



Comisiwn Ffiniau a  
Democratiaeth Leol  
Cymru



Local Democracy and  
Boundary Commission  
For Wales

**WELSH LANGUAGE**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2016 - 2017**

# **LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES**

## **WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - 2017**

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## **Introduction**

The Commission are responsible for the approval of this report; its drafting was undertaken by the Chief Executive, Mr Steve Halsall. The report has been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Language Commissioner's template for reports 2015/16.

The Commission are an advisory body responsible to the Welsh Government.

The Commission's Secretariat comprises 12 full time and 2 part time employees. Throughout the year, the Welsh Language Scheme continued to operate well, with no problems reported by the staff. One complaint was received from a stakeholder, and was resolved amicably.

For the majority of the 2016/17 reporting period, the Commission followed its existing Welsh Language Scheme; accordingly, this Annual Report focuses largely on that Scheme. The organisation received the Final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commission on 25 July 2016, and is currently experiencing a period of busy transition, as the organisation moves from the Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Standards. A number of the Standards specified in the Final Compliance Notice came into effect at the end of January 2017. In adherence to the schedule specified in the Final Compliance Notice, the Commission should be fully compliant with the Standards by the end of July 2017. The 2017/18 Welsh Language Annual Report will focus solely on the Welsh Language Standards as imposed in the Welsh Language Commissioner's Final Compliance Notice of 2016.

1. COMPLIANCE WITH THE WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

a. Report against each target within the timetable

Measure	Timetable Target	Report
<p>Maintain measures which promote and facilitate the principle of equality of use of the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>The Commission uses bilingual templates. The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all desk instructions, and these have been distributed to staff.</p> <p>The letters templates include a statement that the Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.</p> <p>Checklists are used by staff when conducting electoral reviews, which ensure Welsh language versions of Reports are quality assured and published according to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme/the Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>Staff members have access to Welsh language grammar and spellcheck facilities, such as 'Cysgeir' and 'Cysill', to improve confidence and encourage the wider use of written Welsh. A Welsh Language Phrases document has been created, and is updated as necessary, which provides non-Welsh speaking staff with standard phrases to be used in documents/emails/letters etc. Simultaneous translation facilities are provided at all public meetings.</p> <p>The Chair is a fluent Welsh speaker, and the Commission has appointed him Welsh Language Champion.</p> <p>The Chief Executive manages all new policies and initiatives personally and is the Scheme's monitoring officer.</p> <p>Two (16.66%) members of staff at the Commission's Secretariat are Welsh speakers and one staff member has been attending Welsh language lessons.</p> <p>A Use of Welsh at Work Policy has been created, which is available for all staff members, and a complementary training session with staff members is to be held soon. This will educate and remind staff as to the organisation's obligations in respect of the Welsh language.</p>
<p>Ensure additional measures are developed to extend the principle to any new policy, activity or purchase.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>The Commission prepares an annual operational plan that underpins the budget and expenditure for the year. The plan for 2016-2017 incorporated resources to fulfil the Commission's obligations specified in the Welsh Language Scheme.</p> <p>The Chief Executive managed all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the</p>

		Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with.
Obtain the Welsh Language Commissioner's agreement to any changes.	As necessary	No changes were made to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme as the Welsh Language Standards Final Compliance Notice was anticipated. Furthermore, the Welsh Language Commissioner no longer approves organisations' Welsh Language Schemes.
Monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the measures set out in this scheme.	On-going	The Chief Executive monitored the appropriate use of Welsh at every stage of the reviews undertaken during the year. This is achieved through monitoring of review checklists, correspondence and telephone calls. Verbal reports on review progress (including the translation of relevant documents) are given by Review Officers to all staff, but particularly the Chief Executive, at monthly Team Meetings. The arrangements were considered to be effective because replies to consultation papers were received from principal councils, community and town councils, organisations and individuals in Welsh. The Commission receives telephone calls through the medium of Welsh.
Initial and covering letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual.	Already implemented	100% of initial and covering letters were issued bilingually. When sending out initial and covering letters, the Commission uses bilingual templates. The Commission's IT system automatically generated all circulars and standard letters bilingually.
Letter templates are prepared in both languages and updated as necessary.	Already implemented	At present, all letter templates are bilingual, and the IT system automatically generates letters bilingually. Any new letter templates that are prepared during 2017/18 will be professionally translated.
Replies to Welsh language correspondence to be in Welsh.	Already implemented	100% of Welsh correspondence was responded to in Welsh. The majority of Welsh correspondence was processed in accordance with a contracted translation service, with simple translations provided by Welsh-speaking staff members.
Same target time for replying to letters in Welsh as for replying to letters in English.	Already implemented	The Commission has responded to 100% of the correspondence received in Welsh within the nominated time scales. The Chief Executive was able to monitor this performance because the majority of Welsh correspondence was processed in accordance with a contracted translation service. Welsh-

