



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Culture, Communications, Welsh Language and Sport Committee
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Dear Chairs,

The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language and Sport Committee's consultation on its priorities for the Seventh Senedd

I recently published a [5-year report on the situation of the Welsh language](#) which provides an in-depth analysis of the results of the 2021 Census in relation to the Welsh language. The report goes beyond the census figures by examining in detail policy areas that are central to creating more Welsh speakers and increasing the use of Welsh. This includes areas such as the transmission of Welsh at home, education and skills, the workplace, and community language planning. The report draws together this evidence and sets out clear, specific recommendations as to what needs to be prioritised to strengthen the position of the Welsh language over the next period. We would encourage you to consider the findings of this report as you plan your work during the Seventh Senedd.

While the report outlines several challenges facing the Welsh language, it also highlights important developments that could significantly strengthen its position over the coming years. Perhaps the two most important developments are the introduction of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 and the work of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities. These developments have the potential to transform the situation of Welsh language, and the Committee has a central role in scrutinising the Government's actions and ensuring that it maximises the opportunities available during this Senedd.

As highlighted in our report, the Welsh language is not a marginal policy area that stands alone; rather, it should be considered a central element in the development of Welsh legislation and public policy. We would therefore encourage you to ensure that the Committee considers the Welsh language in all aspects of its work, not just when it considers specific issues relating to the Welsh language. Several of the priority areas outlined in our report apply to other committees of the Senedd, as well as your Committee

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which is responsible for scrutinising the Welsh language. We would therefore encourage you to consider opportunities to collaborate with other relevant committees of the Senedd.

Based on the main conclusions of the report I recommend that the Committee focus on the following priority areas:

1. The Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy

The Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy sets out the vision of reaching one million Welsh speakers and doubling the percentage who use Welsh on a daily basis by 2050. The Committee has a key role in scrutinising the extent to which the Strategy is being achieved and the milestones that have been set are being met.

As you are aware, the Government will be consulting on a revised version of this strategy in the autumn, as part of the implementation of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025. The Committee has a critical role to play in scrutinising the reform of this strategy and will in turn hold the Government to account for its implementation. Several of the issues that are referred to below are, of course, part of the implementation of the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy.

2. Expanding Welsh language standards

Our 5-year report states that Welsh language standards are the most effective mechanism for improving provision and ensuring consistency in Welsh language services. To further increase these opportunities, extending the standards to new organisations and sectors is a key step. We welcome the fact that the new Government is committed to strengthening the rights of Welsh speakers by extending Welsh language standards.

The Committee should scrutinise the programme of extending Welsh language standards, including:

- The development of a specific timetable for bringing more organisations and sectors under the Welsh language standards regime, including which organisations and sectors should be prioritised
- The need to review Welsh language standards to ensure they remain relevant and reflect current and future service delivery models
- The implementation of Section 4 of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 and the duty placed on Welsh Ministers to review the standards relating to the improvement or assessment of the skills of the Welsh language workforce, and the promotion standards

3. Creating confident Welsh speakers through the education system

In our response to the Early Years, Children, Young People and Education Committee's consultation on their priorities for the Seventh Senedd we have recommended that the



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Committee focus on five priority areas in relation to the Welsh language. These should be priorities for the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language and Sport Committee as well, and include:

- **Expanding Welsh-medium childcare and early years provision** with a particular focus on the Government's commitment to offer free childcare to all children between 9 months and 4 years of age and as part of that to expand Welsh-medium childcare.
- **Implementing the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025** including a short-term focus on the development of the code for describing ability in Welsh and the process of drawing up and publishing a National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh.
- **Developing an increasingly bilingual education workforce**, including the early years, statutory education, and the tertiary education workforce.
- **Addressing barriers to the growth of Welsh-medium education**, including the availability of qualifications, transport to education, additional learning needs and curriculum implementation.
- **Strengthening progression to tertiary education, skills and employment**, with a particular focus on the role of Medr in introducing a national plan for the Welsh language in the tertiary sector, how the tertiary sector is creating the bilingual workforce of the future, and the importance of expanding vocational qualifications and Welsh-medium apprenticeships.

4. Supporting Welsh-speaking communities

Although the number of people able to speak Welsh has remained relatively stable over the last few decades, the latest Census shows a further decline in the situation of the Welsh language in some areas with a high density of speakers. There is no doubt that the position of the Welsh language as a living community language, which is widely used and which is being passed on from one generation to another, is under increasing pressure.

The viability of Welsh as a community language depends on more than the provision of education or the existence of Welsh language services. It depends on housing, the local economy, job opportunities, community activities, and local structures that can sustain community use of the language.

