating in different part of rural Wales since. They work closely with rural communities to identify local housing need and work with planning and housing authorities and housing associations to deliver housing in rural areas. Locally, projects are funded by local authorities, housing associations and national parks. Welsh Government provides approximately 30% of each projects revenue funding.
48. Whilst these capital programmes are not solely related to the Welsh language they support the delivery of much needed affordable housing across Wales including Welsh speaking areas and indeed support the language by making Housing provision available for local, Welsh speaking households.
49. This Programme for Government commitment is being delivered within the available portfolio budgets.
50. The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Unit will work with the Local Government and Communities department to ensure that when the programme is evaluated the Welsh language element is considered.

Key policies

How Draft Budget allocations relate to the delivery of the A Living Language: A Language for Living strategy

51. Paragraphs 13-33 under Programme for Government Commitments provide this information.

The impact of Y Gynhadledd Fawr and the Welsh Government's subsequent response

52. In August 2014, the First Minister published the Welsh Government's response to Y Gynhadledd Fawr, through a policy statement – *A living language: language for living – Bwrw Mlaen*. This policy statement clearly sets the Welsh Government's agenda in relation to the Welsh language over the next three years.

53. The emphasis in *Bwrw Mlaen* is on action and delivery to support and strengthen position of the Welsh language. The documents identifies four strategic themes:

- The need to strengthen the links between the economy and the Welsh language.
- The need for better strategic planning for the Welsh language.
- The use of Welsh in the community.
- The challenge of changing linguistic behaviour.

54. Each theme contains a series of actions, which include:

- the introduction of an investment fund of £1.25 million for 2014-15 that will be specifically targeted to support the development of centres and/or learning spaces which promote the use of Welsh or immersion in Welsh through a competition that will generate new ideas and energy
- the development of a series of campaigns aimed at changing linguistic behaviour that will utilise social marketing expertise, beginning with the 'Pethau Bychain' campaign
- a website which will promote and advertise opportunities to learn, use and enjoy the Welsh language as part of everyday life across Wales
- new funds of £400,000 from the Economy, Science and Technology portfolio to support the link between the Welsh language and the economy
- re-prioritisation of funds within DfES which resulted in an additional £1.2m being available over two years (£400,000 in 2014-15 and £800,000 in 2015-16) to support the use of Welsh in the community (achieved through redirection of funding from Welsh for Adults budget as announced in July 2014).

Funding allocations for the Welsh Language Commissioner and the basis on which these have been decided

55. Funding for the Welsh Language Commissioner

Budget 2014-15	Proposed Budget reduction	Budget 2015-16	% Reduction
£'000	£'000	£'000	
3,690	(300)	3,390	(8)

56. To aid transparency a separate Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) was set up in 2014-15 with the transfer due to be actioned in the second supplementary budget.
57. While we remain committed to the Welsh language we cannot shield all services from the effect of the UK Government's cuts and the implications of prioritising spend. As a result, an assessment of the overall budget had to be undertaken to establish where reductions could be found, where the least impact from any cuts would be felt. As part of the review, it was decided to cut the Welsh Language Commissioner's budget for 2015-16 by £300,000, which equates to approximately 8%.
58. In order to safeguard the commitments made in *Bwrw Mlaen* it is not appropriate to cut funding to our delivery partners who work to promote the use of the Welsh language in communities across Wales. Consideration has therefore had to be given to cutting expenditure in other areas.
59. Whilst funding for the Welsh Language Commissioner is being reduced, the Welsh Government wishes to safeguard the Commissioner's regulatory role and has identified areas of work where there is potential for duplication between the work undertaken by the Welsh Government and the Commissioner.
60. At the time of writing Welsh Government officials are working with the Commissioner to identify ways of joint working and working differently in areas such as promoting the Welsh language with the private and third sectors in order to maximise the resources and expertise available.

How Draft Budget allocations have been influenced by the expected impact of regulations making Welsh language standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011;

61. A Regulatory Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the Standards Investigation stage. However, this was based on the proposed standards and therefore, we will not be able to finalise expected impacts until the regulations are made and the final set of standards are placed on Welsh Government.

How Draft Budget allocations relate to the delivery of the Welsh Medium Education Strategy, including information on how this links with targets, outcomes achieved to date and intended outcomes.