		<p>speaking staff members responded to occasional correspondence in Welsh or bilingually; this is monitored as the Chief Executive and/or Deputy Chief Executive are usually copied in to responses.</p> <p>Furthermore, the presence of two Welsh-speaking members of staff helped enable the Commission to respond well within timescales as correspondence received in Welsh can often be translated to English and passed to non-Welsh speaking colleagues for consideration without delay.</p>
Write in Welsh to an individual, a group or an organisation known to work mainly in Welsh or prefer to receive letters in Welsh.	Already implemented	<p>100% of persons or organisations working in Welsh or preferring to receive letters in Welsh were written to in Welsh. Either Welsh-speaking staff provided the written material or Welsh language documents were prepared using contracted translation services.</p> <p>The Commission has recently undertaken a process of contacting all Community and Town councils in Wales to establish their language preference.</p> <p>The Commission maintains a database of those wishing to deal with the Commission in Welsh. A Language Preference Form and Language Preference Excel tables have been created for staff to complete when correspondence is entered into and meetings are arranged.</p>
Follow-up correspondence, following a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation in Welsh, will be in Welsh, unless requested otherwise.	Already implemented	100% of correspondence, following face-to-face meetings/telephone conversations in Welsh, were issued in Welsh.
A database to be maintained of those wishing to deal with us in Welsh.	Already implemented	The Commission maintains a database of those wishing to deal with the Commission in Welsh. A Language Preference Form and Language Preference Excel tables have been created for staff to complete when correspondence is entered into and meetings are arranged.
<p>Callers wishing to speak Welsh will be transferred to a Welsh-speaking member of staff or an external interpreter will 'phone them back, or the call can be continued in English.</p> <p>In cases when there is no one available who can answer the query in full, callers will be asked for details of the query, or they may be advised to submit the query in writing. A reply in Welsh will then be sent by post.</p>	Already implemented	100% of telephone calls were answered bilingually. During the year all telephone calls received from Welsh-speaking members of the public were dealt with by a Welsh-speaking member of staff. Routine telephone calls from the Chair to the Welsh-speaking staff are conducted in Welsh.

<p>A bilingual message will be recorded on the answering machine.</p>	<p>Already Implemented</p>	<p>The Commission has a fully bi-lingual answering machine message, in which callers are invited to leave their message in Welsh. The answering machine was installed in November 2014.</p>
<p>Meetings will be publicised bilingually. A Welsh-speaking member of the Commission or the Secretariat will attend public meetings.</p> <p>Interpretation facilities will be provided at meetings when a requirement has been identified.</p>	<p>As necessary</p>	<p>The Commission did not hold any public meetings during the year. Procedures are in place based on previous practice, to facilitate the use of the Welsh language at public meetings as necessary.</p>
<p>Meetings organised in advance will be held in Welsh if required.</p>	<p>As necessary</p>	<p>The Chair of the Commission and/or Welsh-speaking members of staff have attended meetings with Welsh speakers during the year wherever possible and where resources allow. Simultaneous translation facilities were provided at meetings where attendees expressed a preference to use and hear Welsh in the meeting. A complaint was received on 23 January 2017 from Gwynedd County Council, the details of which are discussed further at page 14, point C of this Report.</p> <p>A Language Preference Form and Language Preference Excel tables have been created for staff to complete when correspondence is entered into and meetings are arranged.</p>
<p>Unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh will be offered the service of an external translator by telephone if a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available.</p>	<p>As necessary</p>	<p>We have not received any unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh this year. If the Commission had received unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh, and a Welsh speaking member of staff had not been available, the service of an external translator by telephone would have been made available.</p>
<p>The Commission's name, address and associated information will be bilingual on office signs, publication covers and all other forms of public display.</p>	<p>Already implemented</p>	<p>Following the enactment of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, the name of the Commission was changed. Commission signs (a 'pop-up stand' and 'roll-up banners') were replaced and all were bilingual, with the Welsh language appearing before the English language. All publication covers were bilingual, except when separate Welsh and English language publications were produced. When separate publications were produced, both versions were made available simultaneously, with both languages being afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence. Examples of these documents are available on the Commission's website. Later</p>

