



Gweinyddiaeth
Cyfiawnder

Ministry
of Justice

Ministry of Justice Welsh Language Scheme

2023-24 Annual Monitoring Report
to the Welsh Language Commissioner

January 2025



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Introduction

This report covers the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and is a self-assessment of how the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has continued to deliver its commitments under its Welsh Language Scheme (the MoJ Scheme) during this period.

The MoJ Scheme sets out how the MoJ gives effect to the principle in Section 5 of the Welsh Language Act 1993 that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality. It enables everyone who receives a service from the MoJ in Wales, or who communicates with us, to do so through the medium of English or Welsh, according to their personal choice.

The MoJ Scheme is a corporate scheme that covers policy development, recruitment, and delivery of services to the public within its corporate headquarters.

The MoJ has five Executive Agencies (EAs) responsible for the delivery of the majority of its services to the public. Each of its EAs has its own Welsh Language Scheme (WLS) that achieves either an equal or greater provision of Welsh language services compared to the MoJ Scheme. Since each EA also reports annually to the Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC), the detail of this information is not repeated here unless it is of relevance to corporate MoJ Scheme reporting.

Summary of achievements

Achievements for 2023-24 include:

- The Welsh language speaking capability of MoJ staff on the Single Operating Platform (SOP) internal staff data collection system continues to be recorded.
- MoJ consultations are available in Welsh from the MoJ Consultation Hub on our 'corporate' GOV.UK pages and from the 'mainstream' pages of GOV.UK
- We advertised 337 staff recruitment campaigns where the Welsh Language Scheme is highlighted and in which the language requirements state that the ability to use the Welsh language is desirable or essential.
- HMCTS recorded 332 cases in the reporting year where Welsh was used.
- The Advisory Committees for the Magistracy have continued to encourage applications from Welsh speakers particularly across North and West Wales.
- The Witness Intermediary Scheme continued to meet rising demand for Welsh speaking Registered Intermediaries.
- We have maintained our Welsh language landing page website which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice.cy>

- The MoJ Welsh Language Co-ordinators Group, which meets biannually, has continued to operate and covers the full breadth of MoJ's business areas.
- We supported the Welsh Government funded 'Work Welsh programme' which offers Welsh language courses for staff.
- In support of the success of our Welsh Impact Test for policy officials, the HMCTS Welsh Language Unit and [thebigword](#) translated 104 corporate policy documents.

Progress on the Action Plan

An update on our progress in delivering our ongoing Welsh Language Scheme actions is set out below to help demonstrate compliance.

1. Policy development and Implementation

Success criteria:

- a) Improvements in staff awareness; with WLS requirements considered in the policy making and procurement process.*
- b) Policy, analyst, and legal staff consistently consider Welsh language implications in policy development and consultations.*

Refreshed Welsh Language Impact Test (WIT)

We have improved our advice to policy teams undertaking consultation exercises. This includes prompting them to consider whether the proposals are likely to impact on someone's ability to lead their life through the medium of the Welsh language in Wales.

MoJ consultations

During the 2023-24 reporting period the MoJ conducted a number of consultations in Welsh and published responses in Welsh as follows:

Judicial Pensions Amendment Regulations 2024: Consultation on the Draft Regulations. The consultation was translated in full (February 2024) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Statutory review of the whiplash tariff

The call for evidence was translated in full (February 2024) on the corporate MoJ consultation hub.

Crime Lower consultation: this follows on from the government response to the Criminal Legal Aid Independent Review (CLAIR) consultation in November 2022. The consultation was translated in full (January 2024) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Introducing fees in the Employment Tribunal and Employment Appeal Tribunal

The consultation was translated in full (January 2024) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Local Criminal Justice Board. This call for evidence was translated in full (January 2024) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Increasing the use of mediation in the civil justice system.

The consultation response was translated in full (December 2023) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Murder sentencing consultation

The consultation was translated in full (November 2023) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Implementing increases to select court and tribunal fees.

The consultation was translated in full (November 2023) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Reforming fees in the UK Supreme Court.

The consultation response was translated in full (November 2023) on the corporate MoJ consultation hub.

Revising the “Help with Fees” remission scheme.

The consultation response was translated in full (October 2023) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Personal injury discount rate: exploring the option of a dual/ multiple rates.

A Welsh summary (September 2023) of the consultation response is available on the corporate MoJ consultation hub and mainstream GOV.UK site.

Consultation on Youth Remand Funding arrangements

The consultation (August 2023) and response (February 2024) were translated in full on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Diversions and community cautions: draft code of practice.

The consultation was translated in full (August 2023) on the corporate MoJ consultation hub.

Revisions to the Medical Reporting process for Road Traffic Accident claims

The consultation was translated in full (July 2023) on the corporate MoJ consultation hub.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme Review: additional consultation 2023

The consultation was translated in full (July 2023) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

A consultation on the implementation process for applying a 30-year time limit for claims on the Unclaimed Balances fund.

The consultation (July 2023) was translated in full on the corporate MoJ consultation hub. The response (December 2024) was translated in full on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Legal aid fees in the Illegal Migration Fee

A summary of the consultation was translated (June 2023) on the corporate MoJ consultation hub.

Tribunals leadership: consultation on the reform of the Senior President of Tribunals

An executive summary in Welsh (May 2023) is on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Supporting early resolution of private family law arrangements

The consultation was translated in full (March 2023) on the mainstream GOV.UK site.

Welsh Language speakers

We continue to capture the capability of MoJ staff on the SOP system which holds staff data through a voluntary question asking whether staff can speak either basic or fluent Welsh. It has helped MoJ to establish an evidence base for Welsh speaking staff and will also contribute to the Welsh Government’s target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The MoJ was also one of the first six government departments to corporately sign up to the Welsh Government's Work Welsh (WW) programme aimed at improving the Welsh language skills of our staff in Wales. Building on HMCTS being an early adopter of WW, we continue to recognise the importance of encouraging all staff in both operational and corporate roles to consider Welsh language training.

MoJ actively promotes the Civil Service Welsh Network, part of the Civil Service Languages Network. It is designed for civil servants who can speak Welsh or are keen to learn and are interested in intercultural dialogue. The Network also provides support on special projects in government requiring solid language skills and intercultural knowledge. For more information, contact cslocalcymruwales@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

2. Recruitment

Success criteria:

- a) *An effective system exists to monitor MoJ's recruitment of staff and appointment of judiciary to ensure that it meets its commitments made in the Welsh Language Scheme.*
- b) *Court proceedings are held in Welsh where required.*
- c) *Consistent approach to the Welsh language in the recruitment of magistrates and judges.*
- d) *New recruitment system complies with Welsh Language Commissioner's requirements and legislation.*

Staff

Success criteria:

- a) *An effective system exists to monitor MoJ's recruitment of staff and appointment of judges to ensure that it meets its commitments made in the Welsh Language Scheme.*
- d) *New recruitment system complies with the Welsh Language Commissioner's requirements and legislation.*

During the reporting year, we have advertised 337 campaigns where the Welsh Language Scheme is mentioned and the language requirement states that Welsh is desirable or essential.

As of 1 April 2024, 588 formal offers have been accepted within these campaigns where the Welsh language is desirable or essential.

Court proceedings

Success criterion:

- b) *Court proceedings are held in Welsh effectively where required.*

The effective identification and subsequent recruitment of Welsh-speaking judges and magistrates enables court proceedings to take place in Welsh when required. During the reporting year HMCTS recorded 332 cases where Welsh was used.

The total is broken down as follows:

Magistrates Court (non-appearance)	70
Magistrates Court (appearances)	64
County Court	164
Tribunals	6
Crown Court	27
Court of Protection	1

The judiciary

Success criterion:

c) Consistent approach to the Welsh language in the recruitment of magistrates and judges.

The following selection exercises identified vacancies in Wales that had an essential Welsh language requirement in addition to testing the candidates' understanding of the administration of justice in Wales:

- **Employment Judge (England and Wales) (00132).** Welsh language was an essential requirement for one post in the selection exercise for Employment Judge (England and Wales). The national exercise launched on 14 March 2023 with 50 vacancies across England and Wales. 20 candidates were recommended with no candidate recommended as suitable for appointment for the Welsh speaking post.
- **Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal and Fee-paid Judge of the Employment Tribunals (England and Wales) (00117).** The joint exercise for Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal and Fee-paid Judge of the Employment Tribunals (England and Wales) launched on 21 March 2023 with, 229 vacancies^[1] which included three Welsh language posts in the Fee-paid Judge of the Employment Tribunal (England and Wales) exercise. Those candidates who were interested in a Welsh post were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales.
- Overall, 179 candidates were recommended for appointment to the office of Fee-paid Judges of the First-tier Tribunal, with 11 candidates recommended as suitable for

^[1] Candidates can be appointed to both roles.

appointment to posts in Wales. Overall, 50 candidates were recommended for appointment to the office of Fee-paid Judge of the Employment Tribunal (England and Wales), with four candidates recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales, however no candidates were recommended to the Welsh speaking posts^[2].

