

Paper for the Welsh Language Evidence Session - Communities, Equality & Local Government Committee

In a letter from the Committee Chair on 2 July inviting me to a Committee meeting in the autumn to discuss my responsibilities with regards to the Welsh Language, I was asked to provide a paper beforehand on the following issues:

- the Welsh Language Commissioner's Annual Report for 2014-15
- an update on what has been achieved so far in the first year of the Bwrw Mlaen strategy
- an update on the implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, including the introduction of standards
- details of how the Welsh Government intends to take forward issues around the Welsh language in implementing the Donaldson review.

These issues are discussed below in turn.

Welsh Language Commissioner's Annual Report 2014-15

I note the content of the Welsh Language Commissioner's latest annual report. This was a very important year for the Commissioner as the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015 were passed by the Assembly. This means that the Commissioner can now carry out her regulatory and enforcement duties in respect of the Welsh Ministers, local authorities and National Park authorities. The action taken by her via statutory powers in response to complaints by the public shows how important her role is in ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English.

I also note the Commissioner's achievements with regards to promoting Welsh amongst businesses and the third sector and maintaining an overview of other essential areas such as the translation profession, lexicography and language standardisation.

The first year of *Bwrw Mlaen*

For further details on what has been achieved since publishing the Bwrw Mlaen policy statement in August 2014, see the Annex at the end of this document.

The main achievements include:

Chapter 1 - The Welsh Language and the Economy

- Business Wales has been a first point of contact for businesses, and has started to invest the £400,000 earmarked for the economy.
- Research has been done into the use by business of Welsh-language channels in order to increase our marketing and communication

activities and improve awareness of Welsh-language services. This included a series of Welsh: The Business Brand events.

- We have held a series of workshops in the Teifi Valley Growth Zone to discuss the role of Welsh in business.
- We have had discussions with a number of national and international organisations on developing digital content and software.
- The 'Cymraeg – Byw Dysgu Mwynhau' (Live, Learn, Enjoy) website has been launched as a one stop shop to facilitate and encourage people to use Welsh.

Chapter 2 - Better strategic planning for the Welsh language

- Over £2.25 million of capital funding has been invested to develop 10 Welsh Learning Centres and Spaces.
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 includes 'a thriving Welsh language' as one of the seven national well-being goals.
- The Minister for Education and Skills has approved all local authority revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.
- On 17 July, the Minister for Education and Skills published the Welsh Medium Education Strategy annual report on the progress made during 2014-15.
- The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 received royal assent on 6 July, which requires local authorities to consider the effect of local development plans on the use of Welsh.
- The Welsh Government has continued to mainstream the Welsh language ensuring that the Welsh language is a central consideration when developing new policies and reviewing existing policies, in order to prepare for the implementation of the standards.
- We have provided advice and guidance to councils to help them promote Welsh e.g. we have helped Powys County Council to establish a Welsh Language working group.

Chapter 3 – The use of Welsh in the community

- We announced an additional investment worth £1.2 million over two years. This included £750,000 to develop the work of the Mentrau Iaith and to strengthen their national structures and train their staff.
- Additional funding was also allocated to Mentrau Iaith Cymru to enable them to support the network of Mentrau Iaith.

- The Welsh Government allocated a total of £3.61 million to 34 organisations through the Welsh Language Promotion grant scheme in order to encourage Welsh-language activities in the community. Almost £300,000 of additional funding was allocated through the Bwrw Mlaen fund to encourage innovation.
- Funding has been given to various organisations such as the Mentrau Iaith, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the National Eisteddfod, and Young Farmers' Clubs in order to provide a variety of activities for **children and young people** in the community.
- Trywydd has been trialling training for youth workers, and has developed a toolkit.
- During this year's National Eisteddfod we announced that we are allocating £220,000 to expand the Welsh Language Charter across north Wales schools during 2015-16.
- During 2014-15, we implemented the main recommendation of the Welsh for Adults Review Group, which was to establish a National Entity to strategically develop work in this field on a national level. On 12 May 2015, it was announced that the Entity would be established in the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.
- Following the publication of Professor Donaldson's report on the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, we will be changing the regime for the teaching and learning of Welsh in English-medium schools in consultation with the education sector. See below for more details on the next steps.