		English language publications had an additional line, in Welsh, informing the reader that the publication was also available in Welsh.
Printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery will be bilingual. Both languages will be shown with equal prominence.	Already implemented	100% of the printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery was bilingual, with both languages being shown with equal prominence.
All publications will be produced in Welsh and English.	Already implemented	The following documents were published bilingually by the Commission during 2016/17: minutes; consultation papers; booklets; guidance; Review Reports; Annual Reports; Statements; and, Maps. A number of documents were produced bilingually. When separate publications were produced, both versions were made available simultaneously, with both languages being afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence. All of the organisation's publications are published bilingually. During the year a change was made to English language publications to add a line, in Welsh, informing the reader that the publication was also available in Welsh.
Whilst considering names of electoral wards, we will consider advice provided by the Welsh Language Commissioner	Already implemented	Procedures were agreed whereby the Welsh Language Commissioner would be consulted on Welsh place-names during the review process. The Welsh Language Commissioner is now on the organisation's list of consultees.
Welsh and English versions will be published simultaneously and will be equally accessible and of the same quality, format and prominence.	Already implemented	100% of the Commission's publications were issued either bilingually or with Welsh and English versions being published simultaneously. Separate publications were equally accessible (in hard copy and on the Commission's website), and were of the same quality, format and prominence. Later English language publications had an additional line, in Welsh, informing the reader that the publication was also available in Welsh.
Public notices issued to libraries in Wales will be bilingual. Both languages in public notices will be afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence.	Already implemented	100% of public notices were issued bilingually, with both languages being of the same quality, format and prominence. Review desk instructions and checklists ensure bilingual notices are issued, and staff members are regularly reminded of the Commission's commitments and obligations under the Welsh Language Scheme at monthly team meetings and ad hoc office discussions.
Media notices will be bilingual and normally in one document.	Already implemented	100% of the Commission's media notices were issued either bilingually or with Welsh and

However, long notices may be prepared separately in Welsh and English and issued together.		English versions being published simultaneously. Separate publications were equally accessible (in hard copy and on the Commission's website), and were of the same quality, format and prominence. Later English language publications had an additional line, in Welsh, informing the reader that the publication was also available in Welsh. Review desk instructions and checklists are regularly reviewed and ensure bilingual notices are issued. Staff members are regularly reminded of the Commission's commitments under the Welsh Language Scheme at monthly team meetings and ad hoc office discussions.
Public surveys will be conducted in both Welsh and English.	As necessary	No surveys were conducted during 2016/17.
A bilingual website will be maintained. Updates to the website will be applied in both languages at the same time.	Already implemented	The Commission used their fully bilingual Internet site to disseminate their reports and other publications throughout the year. Welsh and English language versions are updated at the same time. All future publications on the English language version of the website will inform readers, in Welsh, that a Welsh language version of the publication is available.
Social media messages will be issued in both Welsh and English. These messages will be issued at the same time.	Already implemented	100% of notifications on social media during 2016/17 were issued in Welsh and in English simultaneously.
Posts will be examined to consider whether it would be essential or desirable to have Welsh speakers and this will be specified in the job descriptions.	As necessary	3 posts were advertised by the Commission during 2016/17. All posts were advertised in the first instance as Welsh Essential, but no applications were received, and posts were later advertised as Welsh Desirable, at which point we were able to fill them with non-Welsh speakers. A Vacancy Language Assessment Form and Vacancy Language Requirements Spreadsheet have been created for use with all future vacancies, to assess requirements and formally document decisions.
Job descriptions will be available bilingually via a link on the Civil Service Jobs website.	As necessary	All job descriptions are available bilingually, with links to both versions equally accessible.
The language policy will be stated and the linguistic skills expected of the post holder will be specified in all recruitment information. Linguistic ability will be one of a number of skills to be borne in	As necessary	Job applicants have advised of the language policy and the Welsh Language Standards. The linguistic skills of potential post holders are specified in recruitment information, where required, and applicants' skills are assessed at interview, where appropriate. The linguistic requirements of posts are

