

**TO DDO
DYFO**

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Llais i'r Iaith

William Powell AM

Petitions Committee Chair

Tŷ Hywel

Cardiff Bay

Cardiff

CF99 1NA

3 December 2014

Dear Mr Powell

Petition: P-04-541 Support for the Mentrau Iaith (Language Initiatives)

I would like to thank you and the Committee for giving detailed consideration to our petition to support the work of the Mentrau Iaith, and to try to ensure that they receive adequate funding that corresponds to the demands of language planning in the context of restoring the Welsh language.

I attach a letter from Mentrau Iaith Cymru, noting the progress made in discussions over the last few months.

We happily accept the First Minister's view that Mentrau Iaith play a key linguistic role, and we appreciate his offer to meet with us to discuss this further.

I will contact the First Minister to arrange a meeting to continue the discussion at ministerial level.

Many thanks again, I look forward to hearing the outcome of your Committee's discussions on the petition.

Yours sincerely,



Heini Gruffudd

Chair

Dyfodol i'r Iaith

Mr William Powell, Petitions Committee Chair, National Assembly for Wales

Dear Mr Powell,

We write in response to recent correspondence between the Petitions Committee and the First Minister, namely the letter dated 17 November 2014.

We would like to start by responding to the proposal in the First Minister's letter on commissioning an independent review of Mentrau laith structures as part of the funding package for 2014–15. There was a unanimous decision to reject this proposal for the network of Mentrau laith by the Executive Committee of Mentrau laith Cymru in the Mentrau laith Cymru national meeting in July 2014 for two main reasons. First, the proposal did not include conducting an independent assessment of the resources required by Mentrau to develop and implement their full potential; instead, it focused specifically on the structures, which was within the scope of the review carried out in 2012. Secondly, the Welsh Government provided an estimated cost of £150,000 for the work, which would be deducted from the additional funding for the Mentrau (total of £750,000) announced in June 2014.

Because of the above points, the Mentrau decided not to accept the proposal, as it did not respond to our real needs, and more seriously, it would mean less resource for the Mentrau, for their crucial work in supporting and promoting the Welsh language in their communities.

As the First Minister mentions in his letter, we are currently discussing the funding package for the additional resources with Welsh Government officials and we will continue to discuss and work together to ensure the best use of those resources.

We also welcome the First Minister's comments about the role of Mentrau as an

integral part of the communities they serve. We agree entirely that there is a need to strengthen the role and influence of the Mentrau as language planning in Wales develops. To this end, the additional funding of £750,000 over two years represents additional investment to be welcomed as a *first step* in the process of strengthening and developing our work. Further resources are needed in the long term, along with long-term financial security, for the Mentrau to develop and grow to meet the challenges that the Welsh language will face, and to prepare them to play a full role in the field of language planning in Wales, as the First Minister has mentioned. In our original response to the review of the work of the Mentrau Iaith, we called for additional investment of £3.1 million over three years. We still strongly believe that this resource is needed in order to develop Mentrau with sufficient influence to act for the Welsh language and Welsh speakers in all parts of Wales, with the ability to work with the Welsh Government to achieve the goal of seeing the Welsh language thrive and achieve the aims of the Welsh language strategy.

Mentrau Iaith Cymru will be discussing the issues that have arisen as a result of the petition by Dyfodol i'r Iaith directly with the First Minister and the Welsh Government from now on, as we are in discussions with them already.

We would like to thank the Petitions Committee and Dyfodol i'r Iaith for their work in submitting the petition and the correspondence that has followed. We sincerely hope to work with you again in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Meirion Ll Davies

On behalf of Mentrau Iaith Cymru's Executive Committee