Chapter 4 – Changing linguistic behaviour

- The **Y Llais** brand has been launched to reinforce the message that there are opportunities to use the language in every aspect of our lives.
- The **Pethau Bychain** behaviour change campaign has been launched which concentrates on presenting the Welsh language as a series of small, achievable activities.
- The new website **Cymraeg –Live Learn Enjoy** was launched in March 2015.

The Welsh Language Measure

In readiness for the implementation of the new standards regime, the work of establishing the Welsh Language Tribunal has been completed. Keith Bush QC has been appointed as President, and a further 4 members have been appointed as Tribunal members: Nicola Jones (Legal member); Isata Kanneh

(Lay member); Sara Peacock (Lay member); and Sara Williams (Lay member).

The Measure also makes provision to provide for an Advisory Panel for the Welsh Language Commissioner. Three new members have been appointed to the panel and will serve a three year period from 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2018. The new members are Nick Speed, Heledd Iago and Meinir Davies.

Welsh Language Standards

Welsh Ministers are responsible for preparing the Regulations to make Welsh language standards specifically applicable to organisations. Standards are prepared to:

- improve the services Welsh-speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh
- increase the use people make of Welsh-language services
- make it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language
- ensure that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.

In accordance with the Welsh Language Measure, standards fall into the following categories:

- **Service-delivery standards** will be imposed in relation to the delivery of services in order to promote or facilitate the use of the Welsh language, or to ensure that it is treated no less favourably than English.
- **Policy-making standards** will require organisations to consider what effect (including how it will have positive effects and not have adverse effects) their policy decisions will have on the ability of persons to use the language and on the principle of treating Welsh no less favourably than English.
- **Operational standards** deal with the internal use of Welsh by organisations.
- **Promotion standards** will require organisations to adopt a strategy setting out how it proposes to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh more widely.
- **Record-keeping standards** will make it necessary to keep records about some of the other standards, and about any complaints received by an organisation. These records will assist the Commissioner in regulating the organisation's compliance with standards.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015 were approved by the National Assembly for Wales on 24 March 2015 and came into force on 31 March 2015. These Regulations allows the Commissioner to impose standards on Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities and National Park Authorities.

The Commissioner has commenced the process of imposing standards on these organisations. She has consulted with them on draft compliance notices, and has advised that she plans to issue final compliance notices in

September 2015. Organisations will have to comply with standards from a date set by the Commissioner in the compliance notice, but a minimum of 6 months must pass between receiving the notice and having to comply.

The Commissioner concluded her second standards investigation on 6 February 2015, and presented the conclusions to Welsh Ministers in May 2015. The second standards investigation encompassed 119 organisations from a variety of sectors. It included organisations that provide services in the fields of health, education, emergency services, visitor attractions, Welsh Tribunals, and broadcasting. In accordance with the Welsh Language Measure, I am currently in the process of giving due regard to the Commissioner's conclusions. I will issue a full response to her investigation in the autumn 2015. This will include a timetable for preparing Regulations to make standards specifically applicable to the organisations in the second investigation.

The Commissioner's third standards investigation concluded on 18 August 2015, and included 64 organisations. The organisations were some Government Departments, providers of social housing, water companies, and the Royal Mail and Post Office. I am expecting to receive the Commissioner's conclusion in relation to this investigation in October 2015.

Implementing the Donaldson review.

In March 2014, the Minister for Education and Skills appointed Professor Graham Donaldson to undertake a comprehensive review of curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales. Professor Donaldson's report, 'Successful Futures', was published by Welsh Government on 25 February 2015. On 30 June, the Minister for Education and Skills accepted all of the recommendations in the report.

