

SUBJECT:	WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS - APPEAL
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	2ND MARCH 2016
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with a copy of Monmouthshire's Welsh Language Standards Appeals document which needs to be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner by the deadline of the 30th March 2016.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve the appeal document prior to submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In January 2014 the Welsh Government announced proposals for the first set of Welsh language standards that would be applicable to councils, national parks and the Welsh Government itself. Following a period of consultation the final standards were issued to authorities on 30 September 2015 in the form of a compliance notice.
- 3.2 There are in total 176 Welsh Language Standards. On 2nd December Cabinet received a report outlining the standards that applied to Monmouthshire, the actions that would need to be taken and the associated costs. That report noted the option to further appeal a number standards on the grounds of proportionality and reasonableness before the 30th March deadline. Following extensive discussion and careful consideration of all of the standards amongst many officers from different divisions we have identified that we will should against the following:
- Standard 9 – Extension sought on bilingual telephony service while a new system is installed
 - Standard 41a – Extension sought on the requirement for bilingual minutes and agendas for Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings to allow the translation module of the Modern Gov system to be introduced and fully enabled

- Standard 64 – We are seeking exemption from the requirement to make all reception areas fully bilingual on the basis of low levels of demand and difficulties recruiting Welsh speakers, both in general and specifically at a time when staff turnover is low

3.3 Further details are contained in the full appeals document which is attached as appendix 1.

4. REASONS

- 4.1 To ensure that people who wish to receive a service through the medium of Welsh are treated no less favourably than those who wish to use English while minimising the financial pressures on the council's budgets.
- 4.2 To ensure that the Council is able to comply with section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 while minimising the financial costs of meeting the standards.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The resource implications were dealt with in the report of 2nd December. This report carries no further resource implications

6. EQUALITIES AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are significant positive implications for the Welsh language. At this stage of the analysis there is no specific impact anticipated on any of the protected characteristics.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

It will be important to ensure that the language preference of families involved in safeguarding processes are reflected and acted upon in accordance with the standards.

8. CONSULTATION

Senior Leadership Team
Cabinet

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Compliance Notice, Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

9. AUTHOR

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