

Pre-legislative public consultation on Bilingual Services

Evidence from Megan Tomos

Consultation on Assembly Commission services

Dear Sir/Madam

I'm pleased about the intention to legislate on the Welsh language at the National Assembly by amending the Government of Wales Act 2006. However, I would like to see some important changes to your legislative plans.

1. The Record of Plenary proceedings should be entirely bilingual and the Act itself should state this clearly and unambiguously. A failure to do so would undermine all of the efforts made since the establishment of the Assembly to bolster Wales's identity and reinforce the Welsh language. Imagine for a moment what the impact of failing to do this would be on implementing bilingual policies within the county councils.

The task of translating the Record should be undertaken as professionally as any other translating work undertaken at the Assembly. Modern technology should be used to its limits, but linguistic standards should not be ignored in order to save money. If the Record does not read like a genuine Welsh-language text, people will not want to use it.

2. In order to bolster the presence of Welsh within the organisation, the Bilingual Services Scheme should be strengthened.

3. The Bill and the Scheme should be extended beyond the remit of *services*, and they should include the legislature and the role of Assembly Members.

4. More attention needs to be paid to staff skills and the role of the Welsh language in the internal operation of the Scheme.

5. A detailed programme of targets and a monitoring plan will be needed to move forward and strengthen the Scheme in its current form.

Sincerely,

Megan Tomos (former Chief Executive, the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters)