

MEETING:	LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
DATE:	JANUARY 15 2013
TITLE:	LANGUAGE STANDARDS: UPDATE
AUTHOR:	EQUALITY AND LANGUAGE OFFICER
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	FOR INFORMATION

1. Background

- 1.1. The Language Commissioner has given notice that she will be informing Local Authorities and National Parks in Wales of a Standards Investigation on January 6 2014. The ultimate aim of the Language Standards is to standardize Welsh language provision across the public sector in Wales. Unlike Welsh Language Schemes, Standards will be imposed upon organizations, rather than agreed upon.
- 1.2. Because of the Language Committee's timetable, this Report had to be produced before the correspondence was received from the Commissioner; however, a copy has been appended for Members' attention.
- 1.3. Also appended is a copy of the Proposed Standards Relating to the Welsh Language published by the Welsh Government at the same time as the correspondence received from the Commissioner. The Standards Investigation will be based upon this draft.

2. Next Steps and Timetable

- 2.1. From January 27 2014, all Welsh Local Authorities and national Parks will be expected to take part in the Standards Investigation. The purpose of this is to ascertain what whether an organization needs to comply with the Standards, and if, so, which particular ones are relevant. The Investigation will take the form of a Questionnaire to define our situation regarding Welsh language provision, and the process will take 12 weeks.
- 2.2. As outlined above, Local Authorities and National Parks are the first to be targeted, with, with other organizations being part of the process in due course. The commissioner estimates that all relevant organizations will be working to the Standards within two and a half years.
- 2.3. Following the Investigation into the work of Local Authorities and national Parks, The Commissioner will share and discuss a Standards Report with the Welsh Ministers before Draft Regulations are imposed towards the end of 2014. Having received the Standards, each organization will have 6 months to comply.

3. The Committee is asked to

3.1 Note the contents of the report and the appendices.