



**Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru**  
**Older People's Commissioner for Wales**

# **Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2016-17**

**October 2017**

## The Older People's Commissioner for Wales

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales is an independent voice and champion for older people across Wales. The Commissioner and her team work to ensure that older people have a voice that is heard, that they have choice and control, that they don't feel isolated or discriminated against and that they receive the support and services that they need.

The Commissioner and her team work to ensure that Wales is a good place to grow older, not just for some but for everyone.

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## Introduction

As an independent organisation funded by public monies, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales is required to comply with the [Welsh Language Standards](#), which set out a number of ways in which the Commissioner must provide and promote services through the Welsh language and facilitate and encourage its use in the workplace.

The Commissioner received the compliance notice for the Standards on 25 July 2016, which then came into force on 25 January 2017.

The Welsh Language Standards that apply to the Commissioner are divided into four different categories:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Record Keeping

The Commissioner has been issued with 145 Standards, of which 134 have a compliance date of 25 January 2017.

	<b>Compliance Date: 25.01.17</b>	<b>Compliance Date: 25.07.17</b>	<b>Total</b>
Service Delivery	71	0	71
Policy Making	15	0	15
Operational	47	2	49
Record Keeping	9	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>145</b>

This is the first report undertaken by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales that details what steps and actions have been undertaken to comply with the Standards.

This report focuses on activities undertaken in the period 25 January 2017 to 31 March 2017, covering the 2016/17 financial year.

## Compliance

The Commissioner's Welsh Language Scheme, required under the Welsh Language Act 1993, already contained many of the measures detailed in the Commissioner's Welsh Language Standards. This enabled there to be a straight-forward transition to the new Standards, as many were already part of the Commissioner's policies and practices.

In order to be fully compliant with the Standards, the Commissioner developed an action plan to implement the changes required. This action plan involved staff from across the organisation and was led by the Welsh Language Officer.

Once this action plan had been developed, the Welsh Language Officer ran an information session for all staff in the organisation, detailing the new requirements under the Welsh Language Standards and the approach that the Commissioner would be taking to implement them.

As part of this action plan, staff were invited to show their interest in receiving regular Welsh language lessons during their work hours. The weekly courses began in February 2017 for both beginners and those with a higher level of competency.

In addition to this, the Commissioner has organised for a representative from Cardiff University to attend a team meeting in May 2017 to discuss the history of the Welsh language and its role in Welsh culture.

The Commissioner's compliance with the Standards is set out below.

### **Service Delivery Standards**

- A database has been compiled recording an individual's language preference
- All staff have received training on how to respond to correspondence (letter and e-mail), answer the telephone, arrange and hold meetings, and greet visitors
- All template letters have been updated to comply with the Standards

- A telephone system has been introduced to enable the caller to choose a language preference
- All answer machine messages are bilingual
- All members of staff answer the phone bilingually
- All documents produced for public use are bilingual
- Attendees of meetings are asked for their language of choice. If over 10% state they wish to contribute in Welsh, then simultaneous translation will be provided.
- All public notices and adverts are bilingual
- The Commissioner's website is bilingual
- All signage is checked for compliance
- All tenders for contracts are published bilingually
- Tenders received in Welsh will be responded to in Welsh and any interviews will be conducted with the aid of a simultaneous translator

## **Policy Making Standards**

- All staff have received training on the Policy Making Standards
- All staff will consider the effects of any new policy (or amendments to policy) on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language
- A template Welsh Language Impact Assessment form has been produced for all staff to use and complete
- Welsh Language Impact Assessment guidance has been produced to help staff complete a Welsh Language Impact Assessment
- If research is commissioned that is intended to assist with policy making, staff will ensure that the research considers how the policy decision could be made so that it does not have a negative impact on the Welsh language

## Operational Standards

- The Commissioner has produced a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language
- The Commissioner has introduced a HR procedure where all staff are asked whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh
- The Commissioner has asked all staff whether they wish to receive any paper correspondence that relates to his or her employment and which is addressed to him or her personally in Welsh
- The Commissioner has asked all staff whether they wish to receive any documents relating to their training needs and their performance objectives in Welsh
- The Commissioner has asked all staff whether they wish to receive forms that record and authorise annual leave, absences from work and flexible working hours in Welsh
- All policies are published bilingually
- All staff have been informed that they are able to make complaints in Welsh and have the right to respond to a complaint made about them in Welsh
- All staff will be offered the opportunity to host any meetings regarding complaints about them in Welsh (with the use of simultaneous translation)
- Any record of decision relating to a complaint against a member of staff will be issued in Welsh
- Policies have been updated to reflect the Standards
- Computer software has been provided for staff who require it to check spelling and grammar in Welsh
- The Welsh language skills of all staff has been assessed through self- assessment

- The Commissioner has provided opportunities during work hours for employees to receive Welsh language training
- Training courses will be provided to raise staff's awareness of the Welsh language
- Information to raise awareness of the Welsh language is provided to all new staff members as part of their induction
- Wording and a logo has been provided for staff's e-mail signature to inform people if they are fluent Welsh speakers or learners
- Welsh language skills for new or vacant posts are assessed
- Posts are advertised bilingually and state language skills required
- Adverts state that the Commissioner welcomes applications in Welsh
- All information related to recruitment is published bilingually
- Application forms provide a space for individuals to state if they wish to use Welsh at interview stage and that simultaneous translation will be provided if necessary
- Any new signage is displayed in Welsh

## **Record Keeping**

- The Commissioner will keep a record of the number of complaints she receives relating to our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards
- The Commissioner will keep a copy of any complaint that she receives in relation to the Standards
- The Commissioner will keep a record of steps taken to comply with the Policy Making Standards
- The Commissioner will keep a record of the Welsh language skills of all staff and keep the self-assessments
- The Commissioner will keep a record of the assessments she carries out for Welsh language skills of new or vacant posts
- The Commissioner will keep a record of how all new or vacant posts were categorised in relation to Welsh language skills needed

## Language Complaints

During 2016/17, there have been no complaints regarding the Commissioner's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

## Welsh Language Skills of employees

During 2016/17, the Commissioner employed 21 members of staff. The Welsh Language Survey was conducted during February and March 2017, the results are detailed below.

Department	Wellbeing and Empowerment*	Corporate Affairs**	Commissioner	Total
Number of staff	11	10	1	22
No skills	5	1	1	7
Entry	1	3	-	4
Foundation	1	3	-	4
Intermediate	1	1	-	2
Advanced	0	0	-	0
Fluent	3	2	-	5

\* This department includes the Commissioner's Senior Caseworkers who manage enquiries from the public

\*\* This department includes the Commissioner's front-line administrative support staff.

## Recruitment

During 2016/17, there were no new or vacant posts advertised.