The following selection exercises identified vacancies in Wales that did not have a Welsh language requirement but tested candidates' understanding of the administration of justice in Wales:

- **Circuit Judge (00110).** The exercise for Circuit Judge launched on 14 July 2022 with 92 vacancies. Those candidates who were interested in a Welsh post were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. 10 candidates were recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales.
- **District Judge (00115).** The national exercise launched on 08 September 2022 with 100 vacancies across England and Wales. Those candidates who were interested in a Welsh post were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. 49 candidates were recommended with seven candidates recommended as suitable for posts in Wales.
- **Deputy District Judge (00120).** The exercise for Deputy District Judge launched on 27 September 2022 with 116 vacancies across England and Wales. Those candidates who were interested in a Welsh post were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. 116 candidates were recommended, with five candidates recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales.
- **Judge of the First-tier Tribunal (00129).** The national exercise for Judge of the First-tier Tribunal launched on 21 February 2023 with 70 vacancies across most Chambers. Those candidates who were interested in a Welsh post were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. 47 candidates were recommended with six candidates recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales.
- **Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Court) (00133).** The national exercise for Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Court) launched on 8 March 2023 with 15 vacancies across England and Wales. Those candidates who were interested in a Welsh post were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. 15 candidates were recommended with three candidates recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales.
- **Salaried Judge of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales (MHRTW) (00149).** The exercise for Salaried Judge of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales (MHRTW) launched on 30 March 2023 with two vacancies. All candidates were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. There were two candidates recommended as suitable for appointment.

^[2] Appointable candidates not selected in this financial year will have their selections confirmed in the next reporting year.

The following selection exercises identified vacancies in Wales that did not have Welsh language requirements, and did not test candidates' knowledge of the administration of justice in Wales:

- **Fee-paid Farmer Lay Member and Landowner Lay Member of the First-tier Tribunal, Property Chamber, Agricultural Land and Drainage, and**
- **Landowner Lay Member and Farmer Lay Member of the Agricultural Land Tribunal (Wales) (00166).**

This exercise was a joint exercise between the First-tier Tribunal with six vacancies (two for Landowner Lay Members and four for Farmer Lay Members) and the Agricultural Land Tribunal (Wales) with five vacancies (two for Landowner Lay Members and three for Farmer Lay Members) and launched on 26 July 2023. This is a specialist role which required detailed knowledge about land ownership and farm management. The JAC recommended six candidates for appointment in the First-tier Tribunal, Property Chamber and three candidates for the Agricultural Land Tribunal (Wales).

Section 83 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 allows the Welsh Government to seek assistance from other public bodies. The JAC assisted the Welsh Government for the following exercise:

- **President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales (00155).** This exercise launched on 14 February 2023 with one vacancy. All candidates were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. One candidate was recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales.
- **President and Deputy President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales (00192).** This exercise launched on 28 September 2023 with two vacancies. All candidates were assessed on their understanding of the administration of justice in Wales. Two candidates were recommended as suitable for appointment to posts in Wales.

N.B. Although selection exercises typically started prior to the reporting year, the outcome of the exercises were reported to Judicial Office during the reporting year. This mirrors the approach followed in the JAC Annual Report.

Judicial College

The [Judicial College strategy 2021-25](#) sets the Judicial College's overall ambition and core objectives over this four-year period. The strategy confirms that training will support the increasing diversity of the judiciary, and the College will act in a way that encourages judicial office holders from different backgrounds to feel included and supported. Through the strategy, the College continues to support Welsh language training for judicial office holders and to identify and meet training needs in Welsh law, as they arise and in the most effective way possible.

From April 2023 the College took on responsibility for the delivery of training to all lay magistrates in England and Wales, which was previously held by HMCTS. This built on the College's longstanding responsibilities for designing magistrates' training and delivering training to leadership magistrates.

