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Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Buffy Williams MS  
Chair  
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

11 October 2024

Dear Buffy,

### **Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill**

Thank for your letter dated 20 September, following my attendance to your Committee the previous day, to provide you with evidence in relation to the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill. I trust the Committee found the session to be informative.

Your letter deals with a number of issues which I will deal with in turn. Firstly, the matters that I agreed to provide further information to the Committee.

#### Indicative timeline

The Regulatory Impact Assessment at part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum gives a high-level overview of the current illustrative timetable for the implementation of the Bill and sets out in which financial years following Royal Assent we would expect costs to fall arising from the implementation of the provisions of the Bill. I appreciate the Committee would find it useful for the key implementation dates to be extracted from the RIA. As such, I provide the current high-level implementation milestones, which is provided alongside this letter at document 1 in a tabular format and as a visual at document 2. In sharing these documents, I wish to highlight to the Committee that these dates represent the current planning assumptions. Further work will be undertaken over the coming months in relation to the detailed implementation arrangements. The indicative timetables do not set out the entirety of the work required to implement the Bill e.g. there will be a need to prepare additional items of subordinate legislation such as Commencement Orders.

#### Consultation requirements within the Bill

There are certain consultation requirements within the Bill:

- a) The Code to describe Welsh language ability: Section 7(2) – the Welsh Ministers must consult on the Code with any persons they think appropriate.
- b) The National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh: Section 26 - the Welsh Ministers must consult the persons listed when

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

preparing/amending the Framework. This includes any persons they think appropriate.

- c) Local Welsh in education strategic plans: Section 28(4)(b) - local authorities must consult the persons listed when preparing/amending their plan. The Welsh Ministers may specify other persons in Regulations.
- d) School Welsh language education delivery plans: Section 14(2)(b) – a school's governing body must consult with the persons listed when preparing their delivery plan. This includes the school's pupils, the pupils' parents and staff. The Welsh Ministers may specify other persons in Regulations.

Section 47 amends the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. This will mean that changing the language medium in a maintained school is not a regulated alteration for the purposes of that act. As a result the process involved in giving effect to a regulated alteration will not apply. This is because they are replaced by the consultation requirements listed above, together with the requirement that an implementation plan sets out the governing body's proposals to maintain the amount of Welsh language education, and increase the amount when that is reasonably practicable (section 14(1)(e)). A governing body must take all reasonable steps to implement those proposals (section 15(9)). A school may not change from a "Dual Language" category to a "Primarily English Language, partly Welsh" category, nor from a "Primarily Welsh Language" category to a "Dual Language" category or a "Primarily English Language, partly Welsh" category (section 17).

In terms of the current situation with regulated alterations, section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 states that there must be consultation regarding school organisation proposals in accordance with the School Organisation Code. That Code lists the persons to whom a copy of the consultation document must be sent. As the Bill would remove the requirement to treat a change in language medium as a regulated alteration, the new arrangements would mean that there would be opportunities to consult with the school community and more widely when preparing the local Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and when governing bodies prepare the Welsh language education delivery plans at school level.

### Consideration of the UNCRC

In developing the Bill officials have considered the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This analysis was published upon introduction of the Bill on 15 July 2024 and can be found on pages 36 – 38 of the [Integrated Impact Assessment](#), as it appears on the Welsh Government's website. My officials have since drawn the Committee's attention to the IIA. The Welsh Government does not believe that the proposals will challenge any articles.

Secondly, Annex 1 of your letter of 20 September poses a number of further questions. Please find attached at Annex 1 my response to each of those questions.

Finally, I have taken the opportunity in writing to you to clarify two further matters, which were raised at the Committee session on 19 September.

### Transitional schools

Paragraph 295 of the [transcription](#), states:

*There is a reference to transitional schools in the Bill. There are two steps in going from category 1 to category 2, and then there is a transitional stage there, before going from category 2 to category 3. There is no mention, from*

*what I can see, of a timetable for continuing in this way. It's clear that we would all want to see the schools moving sooner rather than later. In your mind, is there some sort of general timetable regarding how long they can remain transitional?*

I wish to note that there is no reference in the Bill to transitional schools. The term 'transitional schools' derives from the non-statutory guidance on school categories according to language medium published in 2021. In that guidance, transitional sub-categories were created as bridging categories helping to encourage an increase in Welsh-medium provision. In that guidance, it was stated that a school's placement within a transitional sub-category should not exceed a maximum period of 10 years.

However, in the Bill we only propose three statutory categories: Primarily Welsh Language; Dual language; Primarily English Language, partly Welsh.

Schools will be able to indicate that they are currently in a transitional phase within their Welsh language delivery plan. Section 14(1)(g) of the Bill requires the governing body to set out its proposals on how it will prepare for a change in its school's language category if it intends to do so. Welsh language delivery plans will be in effect for three year periods, and will be subject to local authority approval. This will allow the local authority to have a robust overview of the Welsh language provision of its schools, and have sufficient influence in its role as a consultee to the plan and in its final approval role. This is necessary as it provides the local authority with the levers required to meet its WESP targets.

#### Requirements on special schools, special units in schools and in relation to pupils with additional learning needs

In terms of special schools, section 20 provides that they must have a delivery plan. This will be a statutory requirement. Their plan must state:

- a) the amount of Welsh language education provided by the school, and
- b) the governing body's proposals on how it will—
  - (i) promote a Welsh language ethos and culture within the school;
  - (ii) promote use of the Welsh language within the school.

The content of a special school's delivery plan is therefore different to what must be included in a delivery plan under section 14. This is to recognise that the circumstances of special schools are different to mainstream schools, and that they face additional demands as a result. It was felt that the requirement for a delivery plan more similar to what is described above strikes the right balance between recognising the role that special schools can play in creating Welsh speakers and any profound needs they also deal with.

The Welsh Ministers may by regulations make further provision for special school delivery plans – see section 20(2).

In terms of a language category, there is no statutory requirement for a special school to have a designated category. This is because the designation of a category gives rise to a duty to provide in accordance with the requirements of that category, and it was felt that it could be unreasonable to expect such a duty to be met in the unique circumstances of special schools. However, a special school may – if it wishes to do so – designate itself within a category. Section 20(3) deals with this. The Welsh Ministers have a duty to make regulations in relation to voluntary

designation, including the application of Part 3 with modifications. That could include, for example, applying the Welsh language learning goals with modifications so that special schools have different learning goals if they have voluntarily designated themselves a category.

Mainstream schools with specialist units will be required to designate a category for the school, and they will have to prepare a delivery plan in accordance with sections 9 to 19.

In terms of the requirement on the school with a specialist unit to ensure that it provides Welsh language education in accordance with the range specified by its language category, this requirement applies over a school year. The requirement to provide the minimum of 10%, for example, does not mean that every individual pupil within the school must receive 10%. Referring to the education provided over a school year allows flexibility for a school to provide less than 10% in some circumstances where necessary, and to provide more than 10% in other circumstances. This will likely apply in the context of specialist units in mainstream schools.

In terms of additional learning needs provision through the medium of Welsh, the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 makes specific provision for the Welsh language. Consideration must be given to whether additional learning provision should be provided in Welsh for the child or young person, and if it is decided that a specific type of additional learning provision should be provided in Welsh, this must be specified in the child or young person's individual development plan. There is a duty to provide the additional learning provision described in an individual development plan.

In addition, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 require a local authority to include in its WESP a statement setting out how the local authority will use the findings of its reviews under section 63 of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018(11) to improve Welsh language provision for persons with additional learning needs and for workforce planning within the additional learning needs sector.

I thank the Committee for their interest in this Bill and look forward to returning to the Committee to provide further evidence on 24 October.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

**Mark Drakeford AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

## Annex 1: Questions

### Promotion and facilitation of use of the Welsh Language (Part 1)

#### 1. What testing has the Welsh Government undertaken to ensure that the proposed new framework and process of self-assessment provides an effective and robust method of assessing Welsh language ability?

The guidance on self-assessment referred to in section 3(3) will be developed and tested once the Code to describe Welsh language ability is published. The principle of calculating the number of Welsh speakers based on self-assessment is important and it is protected in the Bill (section 3(2)).

The concept of self-assessing Welsh language skills is not new. Individuals already self-assess their Welsh language skills for the Census and the Language Use Survey used for the 'use' indicator in Cymraeg 2050. Many public bodies comply with their statutory duty to record the Welsh language skills of their employees (under the Welsh language standards) by asking employees to self-assess. Many have adopted frameworks based on the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) skill levels (a framework anchored to the first CEFR levels that was developed to relate examinations for different European languages to each other). The Welsh Government's [School Workforce Annual Census](#) (SWAC) already uses a Welsh language competency framework aligned with CEFR levels to enable education practitioners to self-assess and report their skills.

There is evidence of inconsistencies between different data sources regarding how people currently self-assess their Welsh language skills, suggesting that some individuals under-report and others over-report their skill levels. When the Chief Statistician published the first data from the 2022 Census about the Welsh language she noted that a person's assessment of how well they speak a language can be subjective. For some people, the ability to say a few words in Welsh is enough for them to say they speak. For others, despite speaking it regularly, they may say that they can't speak it if they feel more comfortable speaking another language. The comments highlight the need to have a more sophisticated narrative around how individuals self-assess their Welsh language proficiency. The provisions in section 3 on preparing guidance on self-assessment, alongside the duty in section 3(5), will raise the Welsh population's awareness over time of how to self-assess.

The Bill enables the Welsh Ministers by regulations to specify any other method, other than self-assessment or the assessment of the child's parent or carer, to decide whether children under 16 are Welsh speakers for the purposes of section 1 and 2 of the Bill. .t.

The CEFR is widely used across Europe and further afield. In preparing the Code, work will be done to draw upon the experiences of other countries and languages with regard to effective application of self-assessment. In turn, this will inform the guidance prepared under part 1.

### Describing Welsh language ability (Part 2)

#### 2. Could you define what constitutes a Welsh speaker under the new framework, and the threshold that needs to be met in order to be included in the calculation on the numbers of Welsh speakers?

As I noted in the evidence session on 19 September, if Welsh belongs to everybody, then it is the individual's own assessment of the extent to which they believe themselves to be users of the Welsh language that we have to rely on. That principle is at the heart of this Bill as well.

Having said that, I am mindful that the target of a million Welsh speakers must be meaningful, and that people have sufficient skills and confidence to use their Welsh language skills day to day. For the purposes of calculating the number of Welsh speakers as we measure progress towards the target of a million Welsh speakers, we will consider the results of the census alongside any other relevant data that we may specify by regulations.

**3. The descriptions don't seem to cater for everyone, for example those with no level of Welsh ability. Has there been consideration for those who aren't on the CEFR scale or could be considered higher than C2 or below A1 of the CEFR?**

The CEFR recognises that its Global Scale A1-C2 levels, reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill are a necessary simplification of language proficiency levels.

The CEFR notes that A1 is probably the lowest “level” of generative language proficiency that can be identified but also acknowledges that A1 is not the lowest imaginable level of proficiency in an additional language. As such, when the CEFR was updated in 2020 pre-A1 level descriptors were added to the framework. At the pre-A1 level an individual can use isolated words and basic expressions in order to give simple information about themselves. This would include someone at the beginning of their journey to learn a language.

The pre-A1 level in the CEFR is referred to as a sub-level and it is not relevant to all of the CEFR descriptive scales. It is not included in the CEFR Global Scale and as such does not feature in the Table reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill.