Professor Donaldson identified 4 key purposes for the curriculum that set the foundations for our children and young people to be:

- ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives;
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work;
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world; and
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Welsh language

In undertaking his independent review, Professor Donaldson considered the reports of a number of independent reviews commissioned by Welsh Government, this included the Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4, chaired by Professor Sioned Davies. Professor Donaldson's conclusions are reflected in his report, which include recommendations on the place of Welsh Language in the curriculum. Professor Donaldson suggests

that there is a need to improve the relevance and quality of teaching and learning of Welsh language in English-medium schools, he proposes a greater focus on children and young people's ability to communicate confidently in everyday setting in Welsh language, with an emphasis on its increasing role in workplace settings.

One of the six key principles in our education improvement plan for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales, 'Qualified for Life', outlines our commitment to building "Confidence and pride in Wales as a bilingual nation with the strength and assurance to nurture both languages". Welsh Government policy is for the Welsh language to have a firm place in the curriculum in all schools for children and young people from 3 to 16.

There are no plans to change this position. However, there is a need to address a range of significant challenges in the teaching and learning of Welsh as a second language both in primary and secondary schools in Wales. I welcome Professor Donaldson's recommendations in this regard.

Pioneer Schools

As part of an all-Wales partnership, schools and practitioners, as well as other key stakeholders, will be at the forefront of the design and development of our new curriculum. The Minister for Education and Skills invited our regional education consortia to work with their schools across Wales – primary, secondary, special – to apply to be Pioneer Schools. Pioneer Schools, will help to shape the details of the new inclusive curriculum.

Pioneer Schools represent a critically important and a very exciting opportunity to be part of a team that will play a key role in ensuring better learning and higher standards for all of our children and young people and ultimately for Wales itself.

Timeline

The Department for Education and Skills is currently developing a plan which will set-out how Professor's Donaldson's recommendations will be taken forward. This will be published in the autumn.

ANNEX: An update on what has been achieved so far in the first year of the *Bwrw Mlaen* strategy

Chapter 1 – The Welsh language and the Economy

Business Wales has been a first point of contact for businesses, providing information, advice and support through various channels. We have also started investing the £400,000 earmarked for the economy in *Bwrw Mlaen* on specific projects which has led to more activity in Welsh through our business channels. We have also taken advantage of international events such as the NATO Summit and UK Investment Summit Wales, as well as Cardiff Airport as a gateway to the rest of Wales, to market the Welsh language as the language of business.

We have conducted **initial research** to explore why businesses do not utilise the Welsh language channels currently available, and what mechanisms might encourage greater take up, and have increased our **marketing and communication** activity to increase awareness of existing Welsh language services and best practice. This included campaigns in Golwg, the Papurau Bro, national radio, and S4C weather reports, and has resulted in increased activity and take-up of Business Wales services in Welsh.

We have also held a series of **Cymraeg: The Business Brand** events in Cardiff, Caernarfon, Aberystwyth and Llanelli, and Welsh language division officials worked closely with Economy and Tourism officials to mainstream the Welsh language across Government services.

Officials also continued to have an overview of the Anglesey Energy Island programme. As well as working across Welsh Government departments and with Anglesey and Gwynedd County Councils, we are also members of Horizon work boards, which consider the linguistic impact of the development, as well as the Skills and Employment Group.

And in relation to the **Teifi Valley Growth Zone**, following the Task and Finish Group report, over the summer and autumn we are conducting a series of workshops in the area to discuss the role of Welsh in Business and how to strengthen the business brand. The results of these workshops will help set the future direction of projects in the field, including identifying current gaps in provision and research.

We have taken steps to promote the **value of Welsh as a skill in the workplace** as a result of the 'Welsh language skills needs in eight sectors' report published in April 2014, and are working to create a link between Welsh and the workplace. This research has provided evidence to enable skills development programmes and projects to target those sectors and areas where there is the greatest demand for Welsh skills.

Regional Skills Partners have used the results of the survey in their local skills strategies, and this will be developed further during the coming year and will inform future skills programmes and policies.

In the case of **digital content and software**, we have held discussions with a number of organisations to facilitate the work of developing new resources. These vary from universities to high profile individuals and companies in the field e.g. Nuance and Twitter.

