

Framework Agreement between Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner

BACKGROUND

1. The post of Welsh Language Commissioner was created under the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011. The role came into being on 1st April, 2012.
2. The purpose of the Framework Agreement is to outline the working relationship between the Commissioner's officials and the Welsh Government officials, whilst respecting the Commissioner's independence. It also outlines areas of co-operation.
3. The nature of the relationship between the Commissioner and the Welsh Government in respect of certain elements of the Commissioner including, but not limited to, annual budget and annual report, are outlined in the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011. The agreement does not replace or take precedence over what is outlined in the Measure. The Welsh Language Commissioner's role as regulator happens independently of the Welsh Government.
4. The Welsh Government will ensure that no conflict arises in relation to the duty which will be placed on Welsh Ministers to implement the Welsh Language Standards. In this regard, the Commissioner will treat the Welsh Government like any other establishment placed under the duty to implement the Welsh Language Standards.

MEETINGS

5. The Commissioner will usually meet the Welsh Minister with responsibility for the Welsh language twice a year, or more frequently should the need arise. These meetings will provide an opportunity to discuss, amongst other things, Welsh language policy matters, opportunities for joint working and for the Commissioner to advise the Minister. A record will be prepared of each meeting.
6. The Commissioner's officials will usually meet senior Welsh Government officials with responsibility for the Welsh language on a quarterly basis. Amongst other matters, there will be an opportunity to discuss any request to change the Commissioner's baseline budget for the following financial year, policy matters and opportunities for joint working. A record will be prepared of each meeting.
7. The Commissioner's officers will meet Welsh Government officials as required to discuss the budget, standards, and to collaborate on the areas outlined in the Appendices. A record will be prepared as appropriate.

SHARING INFORMATION

8. In relation to implementing the Welsh Language Standards, the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Unit will share factual information with each other promptly and proactively, to the extent it is appropriate to release that information.
9. The Commissioner will inform the Welsh Government at least two working days in advance, sharing selected extracts or a summary, if she intends to produce any documentation and announcements that is likely to attract public attention. This will enable the Welsh Government to prepare its response. The Welsh Government will not reveal such information prior to the Commissioner's announcement.
10. When the Commissioner produces a report regarding Welsh Government, or its policy areas, she will share the information beforehand and will consider the Welsh Government's comments before completing the report. A finalised copy of the report will be shared with Welsh Government at least five full working days before the report's publication.
11. The Welsh Government will notify the Commissioner at least two working days in advance, sharing selected extracts or summary, if it intends to produce any documentation and announcements that is likely to attract public attention. This will enable the Commissioner to prepare a response. The Commissioner will not reveal such information prior to the Welsh Government's announcement.
12. When Welsh Government produces a report relating to the Commissioner, or the Commissioner's policy areas, it will share the information beforehand and will consider the Commissioner's comments before completing the report. A finalised copy of the report will be shared with the Commissioner at least five full working days before it's publication.
13. The Welsh Government will notify the Commissioner and her Audit and Risk Committee as soon as possible of any internal audit or financial review which could affect the Commissioner. The Welsh Government will ensure that the Commissioner receives a copy of the Terms of Reference of any audit or review, as well as a copy of the final report. The Commissioner will provide any information required in order to prepare, or which is required during an audit or review.

FUNDING THE COMMISSIONER

14. Welsh Government officials will consider the Commissioner's requests for funding fairly. When exercising functions in relation to the Commissioner, the Welsh Ministers must have regard to the fact that it is desirable to ensure that the Commissioner is under as few constraints as reasonably possible in determining her activities, timetable and priorities. The Commissioner will have the opportunity to respond to any proposed change to the funding baseline to explain the implications of these changes on her work and to provide additional information. On the Commissioner's request, if there is a need, a

special meeting between the Welsh Government's officials and the Commissioner's officials will be arranged to discuss the budget.

15. Processes and schedule

Process	Schedule
<p>Welsh Language Commissioner to present a draft of her Estimate of Income and Expenditure to Welsh Government officials as the basis for a discussion of the level of budget intended for the Commissioner for the following financial year, in order to allow time to plan and prepare an Estimate of Income and Expenditure.</p>	<p>Commissioner to present a draft document at the end of August or the beginning of September.</p> <p>To be discussed during the quarterly meeting in September/October.</p>
<p>Welsh Government Officials notify the Commissioner of its draft budget for the following financial year following the publication of the Welsh Government Draft Budget</p>	<p>Beginning of October, following the publication of the Welsh Government draft budget.</p>
<p>The Welsh Government officials and the Commissioner's officials arrange a special meeting to discuss the proposed draft budget as needed</p>	<p>Arranged if necessary</p>
<p>The Commissioner presents Estimate of Income and Expenditure to Welsh Government</p>	<p>In accordance with the Welsh Language Measure at least five months before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.</p>
<p>The Welsh Government to lay the Estimate of Income and Expenditure before the National Assembly for Wales with modifications (if any) they think appropriate.</p>	<p>In accordance with the Welsh Language Measure after the publication of the Government's final budget and the Commissioner has been informed of the final budget.</p>
<p>Welsh Government Officials to confirm the Commissioner's budget for the following financial year following the publication of the Government's Final Budget</p>	<p>Beginning of December following the publication of the Government's final budget</p>
<p>The Commissioner to present her Accounts for the previous financial year</p>	<p>In accordance with the Welsh Language</p>

	<p>Measure, the Commissioner must present the accounts for the financial year to the Auditor General for Wales by 31st August the following financial year.</p>
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16. It is possible for the Commissioner to bring forward a reasonable sum from one financial year to another in order to create a contingency fund. This funding must be used in accordance with the terms set out in the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011.

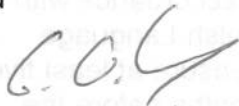
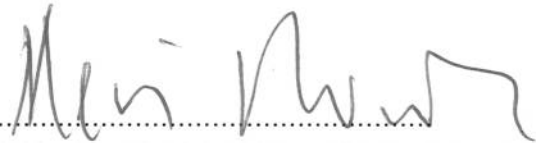
CO-OPERATION

17. It is possible for the Welsh Government and Commissioner to co-operate in a number of areas, which may vary from time to time. This will ensure that the best use is made of resources. These areas are outlined in the Appendices, and they may be supplemented and updated by agreement when appropriate.

REVIEW

18. The Welsh Government and the Commissioner agree to review this Framework by 30 September 2015, and to update it by agreement.

Signed

Owen Evans
 Director General
 for Education and Skills
 Welsh Government on
 behalf of the Minister with
 responsibility for the Welsh
 Language.

Meri Huws
 Welsh Language Commissioner

Date 15.07 2014

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