

Board Paper

09 July 2014

Paper Title	Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report to Welsh Language Commissioner 2013-14
Paper Reference:	NRW B B 49.14
Paper Prepared By:	Adrian Williams/Lyn Williams

Purpose of Paper:	Decision
Recommendation:	To agree Annual Report for Natural Resources Wales to forward to Welsh Language Commissioner
Decision Required:	Agreement

Impact: To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic	Impact on the Environment: A bilingual Natural Resources Wales will be in a stronger position to work with other Wales organisations and partners to deliver better environmental outcomes
	Impact on the Economy: Not applicable
	Impact on Community: Enables our organisation to deliver a bilingual service to the public and be able to communicate effectively with all the communities which we serve.
	Impact on Knowledge: A bilingual capability will strengthen our ability to share and develop knowledge with other partners and academic institutions across Wales

Issue

1. To bring the Board up to date with progress made on implementing the Welsh Language Scheme, which was approved by the Board in November 2012, and to seek approval for the Natural Resources Wales Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report (Enclosure 1).

Summary

2. The Welsh Language Commissioner requires all Welsh Public Bodies to provide an Annual Report on the implementation of their Welsh Language Scheme. The draft report for Natural Resources Wales is attached. The report shows a good overall level of performance in the first year, but with the need to continue to make progress in order that we can achieve our aim of becoming a bilingual organisation.

Background

3. The Welsh Language Scheme is a Corporate Policy under the 1993 Welsh Language Act which puts a duty on public sector organisations to prepare Welsh Language Schemes outlining how they plan to prepare and deliver a bilingual service to the public. Our Scheme reflects the combined longer term objectives of the three legacy bodies in relation to the Welsh Language. The Scheme covers the period between April 2013 and the introduction of the statutory Welsh Language Standards, anticipated to be sometime in 2015.

Annual Report: Key Achievements during 2013/14

4. The Annual Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner represents a formal requirement for us to report back to the Commissioner setting out how we are progressing against the specific targets we included in our Scheme. The attached draft Annual Report is set out in a format that is mandated by the Welsh Language Commissioner, with the Annex to the Report providing progress against each of our individual targets from our Welsh Language Scheme.

5. Natural Resources Wales' Welsh Language Scheme and relevant guidance have been in place and available to the public and staff since 1st April 2013. The main achievements in implementing the Scheme are listed below, with the Annual Report having a more comprehensive list of key developments.

- A number of face to face meetings have taken place to raise staff awareness of the Scheme with the Welsh Language Officer giving a presentation on the requirements of the Scheme. The meetings have been successful helping staff to get a better understanding of the Scheme and addressing any concerns raised.
- Grŵp Pencampwyr (Champions Group) is fully established with Adrian Williams acting as Chair and with a representative from each Directorate. Pencampwyr's

work has been invaluable in implementing and raising staff awareness in all areas of the business.

- Where appropriate, we have incorporated a bilingual approach into the way we conduct our day to day business. This includes our Website, our Intranet, how we communicate key pieces of information and decisions.
- New Welsh Language Training Guidance in place for the organisation, giving all our staff the opportunity to learn the language. Training priorities have been drawn from the results of the Staff Skills Audit carried out in October 2013. This training programme will improve the Welsh language skills of staff and also help achieve the targets set out in our Bilingual Skills Strategy which forms part of our Scheme.

Plans for 2014/15 and beyond

6. Over the next year we will:-

- Continue to implement the Scheme and raise staff awareness.
- Implement the new Welsh Language Training programme.
- Continue to capture staff Welsh language skills to ensure that we are working towards achieving our targets as set out in our Bilingual Skills Strategy.
- Carry out an internal audit to ensure staff compliance with our policy of answering the telephone bilingually, bilingual answerphone messages etc.
- Work with Team Managers and Grŵp Pencampwyr on a business mapping exercise to set a Welsh language level for each post within the organisation.
- Work with the Welsh Language Commissioner's staff who will be conducting an investigation into our organisation in September 2014 to determine whether we should comply with the forthcoming Welsh Language Standards, and if so, which will apply to us. More information on the new Standards is at (Enclosure 2).

Risks

7. The Welsh language has a high profile, both externally and also internally with staff. Failure to deliver a bilingual service will result in complaints to the Welsh Language Commissioner resulting in a risk to our reputation and a potential loss of support to us as an organisation.

Financial Implications

8. This work is already in the Learning and Development budget plans.

Communications

9. The Scheme should continue to be publicised in Yr Wythnos, on the Intranet and Website to raise awareness and bring attention to any changes. As we rollout the training programme, we should ensure that we celebrate success.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

Not required.

Index of Enclosures

1. Annual Report to Welsh Language Commissioner 2013-2014(Final Draft)
2. Welsh Language Standards.