



Elin Jones AC, Llywydd

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Elin Jones AM, Presiding Officer

National Assembly for Wales

Mike Hedges AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Your ref:
Our ref: PO189/EJ/HP

15 June 2017

Dear Mike

P-04-526 Please make Senedd TV accessible to deaf people

Thank you for your letter with regards to the above petition.

Accuracy and Quality of British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreted Proceedings of First Minister's Questions (FMQs)

As you refer to in your letter of 19 May 2017, there were concerns raised by both deaf members of the public and BSL interpreters regarding the accuracy and quality of the interpretation of plenary proceedings, due to the pace and complexity of subject matter and the technical language used. These constraints have not changed and it remains an immense challenge to provide a live and accurate interpretation; however, we have been working on a number of improvements which I'm happy to update you on.

Following a period of research work we procured and installed a new digital broadcasting archive system. A benefit of the new system is that we can record the BSL interpretation immediately after First Minister's Questions has finished, giving the interpreter time to watch the session and prepare notes. This has improved the accuracy and quality of the broadcast interpreted proceeding and has been warmly welcomed by the interpreters.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

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In September 2014, the interpretation service was reinstated using this new technology, with S4C broadcasting BSL interpretation of First Minister's Questions on their 'Y Dydd yn y Cynulliad' programme. S4C took the decision to bring Y Dydd yn y Cynulliad to an end in April 2016, and the Assembly, recognizing the need for this service, has taken on the responsibility for running it since then.

We currently show signed and subtitled First Minister's Questions on the Assembly's YouTube channel, and the signed version of FMQ on Senedd.tv. A new section dedicated to signed proceedings will be set up on the Senedd Extra section of Senedd.tv in the next few weeks, making it easier for users to find these recordings.

You may also be interested to note that the National Assembly for Wales won the Service Excellence category at the recent Action on Hearing Loss (AHL) Cymru. The awards are organised to recognise success in providing deaf-friendly services to the half a million people in Wales who are deaf or have hearing loss.

The Assembly achieved the AHL Louder than Words accreditation in 2013, retaining it in 2014 and 2015. Also, for the past two years, the Assembly was presented with an Action on Hearing Loss Cymru's Silver Excellence Wales Award.

If we can provide any further information, do let me know.

Yours sincerely

Elin Jones AM, Llywydd