<p>mind when appointing staff and will be assessed against the previously identified level of skills needed for the post.</p>		<p>considered carefully at Commission meetings prior to advertisements being issued. As stated above, a Vacancy Language Assessment Form and Vacancy Language Requirements Spreadsheet have been created for use with all future vacancies, to assess requirements and formally document decisions.</p>
<p>We encourage and, in certain circumstances, may require staff to take up suitable language training, for example, to assist with the pronunciation of Welsh place names. We will consider financial support, in appropriate cases, should staff wish to take up suitable language training.</p>	<p>As necessary</p>	<p>One member of the Commission's Secretariat completed a formal Welsh Language course during 2016/17. The staff member has received the support and reassurance of Welsh-speaking colleagues; however, despite encouragement, the staff member does not wish to continue with lessons at present. Staff were reminded that the Commission considers providing financial support and release during working hours, in appropriate cases, should they wish to take up language training. Two new staff members have expressed an interest in learning Welsh during the 2017/18 period; the Business Support Manager is currently researching the most appropriate providers. It is hoped that, were the two staff members to attend lessons together, they may inspire each other during the course. Non-Welsh speaking members of staff are regularly coached by Welsh speaking staff regarding pronunciation and basic phraseology.</p>
<p>The need for specific vocational training through the medium of Welsh will be assessed.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>No members of the Commission's Secretariat requested to undertake vocational training through the medium of Welsh. Had such a request been made, the Commission would have considered the request and provided it, if appropriate.</p>
<p>The Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive will ensure consistent implementation of the Scheme.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all desk instructions and checklists, and the office systems are such that the Chief Executive is the monitoring officer and approves the majority of output from the Secretariat. The desk instructions and checklists are reviewed, and changes are currently being undertaken to ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards. The Chief Executive monitored the use of Welsh at each stage of a review. The Chief Executive managed all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with. Furthermore, the Chief Executive drew new Scheme initiatives to the attention of staff</p>

		members.
All members of staff will receive detailed written guidance in the form of desk instructions which include the use of Welsh in the work of the Commission, and will be given copies of the Welsh Language Scheme.	On-going	<p>All members of staff received information about the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme, including advice about correspondence, as part of the Commission's desk instructions and reviews checklists. As the Commission's Secretariat has only 14 members of staff, with the majority working in an open-plan environment, the dissemination of information is easily achieved, and staff members are particularly well-informed about the Commission's commitment to the Welsh language.</p> <p>A Use of Welsh at Work Policy has been created, which is available for all staff members, and a complementary training session with staff members is to be held soon. This will educate and remind staff as to the organisation's obligations in respect of the Welsh language.</p>
The specification of new or replacement IT systems will be required to meet the needs of the Welsh Language Scheme.	On-going	<p>New / replacement IT systems are purchased through Welsh Government providers / contractors. LDBCW is able to access systems that meet the needs of the Scheme.</p> <p>The Commission is currently exploring alternative IT providers, and the organisation's Welsh language requirements have been taken into account during planning and creation of the business case.</p>
Tenders for translation services will continue to be assessed for capability and quality of service as well as price.	On-going	<p>Translation Services for the Commission are under contract, which was due to expire at the end of March 2017. The Commission extended its contract with the current provider for a further 12 months as the Commission is experiencing an extremely busy period, and because contract monitoring raised no major concerns about the existing providers. The current contract, therefore, expires at the end of March 2018, when a full tender exercise will be undertaken, where full assessments of capability and quality will be carried out.</p>
Translations will be monitored by staff to ensure the quality of the publication	On-going	<p>Welsh-speaking members of staff at the Commission routinely quality assure translations. A monitoring sheet has been established, wherein any issues/concerns are reported. The Business Support Manager regularly reviews the monitoring sheet. Meetings have been held with translators where monitoring concerns have been raised.</p> <p>Checklists are used by staff when conducting electoral reviews, which ensure Welsh language versions of Reports are quality assured and published according to the Commission's Welsh</p>