62. The information on the budget supporting this strategy is at paragraph 8. Although the new budget plans show an increase in the Welsh in Education BEL as described in paragraph 10, on a like for like basis, the relevant budgets in support of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy have decreased by £600k between 2014-15 and 2015-16.
63. The main effects will be:
- Welsh in Education Grant – The effect of budget reduction in 2015-16 will lead to a reduction in the support available to schools from local authorities to support Welsh language and Welsh second language teaching.

- The commissioning of Welsh-medium teaching resources – The number of teaching resources commissioned will be reduced; this will be managed due to the time it takes to commission and produce resources and recent delays in the tendering and commissioning process.
- Less marketing activity undertaken – Some impact but not significant.
- Planning and mainstreaming - there will be a small impact on the budget available to implement the Welsh-medium Education Strategy,

64. The **Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol** provides independent oversight, management and development of Welsh medium higher education across Wales. The Welsh Government provides funding via the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCW) to support the work of the Coleg, including the provision of Welsh medium scholarships to incentivise higher education study through the medium of Welsh. A budget allocation of £8,600,000 (**BEL 4561** For our Future – CCC and UHOVI) has been provided within HEFCW's provision allocation to support the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol in 2015-16, with an additional £330,000 allocated to support Welsh Medium Scholarships.

65. HEFCW was remitted in 2013-14 to 'undertake an evaluation of the outcome of the Coleg's activities, including a review of the funding provided to the Coleg and to supply my officials with the details of the review by September 2013 and a final report by September 2014. That review is underway, conducted by consultants Oldbell3, and will report to the Minister by the end of September 2014. The Welsh Government will consider the findings before finalising the funding envelope for 2015-16 and beyond.

Details of the costs and/or any work being undertaken to assess the cost of delivering these policies;

66. As mentioned in paragraph 17, in line with the commitment made in the recent policy statement, *A living language: a language for living – Bwrw Mlaen*, arrangements are now being made to establish a project board to oversee the implementation of the Strategy and policy statement within Welsh Government. An Evaluation Framework for the Strategy has been prepared and specific evaluation projects will be commissioned in due course.

Information relating to how the delivery of the policy, and its associated outcomes, will be monitored and evaluated to demonstrate value for money.

67. This information can also be found at paragraph 17.

Welsh language impact assessments

68. Many important steps have been taken in the preparation of the draft budget this year to ensure that the Welsh language is appropriately considered.

69. We are building on last year's impact assessment of the budget and prepared a fully integrated impact assessment for 2015-16, which includes the Welsh language across the portfolio areas.

70. The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the Draft Budget 2015-16 was published as a stand alone document alongside the Draft Budget on 30 September 2014.

71. This integrated approach has a key benefit of considering the impacts of spending decisions on all of the protected groups as well as different issues. Doing so in an inclusive way helps us understand the relationships between these key areas.
72. This is the first time we have produced an integrated report considering children's rights, equality, tackling poverty and socio-economic disadvantage and Welsh language taking a sustainable development approach. These issues do not stand alone - they support and complement each other. For example, a more equal Wales is one of our well-being goals for Wales. We want a society which enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.
73. The IIA is a more focused document setting out the most significant changes to budgets while also highlighting the reasons for protecting certain budgets.
74. All Departments were issued guidance on assessing the impact on the Welsh language when preparing their draft budgets this year. The impact assessment report on the budget demonstrates the most significant changes by Spending Programme Area (SPA) level.
75. The impact assessment report published along side the draft budget includes numerous examples of impact assessments on the Welsh language.
76. We have recently announced funding over 3 years of £4.324M to **CWLWM** (a consortium of 5 leading childcare organisations in Wales) whose objectives include identifying gaps in Childcare and Play provision across Wales and finding solutions to those gaps including innovative solutions around Welsh language provision
77. **Flying Start** is a key tackling poverty programme, aimed at improving the outcomes of children and families living in low income households (2015-16 - £76.984M revenue and £6.950 capital, Communities and Tackling Poverty Main Expenditure Programme (MEG)). The Flying Start Delivery Plans, completed by all local authorities to access the grant, requires the Local Authority to provide details of the Welsh Language childcare provision and how it is offered to parents. The aim to increase the number of children accessing Flying Start to 36,000 by 2016 has resulted in an increase in demand for Welsh speakers, particularly childcare workers, as the local authorities are required to respond to parental preference providing childcare places through the medium of Welsh as well as English. The expansion of Flying Start also requires an increase in a number of roles including parenting support workers, health visitors and speech and language therapists. These posts reflect the linguistic demands of the local authority. In addition, all Flying Start promotional materials are produced bilingually.

