



## Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan

SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS		
How we intend to comply	Facilitating the use of Welsh	Oversight
<p><b>Capturing language choice</b> SWFRS will ask which is a service user's preferred language at the point of first contact.</p>	<p>Language preference will be recorded by the department making contact with the Service user and this information will be shared with other internal departments as necessary.</p>	<p>Each Head of Service has overall responsibility for implementing the Welsh language standards within their own directorate including record keeping and monitoring.</p>
<p><b>Correspondence</b> When the Service receives correspondence in Welsh, the Service will reply in Welsh, should a response be required. Where the Service issues correspondence but the language preference of recipients is unknown, the correspondence will be issued in Welsh and English. (Standards 1,4,5 &amp;6) All external Service e-mails and letter-headed paper will include the following statement within the footer: (Standard 7) <i>'Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg - byddwn yn ymateb yn gyfartal i'r ddau ac yn ateb yn eich dewis iaith heb oedi.'</i> <i>'We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English - we will respond equally to both and will reply in your language of choice without delay.'</i></p>	<p>The Service has produced and published on its intranet guidance for staff to ensure that staff are aware of the internal procedures for issuing correspondence to the public.</p> <p>The "Siarad Cymraeg" and "Dysgu Cymraeg" logos have been incorporated into the Service's standard e-mail signature block templates for staff to use if they are in Welsh essential roles or if they wish to use their Welsh at work.</p> <p>The departments responsible for setting the corporate e-mail footer and letter-headed paper have made the changes required to ensure legal compliance.</p>	<p>All staff have been made aware of the requirement to respect language choice or, if necessary, correspond bilingually. The Service expects each individual member of staff to take personal accountability for following the correct internal procedures to ensure that legal compliance is maintained.</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Telephone calls</b></p> <p>The Welsh Language Standards as imposed upon the Service place no legal requirement to answer 999 calls in Welsh. However, the Service will designate a number of posts in the Control Room as Welsh essential in order to provide a Welsh language response to 999 calls made in Welsh whenever possible.</p> <p>Employees of the Service will give a fully bilingual greeting when answering the telephone.</p> <p>The posts within the Service responsible for undertaking reception duties have been designated as Welsh essential and filled by Welsh speakers.(Standards 8, 9,13 &amp; 20)</p> <p>Staff who are not Welsh speaking may locate a Welsh speaking colleague from a list held on the Service’s intranet and transfer a call to them if that is the caller’s preference. (Standards 10 &amp; 18)</p> <p>When the Service establishes telephone contact with a service user for the first time, the service user will be asked if they would prefer to receive future calls from the Service in Welsh or English. That language preference will be noted and respected. (Standard 21)</p>	<p>The Welsh Language Standards Guidance for staff published on the Service’s intranet contains clear instructions on the procedures to follow if a caller wishes to conduct their business with the Service in Welsh, but the call taker is not a Welsh speaker.</p>	<p>All staff have been made aware of the requirement to respect language choice when dealing with telephone calls to and from members of the public. The Service expects each individual member of staff to take personal responsibility and accountability for following the correct internal procedures to ensure that legal compliance is maintained.</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Meetings</b></p> <p>When the Service arranges a meeting with a member or members of the public, attendees will be asked if they wish to use the Welsh language at the meeting. Where individuals express a desire to use Welsh at a meeting, the Service will respect and accommodate that preference.</p>	<p>The Welsh Language Standards Guidance for staff published on the Service's intranet contains clear instructions on the procedures to follow should a member of the public wish to use the Welsh language at a meeting with representatives of the Service.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Standards page of the Service's intranet contains the internal procedure to be followed when organising a simultaneous translation service at a meeting, should that be necessary and allowable under the standards.</p>	<p>Members of staff who organise meetings with members of the public will be responsible and accountable for ensuring that language choice has been offered, respected and accommodated.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Documents and forms</b></p> <p>With the exception of Fire and Rescue Authority minutes and papers, any documents produced by the Service for the public will be made available bilingually. The Service tries to avoid producing separate Welsh and English versions of documents and forms, however where this cannot be avoided, both versions will carry a statement to the effect that a version is available in the other language. Both versions will be treated equally in every way and neither version shall be treated less favourably than the other. (Standards 38 &amp; 45 – 48B)</p>	<p>The Service recognises that there are many households in its catchment area where some members of a household are Welsh speaking or learning Welsh and other members of the same household who have no Welsh at all. For this reason, the Service implements its policy of producing as many of its printed resources as possible in the bilingual tilt-and-turn format, rather than as separate Welsh and English versions.</p>	<p>All members of staff are aware of the need to produce information for the public in both Welsh and English. The Service's internal translation procedure is well publicised and is made available to staff on the Welsh Language Standards page of the intranet. The Service's media team act as gate-keepers to ensure that all internally produced documents are designed and formatted in both languages at the same time.</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signs and notices</b></p> <p>All public facing signs and notices displayed on Service premises, including temporary signs and notices, will be bilingual with the Welsh positioned so that it is likely to be read first. (Standards 58,59 &amp;139-141)</p>	<p>The Service will ensure that the “Welsh language first” bilingual signage requirement is included in all relevant tenders, contracts etc and that the requirement is implemented and monitored.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Websites and on-line services</b></p> <p>The Service maintains the following fully bilingual websites: All pages are created equally in Welsh and English to be fully functional and with a facility to switch easily between the two languages. The only information not updated in both languages simultaneously at all times is information concerning emergency incidents. It is not always possible to update this type of dynamic information in Welsh as well as English, but the Service will make every effort to provide bilingual information about emergency incidents as soon as possible. The Service does not generally offer on-line services, however recruitment processes are promoted and administered on-line and are always fully bilingual. (Standards 49, 52 &amp; 53)</p>	<p>The Service will have a new page created on its main website to provide further information to the public about how to access non-emergency services in Welsh, and explain what other opportunities there are to use Welsh when interacting with the Service.</p>	<p>The Service’s media team act as gate-keepers in the internal process of updating the main website. From time to time the Service’s Welsh language officer performs a dip-sampling exercise to ensure that all the Service’s websites are being maintained bilingually.</p> <p>The Service welcomes feedback from users, either in Welsh or English, regarding the quality and accessibility of its websites. If you would like to provide feedback, please contact the Service at: <a href="mailto:GTDC@decymru-tan.gov.uk">GTDC@decymru-tan.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:swfs@southwales-fire.gov.uk">swfs@southwales-fire.gov.uk</a></p>