This year our Translation Service launched a new website, **BydTermCymru**, which includes open access downloads of specialist translation memories on the Meta-Net pan-European platform. Furthermore, Welsh interfaces were commissioned for international Apple apps such as PlaneFinder, Steppy II and Alto's Adventure.

And in the 2014-15 round of the Welsh Language Technology and Digital Media Fund, grants were awarded to ten new projects, including the University of South Wales to convert GATE language technology resources to Welsh, and the Language Technologies Unit at Bangor University to develop its work in the field of speech technology. Also, in line with our commitment to make it easier for community groups and third sector bodies to take advantage of technical resources, grant funding was allocated to Menter Môn's **O Glust i Glust** project to make it easier to conduct meetings in Welsh in the community.

On a practical level, in order to facilitate and encourage people to use Welsh, we have created a new section on the **Cymraeg – Byw Dysgu Mwynhau** website to bring together in one place all our YouTube videos which show how to change popular software interfaces to Welsh. Another section of the website includes a selection of Welsh mobile apps.

We have also commissioned **digital resources in the field of education** (in 2014–15, about 65 per cent were digital or contained digital elements), and continue to work with the BBC and S4C to offer content on digital learning website Hwb.

Chapter 2 – Better strategic planning for the Welsh language

We have used **Capital Investment Funding** of over £2.25 million to develop 10 **Welsh Learning Centres and Spaces**, with the aim of creating dynamic centres in our towns and communities, and to give community-based projects a basis to be self-sufficient. These will promote the use of, and immersion in, the Welsh language, giving local authorities, colleges and universities the opportunity to work with community partners to enable people to learn or practice their Welsh.

As well as the Welsh language standards (see above), *Moving Forward* challenges us to improve strategic planning for the Welsh language, and to ensure that the language is higher up on policy agendas within the Welsh Government and beyond. The Policy-making Standards and Promotion

Standards will play an important role in this respect, and the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** includes ‘a thriving Welsh language’ as one of the seven national well-being goals which underpin forward planning by public bodies. Welsh Language Unit officials have fed into the process of producing guidelines to remind organisations how duties under the Welsh Language Measure contribute to their duties in relation to the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

In the field of **health**, in June *Words into Action* was held – The Welsh in Health and Social Services and Social Care Conference and Awards. The aim of the event was to share good practice in order to strengthen Welsh language services, and to act as a catalyst to achieve the aims of ‘*More than just words*’.

As mental health issues (such as dementia) can affect patients’ ability to use their second language (especially as the condition deteriorates), having a standardised assessment in Welsh is essential for the care of Welsh speaking patients. Recently, the Alzheimer Society’s cognitive assessment toolkit was translated by Bangor University, thereby validating three of the cognitive assessment measures from a linguistic point of view. This is the first ever toolkit to provide a series of cognitive assessments in Welsh.

Since the passing of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the introduction of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013, it is now a statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare **Welsh in Education Strategic Plans**. The 22 plans submitted were considered in detail by the Welsh Ministers. Three plans were approved and the other 19 were approved subject to revisions. All local authorities have also had their Revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plans approved. 5 were approved as submitted and 17 with modifications.

A five year action plan was published with the **Welsh Medium Education Strategy** in April 2010. A three year evaluation of the Strategy is in progress. An interim report was published in November 2014, and it is hoped that the final report is published in autumn 2015. We will then review the Strategy and the targets before setting the direction for the next period of implementation.

The **Planning (Wales) Act 2015** received royal assent on 6 July. The Act contains new powers which require planning authorities to give consideration to the Welsh language as part of their development plans and when considering planning applications.

The Welsh Government’s planning policy states that effects on the use of Welsh should be considered when preparing local development plans, and these implications were formalised in the new Act. It is now necessary for planning authorities to include an assessment of how their planning policies and plans impact on the language when conducting a Sustainability Appraisal. This will ensure that every local development plan, as well as strategic development plans and the new National Development Framework, reflect the

Welsh Government policy of encouraging growth in the use of Welsh. Planning authorities are expected to maintain an evidence base concerning matters relevant to the development plan, and the new act confirms evidence concerning the use of Welsh to be one of those important factors.