Culture & Sport MEG	Budget 2014- 15 £'000	Proposed Budget reduction £'000	Budget 2015- 16 £'000	% Reduction
Total	117,439	(4,021)	113,418	(3.4)

78. The total revenue budget for **Culture & Sport** has been reduced by 3.4% compared to 2014-15. Very difficult decisions have therefore had to be made to find the required budget reductions. In making budget decisions, we have been very conscious of the impact of the decisions in terms of the Welsh language. Many of the organisations sustain jobs in areas with a high proportion of Welsh speakers— for instance the National Library in Aberystwyth; the National Museums sites at Drefach, Velindre and at Llanberis; The Royal Commission and the Welsh Books Council in Aberystwyth, and the National Botanic Garden of Wales in Carmarthenshire and the three National Park Authorities. It has therefore been a question of weighing up the impact which budget reductions would have on these bodies, the functions they deliver, and with a particular emphasis on jobs and the impact which this would have on rural communities in areas where the Welsh language is strong. But due to the nature of the budgets and the fact that there are major pressures across the funded bodies, it has been necessary to reduce budgets – by varying degrees – in order to achieve the necessary overall budget reduction of 3.4%.

Preventative Spending

79. £654,500 has been provisionally allocated for funding the Twf project for 2015-16. The Twf project is the Welsh Government's main intervention in the field of language transmission in the family, considered by experts as one of the two most important areas of language planning – the other being education. As noted in our Welsh language strategy *A living language: a language for living*, the Welsh Government wishes to see more families where Welsh is the main language used with the children by at least one adult family member in regular contact with them. Twf is an innovative and extensive project aimed at encouraging Welsh speaking parents/carers to speak Welsh with their children. It has a network of field officers located throughout Wales conveying to parents, prospective parents and the general public the advantages of introducing the language from birth, and raising their children bilingually.

80. The Welsh Government, by investing in initiatives to target families from pregnancy and birth, ensures that key messages about children's ability to absorb more than one language. Research shows that the critical periods for development of the neural pathways for language in babies' brains are thought to be birth to six months old for vocabulary, and six to 12 months for language capacity and speech. By concentrating our initiatives during this period we ensure that children are given the best possible start and that two languages are introduced from birth, thus avoiding the need for additional efforts, resources and costs in learning the language at a later stage in life.

81. Other good examples are the *Tyfu* and *Mae dy Gymraeg di'n Grêt* projects as detailed in paragraph 25-27.

Provision for Legislation

82. The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Scheme requires that we take advantage of every opportunity to ensure that new primary and secondary legislation will support the use of Welsh and be consistent with the following principles, that they:

- Be compatible with the bilingual nature of Wales.
- Support and facilitate the use of Welsh and, whenever possible, help the public in Wales to use Welsh as part of their day to-day lives.
- Respect the principle that public services in Wales should treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality.
- Help preserve traditional Welsh-speaking communities.

83. Section 144(2) of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 states that Part 2 of the Welsh Language Act 1993 (dealing with schemes) will cease to apply to a person if and when that person first becomes subject to the duty under section 25(1) of the Measure to comply with a standard. On this basis the current Welsh Language Schemes would continue until standards are imposed by the Commissioner.

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014:

84. The Act is not being implemented until April 2016, thus there will be no impact on the Welsh Language or on related budgets in the 2015-16 financial year.

85. The Welsh language assessment reveals that no negative impact on the language is likely and that as the Bill is designed to create a fairer and more equitable system for all people eligible for care and support, opportunities to increase the use of the Welsh language in service provision exist. All people and organisations involved in the delivery of social services and social care must have regard to the right of people to communicate in Welsh and will be required to comply with any future Welsh language standards.

86. In preparing this Bill, the Welsh Government's Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care: *More than just Words* has been considered and as a result a Ministerial commitment has been given that the Welsh language will be included within the regulations and Guidance which underpin this Bill, for example, in relation to the new assessment and commissioning arrangements for social services and social care.

87. Regarding the preparation of local Welsh in Care and Support and Well-being Plans, the Bill includes an important statutory principle which is that any person exercising functions under the Bill must have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the individual, including language.

88. *More than just words* states that language is a need, and in specifying the detail of what is required in an assessment; the requirements in relation to the identification of language need will be specified in Regulations.

