

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

**SUBJECT:
WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS: ANNUAL REPORT**

Members will recall that, on the 30th September 2015, the Welsh Language Commissioner issued the Authority with a Compliance Notice in accordance with Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Compliance Notice sets out the Welsh Language Standards with which the Authority has to comply in the course of carrying out its business and the dates from which the Authority has to comply with the Standards. All bar 15 of the Standards contained in the Compliance Notice had to be complied with by the 30th March 2016, with the remainder having a compliance date of the 30th September 2016. The Standards supersede the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme that had been in place up until then.

The Authority is currently challenging three Standards, and we are awaiting the Welsh Language Commissioner's decision on these.

Although the new Standards have only been in place for one day in the 2015/16 financial year, the Authority is required to produce an Annual Report in line with the requirements of the Compliance Notice. A copy of that report will be made available to Members prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members endorse the Annual Report as the Authority's submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Background papers:

Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to the Authority on the 30th September 2015

(For further information, please contact Janet Evans, Administration & Democratic Services Manager on extension 4834, or by e-mailing janete@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)



PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY: 2015/16 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS WITH WHICH WE HAVE TO COMPLY

1. Introduction

1.1 On the 30th September 2015, the Welsh Language Commissioner issued the Authority with a Compliance Notice in accordance with Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Compliance Notice came into force on the 30th March 2016, when the Authority was expected to comply with all but 15 of the Standards referred to in the Notice, their compliance date being the 30th September 2016.

1.2 The Standards fall into five broad areas:

- Service Delivery;
- Policy Making;
- Operational;
- Promotion, and
- Record Keeping.

1.2 Standard 158 stipulates that the Authority must produce an 'annual report' in relation to each financial year and, although the new Standards have only been in place for one day in the 2015/16 financial year, this report provides an overview of how the Authority has complied with the Standards within the timescale referred to.

2. Service Delivery Standards (Standards 1 to 87)

2.1 Correspondence

2.1.1 Correspondence is responded to in the same language as the initial correspondence. When the Authority has instigated the correspondence, it is sent out bilingually unless the recipient's language of choice is already known.

2.1.2 When issuing bilingual correspondence, both languages are treated equally, with the same font and size used and both versions are signed.

2.2 Telephone calls

2.2.1 All persons calling the Authority are greeted bilingually.

- 2.2.2 The out-of-office-hours pre-recorded message on the Authority's main telephone number is bilingual.
- 2.2.3 All staff have been instructed to transfer a call made to their direct line to a Welsh-speaking colleague without delay if they are unable to continue the conversation in Welsh themselves.
- 2.2.4 All staff have been instructed to answer calls to their direct line with either a bilingual greeting (Welsh first) or a neutral greeting, thereby ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.
- 2.3 Meetings
 - 2.3.1 Guidance has been issued in relation to arranging meetings, reminding all staff that bilingual invitations should be issued (unless the language choice of all attendees is already known), a simultaneous translation service is provided (if required), and all publicity, written materials, etc. produced by the Authority for the meeting are to be fully bilingual, with the Welsh and English languages treated equally.
- 2.4 Press statements
 - 2.4.1 All press statements have been, and will continue to be published bilingually, with both the Welsh and English languages treated equally.
- 2.5 Public documentation
 - 2.5.1 Many of the Authority's information leaflets are produced bilingually, with both the Welsh and English languages treated equally, or – if they are produced separately – with a sentence to say that the leaflet is also available in the other language.
 - 2.5.2 Where public documents are printed separately, the Welsh and English languages are treated equally in terms of font, size, format, etc.
- 2.6 Website, apps and social media
 - 2.6.1 Users of the Authority's website are able to choose their preferred language by clicking on a toggle button. We are in the process of ensuring that all pages correspond fully between both languages.
 - 2.6.2 All apps produced by the Authority are bilingual.
 - 2.6.3 The Authority's Twitter account is bilingual.
- 2.7 Signage
 - 2.7.1 The Authority's signage is bilingual, although the Welsh language does not necessarily come first at all times. When these signs will be replaced, they will comply with the Standards in that the Welsh language will be positioned so that it is read first; however, any new signs erected will comply with the relevant Standard(s).

2.8 Reception services

2.8.1 Of the five staff (three full-time equivalents) in the Authority's main reception area, one is a fluent Welsh speaker while two have undertaken basic Welsh language courses. If staff have been unable to deal with a call themselves, they have referred the caller to another Welsh-speaking colleague without delay. All the Authority's reception areas display the 'Iaith Gwaith' logo and Welsh-speaking staff have been provided with badges.

2.9 Official notices

2.9.1 Official notices are published/displayed in Welsh and English.

2.10 Grants

2.10.1 The Authority administers the Sustainable Development Fund. Guidance notes and the application form are available in Welsh and English, and correspondence is responded to in the applicant's language of choice. Any promotional material is available either bilingual or in both Welsh and English languages and are treated equally in terms of font, size, format, etc.

2.11 Tenders

2.11.1 No tenders were invited during the reporting period in question. However, invitations to tender are inputted bilingually on the Sell2Wales website.

2.12 Corporate identity

2.12.1 The Authority's corporate identity has been bilingual since its inception.

2.13 Education courses

2.13.1 The Authority does not run education courses *per se*. The activities and events programme for 2016/17 had already been formulated during the reporting period in question, although a review of the activities and events offered is now underway.

3. **Policy Making Standards (Standards 88 to 97)**

3.1 Policy formulation

3.1.1 No new policies were formulated, or existing policies reviewed during the reporting period in question. However, in future all new policies (or review of existing policies) will comply with the relevant Standards.

3.2 Public consultation

3.2.1 During the reporting period in question, the Authority consulted on its review of the Local Development Plan and Delivery Agreement. Both documents were published in Welsh and English, together with the relevant consultation questionnaires.

3.3 Policy research

3.3.1 No research was commissioned during the reporting period in question.

4. Operational Standards (Standards 98 to 144)

- 4.1 On the 31st March 2016, the Authority employed 153 staff, 30 (20%) of whom describe themselves as fluent, with an additional 59 (39%) describing themselves as “Welsh learners” or “less fluent”.
- 4.2 All staff have been asked whether s/he wishes to receive any documents relating to their employment in Welsh or bilingually.
- 4.3 All relevant staffing policies covered by the Standards have been, or are in the process of being, translated into Welsh.
- 4.4 The *Cysgeir* and *Cysill* programmes are available to all staff.
- 4.5 Performance reviews are undertaken with all staff, where the need (or opportunity) to learn Welsh is identified. Any staff wishing to attend a Welsh language course during work time is supported.
- 4.6 Guidance has been provided to all staff on email signatures and out-of-office messages.
- 4.7 All documentation (i.e. job description, person specification, etc.) for vacant posts is available bilingually.
- 4.8 All vacant/new posts are assessed as to the linguistic skills needed for the post.

5. Record Keeping Standards (Standards 147 to 154)

- 5.1 No complaints were received during the reporting period in question.
- 5.2 A copy of the Compliance Notice issued to the Authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner is available on our website.