

Joint Working Framework between the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner: Statistics and Social Research

Background

A Memorandum of understanding was agreed between the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government in August 2019. The purpose of the Memorandum is to outline the working relationship between the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government. It respects the independence of the Welsh Language Commissioner, and also outlines where there will be collaboration. The Memorandum states that working together to implement the targets of *Cymraeg 2050* is central to the relationship between the Government and the Commissioner.

It states that committees of officials from both bodies will be established in order to discuss specific areas of work as necessary, some of which will be established on a permanent basis and others temporary.

This Joint Working Framework is supplementary to the Memorandum of understanding, and encompasses *Statistics and Social Research*. A Statistics and Social Research Joint Working Framework was originally agreed in January 2015, and updated in September 2018. This latest Framework was produced in July 2020.

The aim of the Welsh Government's Social Research is to support the development, implementation and evaluation of policy in Wales. It achieves this by exploring the effectiveness of policies, interventions and projects, and by facilitating improvements on the basis of robust evidence. A variety of quantitative and qualitative methods are used to undertake this work.

The role of the Welsh Government's Statistical Service is to support decision-making, the distribution of funding and research within government and the wider community by providing a reliable, efficient statistical service.

Joint Working: principles

The Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government will share information and identify opportunities for joint working in statistics and social research, with the aim of promoting the following principles:

- Developing a robust and comprehensive evidence base regarding the needs of the Welsh language and its speakers;
- Strategic forward planning and avoiding duplication of work;
- Avoiding an unnecessary burden on stakeholders, respondents and research partners;
- Making the best use of resources.

In some instances, it will not be appropriate for the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government to share information or engage in joint working.

Government Social Research and Government Statistical Service

The Welsh Government's research and data work is undertaken in accordance with the Welsh Government Social Research Principles for Research and Evaluation¹ and the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Code of Practice.² They apply to the quality of the work produced and also to the procedures governing the publishing of research.

The Welsh Government Social Research Principles for Research and Evaluation are:

- Early consideration of evaluation;
- Effective planning of research and evaluation;
- Research is published (according to the Government Social Research publication protocol);
- Research is acted upon;
- Value for money.

Bodies within the UK that are responsible for official statistics must comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics. This Code is based on three pillars: Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. Together, these pillars support public confidence in statistics.

The Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Wales) Order 2009 sets out the rules and principles to be followed in relation to allowing specific people to see specific kinds of statistics in advance before publishing them officially.

The Welsh Language Commissioner's Statistics and Social Research

In accordance with Section 4(2) (e) of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, the Welsh Language Commissioner may engage in research work or commission others to do so. The Commissioner is named under the Official Statistics (Wales) Order 2017, and the Commissioner is expected to follow the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics.

¹ [Welsh Government standards for statistics and research](#)

² [UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics](#)

Sharing Information: statistics and social research

The Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government will share information regarding statistics and social research. This will include:

- providing information on research that is ongoing within both organisations;
- providing information on research that is being planned by both organisations;
- providing information regarding the publication of statistics or research outputs (e.g. reports, seminars);
- sharing information on wider research developments that may be of interest to the other organisation.

In accordance with section 4 of the Memorandum of understanding ('Sharing Information'), the Commissioner will notify the Government at least two working days in advance, enclosing a copy, if they intend to publish any report or document. Similarly, the Government will notify the Commissioner at least two working days in advance if it intends to publish any report or document that directly affects the Commissioner's work.

The principle of sharing information will be subject to any conditions relating to the requirements of the relevant professional bodies. These include the compliance requirements of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) and the Government Social Research (GSR) protocol in relation to the publication of data and research.

Information sharing methods

The Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner will share information about research work that is ongoing or that has been completed by the following methods:

- Meetings between Welsh Government officials who have responsibility for Statistics and Social Research and the Welsh Language Commissioner at least every six months. A record will be kept of every meeting;
- Welsh Statistical Liaison Committee meetings;
- Seminars, conferences and other forums arranged to promote joint working with partners in research and evaluation;
- Email correspondence where appropriate;
- The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Research and Statistics Evidence Plan;

- New opportunities that are identified as the Joint Working Framework is developed and revised.

These methods can also be a way of identifying opportunities to commission joint research.

Data sharing

The Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner will share data, subject to legal rights, with appropriate agreements in place. The Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner will be responsible for their own analyses unless joint working arrangements have been agreed in advance.

The Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner will collaborate and share information where appropriate on the following:

1. **Census** – including analysing census results, responding to an Office for National Statistics (ONS) consultation (formal or informal), Census Advisory Group for Wales, and wider matters relating to the Census.
2. **Language Use Surveys** – including analysing the findings, sharing the findings of the survey further, and planning future Welsh language use surveys.
3. **Other data regarding the Welsh language** – including other data collected by or on behalf of the Welsh Government (e.g. the National Survey for Wales, the Annual Population Survey, Pupil Level Annual School Census), projections regarding the language in the future and other analyses.
4. **Statistical matters** – including developing the Statistical Service's policy matters and attending meetings on statistical matters that could be relevant to the Welsh language or relevant to the status of the Welsh Language Commissioner as a producer of statistics, e.g. Welsh Statistical Liaison Committee.

In accordance with clause 9.2 of the Memorandum of understanding the Welsh Language Commissioner will provide data and written analysis to the Welsh Government on a yearly basis on how their work has contributed to the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy.

The Welsh Language Commissioner's 5-year Reports

Section 5 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 notes that the Welsh Language Commissioner must produce a 5-year report on the position of the Welsh Language during that period. The first five-year report was published in August 2016. In accordance with Section 5(3) of the Measure, this report includes a report on the 2011 Census results and an assessment of the implications of those results for the Welsh language. There is no limit on the other matters which the Commissioner may include in any 5-year report.

The Welsh Government will share data with the Welsh Language Commissioner at the request of the Commissioner, subject to legal rights, and

the establishment of appropriate agreements, to be analysed by the Welsh Language Commissioner and included in the 5-year report.

The Welsh Government will offer information and advice to the Welsh Language Commissioner on issues relating to the report, to ensure the factual accuracy of the report or to confirm that the appropriate sources have been explored.

Opportunities to commission joint research

When appropriate, the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner will commission and publish research jointly. In some circumstances, commissioning and publishing independently could be advantageous in a wider academic and civil context. In such cases, care must be taken to ensure that the quality of the research itself is not compromised.

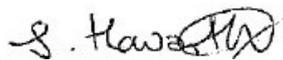
Matters Specific to Statistics: Producers of Official Statistics

Following the confirmation of the Welsh Language Commissioner's status as Producer of Official Statistics, the Welsh Government will offer advice and support to the Welsh Language Commissioner on specific matters.

Review

The Memorandum of understanding between the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner notes that the division of responsibilities between the two organisations will be reviewed annually to ensure that the objectives of *Cymraeg 2050* are realised.

SIGNED



.....

Stephanie Howarth
Chief Statistician
Welsh Government

Date 06/07/2020



.....

Dyfan Sion
Director
Welsh Language Commissioner

Date 06/07/2020



.....

Steven Marshall
Chief Social Research Officer
Welsh Government

Date 06/07/2020