The Act provides clarity to local planning authorities that the effect on the use of Welsh can be a material consideration when making development management decisions – i.e. decisions on applications for planning permission. The priority given to the Welsh language has not changed as a result of the Act, however the language is named specifically in order to give planning officials and local councillors assurance and confidence.

In order to continue to **mainstream the Welsh language** across the organisation, we have ensured that the Welsh language is a central consideration in developing new policies and reviewing existing policies, launching a framework for assessing the impact of new Welsh Government policies on the Welsh language. A language awareness e-learning module was also prepared to improve staff awareness of the history, demography, legislation and policies relating to the Welsh language.

On 22 June, a draft **Compliance Notice** was received from the Welsh Language Commissioner, listing the standards she proposes to impose on Welsh Ministers, as well as the date those standards will come into force, under section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. We provided a response to the short consultation that followed, and hope to come to an agreement on the content of the final Compliance Notice in September 2015.

Since the beginning of April 2015, a comprehensive series of engagement sessions has been conducted with staff about the implications of moving to the new standards system. One significant element of the sessions is discussing the organisation's ability to work bilingually, without over-dependence on the Translation Service. Divisional Bilingual Skills Strategies, which consider the need to provide bilingual services in relation to the organisation's Welsh language skills, are revised continuously.

At **local authority** level, we have provided advice and guidance to councils to help them take steps to promote Welsh. For instance, in response to the decline in the number of Welsh speakers in Powys between 2001 and 2011, the Council has committed to establishing a Working Group to consider the current position of the language in the county, and to draw up recommendations on how the Council can reverse the situation. The Council intends to assess its services according to opportunities for people to use Welsh, treating Welsh no less favourably than English, and opportunities to promote Welsh.

The Council received guidance from Welsh Government officials and members of other local authorities before setting up the Working Group and conducting the first meeting in June this year. Officials from the Welsh

language division and the Education Department gave a presentation during that first meeting.

We will continue to work with local authorities to make them aware of the steps we expect them to take in relation to the Welsh language as the process of Local Authority reorganisation continues

Chapter 3 – The use of Welsh in the community

In order to build on the recommendations in Cardiff University's independent review of the work of the Mentrau, the Welsh Language Action Plans and Aman Tawe Welsh Language Promotion Scheme, we announced an additional investment worth £1.2 million over two years. As part of this additional spend, £750,000 was earmarked to develop the work of the **Mentrau Iaith**, including strengthening their national structures to provide a comprehensive training programme to grant partners' staff, as well as resources to market the Welsh language in the community.

Additional funding was also allocated to Mentrau Iaith Cymru to enable them to support the network of Mentrau Iaith. As a result of this additional funding, Mentrau Iaith Cymru were able to appoint two new officers to help the Welsh Government create marketing campaigns to promote the use of Welsh in communities, and develop a comprehensive training programme for Mentrau Iaith staff.

In relation to **Welsh language activities in the community**, the Welsh Government allocated a total of £3.61 million to 34 organisations through the Hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg (Promoting the Welsh Language) grant scheme. Almost £300,000 of additional funding was allocated through the *Moving Forward* fund to encourage innovative projects in areas where there is a high percentage of Welsh speakers, or areas of strategic importance – during 2014-15 sixteen projects were supported with this funding.

Acting on the recommendations of the **National Eisteddfod** report, at the Montgomeryshire and the Marches event held in Meifod this year a number of new elements were further developed and were popular with those attending the festival. These included specific 'village' areas for food and entertainment, folk, crafts and drama. Large, colourful banners were set above each area to denote the different 'villages', with a special Maes B Café image in the shape of a teepee for young people proving very popular as a place to relax and listen to live music. 150,776 attended the event this year.

