



Ein cyf/Our ref MA/P/EM/0721/18

Bethan Jenkins AM
Chair
Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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6 March 2018

Dear Bethan,

Further to my appearance before the Committee on 18 January for scrutiny on the Welsh language, this letter provides information in response to the action points recorded by the Clerk during the session.

1. Latest evaluation of the outcomes of the Welsh Language Sabbatical Course / How many practitioners return to schools following the course to teach through the medium of Welsh

The most recent evaluation of the Sabbatical Course, under the title *Review of the Welsh-language Sabbatical Scheme for education practitioners*, was published in 2014. This study was based on the views of participants who attended courses during the period January 2011 – December 2012. A total of 324 practitioners completed courses during this period (Higher Level: 115; Foundation Level: 113; Entry Level: 96).

It is important to note that the Higher Level course is the only course designed to enable participants to return to school to increase how much they teach through the medium of Welsh. The Foundation and Entry Level courses are designed for practitioners in English-medium primary schools, with a view of developing their Welsh language skills to enable them to improve their teaching of Welsh as a subject and the use of Welsh across the curriculum.

The following provides an outline of findings in relation to the **higher level** course:

68 Higher Level participants responded to the online survey (out of a total of 115 who had completed the course).

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Participants were asked to note the number of hours of Welsh-medium/bilingual teaching they provided before and after attending the higher level course, with the review providing an outline of the data by sector and by medium, with the following caveat:

...it is important to note that the medium and context of each institution determine to a considerable extent whether there are any opportunities to increase the number of hours of Welsh language provision. The very idea of 'hours' of provision differs between secondary schools compared with primary schools, where often there are no specific blocks of provision. Therefore, quantifying the exact number of hours in the primary sector can be more challenging.

- For teachers in Welsh-medium schools (primary or secondary) there was no expectation that the Sabbatical Scheme should lead to an increase in the number of hours of provision: these teachers already deliver through the medium of Welsh. However, responses to the questionnaire confirmed that the scheme had, in the opinion of the respondents, improved language skills and strengthened teaching methods.
- 18 out of 30 teachers who attended the higher level course and taught in English-medium secondary schools reported that there had been an increase in the number of hours of Welsh provision in their schools since they completed the course. Evidence also suggested that attending the course led to a wider use of Welsh across a range of subjects in a number of schools.
- All four of the teachers teaching in bilingual schools reported an increase in the number of hours of Welsh language provision.
- Responses to the questionnaire were received from 22 participants from the further education sector who had attended the higher level course. Of these, six reported no increase in the number of hours of Welsh-medium or bilingual teaching. Fourteen of the participants reported that the number of hours of Welsh language or bilingual teaching they provided had increased, significantly so in some cases.

A copy of the report is attached to this letter.

As I mentioned during the Committee meeting in January, I have spoken to people who have attended the programme, who say that after-care is crucial. That is also reflected in the evaluation. We are working with the regional consortia to ensure that after-care is provided and that the practitioners continue to make progress when they return to school.

We continually evaluate the programme to make improvements, and the need to increase the number of the teaching workforce able to teach through the medium of Welsh is of strategic importance under the *Cymraeg 2050* Welsh language strategy. With this in mind, the work of commissioning a further evaluation of the Scheme is underway, with the intention of beginning the evaluation in the summer for a period of three years.

2. The total number of Welsh Government employees working to prepare the Welsh Language Standards

Capacity within departments of the Welsh Government Civil Service is a matter for the Permanent Secretary.

3. Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol funding for 2017/2018

Since its establishment in 2011 the Welsh Government has provided funding for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (the Coleg) to maintain its activities; providing independent

oversight, strategic planning, management and support to the development of Welsh-medium higher education (HE) across Wales. The funding which was provided via HEFCW included the provision of Welsh-medium scholarships to incentivise higher education study through the medium of Welsh.

From 2017-18 onwards, the Welsh Language Division has had responsibility for funding the Coleg and £5.4m was allocated from the Welsh Language Division's revenue budget for this purpose. (This budget was made available as a result of a transfer of budget from the Higher Education Revenue budget to the Welsh Language Division). For 2017-18, HEFCW allocated an additional £0.330m to support Welsh-medium Scholarships.

The funding provided for 2017-18 was maintained at the level provided by HEFCW during 2016-17. This was in line with the recommendations of the Diamond review which recommended the continuation of funding for the Coleg to promote the provision of Welsh Language in Higher Education. It stated that funding for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and its scholarship programme should be maintained at least at the level for academic year 2016/17.

On 12 December 2017 the Welsh Government response to the final report of the task and finish group which reviewed the future role of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol was published. This report concluded that investment will need to be sustained within higher education in order to maintain the growth in provision that we've seen already and that the growth will not be sustainable without continuity in this investment. In considering future funding and the expanded role of the Coleg within the post-16 sector as a result of the review; future funding will be allocated in response to the priorities and recommendations of the review group which were accepted by the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

4. How the Welsh Government are monitoring and evaluating expenditure on National Centre for Learning Welsh

The Welsh Government holds regular meetings with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to monitor progress against its work programme. This includes the monitoring of expenditure against its grant allocations.

Funding allocated by the Centre to its network of 11 providers across Wales is calculated using the same hourly rate as other Welsh Government funded Further Education provision to ensure parity with other provision.

The Welsh Government has also established an independent Welsh for Adults Scrutiny Committee. The Committee meets three times a year, and its main purpose is to scrutinise the work of The National Centre for Learning Welsh and advise on matters such as value for money and how the Centre is responding to Welsh Government policies.

Yours sincerely



Eluned Morgan AC/AM

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning