

Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan

SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS		
How we intend to comply	Facilitating the use of Welsh	Oversight
<p>Capturing language choice North Wales Fire and Rescue Service will ask which is a service user's preferred language at the point of first contact.</p>	<p>Language preference will be recorded by the department making contact with the service user and this information will be shared with other internal departments as necessary.</p>	<p>Each Head of Department has overall responsibility for implementing the Welsh language standards within their own directorate including record keeping and monitoring.</p>
<p>Correspondence When the Service receives correspondence in Welsh, the Service will reply in Welsh, should a response be required. Where the Service issues correspondence but the language preference of recipients is unknown, the correspondence will be issued in Welsh and English. (Standards 1,4,5 &6) All external Service e-mails and letter-headed paper will include the following statement within the footer: (Standard 7) <i>Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg - byddwn yn ymateb yn gyfartal i'r ddwy ac yn ateb yn eich dewis iaith heb oedi.</i> <i>We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English - we will respond equally to both and will reply in your language of choice without delay.</i></p>	<p>The Service has produced guidance for staff to ensure that everyone is aware of the internal procedures for issuing correspondence to the public. This guidance is published on the Service intranet.</p> <p>The "Siarad Cymraeg" and "Dysgu Cymraeg" logos, together with the statement offering language choice, have been incorporated into the Service's standard e-mail signature for staff to adopt.</p>	<p>All staff have been made aware of the requirement to respect language choice or, if necessary, correspond bilingually. The Service expects each individual member of staff to take personal accountability for following the correct internal procedures to ensure that legal compliance is maintained.</p>

SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS

How we intend to comply	Facilitating the use of Welsh	Oversight
<p>Telephone calls The Welsh Language Standards as imposed upon the Service place no legal requirement to answer 999 calls in Welsh. However, the Service has already designated Control Room staff as Welsh essential posts in order to be able to provide a bilingual 999 service and this will continue to be the case. Employees of the Service will give a fully bilingual greeting when answering the telephone. The posts within the Service responsible for undertaking reception duties have been designated as Welsh essential and filled by Welsh speakers.(Standards 8, 9,13 & 20) All those staff who are Welsh speaking are highlighted as such on the Service’s Staff Directory, so that Welsh speakers can be easily identified located should assistance be required. (Standards 10 & 18) When the Service establishes telephone contact with a service user for the first time, the service user will be asked if they would prefer to receive future calls from the Service in Welsh or English. That language preference will be noted and respected. (Standard 21)</p>	<p>The Welsh Language Standards guidance for staff which is published on the Service’s intranet contains clear instructions on the procedures to follow if a caller wishes to conduct their business with the Service in Welsh, should the call taker be a non Welsh speaker.</p>	<p>All staff have been made aware of the requirement to respect language choice when dealing with telephone calls to and from members of the public. The Service expects each individual member of staff to take personal responsibility and accountability for following the correct internal procedures to ensure that legal compliance is maintained.</p>

<p>Meetings When the Service arranges a meeting with a member or members of the public, attendees will be asked if they wish to use the Welsh language at the meeting. Where individuals express a desire to use Welsh at a meeting, the Service will respect and accommodate that preference.</p>	<p>The Welsh Language Standards guidance for staff published on the Service's intranet contains clear instructions on the procedures to follow should a member of the public wish to use the Welsh language at a meeting with representatives of the Service.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Standards page of the Service's intranet contains guidance on organising a simultaneous translation service at a meeting, should that be necessary and permissible under the standards.</p>	<p>Members of staff who organise meetings with members of the public will be responsible and accountable for ensuring that language choice has been offered, respected and accommodated.</p>
<p>Documents and forms Documents produced by the Service for the public will be made available bilingually. The Service aims to avoid producing separate Welsh and English versions of documents and forms, however where this cannot be avoided, both versions will carry a statement to the effect that a version is available in the other language. Both versions will be treated equally in every way and neither version shall be treated less favourably than the other. (Standards 38 & 46 – 48B)</p>	<p>In recognition that households may include residents who are Welsh speaking Welsh learners or who may be unable to speak Welsh at all, the Service produces bilingual, rather than separate Welsh and English versions of documents.</p>	<p>All members of staff are aware of the need to produce information for the public in both Welsh and English. Guidance on managing requests for translation is available on the Language Standards page of the intranet.</p> <p>The Service's Corporate Communications Department acts as gate-keeper to ensure that all internally produced documents are designed and formatted in both languages at the same time.</p>