The Planning (Wales) Bill

89. The purpose of this legislation is to deliver a modernised planning system by making changes to the delivery of planning services, the preparation of development plans and planning procedures. The Bill will not contain planning policy. This will continue to be set out in Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Notes.
90. The Bill may indirectly have a positive impact on the Welsh language by enabling development that will provide the jobs and growth required to support the use of the Welsh language within our existing communities.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill;

91. The purpose of this legislation is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account.
92. The Bill provides for a significant link to the Welsh Government's Welsh language strategy, *laith Fyw: laith Byw*, in particular in relation to increasing awareness of the value of the language and strengthening the position of the Welsh language in the community.
93. The Bill will set ambitious, long term well-being goals to reflect the Wales we want to see in the future. This will put a thriving Welsh language at the heart of defining a sustainable Wales. It will be an important milestone for the language, underlining its official status, and it will help ensure that Welsh is clearly part of the agenda for Wales' long-term future.
94. The Bill, by setting a thriving Welsh Language as one of the six well-being goals for named public service organisations, is intended to ensure that the long-term future of the language is central to objectives set by the Welsh Government and other public bodies.

Regulations introduced under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

95. A key part of implementing the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 is developing standards that will allow the Welsh Language Commissioner to impose duties on organisations. The current timetable indicates that there will be a vote to approve regulations for the first set of standards during National Assembly Plenary during March 2015. The first set will apply to Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities and National Parks.
96. The proposed standards have been drafted bearing in mind the following key principles, which reflect the commitments given to the National Assembly for Wales during its scrutiny of the draft Measure:
- to see clear rights established for Welsh speakers, with regard to Welsh language services;
 - to ensure that the standards are as clear as possible about what organisations will need to do on a practical level to ensure they comply, so that the public can be as clear as possible about what to expect with regard to Welsh language services;
 - to ensure more consistency between organisations, especially within the same sectors, with regard to the provision of Welsh language services;

- to ensure that any duties imposed on organisations in accordance with Welsh language standards are reasonable and proportionate;
- to reduce the administrative burden on organisations which are required to deliver Welsh language services, so that they can focus on improving the delivery of those services;
- to ensure effective enforcement of standards;
- to enable the preparation of a Regulatory Impact Assessment to accompany the regulations specifying the standards.

97. This new standards regime will be introduced gradually, replacing Welsh Language Schemes sector by sector according to a prioritising system set by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

98. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 provides for the establishment of a Welsh Language Tribunal that will hear appeals against the Welsh Language Commissioner's decisions in relation to Welsh language standards. It will be the first tribunal to be established under National Assembly for Wales' legislation.

99. On 17 July 2014, the First Minister appointed Keith Bush QC as the first President of the Welsh Language Tribunal. The appointment was made in line with the Welsh Language Tribunal (Appointment) Regulations 2013, which set out the requirements for appointing the President and other members of the Tribunal. The legally qualified members and lay members will be appointed in early 2015. The Tribunal will be established by the end of March 2015 to coincide with the Welsh Language Standards' timetable.

Housing (Wales) Bill

100. The Housing (Wales) Bill ("the Bill") is a coherent set of proposals that will contribute to the Welsh Government's three strategic priorities for housing: more homes, better homes, and better services. In broad terms, it will help to ensure that people have access to a decent, affordable home and that people at risk of becoming homeless receive the help they need. Discretionary powers for Council Tax on empty homes may result in more affordable housing being available in rural, Welsh speaking communities, which could help to sustain and enhance those communities and the use of the Welsh language.

Information on the impact on the Welsh language of any UK legislation

101. UK legislation can sometimes have an impact on the Welsh language, particularly in the context of non-devolved areas of policy.

102. An example of recent UK legislation that could potentially have an impact for the use of the Welsh language in Wales and result in an unexpected cost for the Welsh budget to bear was the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill. The First Minister noted that one of the provisions – to do with reducing the amount of money that could be spent by third parties on non-party campaigning in relation to elections – could have an adverse impact in Wales where election material might need to be produced bilingually, and the translation costs would mean that less material could be produced in Wales compared to other parts of the UK. The First Minister wrote to the UK Government about this, after discussing with the Welsh

Language Commissioner, and consequently an amendment was agreed to exclude the additional costs associated with publishing election material both in English and Welsh when calculating the amount that can be spent on campaigning literature.

**Rt Hon. Carwyn Jones AM,
First Minister of Wales**