Scrutiny should be given to:

- How the Welsh Government is responding and acting on the recommendations of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities' phase 1 report, and as part of that implementing the Commission's main recommendation to establish areas of higher density linguistic significance



- Linked to the above point, how housing, planning, economic development, tourism, culture and sport policies are developed and implemented in order to support the Welsh language within communities
- How the Government's commitment to establish a National Development Agency supports the economy of areas of higher density linguistic significance and increases the visibility of the Welsh language in businesses of all kinds, and thus strengthens Welsh-speaking communities

5. Increasing the use of Welsh and community language planning

The evidence shows that one of the main challenges to the Welsh language is the lack of use of the language in social situations outside and beyond the education system.

The Committee should scrutinise the efforts of the Welsh Government and its partners in creating cultural and community opportunities through the medium of Welsh.

Scrutiny should be given to:

- How the Welsh Government is responding and acting on the recommendations of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities' phase 2 report
- How partners such as the Commissioner, the Urdd, Mentrau Iaith Cymru, the National Eisteddfod, sports clubs, and arts and cultural organisations are working to create spaces for the use of the Welsh language, and what resources and funding they will need to do this work effectively
- How local authorities are taking action to increase the use of the Welsh language locally, whether through direct community language planning, or through wider policies and strategies
- The potential of the promotion standards and promotion strategies of local authorities and national parks as a framework for community language planning
- How the new Culture and Sport Strategy for Wales can increase opportunities to use the Welsh language and contribute to strengthening the Welsh language as a community language

6. The role of sport as a strategic area for increasing the use of the Welsh language

There is no doubt about the importance of sports in providing opportunities for people to use the Welsh language socially. This is especially true for children and young people who participate in sport more than any other activity outside of school.

Particular scrutiny should be given to:

- How Sport Wales, sporting governing bodies and local clubs set clear expectations about the Welsh language in grant allocation and programme planning



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- Provision of training, training qualifications and development of volunteers through the medium of Welsh
- How national and local partners support clubs to use the Welsh language informally and in a fun way
- How sport is used as a central element of community language planning processes, strengthening links between schools, communities and families
- How the investment in sport and culture as part of the Government's preventive health agenda can support the use of the Welsh language

7. Using the Welsh language on digital media

We know that digital media is increasingly central to the lives of children and young people. Our 5-year report refers to the evidence showing that the use of Welsh in mass media and in digital technology is limited. However, the report also notes that advances in technology, digital media and artificial intelligence offer exciting opportunities to increase the use of Welsh.

Scrutiny should be given to:

- What will be the impact of the BBC's charter review on Welsh-language broadcasting
- How the commitment to establish a Shadow Broadcasting and Communications Authority for Wales and the intention to draw up a New Culture Strategy for Wales can support the use of the Welsh language on digital media
- The Government's strategy and investment for ensuring the visibility and use of the Welsh language on digital media, including the Government's response to recommendation 16 of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities' second stage report
- How the Welsh Government is working with and supporting S4C, the BBC, Ofcom, Creative Wales, technology companies and creative organisations to increase Welsh language content on digital media
- What steps are being taken to change the habits and behaviour of users, particularly children and young people, and what steps are being taken to ensure that using Welsh online is an easy and natural choice

8. Creating workplaces that support the Welsh language

Beyond the education system, the workplace is one of the spaces with the greatest potential to influence opportunities for individuals to learn and use Welsh in their daily lives. There is a real opportunity to build on what the education system achieves by ensuring opportunities for people to use Welsh daily at work. By increasing the formal and



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informal use of Welsh in the workplace there is potential to influence people's perceptions of the importance of the language, to build linguistic confidence, and to drive wider use of Welsh in the community.

Scrutiny should be given to:

- How the Welsh Government is leading a national strategy for increasing the use of Welsh in workplaces across Wales
- How key partners, including the Welsh Language Commissioner, the National Centre for Learning Welsh, Medr and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol are working together strategically to create bilingual workforces and increase the use of Welsh in workplaces.
- How the planning and development of a bilingual workforce within key sectors, including health and social care, is effectively prioritised
- How the development of a code for describing ability in Welsh is being used for the purpose of moving workplaces along a linguistic continuum, including the review of Welsh language standards relating to the development of Welsh language skills and use within workplaces.

I hope that these recommendations assist the Committee in shaping its work programme for the Seventh Senedd. I look forward to appearing before the Committee in due course to discuss the above issues further.

Yours sincerely

Efa Gruffudd Jones

Welsh Language Commissioner