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<p><b>Reception services</b></p> <p>The Service has its Headquarters at Llantrisant, Rhondda Cynon Taf, this is where its main reception is sited. The two receptionist posts here are designated as Welsh essential and are both filled by Welsh speakers.</p> <p>The Service does not have other sites where it operates a public reception service. (Standards 61, 64 &amp; 65)</p>	<p>Due to the Service's policy of designating its receptionist posts as Welsh essential, a bilingual reception service is provided at Headquarters between 09.00 and 17.00 Monday – Thursday and 08.30 – 16.30 on Fridays.</p> <p>Staff who cover reception duties during breaks, periods of sickness absence etc are given training in dealing with Welsh speaking visitors and callers in order that they can provide a bilingual reception service even if they are not Welsh speakers themselves.</p>	<p>The Service's Head of Business Support is responsible for ensuring that a bilingual reception service is provided within the stated hours.</p> <p>The Service welcomes feedback from service users regarding the quality of its Welsh language reception service.</p>
<p><b>Awarding contracts</b></p> <p>The Service will include specific information regarding using the Welsh language in procurement procedures in both its guidance to potential suppliers and its guidance to staff. Invitations to tender will be published bilingually and carry a statement to the effect that tenders may be submitted in Welsh, and that a tender submitted in Welsh will be treated no less favourably than a tender submitted in English.</p> <p>If a tenderer is invited for interview as part of the assessment of a tender, they will be asked if they wish to use the Welsh language at the interview and a simultaneous translation facility will be put in place, unless it is possible to conduct the interview in Welsh without the aid of a simultaneous translation</p>	<p>Members of staff who take part in the tendering process and are fluent Welsh speakers will be offered the opportunity to receive bespoke Welsh language training to familiarise themselves with the specific vocabulary involved in procurement.</p>	<p>The Head of Finance is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Service's Welsh Language Standards relating to the tendering process.</p>



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<p><b>Educational courses offered to the public</b> The Service offers a variety of educational courses and visits which are all available in either Welsh or English.</p>	<p>A number of posts in the Service's Community Safety Department have been designated as Welsh essential in order to be able to provide educational courses and visits in Welsh as well as English. Members of staff who conduct these courses and visits and are fluent Welsh speakers will be offered the opportunity to receive bespoke Welsh language training to familiarise themselves with the specific vocabulary involved.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Safety is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Service's Welsh Language Standards relating to the provision of educational courses to the public.</p>

## POLICY MAKING STANDARDS

<p>All new policies, projects, procedures and initiatives implemented by the Service are subject to an Equality Risk Assessment (ERA). As part of the ERA, staff formulating new policies are asked to consider the positive and/or negative impacts that could result from that policy for the Welsh language and for Welsh speakers and learners. New guidance for staff on compliance with the Service's Welsh Language Standards has been incorporated into the general guidance for completing ERAs. (Standards 85-90 &amp; 92-94)</p>	<p>As well as identifying how a policy may have a negative impact on the Welsh language or Welsh speakers, staff are asked to consider how the policy could bring about positive outcomes instead, or how the policy could be adapted to bring about positive outcomes.</p>	<p>The Service assesses the quality of how Welsh language implications are identified through the ERA process. All Heads of Service are responsible for scrutinising and authorising ERAs that are completed by their middle leaders.</p>
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## OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Internal use of Welsh</b></p> <p>In line with standard 95, the Service has developed a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language. The Service's Policy on the Internal Use of the Welsh Language is published on the Welsh Language Standards page of the intranet. (Standard 95)</p>	<p>The Service's Policy on the Internal Use of the Welsh Language highlights opportunities for staff to use their Welsh language skills with colleagues and service users alike, e.g. wearing a sticker with the "Siarad Cymraeg" logo on their fire helmet, applying for internal posts in Welsh, using incidental Welsh at meetings etc.</p>	<p>Evidence of how teams and managers promote and implement a bilingual ethos within their workplaces will be gathered and submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner via the statutory reporting process.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>New posts</b></p> <p>When a new post is offered to an individual, the post holder is asked whether they would prefer to receive their contract of employment in Welsh or English. If they select Welsh, the contract is provided in Welsh. The Service also offers the option of receiving both Welsh and English versions of contracts of employment if that is the post holder's preference. (Standard 96)</p>	<p>Internal HR processes have been reviewed and amended to ensure that new employees can select a language preference at the start of the recruitment process and have that preference accommodated at every stage of their progression from candidate to colleague.</p>	<p>The Head of HR has approved and implemented an action plan to ensure that the relevant Standards are incorporated into the Service's core business.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use of the Welsh language within a body's internal administration</b></p> <p>The Service has conducted a review of HR processes, procedures and documentation in order to ensure that staff choosing to receive the following in Welsh can do so without delay:</p>	<p>All staff have been made aware of their rights under the Standards via guidance to staff published on the Welsh Language Standards page of the intranet.</p>	<p>The number of staff choosing to receive the documents referred to in standards 97 – 101 will be monitored and reported annually to the Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper correspondence relating to their employment</li> <li>• Documents that outline their training needs or requirements</li> <li>• Documents that outline their performance objectives</li> <li>• Documents that outline their career plan</li> <li>• Forms that record and authorise annual leave, absence from work and flexible working hours. (Standards 97 – 101)</li> </ul>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HR policies</b></p> <p>The policies listed in Standards 102-108 will be published on the intranet in both Welsh and English.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Complaints and disciplinary</b></p> <p>The Service has amended its policies on complaints and disciplinary proceedings to include statements to the effect that staff may choose to participate in complaints and disciplinary processes in either Welsh or English according to their personal preference. This includes making allegations, responding to allegations, giving statements in interviews etc. (Standards 109-116)</p>		<p>The number of staff choosing to use the Welsh language whilst participating in complaints and disciplinary proceedings will be monitored and reported annually to Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Software</b></p> <p>All staff in Welsh essential posts and those voluntarily using their Welsh language skills at work are offered to have the Cysgliad spell and grammar checking software installed on their computers. (Standard 117)</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intranet</b></p> <p>The Service has instigated and completed a project workstream that ensures compliance with the requirement to have a bilingual intranet homepage by 30.09.18. (Standard 119)</p>	<p>The Service will take advantage of any opportunity that arises to maximise the use of the Welsh language in the design and implementation of the revised intranet. It is anticipated that these opportunities will become apparent through the completion of an ERA and as the project progresses.</p>	<p>The Service's Senior Management Team will receive regular updates on the progress of the project as a whole, including compliance with Welsh Language Standards.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessing Welsh language skills</b></p> <p>The Service is using new HR software to conduct an information gathering exercise with staff. All colleagues will be asked to self-assess their Welsh language skills in respect of reading, writing and speaking and at levels 0-5 for each of those three categories. (Standard 124)</p>	<p>The data gathered will be used to develop a Welsh language skills profile of the workforce which will inform future HR strategy and policy, e.g. offering Welsh speakers with latent language skills the opportunity to undertake refresher training, transfer of staff within roles etc.</p>	<p>The Welsh language skills profile of the workforce will be monitored and reported annually to the Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>

