

INTRODUCTION

Overview and Introduction

The Welsh language standards put a legal framework in place giving individuals the right to access certain services through the medium of Welsh.

Wales Millennium Centre is subject to the Measure, and as from the 25th of January 2017, we have been successfully complying with a number of the standards, with further standards being implemented in late July 2017.

We have always been committed to deliver services bilingually since we opened in 2004, which means that we were already doing much of what was needed to comply with the standards. We are proud of our Welsh heritage and culture – the language is an important part of the Centre’s identity and part of what makes us unique.

We are totally committed to achieving the standards and we are proud to publish our first annual report which covers 2016/17, outlining our progress to date.

Due to the short period of time that the standards have been operational during the year, our focus for this year’s report is on the work we have undertaken to plan for the standards.

The standards

Our Final Compliance Notice of July 2016 included a total of 146 standards, with 118 of these coming into force on the 25th of January 2017 and the remaining 28 coming into force on the 25th of July 2017. The standards are within the following classes:

Standard	Complying from 25.01.2017	Complying from 25.07.2017	Total
Service Delivery	66	-	66
Policy Making	-	9	9
Operational	26	17	43
Record Keeping	6	2	8
Supplementary	20	-	20

Planning

Following receipt of the Draft Compliance Notice in May 2016, we engaged Ateb, a specialist consultancy to assist us to identify areas where we needed to focus and develop to ensure compliance with the standards, and to help us identify where we needed extra time to comply. During this time, all relevant departments and teams became involved in the work.

Once the Final Notice arrived, we were in a strong position to develop a detailed Action Plan which identified all that we needed to do in time for January 2017.

As we have always taken our responsibility to deliver services bilingually seriously, the majority of the actions focussed on building on this and ensuring that we were consistent in our approach.

Actions

A new Welsh Language Commitment was developed, designed to explain to the public in simple terms how we provide services through the medium of Welsh. Our Commitment can be found [here](#)

We developed a number of briefing notes and documents to help staff understand the implications of the standards. This includes 'Staff Guidelines' which is a complete guide to the standards. We also developed a comprehensive compliance plan which we have published on our website, outlining how we will comply with the standards. This can be found [here](#).

As part of the preparatory work an internal communications campaign was developed, the objective was to introduce the standards to staff, to ensure that staff were aware of their responsibilities and to highlight the help available to them.

Working with Ateb and colleagues from Welsh National Opera, a number of briefing sessions were held in January for staff on all levels within the Centre. The focus was on raising awareness and delivering a strong and consistent message about what staff needed to do in response to the standards. Follow up sessions were then held on key topics with our front of house teams, with a simple 'pocket guide' shared to help.

The following sections focus on the planning and compliance with specific standards:

Service Delivery standards

Planning

Actions put in place to ensure compliance with these standards included:

- Writing to us
 - Putting plans in place to ensure that when we write to someone for the first time or if we don't know in which language they would like us to correspond, that we will write to them bilingually
 - Ensuring that we state clearly in our correspondence, advertisements and publications that we welcome contact through the medium of Welsh
- Contacting by phone
 - Ensuring that each member of our staff who receives phone calls directly from the public will greet them in Welsh.
 - Our Welsh language option continues to be available on our main telephone number
- Meetings and events
 - Developing processes to ensure that when we arrange and hold public meetings and events that we treat the Welsh and English languages equally
- Publications and written material
 - Ensuring that all documents, promotional material and advertisements that we produce are available in Welsh and English and that both languages feature as prominently as the other
 - Promoting our Welsh language services in our seasonal programme
- Digital and online
 - We developed a specific section on our website which contains all the information about how the Centre complies with the language standards
- At the Centre
 - Ensure that Welsh-speaking staff work on the front desk and ticket office so that we provide a bilingual service for members of the public who visit the Centre

Compliance

We believe that we are successfully complying with the required standards in this area

Complaints

During the reporting period, no complaints were received relating to our compliance with the Service Delivery standards.

Policy Making standards

The standards relating to this area of work were not imposed until July 2017, we have been working on an assessment tool to help us comply, this will be detailed in our next report.

Operational standards

Through the standards, we commit to the principle that our staff can live their working lives through the medium of Welsh – from filling in an application form and being interviewed, to discussing matters in relation to their employment.

The majority of the operational standards which came into force in January, focussed on recruitment. This included considering the need for Welsh-language skills for every new post or vacancy and making policies involving the working conditions of our staff which are listed within the standards available in Welsh and English. The focus of the standards which came into force in July 2017 were on training, HR related processes such as complaints and disciplinary procedures and developing a policy on facilitating and promoting the Welsh language internally.

Compliance

We believe that we are successfully complying with the required standards in this area

Complaints

During the reporting period, no complaints were received relating to our compliance with the Operational standards.

In reference to the specific reporting requirements placed upon us:

Welsh language skills

We record the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of each financial year, at the end of 2016/17 the position was as follows:

Total Number of staff = 356

Total number of staff with Welsh language skills = 259 (73%)

Training

We will be required to report on the number and percentage of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh during the year, however, this standard was introduced in July 2017 and therefore is excluded from this report.

Recruitment

We have been working on our approach to identify roles which require Welsh language skills, we want to take a strategic approach to this. In line with the requirements, we record the following information:

New / Vacant posts advertised during the reporting period	21
Posts where Welsh language skills were essential	5
Posts where Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post	1
Posts where Welsh language skills were desirable	15
Posts where Welsh language skills were not necessary	0

Focus for the coming year

Our focus will remain on ensuring that we continue to comply with the standards and that we continue to respond positively to our customers in their chosen language. At the time of writing this report we are also confident in our compliance with the standards which came into force in July 2017. Over the coming twelve months we will:

- Offer Welsh language lessons to staff through the National Centre for Learning Welsh's Working Welsh scheme with an initial focus on front line staff
- Deliver our Welsh language awareness training and revised induction sessions which includes references to the standards
- Deliver a session for Managers on the standards as part of their induction
- Develop our approach to workforce planning in light of the standards
- Offer refresher briefing sessions on the standards to key staff

For more information

A full list of all the standards imposed on us appears on our website and on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website www.comisiynyddygydraeg.cymru.

More information about the standards and the Welsh Language Measure can also be found on the Commissioner's website.

Please contact us if you would like further information.

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Or on our social media pages ...

Facebook/Twitter/Instagram

This report is available in Welsh / Mae'r adroddiad yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg