

WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS – CAERPHILLY CBC INITIAL CHALLENGES 09/12/15

Standard 2:	<p>When you correspond with an individual ("A") for the first time, you must ask A whether A wishes to receive correspondence from you in Welsh, and if A responds to say that A wishes to receive correspondence in Welsh you must –</p> <p>(a) keep a record of A's wish,</p> <p>(b) correspond with A in Welsh when corresponding with A from then onwards, and</p> <p>(c) send any forms you send to A from then onwards in Welsh.</p>
Standard 3:	<p>When you send correspondence addressed to two individuals who are members of the same household (for example, the parents of a child) for the first time, you must ask them whether they wish to receive correspondence from you in Welsh; and if -</p> <p>(a) both individuals respond to say that they wish to receive correspondence in Welsh, you must keep a record of that wish and correspond in Welsh from then onwards when sending correspondence addressed to both of those individuals;</p> <p>(b) one (but not both) of the individuals responds to say that he or she wishes to receive correspondence in Welsh, you must keep a record of that wish and provide a Welsh language version of correspondence from then onwards when sending correspondence addressed to both of those individuals.</p>
Standard 21:	<p>When you telephone an individual ("A") for the first time you must ask A whether A wishes to receive telephone calls from you in Welsh, and if A responds to say that A wishes to receive telephone calls in Welsh you must keep a record of that wish, and conduct telephone calls made to A from then onwards in Welsh.</p>

In the Council response in July 2015, we noted objections to these related standards on the following basis:

Unable to comply due to additional resources being required to record and monitor this information to assess compliance . . .

. . . in practice, we are unsure how this can be implemented or monitored.

The current position is that the above Standards have been imposed despite the objection, the only change being that the timetable has been extended from 6 to 12 months in the final Compliance Notice.

<p>Standard 41: <i>Must also comply with Standard 48 and 49</i></p>	<p>If you produce the following documents you must produce them in Welsh -</p> <p>(a) agendas, minutes and other papers that are available to the public, which relate to management board or cabinet meetings;</p> <p>(b) agendas, minutes and other papers for meetings, conferences or seminars that are open to the public.</p> <p>You must comply with standard 41(a) in every circumstance, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ other papers that are available to the public, which relate to management board or cabinet meetings. <p>You must comply with standard 41(b) in every circumstance, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ other papers for meetings that are open to the public.
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The evidence provided in the summer proved a successful argument for CCBC in that for both 41 (a) and 41(b) “and other papers” has been exempted from the Council’s compliance notice.

This significantly reduces the cost/translation requirements however CMT felt that a further challenge should be made to 41(b) in that the minutes for meetings, conferences and seminars open to the public was still a huge requirement.

A recent analysis of just Scrutiny meetings alone estimates around 162,952 words for a 12 month period, and using the same median translation cost of £75 per thousand words, this equates to £12,241.40 per year.

It is recommended that the requirement is challenged and that an exemption is added to allow the Council to translate only those minutes where a clear Welsh language audience/requirement is evident (i.e. annual Welsh Language reports, Welsh medium Education issues etc.).

Standard 46:	When you issue any statement to the press you must issue it in Welsh and, if there is a Welsh language version and an English language version of a statement, you must issue both versions at the same time.
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This is existing policy but as CCBC noted in the summer, simultaneous publication of every press notice is not currently always achievable. Additional resources would be required and a possible delay could occur.

It is also CMT's position that translating every press notice for publications when many of those publications only publish in English is a waste of resources.

An exemption allowing for the Council to publish its own press statements in its own publications and website only as opposed to the press in general, unless that statement has a clear Welsh medium audience e.g. around Education issues where it would be picked up by Welsh medium press, would make this a more reasonable and achievable Standard.

Standard 64: <i>Must also comply with Standard 67 and 68</i>	<p>Any reception service you make available in English must also be available in Welsh, and any person who requires a Welsh language reception service must not be treated less favourably than a person who requires an English language reception service.</p> <p>You must comply with standard 64 in relation to the following by 30 March 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The body's main reception service. <p>You must comply with standard 64 in relation to the following by 30 September 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Every other reception service.
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This Standard was objected to in the summer as it has resource implications in terms of current staffing / recruitment issues and the ability to guarantee delivery of such a bilingual service.

The bold exemptions shown above in terms of the main reception is more reasonable however the second part of the Standard in terms of every other reception service within 12 months, considering the number of satellite offices the Council has across the county borough and across many service areas, is impossible to achieve with the current workforce profile of Welsh speakers.

Further, an initial and quick review of demand has shown that there are no recorded requests for Welsh language service in other reception services, and approximately 15 in the last year or so at Penallta House. The latter have been successfully dealt with under current practice and with current staffing resources.