Lessons from the transition in Wales informed and shaped the process to transition each of the regions in England through the 2023/24 training year. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, the College delivered approximately 1,180 places on 116 courses for lay magistrates in Wales, in addition to the programme of training for leadership magistrates.

The Wales Training Committee has initiated work to consider how Welsh-speaking magistrates can be further encouraged and supported to use their Welsh language skills and demonstrate that the bench is bilingual.

The College successfully completed training in response to the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 in 2023/24, following on from the main roll-out of the training in 2022/23. The training was provided to, and compulsory for, all judges in Wales who were to deal with new cases under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. This was delivered using a range of methods including live training, podcasts, and videos. A module on housing law in Wales has been integrated into continuation training for delivery at six courses in 2024/25 to equip judges sitting in the Civil jurisdiction in Wales to try the full range of housing work.

Representatives of the College attended the Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association Annual Conference in September 2023 in Cardiff. Under the conference theme 'Open Justice Today' delegates were given the opportunity to share experiences and to consider the ways in which open justice supports confidence in the judiciary and the justice system.

In March 2024 the College delivered a Welsh language seminar for more than 50 delegates. Building on feedback from the previous seminar held in 2022, the aim of the seminar was to enhance the judiciary's experience of using Welsh and interaction with all court users through the medium of Welsh, provide an opportunity for judicial office holders to share best practice when conducting trials and hearings through the medium of Welsh, and promote awareness of the relevant procedure rules pertaining to the use of Welsh in proceedings.

The College provides an eLibrary on its Judicial College Learning platform in respect of Wales specific law, the Welsh language in the justice system and other training materials relevant to judicial office holders sitting in Wales. This resource continued to be developed over the 2023/24 training year, including with the addition of further resources to support the use of Welsh in proceedings and to increase awareness of the role of the Welsh Language Liaison Judge.

The College published a revised interim edition of the [Equal Treatment Bench Book](#) in April 2023. The Equal Treatment Bench Book exists to help judicial office holders facilitate a court process that is respectful of the different needs and requirements of members of society and provides a source of guidance on the wide range of practical matters that may arise in a judicial hearing. The revised edition included a number of updates concerning Wales and the Welsh language, including in relation to the official status of the Welsh language, booking Welsh interpreters and respecting Welsh names.

Two editions of the Judicial College Wales eLetter were published in 2023/24, covering legislative, case law and other updates on topics such as housing law and transparency in Family Court hearings.

Advisory Committees and appointments to the Magistracy

A central theme of the Wales Advisory Committee is ensuring the Magistracy is reflective of the communities at large in Wales.

In order to achieve this the Advisory Committee seeks to recruit from a diverse background. One of the key themes is ensuring that Welsh Speakers are represented within the Judiciary in Wales.

It has been noted over recent years that there has been a reduction in successful applications to be magistrates from Welsh speakers. During this period the number of applications to join the magistracy has remained constant, so there is not within Wales a shortage of magistrates. This

reduction in successful applications from Welsh speaking Magistrates has impacted on the overall percentage of Welsh speaking magistrates.

There is no clear pattern in the 2023 data, with some Local Justice Areas increasing the number of Welsh speaking magistrates and some decreasing. The overall figure across Wales shows a reduction over this period in comparison to the previous 12 months.

<u>Local Justice Area</u>	<u>Percentage of Welsh speaking magistrates in November 2023</u>
Montgomery	8%
Ceredigion & Pembrokeshire	19%
Carmarthenshire	38%
Central N Wales	16%
North West Wales	55%
North East Wales	8%
Cardiff	3%
Mid Wales	5%
Gwent	3%
West Glamorgan	4%

The long-term overall impact of the reduction of Welsh speaking magistrates on those currently able to act as Presiding Magistrates in court has become noticeable and work continues to increase the number of Welsh speaking Presiding Justices in all Jurisdictions.

The Lord Chancellor’s Advisory Committee has continued to encourage applications from Welsh speakers, particularly across North and West Wales.

Although there has been an increase in the number of Welsh applications, this did not translate into an increase in the number of candidates recommended for appointment. The Lord Chancellor’s Advisory Committee will review the data following the 2024-25 recruitment campaign to identify any underlying trends.

In 2023/24, seven Welsh speaking magistrates were appointed (five in the Criminal Court, two in the Family Court).

Registered Intermediaries

Throughout the reporting year, the Witness Intermediary Scheme (WIS) continued to meet demand for Welsh-speaking Registered Intermediaries (RIs). For a fifth consecutive year, the Scheme sustained a record volume of requests, with RIs assisting over 8,700 cases in England and Wales, of which 647 were within the four police force areas (PFAs) in Wales.

Welsh-speaking RIs continue to operate across every Welsh PFA. There are currently five Welsh-speaking RIs, and a further 48 RIs that accept cases in PFAs in Wales.

Demand for RIs in Wales is routinely monitored and the MoJ has taken action to ensure specific requests for Welsh-speaking RIs are recorded and that data on Welsh-speaking RI usage is available on request.

In relation to the WIS receiving 647 RI service requests from the Welsh PFAs in 2023/24, 618 (96%) of these requests were successfully matched, 17 requests were not matched and 12 were cancelled. Three requests were made specifically for Welsh-speaking RIs, of which two were successfully matched to a Welsh-speaking RI, and the other one was cancelled due to the availability of a previous RI report which was utilised to enable best evidence.

The MoJ's WIS recruitment strategy continues to target regions where analysis shows that RIs are most needed. Welsh language skills are taken into consideration, and we are committed to ensuring that the needs of Welsh-speaking victims and witnesses are met.

3. Provision of services to the public

Success criteria:

- a) *No complaints from customers in Wales that clarity was lacking regarding the handling of Welsh correspondence.*
- b) *Documents translated into Welsh appropriately.*
- c) *Welsh correspondence is responded to in Welsh within the same timescales as other correspondence*

Correspondence

MoJ welcomes correspondence in either Welsh or English. When someone writes to us in Welsh, we will reply in Welsh within the same timescales as English.

During the reporting period 2023-2024, the MoJ's Ministerial Correspondence and Support Team did not receive any correspondence in Welsh, either online or in hard copy. Officials continue to monitor levels of Welsh correspondence received by the Ministerial Correspondence and Support Team and staff have been reminded to record any correspondence received in Welsh on the database. This includes hard copy correspondence sent by post or electronic correspondence by email.

Correspondence staff across the MoJ have also been reminded that any correspondence received in Welsh should be replied to in Welsh.

Telephone calls

Success criterion:

d) Welsh speakers will have calls answered in Welsh at first contact.

The MoJ Public Enquiry Line (PEL) is part of the Customer Experience Hub of SSCL based in South Wales that handles calls from the general public or external stakeholders wishing to contact the department or access other services such as those provided by HMCTS, Coroner's Unit and the Press Office.

Whilst we do not advertise any language options to callers, should someone call and wish to speak only in Welsh, the PEL can accommodate the request as the wider Shared Services call centre team has 20 fluent Welsh speakers.

During the period of this report there has not been a caller who has tried to communicate with the MoJ in Welsh. Also, during this period the MoJ did not receive any complaints about the lack of a more formal Welsh language option.

Events

Success criterion:

e) No complaints received about failure to facilitate the use of Welsh or provisions of Welsh translations at events in Wales.

There is guidance on the MoJ intranet to help staff identify translation needs and facilities for meetings and events with the public in Wales. Whilst MoJ does not hold central records of events held across its business regarding meetings in Wales where specific arrangements were made to facilitate the use of the Welsh language, we have not received any complaints for failure to facilitate meetings in Welsh.

Corporate identity

Success criterion:

f) Consistency in the way the Welsh language is used.

During the period of this report, the MoJ's Corporate Communications Team has been operating in its business-as-usual capacity for Welsh language activities. MoJ business areas that require Welsh translation are directed to the HMCTS Welsh Language Unit or thebigword by the MoJ's central design team – design102. The MoJ brand guidelines provide advice on using the Welsh and bilingual versions of the MoJ logo.

Publications and forms

Success criteria:

a) Consistency in the way in which the Welsh language is used.

b) All documents produced in both Welsh and English versions are produced to the same standard and to the same timescale where deadlines permit.

MoJ has adopted the principle that when conducting public business in Wales, it will treat English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality. When publishing materials, our design team adheres to an operating process and works closely with the HMCTS Welsh Language Unit,

enabling simultaneous formatting and publication of documents both in English and Welsh and to the same standard.

Due to the late sign-off and frequent last-minute changes and iterations of some English documents, it is not always possible to produce both Welsh and English versions simultaneously. In such cases the Welsh version is published as quickly as possible thereafter (within 10 working days under our Welsh Language Scheme). All documents produced in both Welsh and English are produced to the same standard.

HMCTS Welsh Language Unit

The HMCTS Welsh Language Unit (WLU) undertakes the majority of our corporate translations. From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 the WLU and [thebigword](#) translated 104 corporate documents for MoJ HQ at a cost of £34,913.29.

Press notices, publicity campaigns and advertising, official and public notices

Success criterion:

a) *Consistency in the way in which the Welsh language is used.*

HMPPS in Wales / HMPPS yng Nghymru (@HMPPSCymru) / X is the official channel of HMPPS in Wales with much Welsh language content.

HMCTS is responsible for a lot of MoJ content on GOV.UK. Gwasanaeth Llysoedd a Thribiwnlysoedd EF - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) HMCTS translates everything that is relevant to Wales or the Welsh language, for example news, blogs and guidance or publications where there is a user need.

Digital services, website and information

Success criteria:

- a) *Reduced complaints regarding lack of Welsh content for relevant corporate documents.*
- b) *Availability of appropriate Welsh content for our policies and publications.*
- c) *MoJ's IT systems include Welsh language capability.*
- d) *Prepare a Welsh language version of our GOV.UK homepage.*

The MoJ is responsible for deciding which 'departmental and policy' content on GOV.UK needs translating, arranging high-quality translation, and keeping the Welsh content accurate and up to date.

MoJ's Welsh landing page for our website can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice.cy>. We have continued to keep all the Welsh content, including on our associated corporate pages, accurate and up to date.

In order to make Welsh publications more accessible and easier to find, the Welsh version has its own page, rather than adding a Welsh document to an English page of content.

We also have Welsh language branding on stationery, reports, logos, and electronic communications to be used as required.

MoJ Technology takes the following position on the use of the Welsh language:

- as we develop and deliver new IT systems and products or update old ones, we will assess the linguistic requirements in respect of services provided to the public in Wales;
- we will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh as far as it is appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practical;
- when we develop or procure MoJ Digital and Technology systems we will take into account the Welsh Language Commissioner's Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards;
- responsibility for the content of IT platforms (as opposed to the associated technology) belongs to the relevant business area.

These principles are applied whenever the MoJ transitions to new contracts. MoJ Digital and Technology is always willing to consider any specific requirements of the Welsh Language Unit.

Services delivered on behalf of the MoJ by other parties

Success criterion:

Staff are aware regarding arrangements to include Welsh language considerations in third party contract agreements.

MoJ current standard contract terms and conditions include clauses which require suppliers to comply with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language Scheme 'as if they were the Authority'. Some examples are:

Independent Children's Rights and Advocacy Services

The purpose of advocacy services in youth custody is to support and promote the voice of children and young people, assisting them in resolving issues relating to their welfare, care, and treatment. Providing advocacy services supports statutory responsibilities and duties placed upon the Youth Custody Service including to safeguard children and young people in custody. There are references within the service specification about where children can speak Welsh and how information must be made available to them in Welsh if required.

Court Reporting and Transcription Services

The transcription of hearings in courts or tribunals includes online, attendance based, and real time hearings. The provision of Welsh language services is part of the contract. Should a person ask to have their trial in Welsh, the transcription will be done in Welsh at the same cost as English.

Family Services (HMPPS Cardiff)

The supplier (G4S) provides a culturally diverse range of provisions, such as reading materials in different languages. Information will be provided in Welsh, English, and additional languages on request (e.g. if there is an identified demographic need within the population) to enable equality of access. The Senior Manager (Operational) for G4S is a first language Welsh speaker and has responsibility for staff for the three Welsh prison establishments (Cardiff, Usk and Prescoed).

Languages Services Spoken (Lot 1)

The contract is with one supplier, thebigword. The purpose of the contract is to allow MoJ authorities to request language professionals to attend bookings and interpret/ translate. The Welsh language is one of the languages provided under this contract and has been included since the start of the sourcing activity.

