

MEETING:	LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
DATE:	05 JULY 2016
TITLE:	LANGUAGE COMPLAINTS
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PURPOSE OF REPORT	PRESENT THE MOST RECENT COMPLAINTS TO THE COMMITTEE.

COMPLAINTS RELATING TO COMPLIANCE WITH THE LANGUAGE STANDARDS (Received from the Language Commissioner's office)

DATE	COMPLAINT	RESPONSE
20/04/2016	Ref: CSG55 Claim that the Council had placed English only signs on houses in Victoria Street, Llanberis	It was confirmed that the Council was not responsible for the signs, and that the home owners had not asked permission to put the signs up. The response to the Commissioner was accepted and the claim was closed with no further investigation.
10/05/2016	Ref: CSG67 Claim that the Council had advised a member of the public to advertise a property licence in English only.	It was confirmed that the Council is not responsible for setting language requirements, but rather that the individual is solely responsible for ensuring that the licence application is presented properly. Refer to complaint CI1602 below for more information. Further action: Guidance given to applicants is being reviewed. Considering including a template sentence that will direct the public to the Council website where a bilingual summary of each application is available.

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED DIRECTLY REGARDING SERVICES OR THE COUNCIL LANGUAGE POLICY

DATE	COMPLAINT	RESPONSE.
14/04/2016	Ref : CI1602 A complaint was received from Liz Saville Roberts MP claiming that a member of the public had received advice from the Licencing unit of the Council to advertise a premises licence in English only in the press.	We made enquiries and found that there had been a misunderstanding regarding the advice given. Legal advice was also sought to confirm the responsibilities and role of the Council in this matter. We explained to the MP that the Council does not have any power to insist that an individual advertises a licence in one language or another, and that the general advice given is to advertise bilingually in order to avoid any challenge or misunderstanding. In the end, it is the decision of the individual what language they choose to advertise.

		<p>Further action:</p> <p>The Licencing unit is considering changes to the wording used in the guidance given to applicants in order to make it easier for them to advertise in one language if they choose to do so. This change could include a template of a sentence that would be used on any public advertisement to direct the public to the Council website, where a bilingual summary of each application is provided.</p>
20/04/2016	<p>Ref : CI1604</p> <p>A letter was received from Llanystumdwy Community Council expressing concerns regarding the proper use of the Welsh language – specifically regarding parking ticket machines that had no Welsh option and the recording of responses to the Deposit Plan following the English alphabet and not the Welsh.</p>	<p>The Regulatory department was already aware of the issues with the ticket machines, and were also unhappy about the situation. It was reported that they were discussing with the providing company to see if any changes could be made.</p> <p>It was explained that the order the responses to the Deposit Plan had been shown was not due to individual mistake, but rather the result of using Microsoft Access to sort the responses exported from the central data base. Microsoft Access does not allow sorting according to Welsh alphabet as far as we know.</p> <p>The department has contacted the IT department of the Council, as well as the owners of the software used for central data base to see if there is a way of getting the information needed in future without having to use Access.</p>
20/06/16	<p>Ref : CI1605</p> <p>A complaint was received from a Councillor, on behalf of Rhiwlas School Council, noting that a swimming instructor in Bangor had been speaking English to them in lessons.</p>	<p>A response was sent to the Councillor from the senior Manager of the service thanking him for brining the matter to his attention and asking the head of the school to get in touch with further details.</p> <p>None of the leisure centre staff in Bangor are non-Welsh speakers, and so further details will be needed about specific incidences and examples of a failure to provide lessons in Welsh before deciding on the steps to be taken.</p> <p>Further details have been received, and a plan of action will be agreed between the service manager and the Language Development Officer as soon as possible.</p>