With Welsh Government support, amongst other developments were the establishment of a new Eisteddfod website, and through Bwrw Mlaen grant funding a group of young people from the area had an opportunity to learn about performing in a band, arranging gigs and filming videos. Looking forward to 2015/16, a part time coordinator has been employed by the Eisteddfod to promote the music scene for young people.

Our main schemes in relation to **families** are Twf and Tyfu gyda'r Gymraeg. Twf is the biggest scheme, and operates across north and south-west Wales in order to encourage parents or carers who speak Welsh to transmit the language to their children. Tyfu gyda'r Gymraeg is our current programme to support parents or carers to transmit Welsh to their children and increase their confidence to use the language with them.

We have continued to fund a range of organisations to provide a variety of activities for **children and young people** in the community. This work included the allocation of grants to organisations such as the Mentrau Iaith, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the National Eisteddfod, and Young Farmers' Clubs. Contracts were also allocated to Community Music Wales, Literature Wales, and Trywydd for the Supporting Language Use Project for children and young people (24 schools took part in the project during 2014-15).

To coincide with this community aspect, Trywydd developed and trialled training for youth workers, and developed a toolkit which will be a useful resource to influence and support young people's use of Welsh.

During this year's National Eisteddfod I announced that we are allocating £220,000 to expand the **Welsh Language Charter** across north Wales during I 2015-16.

The Charter, which has been trialled in Gwynedd, was developed in primary schools as a framework to encourage children to use Welsh in a social context. Under the Charter, each school assesses the use of Welsh amongst its pupils, before developing an action plan which works towards a gold, silver or bronze level. The Charter encourages everyone – from pupils, parents, governors and the wider community – to play a part.

Building on the success of the pilot project in Gwynedd, which has seen an increase in the social use of Welsh amongst young people, the Charter will now be extended to include Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham during the next year. Gwynedd Council will be responsible for doing this, with the aim of developing the Charter into a national programme.

On 12 May this year following a competitive grants process, it was announced that the University of Wales Trinity St David had been successful in their application to be the **National Entity for Welsh for Adults**. The Entity will lead work in this field strategically on a national level going forward, and will also implement the other recommendations of the Welsh for Adults Review Group. Work to implement the other recommendations of the review has included:

- developing new funding arrangements
- developing a new curriculum for future courses
- developing new assessment arrangements to be trialled in September 2015
- implementing a national marketing campaign via social media.

Chapter 4 – changing linguistic behaviour

Raising awareness and encouraging people to use the language in every aspect of their lives is crucial, and we have developed a series of marketing campaigns and brands with the aim of contributing to changing linguistic behaviours.

In August 2014, the **Y Llais** brand was launched to support the Welsh Government and our partners to promote Welsh activities, events and services, and to reinforce the message that there are opportunities to use the language in every aspect of our lives: to live, learn and enjoy.

The **Pethau Bychain** behaviour change campaign was launched in the 2014 National Eisteddfod, which concentrates on presenting the Welsh language as a series of achievable things, and using suggestions from individuals to show their peers that making small changes to include more Welsh in their daily lives is easy.

Campaigns were conducted targeting different audiences, e.g. the Pethau Bychain Competition for young people aged 14-25 years to coincide with skills week (Autumn 2014), and the C'mon Cymru campaign to coincide with the 6 Nations rugby championship and St David's Day.

The new website **Cymraeg – Byw Dysgu Mwynhau (Live, Learn, Enjoy)** was launched in March 2015 (the first of the Welsh Government's sub-sites to use the new domain **.cymru**), which is a portal for all kinds of information about the Welsh language. And as well as the **Cymraeg: The Business Brand** events held to promote the use of **.cymru** amongst businesses, the new domain was also a part of the Cymraeg and @iaithfyw social media plans.

We have also been conducting research in order to improve the effectiveness of our techniques, for example to consider at which point an individual is influenced to change his or her behaviour with regards to the Welsh language, as well as the common aspects which we would like to influence. And a series of workshops and meetings were held with various partners to consider how we can change our behaviour as a government in terms of presenting people with information and reasons for using Welsh.