



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Brecon Beacons NPA's Welsh Language Scheme – The Welsh Language Commissioner's Response to the 2011/12 Annual Monitoring Report



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

1	Baseline Information	1
2	Standard Statement	1
3	Comments on performance	2
4	Summary	5

1 Baseline Information

Baseline Information	Further comment	
Approval date of Brecon Beacons NPA's Welsh Language Scheme	5 December 2006	
Senior Officer responsible for the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme	Chief Executive	
Anticipated date of receipt of Annual Monitoring Report	30 June 2012	Report received on 29 June 2012

2 Standard Statement

2.1 The principal aim of the Welsh Language Commissioner (the Commissioner) is to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh. This entails raising awareness of the official status of the Welsh language in Wales and imposing standards on organizations. This, in turn, will lead to the establishment of rights for Welsh speakers.

2.1.1 Two principles underpin the Commissioner's work:

- In Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language
- Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

2.1.2 In due course, secondary legislation will introduce new powers allowing the setting and imposing of standards on organizations. Until then, the Commissioner will continue to inspect statutory Welsh language schemes through the powers inherited under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

2.1.3 The Welsh Language Commissioner may investigate failure to implement a language scheme, allegations of interference with individuals' freedom to use Welsh in Wales and, in future, complaints regarding the failure of organizations to meet standards.

2.1.4 The Welsh Language Commissioner will be able to regulate organizations firmly and consistently by means of standards, and may decide to impose a civil penalty on an organization if it does not comply with a relevant requirement.

2.2 Annual Monitoring Reports

2.2.1 Language Schemes contain a commitment to prepare and present an annual monitoring report. To all intents, an Annual Monitoring Report is a self-assessment. In responding to them, the Welsh Language Commissioner will expect organizations to testify that they are complying with their language schemes.

2.2.2 With regard to Language Schemes, the Commissioner’s practice will be to highlight risks and influence performance with a view to avoiding failure.

2.2.3 All responses to annual monitoring reports are published with a view to ensuring transparency and easy access to information on performance.

3 Comments on Performance

Compliance with the Welsh Language Scheme

Comments on Performance		Action required
2.1.1	We note that the Welsh language has been incorporated into the Equality Impact Screening process, and that staff have received training on undertaking the process.	Explain the arrangements that exist to ensure objectivity in the undertaking of the assessments. Has the Authority considered a role for the Welsh Language working group in the process?
2.1.2	The Welsh language scheme commits the Authority to ensure that organizations and individuals that receive financial support or grant aid will operate bilingually in their activities and events. The Authority is expected to act accordingly.	Explain the steps that the Authority is taking to ensure compliance with this clause.
2.3.1 DP1	The Authority reported fully on this indicator. Number and % main reception posts that have been designated as ‘Welsh essential’ and have been filled by staff who are bilingual: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 posts fall into the main reception category - 1.5 posts designated as ‘Welsh essential’ - 1 post filled with Welsh speaker 	

	The Authority is not therefore in a position to guarantee a Welsh language service at its reception.	
	We note that the warden's post (4 posts) and education officer posts (1 post) in the west of the park have been designated as 'Welsh essential'.	Explain the Welsh language requirements of warden and education officer posts in the east of the park, and how those requirements were determined.
2.3.2 DP2(a)	The Authority reported fully on this indicator. Number and % of staff who have received Welsh language training to a specific qualification level. 6 members of staff attended structured lessons, with additional support provided to attend intensive courses.	Has the Authority considered providing training for those staff who wish to strengthen their existing Welsh language skills?
2.3.2 DP2(b)	The Authority reported fully on this indicator. The number and % of staff that have received language awareness training. 10 staff received language awareness training as part of the induction program.	Has the Authority considered providing further language awareness session beyond the induction program?
2.3.2 DP3	The Authority reported fully on this indicator. The Number and % of staff within the Council's services who are able to speak Welsh, according to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - service division - post grade - workplace <p>The information provided shows that there has been no significant change in the language skills of the workforce during the reporting period, although there was a small increase (from 12.3% to 15%) in the number of fluent Welsh speakers. The information suggests that the Authority can offer a Welsh language service in situations where the preferred language of the service user is known.</p>	Many Authorities now report on the number of posts designated as 'Welsh essential' and filled by Welsh speakers for the whole organization. Is the Authority in a position to report in the same way? Explain the arrangements that exist to determine the linguistic designation of posts that become vacant and advertised. Provide the number of posts advertised during the reporting period, and the number of those posts that were designated as 'Welsh essential'.

Quality of Welsh Language Services

Comments on Performance		Action required
<p>2.3.3 DP4</p>	<p>The Authority reported on part of this indicator.</p> <p>The number of complaints received in relation to the operation of the Welsh language scheme and the % dealt with in accordance with corporate standards.</p> <p>1 complaint was received during the reporting period.</p> <p>The number of complaints received is not necessarily synonymous with satisfaction. We note that the Authority will develop other measures of measuring quality and satisfaction with the adoption of the revised Welsh language scheme.</p>	<p>Explain whether the complaint was dealt with in accordance with corporate standards e.g. target response time etc.</p>
<p>2.4.1</p>	<p>We note that all retail publications shall be available in Welsh and English from September. An increase in the number of free Welsh publications available to the public was seen during the reporting period.</p> <p>We note that the <i>Visitor Guide</i>, the Authority's main visitor publication, is only available in Welsh on the website.</p>	<p>Explain why the Authority does not publish the Welsh version of this publication in hard copy form.</p>
<p>2.4.3</p>	<p>We note that the Authority's website shall be fully bilingual by August 2012, and that procedures have been developed to ensure that all new or revised web pages are translated into Welsh and published.</p>	<p>Explain how the procedures developed shall ensure that new or revised English pages do not appear on the website before the Welsh version.</p>

4 Summary

Further information required	<p>2.1.1 Explain the arrangements that exist to ensure objectivity in the undertaking of the assessments. Has the Authority considered a role for the Welsh Language working group in the process?</p> <p>2.1.2 Explain the steps that the Authority is taking to ensure compliance with this clause.</p> <p>2.3.1 Explain the Welsh language requirements of wardens and education officer posts in the east of the park, and how those requirements were identified.</p> <p>2.3.2 DP3 Explain the arrangements that exist to determine the linguistic designation of posts that become vacant and advertised.</p> <p>2.3.2 DP3 Provide the number of posts advertised during the reporting period, and the number of those posts that were designated as 'Welsh essential'.</p> <p>2.3.3 DP4 Explain whether the complaint was dealt with in accordance with corporate standards e.g. target response time etc.</p> <p>2.4.1 Explain why the Authority does not publish the Welsh version of this publication in hard copy form.</p> <p>2.4.3 Explain how the procedures developed shall ensure that new or revised English pages do not appear on the website before the Welsh version.</p>	Within 20 days of the response being received.
-------------------------------------	--	--

**Questions
which must
be answered**

2.3.1 Many Authorities now report on the number of posts designated as 'Welsh essential' and filled by Welsh speakers for the whole organization. Is the Authority in a position to provide a similar report?

2.3.2 DP3 Many Authorities now report on the number of posts designated as 'Welsh essential' and filled by Welsh speakers for the whole organization. Is the Authority in a position to report in the same way?

2.3.2 DP2(a) Has the Authority considered providing training for those staff who wish to strengthen their existing Welsh language skills?

2.3.2 DP2(b) Has the Authority considered providing further language awareness session beyond the induction program?

A response should be provided at our follow up meeting to be held soon.