		Language Scheme and requirements under the Welsh Language Standards.
Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties which relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales will be consistent within the terms of the scheme. The Commission will provide, through contracting arrangements, that the contractor implement any relevant elements of the scheme when dealing with the public. The Commission will specify the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts.	On-going / as necessary	The Commission ran a tender exercise for an Online Consultation Portal in 2016/17. The use of Welsh was specified within the contract, as the company in question provides services to the public in Wales on the Commission's behalf. The Deputy Chief Executive and the Business Support Manager have met with the company that submitted the winning tender, and reiterated the requirements as to the use of Welsh.
A summary of the report will be included in the Commission's Annual Report. The Commission's Annual Report will publicise our measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public	Annually in September	A summary of this report will be included in the Commission's Annual Report, which will be published in September 2017. The Annual Report will publicise the Commission's measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public.
All publications and publicity associated with the Commission's reviews - our main contact with the public – will make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. English language publications will advise that a Welsh language version is available.	On-going	All publications / publicity associated with the Commission's reviews make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. Publications are produced either bilingually or simultaneously in Welsh and English. Future English language publications will advise, in Welsh, that Welsh language versions are also available. Publications include a line advising the public that the Commission welcomes communications in Welsh and in English.

## 2. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHEME

### a. *Report on requirements in relation to the Welsh language in contracts, explaining any arrangements to review or strengthen the consideration given to the Welsh language*

As stated above, the Commission conducted a tender exercise for an Online Consultation Portal in 2016/17. Where appropriate, the Commission specifies the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts, and the company that won the tender has been reminded of the organisation's commitments to the Welsh language. The use of Welsh has also been specified within the above contract, as the company in question will provide services to the public in Wales on the Commission's behalf.

Due to the nature of the Commission's work, the majority of services to the public are provided directly by staff members at the Commission's Secretariat. Where services are provided to the public on behalf of the Commission (for example, when simultaneous translation is provided during public meetings), those tendering are made aware of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme, and will be reminded of the Commission's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards.

Welsh-speaking staff at the Commission routinely proof-read translated documents to ensure accuracy. Any errors are reported on a monitoring spreadsheet, which is monitored by the Business Support Manager. If particular concerns are noted, the Business Support Manager will report these to the company providing the translation.

Reference to the Commission's Welsh Language Standards will be made in future tender documents and contracts.

**b. *Evidence that there are robust governance and internal scrutiny arrangements in place for the language scheme***

The Chief Executive managed all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme and relevant Welsh Language Standards were complied with. This is achieved through monitoring of review checklists, correspondence and telephone calls. Verbal reports on project progress (including the translation of relevant documents) are given by staff to all colleagues, but particularly the Chief Executive, at monthly Team Meetings.

The role of the Chair as a fluent Welsh speaker has been important, as the Commission has appointed him Welsh Language Champion. In addition, two (16.66%) members of staff at the Commission's Secretariat are Welsh speakers who are available to: answer queries from colleagues pertaining to the Welsh language; compose routine correspondence; answer queries from Welsh speaking members of the public; and, quality-assure Welsh language publications.

As the Commission's Secretariat has only 14 members of staff, with the majority working in an open-plan environment, the dissemination of information is easily achieved, and staff members are particularly well-informed about the Commission's commitment to the Welsh language. Furthermore, staff members are reminded regularly of the implications of the Scheme and Standards, for example via team meetings, desk instructions, checklists and routine discussions in the office.

The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all revised desk instructions and review checklists, and the office systems are such that the Chief Executive approves the majority of output from the Secretariat. The Business Support Manager is in the process of revising the desk instructions and review checklists to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. The Commission's IT system automatically generates all circulars and standard letters bilingually.

The Chief Executive monitored the appropriate use of Welsh at every stage of the reviews undertaken during the year. The arrangements were effective because replies to consultation papers were received from principal councils, community and town councils, organisations and individuals in Welsh.

All staff members were made aware of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme during team meetings, and regular reminders are issued in relation to the Welsh Language Standards. Plans for transition from Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Standards have been discussed at length during Commission meetings, which all Commission and staff members attend.

**c. *Summary of valid complaints received and action taken***

One complaint was received about the Welsh service provided during the reporting year. The complaint was received from Gwynedd County Council, expressing disappointment that no Welsh-speaking members of staff were in attendance at a meeting that the Commission held with the Council. The correct policy had been followed, as the Council had been informed by a member of staff at the Commission that the Commission could provide a translation service at meetings if needed, but had been assured that this would not be necessary as the Council would provide translation services at the Leaders', full Council and Town and Community Council meetings. The Commission explained, in its response to the Council, that attempts to appoint Welsh speaking members of staff had resulted in an absence of applicants on all occasions. The Council was reminded that they may raise the matter with the Welsh Language Commissioner, but they expressed satisfaction with the Commission's explanation.