<p>Signs and notices All public facing signs and notices displayed on Service premises, including temporary signs and notices, will be bilingual, with the Welsh positioned so that it is likely to be read first. (Standards 58,59 &139-141)</p>	<p>The Service will ensure that the “Welsh language first” bilingual signage requirement is included in all relevant tenders, contracts etc and that the requirement is implemented and monitored.</p>	
<p>Websites and on-line services The Service maintains a fully bilingual corporate website where all pages are created equally in Welsh and English to be fully functional and with a facility to switch easily between the two languages. Information relating to emergency incidents is often dynamic and as such will not always be available bilingually immediately but every effort will be made to provide bilingual information about emergency incidents as soon as possible. The Service does not generally offer on-line services, however recruitment processes are promoted and administered on-line and are always fully bilingual. (Standards 49, 52 & 53)</p>		<p>The Service’s Corporate Communications Department acts as gate-keeper in the internal process of updating the main website. The Service welcomes feedback from users, either in Welsh or English, regarding the quality and accessibility of its websites. If you would like to provide feedback regarding the Service website, please contact the Service at: CorporateCommsDepartment@nwales-fireservice.org.uk</p>
<p>Reception services The Service has its Headquarters at St Asaph, Denbighshire, which is where its main reception is sited. There are also other sites where a public reception service is operated.</p>	<p>A bilingual reception service is provided where public reception services are operated, Staff who cover reception duties during breaks, periods of sickness absence etc</p>	<p>Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that a bilingual service is provided within the sites where a Public reception service is provided. The Service welcomes feedback from</p>

<p>Receptionist posts are designated as Welsh essential and are filled by Welsh speakers. (Standards 61, 64 & 65)</p>	<p>are given training in dealing with Welsh speaking visitors and callers in order that they can provide a bilingual reception service even if they are not Welsh speakers themselves.</p>	<p>service users regarding the quality of its Welsh language reception service.</p>
<p>Awarding contracts The Service will include specific information regarding using the Welsh language in procurement procedures in both its guidance to potential suppliers and its guidance to staff. Invitations to tender will be published bilingually and carry a statement to the effect that tenders may be submitted in Welsh, and that a tender submitted in Welsh will be treated no less favourably than a tender submitted in English. If a tenderer is invited for interview as part of the assessment of a tender, they will be asked if they wish to use the Welsh language at the interview and a simultaneous translation facility will be put in place, unless it is possible to conduct the interview in Welsh without the aid of a simultaneous translation service. (Standards 73, 74, 74A, 76 & 77)</p>	<p>Members of staff who take part in the tendering process and are fluent Welsh speakers will be offered the opportunity to receive bespoke Welsh language training to familiarise themselves with the specific vocabulary involved in procurement.</p>	<p>The Head of Finance is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Service's Welsh Language Standards relating to the tendering process.</p>
<p>Educational courses offered to the public The Service offers a variety of educational courses and visits which are all available in either Welsh or English. Further details regarding these educational courses and</p>	<p>A number of posts in the Service's Community Safety Department are designated as Welsh essential in order to be able to provide educational courses and visits in Welsh as well as</p>	<p>The Head of Community Safety is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Service's Welsh Language Standards relating to the provision of educational courses to the public.</p>

opportunities are available on the Service's main website.	English.	
POLICY MAKING STANDARDS		
All new policies, projects, procedures and initiatives implemented by the Service are subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. As part of this assessment, staff formulating new policies are asked to consider the positive and/or negative impacts that could result from that policy for the Welsh language and for Welsh speakers and learners. (Standards 85-90 & 92-94)	As well as identifying how a policy may have a negative impact on the Welsh language or Welsh speakers, staff are asked to consider how the policy could bring about positive outcomes instead, or how the policy could be adapted to bring about positive outcomes.	The Corporate Communicaitons Manager or Welsh Language Liaison Officer will advise during the EIA process in relation to appropriate consideration of the Welsh Language during the formulation of policies. All Heads of Department Service are responsible for scrutinising and authorising EIAs.
OPERATIONAL STANDARDS		
Internal use of Welsh In line with standard 95, the Service has developed a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language. The Service's Policy on the Internal Use of the Welsh Language is published on the Welsh Language Standards page of the intranet. (Standard 95)	The Service's Policy on the Internal Use of the Welsh Language highlights opportunities for staff to use their Welsh language skills with colleagues and service users alike, e.g. wearing a badge "Siarad Cymraeg"/ "Dysgu Cymraeg", applying for internal posts in Welsh, using incidental Welsh at meetings etc.	Evidence of how teams and managers promote and implement a bilingual ethos within their workplaces will be gathered and submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner via the statutory reporting process.
New posts When a new post is offered to an individual, the post holder is asked whether they would prefer to receive their contract of employment in Welsh or English. If they select Welsh, the contract is provided in Welsh. The Service also offers the option of receiving both Welsh and	Internal HR processes are established to ensure that new employees can select a language preference at the start of the recruitment process and have that preference accomodated at every stage of their progression from candidate to colleague.	The Head of HR is responsible for ensuring that the relevant Standards are incorporated into the Service's core business.