Allocation of grants

Success criterion:

Grants are awarded in accordance with the commitments made in the Scheme

Any organisation which applies for a grant for activities which involve the delivery of services to people in Wales will be expected to address in its application, where appropriate, how it intends to provide those services in Welsh as well as English. This will then be incorporated as one of the funding conditions.

To ensure that we have robust governance arrangements and grant expenditure is achieving value for money, MoJ has established a challenge function, the Grants Challenge and Assurance Panel. The Panel is an integral part of grants governance and financial decision making and has been adopted by the Cabinet Office as best practice.

HMPPS and the Victim & Witness Commissioning and Implementation Unit oversee the process of allocating grants in their respective areas, including the overall sum on offer and aligning the grants to MoJ's strategic priorities. Competitions are advertised on the government's Find a Grant service and run via the Jaggaer e-tendering portal, which can be accessed by any supplier who is registered. HMPPS competitions are also advertised through Clinks.

To help inform prospective bidders, the description document that accompanies each advertisement outlines whether and when Welsh Language Act considerations apply. When awarded, and if appropriate, the grant recipient will be made aware of MoJ requirements with which they are expected to comply, including where the respective MoJ or HMPPS Welsh Language Scheme gives effect to applicable Welsh Language Act requirements.

For 2023-24, the HMPPS grants budget was £26.3m. The funds are used to support the continuation of strategic grants, probation services and innovation grants that contribute to HMPPS's broad aims and specific priorities. The HMPPS grants are advertised to all Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in England and Wales.

HMPPS advertised the new Innovation Grant Programme Scheme for 2023–2025 in July 2023, with a start date of November 2023. The programme identified thirteen new projects, with one project operating in Wales at HMP Parc focusing on strengthening key relationships for people in prison with their families and others. Grant recipients were made aware of the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme where appropriate.

In 2023-24, the Probation Service in Wales made two awards for Commissioned Rehabilitative Services to organisations that include a member of staff who can speak Welsh. In addition, where appropriate, HMPPS can offer organisations receiving a grant access to the probation interpreter services, which includes Welsh language services.

For 2023-24, the Victim and Witness Commissioning and Implementation Unit awarded grants totalling £8.4m to recipients in Wales, to deliver support services for victims of crime.

4. Implementing, monitoring and reporting

Success criteria:

- a) *Policies, initiatives, and services are consistent with commitments made in the WLS*
- b) *MoJ's Welsh Coordinators Group widened and meets biannually at least with virtual interaction from members.*
- c) *Arrangements in place to monitor and report on the progress by MoJ bodies, listed in Annex A, regarding their applications of the MoJ WLS.*

d) Staff have arrangements in place to monitor service providers compliance with Welsh Language arrangements contained in contract agreements.

The MoJ's Welsh Language Scheme Coordinator continued to have responsibility for the development and operation of the MoJ Scheme. A key aspect of the role is to ensure that the MoJ Scheme is developed and applied appropriately by the various MoJ corporate business areas. This includes the provision of advice and guidance and responding to requests for information or clarification relating to the MoJ's policy and practice in relation to the Welsh language. The MoJ Scheme Coordinator did not receive any formal complaints regarding the operation of the MoJ Scheme during the reporting period.

The MoJ continues to operate a widened Welsh Language Coordinators Group of contacts who act as Welsh Language Coordinators across its key business areas. The Group meets in a hybrid manner twice a year.

The remit of the group is to:

- focus on emerging issues relating to delivery of the MoJ's Welsh Language Scheme;
- share examples of best practice to help raise awareness and replicate ideas;
- provide a forum for members to discuss and resolve emerging Welsh language issues; and
- offer mutual support for the MoJ's Welsh Language Coordinators and help inform the future direction of Welsh language policy and governance across our Executive Agencies.

Members use the Group to share information and ideas to improve decision making. Where there are concerns or misunderstandings about Welsh language policy and practice, the Coordinators will pursue these for members and relevant staff in a proportionate manner to ensure satisfactory resolution.

At the September 2023 meeting, we discussed the HMCTS Reform programme and the Welsh language fluency question on the SOP human resources system.

At the March 2024 meeting, we discussed the amended Welsh Impact Test (for MoJ consultations) and digital Welsh language services.

The Group also operates as an *ad hoc* virtual discussion forum on Welsh language issues between meetings to share advice between relevant MoJ colleagues, especially on when translation services may be required.





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