A Language Preference Form and Language Preference Excel tables have been created for staff to complete when correspondence is entered into and meetings are arranged; these will serve to remind staff that a Welsh language translation service is to be provided where stakeholders wish to speak Welsh at meetings and no Welsh-speaking staff or Commission members are available to attend.

A Welsh Language Complaints Code has been created and is due to be presented at a future Commission Meeting. The intention of the Code is to ensure that all Commission and staff members understand the organisation's response to complaints, and to fully inform members of the public how to issue a complaint should they feel their rights to use the Welsh language in dealings with the Commission have been infringed.

**d. *Evidence of arrangements for ensuring the quality of Welsh language content on the corporate website / plans for increasing and improving Welsh language content***

The Commission's website is fully bilingual. Staff members at the Secretariat are responsible for updating the Commission's website, and are reminded regularly of the Commission's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Scheme and Standards. Desk instructions and checklists help ensure that all content on the corporate website is bilingual, and staff and Commission members are reminded on a regular basis of the Commission's obligations and

commitment. Furthermore, all publications are quality checked by Welsh-speaking members of staff at the Commission prior to publication.

### **3. WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS**

#### **a. *Information on the Welsh language skills of the workforce and a report on the data***

As the Commission's Secretariat is small, the language skills of staff were known without the need for a survey. The Commission's Chair (20%) and two Secretariat staff members (16.66%) are Welsh speaking. A member of staff has completed a formal Welsh language evening course. Two further members of staff have expressed an interest in attending Welsh language courses, and the Business Support Manager is in the process of sourcing such training.

3 posts were advertised during 2016/17. All posts were advertised, in the first instance, as Welsh Essential; unfortunately, no applicants responded until the posts were advertised as Welsh Desirable.

During the 2017/18 reporting period, a small staff survey will be conducted to establish and formally record the staff members' Welsh language skills.

#### **b. *Evidence of investment in Welsh language training and an explanation of other action taken to improve workforce skills***

One member of the Commission's Secretariat completed a Welsh Language course during the year. Staff members were reminded that the Commission considers providing financial support, in appropriate cases, should they wish to take up language training. Two further members of staff have expressed an interest in attending Welsh language courses, and the Business Support Manager is in the process of sourcing such training.

Welsh speaking members of staff at the Secretariat provide guidance and tuition to non-Welsh speaking colleagues regarding the pronunciation of Welsh place names and basic greetings, as required.

#### **c. *Evidence of provision of language awareness training***

Staff members of the Commission's Secretariat undertake Welsh language awareness training. As stated above, the Commission's Secretariat has only 14 members of staff, with the majority working in an open-plan environment, and the dissemination of information is easily achieved, and Welsh language issues are discussed on a regular basis at Commission meetings. Therefore, Commission and staff members are particularly well-informed about, and supportive of, the Commission's commitment to the Welsh language.

### **4. MAINSTREAMING THE WELSH LANGUAGE**

#### **a. *Information on arrangements for assessing the impact of policies on the Welsh language and any action taken to review arrangements to ensure appropriate assessments are conducted***

The Chief Executive manages all new policies and initiatives personally and, as the Commission's monitoring officer, he ensured that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme was complied with. Furthermore, the Commission's Chair, as a fluent Welsh speaker, has been appointed Welsh Language Champion.

When policy decisions are made, the Commission routinely considers the impact such decisions may have upon the opportunities for persons to use Welsh or treat Welsh no less favourably than English; this is particularly so as the positive image of the Welsh language is thoroughly embedded in the day-to-day operations of the Secretariat. During the reporting year, all policy documents were published bilingually.

When the Commission consults upon policy decisions, the consultation and covering documentation is published bilingually, with responses welcomed in Welsh or English (examples of such documents can be viewed on the Commission's website).

The Secretariat is currently working towards creation of Policy Impact Assessment documents, which will be presented at a future Commission meeting. The Assessments will thereafter be used routinely by Commission and staff members.