<p>English versions of contracts of employment if that is the post holder's preference. (Standard 96)</p>		
<p>Use of the Welsh language within a body's internal administration The Service has conducted a review of HR processes, procedures and documentation in order to ensure that staff choosing to receive the following in Welsh can do so without delay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper correspondence relating to their employment • Documents that outline their training needs or requirements • Documents that outline their performance objectives • Documents that outline their career plan <p>Forms that record and authorise annual leave, absence from work and flexible working hours. (Standards 97 – 101)</p>	<p>Staff have been provided with guidance on the Standards which is published on the Welsh Language Standards page of the intranet.</p>	<p>The number of staff choosing to receive the documents referred to in standards 97 – 101 will be gathered as part of the statutory reporting process.</p>
<p>HR policies The policies listed in Standards 102-108 will be published on the intranet in both Welsh and English.</p>		
<p>Complaints and disciplinary The Service has arrangements in place to ensure that staff may choose to participate in complaints and disciplinary processes in either Welsh or English according to their personal preference. This includes making allegations,</p>		<p>The number of staff choosing to use the Welsh language whilst participating in complaints and disciplinary proceedings will be gathered as part of the statutory reporting process.</p>

<p>responding to allegations, giving statements in interviews etc. (Standards 109-116)</p>		
<p>Software Cysgliad spelling and grammar checking software is available to all members of staff who have access to a Service computer. (Standard 117)</p>		
<p>Intranet The Service will instigate a project workstream to ensure compliance with the requirement to have a bilingual intranet by 30.09.18. (Standards 118-123)</p>	<p>The Service will take advantage of any opportunity that arises to maximise the use of the Welsh language in the design and implementation of revising the intranet.</p>	<p>The Service's Welsh Language Forum will receive regular updates on the progress of the project as a whole, including compliance with Welsh Language Standards.</p>
<p>Assessing Welsh language skills All staff are required to self-assess their Welsh language skills in respect of reading, writing and speaking and at levels 0-5 for each of those three categories. Members of staff are also encouraged to take a formal assessment. (Standard 124) All new staff are required to undertake a formal assessment of their Welsh Language skills.</p>	<p>The data gathered is used to develop a Welsh language skills profile of the workforce which will inform future HR strategy and policy.</p>	<p>The Welsh language skills profile of the workforce is monitored and will be reported as part of the statutory reporting process.</p>
<p>Welsh Language Skills Training When the courses listed under Standard 125 are offered to staff, there will be an opportunity for staff to attend either a session provided through the medium of Welsh or session provided through the medium of English, according to their personal language</p>		<p>The number of staff enrolled on Welsh language skills courses, their level of study and any qualifications attained will be monitored and reported as part of the statutory reporting process</p>

<p>preference. Welsh speaking Service trainers will be used to deliver the courses, irrespective of whether they are a subject matter expert. The courses listed under Standard 126 will be offered to staff through the medium of Welsh and instructed by Welsh speaking Service trainers. The Service collaborated with North Wales Police in delivering training courses listed under Standards 125 and 126. In respect of Standards 127 and 128 Service employees are offered the opportunity to receive basic Welsh lessons during work time. The Service provides Welsh language courses which have been specifically designed for fire and rescue service staff. Courses are provided at Level 1 through to Gloywi Iait. Members of staff who successfully complete a course are actively encouraged to progress to the next level. Members of staff are also able to attend a course in their local community if they wish to do so. Managers are given the opportunity to attend training to increase their awareness of using Welsh as part of their role and facilitating Welsh at work.</p>		
<p>Welsh Language Awareness Training The Service provides Welsh language awareness training to all new staff. This training is delivered by the Welsh Language Liaison Officer but is also available via an online learning module. (Standards 129 & 130)</p>		<p>The number of staff who have attended or completed Welsh language awareness training courses will be monitored and reported as part of the statutory reporting process.</p>

<p>Assessing Welsh language skills requirement for each vacant post When a new post is created, or an existing post is reviewed, the line manager for that post and an HR officer assesses the Welsh language skills required for that post. The assessment is based on the job description, i.e. does the post involve contact with the public, if so how often, is a service provided etc. The Service uses a set of skill levels based on the ALTE framework and a series of “can do” statements to determine what level of Welsh is required for the role. (Standards 134-135B)</p>		<p>The number and nature of Welsh essential roles within the Service will be monitored and reported as part of the statutory reporting process.</p>
<p>Application forms The Service’s application forms for posts provide an opportunity for applicants to indicate Language preference at interview (Standard 137)</p>		<p>The number of applicants for posts who choose to complete applications forms in Welsh and/or have an interview for a post in Welsh, will be monitored and reported as part of the statutory reporting process.</p>
<p>RECORD KEEPING STANDARDS AND STANDARDS WHICH DEAL WITH SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS</p>		
<p>The Service will record and monitor all the information required under Standards 143-171. Information will be made available to the Welsh Language Commissioner upon request and without delay.</p>		<p>The Fire and Rescue Authority will compile and publish an annual monitoring report that will be published on its main website.</p>