



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-23

September 2023

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales is an independent voice and champion for older people throughout Wales.

The Commissioner is taking action to protect older people's rights, end ageism and age discrimination, stop the abuse of older people and enable everyone to age well.

The Commissioner is working for a Wales where older people are valued, rights are upheld and no-one is left behind.

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This document is available in Welsh here

<https://comisiynyddph.cymru/amdano/cynllun-cyhoeddi/ein-polisiau/safonaur-gymraeg/>

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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 (the 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 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:

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

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

This report focuses on activities undertaken in the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, covering the 2022/23 financial year.

Context

The Commissioner's hybrid working policy, formally adopted in January 2022, enables staff to determine how to split their time between a remote location and the workplace, ensuring that they are able to undertake their role effectively and efficiently.

Compliance

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

Service Delivery Standards

- New employees receive information about the Welsh Language Standards in their induction pack and receive training on how to be compliant with the Standards from the Welsh Language Officer.
- All staff know how to respond to correspondence (letter and e-mail), answer the telephone, and arrange and hold meetings.
- All template letters comply with the Standards.
- An automated system for the main telephone number enables callers the option to speak to a member of staff in Welsh.
- All answer machine messages are bilingual, with Welsh first.
- Staff answer the phone bilingually, Welsh first.
- All documents produced for public use are bilingual, using the tilt and turn format as standard (longer reports are produced separately in both languages).
- Attendees of meetings (online and in person) are asked for their language of choice. If over 10% state they wish to contribute in Welsh, simultaneous translation is provided.
- All adverts are bilingual.
- The Commissioner's website is bilingual.
- All tenders for contracts are published bilingually on the Sell2Wales website.
- Tenders received in Welsh are responded to in Welsh and any interviews will be conducted with the aid of a simultaneous translator if required.

Policy Making Standards

- All staff understand the requirements of the Policy Making Standards.
- Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance has been produced to help staff complete a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Operational Standards

- A policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language is published on the website.

- All staff are asked whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh and the results are recorded.
- All staff are asked 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 and the results are recorded.
- All staff are asked whether they wish to receive any documents relating to their training needs and their performance objectives in Welsh and the results are recorded.
- All forms relating to annual leave, absences from work and flexible working hours are produced bilingually.
- All policies are published bilingually on the shared access drive.
- All staff are aware 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.
- All policies are compliant with the Standards.
- Computer software has been provided to all members of staff who required it to check spelling and grammar in Welsh (Cysgliad).
- The Welsh language skills of all staff has been assessed through self-assessment (see Welsh Language Skills of Employees section).
- The Commissioner provides opportunities during work hours for all employees to receive Welsh language training.
- 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 (see Recruitment section).
- Posts are advertised bilingually and state language skills required.
- Adverts state that the Commissioner welcomes applications in Welsh and that an application submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than an application submitted in English.
- 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.

Record Keeping

- The Commissioner keeps a record of the number of complaints she receives relating to our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. No complaints were received in 2022/23.
- The Commissioner keeps a copy of any complaint that she receives in relation to the Standards.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of steps taken to comply with the Policy Making Standards.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of the Welsh language skills of all staff as well as the self-assessments that are completed by staff per year to determine their language proficiency.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of the assessments undertaken to determine the required Welsh language skills of new or vacant posts.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of how all new or vacant posts were categorised in relation to Welsh language skills needed.

Language Complaints

During 2022/23, there have been no complaints received regarding the Commissioner's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

Welsh Language Skills and Training

As at 31 March 2023, the Commissioner employed 18 members of staff. The Welsh Language Survey was conducted during March 2023, which asked staff to self-assess their skills using a matrix of proficiency in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. All members of staff and the Commissioner responded to the survey. The results are detailed in tables 1 and 2 below, showing that over a quarter of the organisation class themselves as proficient Welsh speakers.

Table 1 - Welsh language skills of all staff

	Understanding	Reading	Writing	Speaking
0 – No Skills	2	2	6	6
1 – Entry	3	4	4	4
2 – Foundation	7	4	1	2
3 – Intermediate	1	3	2	1
4 – Advanced	1	1	3	1
5 – Fluent	5	5	3	5

Table 2 - Welsh language skills of all staff at Band level

Level	Band						Total
	B	C	D	E	F	Comm	
No Skills			2				2
Entry	1	1	1	1		1	5
Foundation	2		1		1		4
Intermediate			1				1
Advanced		1			1		2
Fluent	2	3					5

During 2022/23, the Commissioner remained committed to providing opportunities during work hours for all employees to receive Welsh language training, fully funded by the organisation.

All members of staff are able to access online learning and resources from the LearnWelsh website.

One member of staff completed the Intermediate Course run by LearnWelsh Cardiff and passed the exam with distinction.

Recruitment

When a new or vacant post arises, the Chief Operating Officer will complete a Welsh language skills assessment for each role. This assessment will determine the Welsh language skills required for that role based on the requirements of the role e.g being public facing, providing advice and support directly to older people. The assessment will determine whether Welsh language skills are deemed 'essential' or 'desirable' for the post.

During 2022/23, five posts were advertised through external recruitment. Three roles required Welsh language skills as 'essential' (requiring the post holder to be able to engage fluently in Welsh with members of the public) and two roles required Welsh language skills as 'desirable'.

Training

No training was delivered through the medium of English or Welsh on topics such as recruitment and interviewing, performance management, complaints and disciplinary procedures, induction, and dealing with the public, and health and safety.