## **5. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

### ***a. Identify risks and priorities for next year***

The Commission prepares an annual operational plan that underpins the budget and expenditure for the year. The plan for 2016/17 incorporated resources to fulfil the Commission's obligations specified in the Welsh Language Scheme and Standards. The Commission's annual operational plan for 2017/18 will also incorporate resources to ensure the Commission's obligations under the Standards will be fulfilled.

The Commission submitted its response to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Draft Compliance Notice before the consultation deadline in May 2016. The Commission then prepared an Action Plan to facilitate the transition from Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Standards. A Use of Welsh at Work Policy has been created, which is available for all staff members, and a complementary training session with staff members is to be held soon. This will educate and remind staff as to the organisation's obligations in respect of the Welsh language. This information will also be shared with the Commission members. Transition work is ongoing.

A number of Commission desk instructions and letter templates have been revised; requirements under the Welsh Language Scheme were considered as part of that process. Furthermore, it is intended to include reference to the Commission's Welsh Language Standards with which the Commission will need to comply in future tender documents and contracts.

### ***b. Examples of relevant good practice***

The Commission is encouraged by the fact that only one complaint was received about the Welsh language service provided during this extremely busy period and at a time of transition, and that the Commission's response and explanation to the complaint was accepted by the complainant.

The Commission has undertaken a process of contacting all Community and Town councils in Wales (who are among our primary stakeholders) to confirm whether they would prefer to receive correspondence / documentation in Welsh, English or bilingually. This information has been recorded in the Commission's database.

Two (16.66%) members of staff at the Commission's Secretariat are Welsh speakers and are available to: answer queries from colleagues pertaining to the Welsh language; answer queries from Welsh speaking members of the public; make contact with stakeholders whose preferred language is Welsh; respond to routine correspondence in Welsh; and, quality assure Welsh language publications.

The Commission uses bilingual templates. Desk instructions have been distributed to staff, to ensure that all aspects of the Commission's work are issued bilingually. Checklists are used by staff when conducting electoral reviews, which ensure Welsh language versions of Reports are quality assured and published according to the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme and Standards. Staff members have access to Welsh language grammar and spellcheck facilities, such as 'Cysgeir' and 'Cysill' to improve confidence and encourage the wider use of written Welsh.

The Commission advertised 3 roles during 2016/17. All posts were advertised, in the first instance, as Welsh Essential; however, due to the dearth of interest in the posts, despite added efforts to disseminate the job adverts, the roles had to be subsequently advertised as Welsh Desirable.

During the year all telephone calls received from Welsh-speaking members of the public were dealt with by the Chair or the Welsh-speaking members of staff. Routine telephone calls from the Chair to the Welsh-speaking staff are usually in Welsh.

The Commission's website is fully bilingual, and all notifications on social media are issued in Welsh and in English simultaneously.

Simultaneous translation facilities are provided at all public meetings.

Following the enactment of the Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013, the name of the Commission was changed. Commission signs (a 'pop-up stand' and 'roll-up banners', for example) are in place and are bilingual, with the Welsh language appearing before the English language.

The following documents were published bilingually by the Commission: minutes; consultation papers; booklets; guidance; Reports; receipts; and, Maps. Where Welsh language and English language documents were published, both versions were made available simultaneously, with both languages being afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence. Examples of these

documents are available on the Commission's website. A number of the later English documents informed the readers, in Welsh, that Welsh language versions of documents are available.

Welsh-speaking Commission staff members have access to the Welsh Speaker badges/stickers; they are encouraged to wear these when outside of the office on official business to encourage Welsh-speaking members of the public to initiate conversations in Welsh.

The induction processes for Commissioners and staff include awareness of the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme and obligations under the Welsh Language Standards. Both Commissioners reported that they were particularly conscious of the organisation's and staff members' supportive attitude towards the Welsh Language Scheme and Standards following induction.

**c. *Evidence of efforts to monitor the quality of Welsh language services and / or service user surveys***

The Commission's Welsh Language Scheme has been incorporated into all current desk instructions and the office systems are such that the Chief Executive is the monitoring officer and approves the majority of output from the Secretariat. Work is ongoing to update desk instructions and office systems to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

The Commission responded to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Draft Compliance Notice before the May 2016 consultation deadline, and received the Final Compliance Notice on 25 July 2016, and is currently experiencing a period of busy transition, as the organisation moves from the Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Standards.

Staff members at the Commission are dedicated to ensuring that all Welsh language publications are quality assured by Welsh speaking members of staff prior to publication.