

MEETING	LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
DATE	22 October 2015
TITLE	Update on the Welsh Language Standards
AUTHOR	Gwenllian Williams Language Development Officer
PURPOSE OF REPORT	Present the Language Standards and a summary of the action points for the member's information.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Pursuant to Section 44 of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011, the Compliance Notice on the Language Standards was received on 30th September 2015.
- 1.2 There were 165 Standards in the compliance notice received for consultation in July
- 1.3 As part of the consultation process, 55 of the standards were challenged, mainly on the grounds that the Council already goes beyond what is required in the standards.
- 1.4 151 Standards were presented to using the final notice – 14 less than the draft notice.
- 1.5 A time extension was given for the 4 promotion Standards that involved creating a new Language Strategy.

2. COMMENTS ON THE STANDARDS SET

- 2.1 We will need to look at many of the current administrative processes, and establish new processes for recording data.
- 2.2 Clear guidance will need to be given to some departments in relation to specific standards (e.g. Standards 25 and 28 for Social Services)
- 2.3 A discussion will be needed regarding additional training needs – this has already started with the Learning and Development team.

3. IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

- 3.1 The Standards will be enforced from 30 March 2016, apart from the 4 Promotion Standards, that we will need to comply with by 30 March 2017.
- 3.2 It will be possible to appeal against any of the Standards before the date they are set if there is reason to believe that they are unreasonable or disproportionate, but we do not recommend doing so.

3.3 The Council's current Language Scheme will come to an end on the day that we are first required to comply with a Standard, which will be 30 March 2016.

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF THE STANDARDS

A summary is given here of the Standards where there will be a need for action before they are implemented at the end of March 2016 in order to ensure compliance.

The actions vary from the need to look at current arrangements to ensure that we are collating and recording the information needed to prove compliance, and setting up new procedures for recording to identifying which services or departments will need some guidance to ensure compliance.

Need: New templates or one off change	
Standard	Action
7	Need a way of declaring that the public are welcome to correspond in Welsh
14	Need to declare (in Welsh) that the Council welcomes phone calls in Welsh
134	Need to ensure that any email signature templates contain the necessary logos.
135	Need to ensure that "out of office" templates are available.

Need: Change in workers practice (training / guidance)	
Standard	Action
18	Need to ensure that direct phone calls can always be transferred to a member of staff who can deal with enquiries in Welsh if needed.
63	Need to think about offering specific training (e.g. Cymraeg Clir) to ensure that the staff have the proper skills to be able to produce clear and accurate signs.
120	Need to ensure that staff know how to use Welsh interface and software – e.g./Cysill and Cysgair.
129	Need to ensure that training is offered to Managers regarding effective use of the Welsh language in meetings, interviews and complaint procedures (maintaining the use of Welsh in meetings is a crucial element)
153	Need to ensure that complaints relating to language issues are referred to the right place and that staff are aware of how to deal with formal and informal complaints.

Need: New recording systems / Documentation	
Standard	Action
21	Need to ensure that language choice is recorded properly in order to ensure follow up in the same language.
98	Need a policy relating to the internal use of the Welsh language (Guidance or Internal Action Plan.
112A	Need to be able to specify, in the complaints procedure, that a complaint can be done in Welsh.

127	Need to assess the language skills of staff.
151	Need to agree on what linguistic skills will be recorded.
Supplementary Standards	<p>Need to ensure that all documentation and relevant guidance notes have been written and published on the public website. Need to deal with each class of Standards, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance Guidance • Complaints procedure • Monitoring and accountability • Reporting on compliance <p>5 year Strategy – to be published 30/03/17, after the current Strategy has come to an end.</p>

Need: Specific Guidance for Departments	
Standard	Action
25 and 28	Need to draw these Standards to the attention of Social Services, that deal with welfare meetings. Need to ensure that they always comply and that Language choice is recorded on the RAISE system. Need clear guidance that note that it is the responsibility of the department to ensure that any welfare meeting, like case conferences for example, are conducted in Welsh if that is the wish of the client/member of public.
67 and 68	Need to ensure that receptions display the proper signage and staffwear the badges etc that denote that they are Welsh speakers.
72	Need to ensure that any departments that deal with grants and tenders follow the proper procedure in giving consideration to the Welsh Language.
87	Need to identify where Public address systems are used and ensure the operators are aware of the need to comply with this Standard.