**Welsh Language Skills Training**

When the courses listed under Standard 125 are offered to staff, there will be an opportunity for staff to attend either a session provided through the medium of Welsh or session provided through the medium of English, according to their personal language preference. Welsh speaking Service trainers will be used to deliver the courses, irrespective of whether they are a subject matter expert.

The courses listed under Standard 126 will be offered to staff through the medium of Welsh and instructed by Welsh speaking Service trainers. The Service is seeking opportunities to collaborate with other public sector organisations in delivering the training courses listed under Standards 125 and 126.

In respect of Standards 127 and 128 Service employees are able to receive Welsh lessons by attending classes in their local communities through Learn Welsh Cymru.

The number of staff enrolled on Welsh language skills courses, their level of study and any qualifications attained will be monitored and reported annually to Fire and Rescue Authority.

<p><b>Welsh Language Awareness Training</b> The Service provides Welsh language awareness on induction courses for new staff (Standards 129 &amp; 130).</p>		<p>The number of staff who have attended or completed Welsh language awareness training courses will be monitored and reported annually to Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>
<p><b>Assessing Welsh language skills requirement for each vacant post</b> When a new post is created, or an existing post is reviewed, the line manager for that post and a member of HR will assess the Welsh language skills required for that post. The assessment will be based on the job description, i.e. does the post involve contact with the public, if so how often, is a service provided etc. The Service uses a set of skill levels based on the ALTE framework and a series of “can do” statements to determine what level of Welsh is required for the role. (Standards 134-135B).</p>		<p>The number and nature of Welsh essential roles within the Service will be monitored and reported annually to Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>

<p><b>Application forms</b></p> <p>The Service's application forms have been amended to include the requirements of Standard 137.</p>		<p>The number of applicants for posts who choose to complete applications forms in Welsh and/or have an interview for a post in Welsh, will be monitored and reported annually to Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>
<p><b>RECORD KEEPING STANDARDS AND STANDARDS WHICH DEAL WITH SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS</b></p>		
<p>The Service will record and monitor all the information required under Standards 143-171. Information will be made available to the Welsh Language Commissioner upon request and without delay.</p>		<p>The Fire and Rescue Authority will compile and publish an annual monitoring report that will be published on its main website.</p>