The CEFR also recognises that there are levels above C2 – although not identified specifically in the framework – these levels describe advanced mastery of a language gained by individuals who work in professions immersed in language e.g. literary translators, simultaneous translators.

The CEFR states that C2 is not intended to imply the highest imaginable level of linguistic proficiency. The framework recognises that simultaneous interpreters at European institutions and professional translators operate at a level well above C2. The CEFR intends to characterise the ability of those who have been highly successful learners.

The CEFR also includes ‘plus’ level descriptors, (such as B1.1 and B1.2), developed to represent a very strong competence at a level that does not yet reach the minimum standard for the next level.

The provisions in section 6 of the Bill allow for the ‘Code to describe Welsh language ability’ to include anything else related to describing ability in Welsh, including the CEFR’s pre-A1 and ‘plus’ level descriptors. When developing the Code under Section 6 the extent to which the CEFR’s entire ‘menu’ of descriptor scales can be used to describe Welsh language ability will be considered.

It is important for the standard method of describing ability in Welsh to facilitate people's capacity to self-assess their ability in the language, regardless of how much Welsh they speak. This will allow them to see what the next stage of their Welsh learning journey will be. It will show that any Welsh language skills are valuable and allow us to celebrate everyone's language journey.

**4. Could you clarify comments made during the session which suggested that you believe almost everyone speaks some Welsh? Were you saying that this therefore**

## **means almost everyone would be on at least level A1 on the CEFR?**

The Welsh language is so visible in our everyday lives and is used regularly in so many domains. As such I believe that all people living in Wales will have knowledge of some common words such as 'Diolch', 'Bore da' and many names and placenames. I also base my belief on the fact that the Welsh language has been a mandatory element of the curriculum in Wales since 1990. Although not included in the CEFR Global Scale reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill, this basic level of ability is catered for in the CEFR at the Pre-A1 level. Pre-A1 descriptors have been available in the framework since it was updated in 2020. The extent to which the CEFR's entire 'menu' of descriptor scales will be used to describe Welsh language ability will be considered when developing the Code. Section 6 of the Bill enables the pre-A1 level to be included in the Code to describe this basic level of Welsh language skill.

### **5. Could you also clarify comments made during the session which suggested that A1 equates to GCSE level?**

An important part of achieving the Bill's aims will be to develop more meaningful ways of assessing the Welsh language ability of school pupils. At present there is generally a lack of data about the Welsh language proficiency achieved by learners who have been awarded A\*-F grades in GCSE Welsh language or GCSE Welsh second language. The 2021 Census reported that 38,800 of young people between 16 and 19 years old did not identify themselves as Welsh speakers. A large majority therefore reported that they did not speak Welsh even though the Welsh language was a mandatory element of their school curriculum. A small-scale study undertaken by the National Centre for Learning Welsh to identify its needs for post-16 course provision suggests that proficiency of a group of 16-17 yr old participants who had sat the GCSE Welsh second language qualification the previous academic year varied roughly between bottom A1 and bottom B1 of the CEFR, between the start of Entry and Intermediate in Learn Welsh for adults terms. Spoken interaction competence proficiency was generally lower.

### **6. The CEFR has been designed specifically for the learning of foreign/second languages. How appropriate is it to apply this to the context of Welsh language learning, and what consideration was given to developing descriptors specifically for the Welsh language?**

While the CEFR was originally designed with second/foreign languages in mind, it has since been adopted more generally. Through our membership of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) we have learnt from colleagues working in the field of language policy and planning for constitutional, regional and small-state languages across Europe that the CEFR framework is used in contexts to describe linguistic ability in both first, second and other languages.

For example, in the new 2023 Basque country education act the CEFR framework is used to describe ability in first and additional language contexts, introducing a duty for learners to achieve minimum CEFR B1 level in both official languages by the end of primary education/B2 by the end of secondary education. Similarly in Finland the CEFR is used to set the criteria for both mother tongue and the second official language and other languages. So, we believe it is appropriate to use the CEFR for our purposes for the Welsh language in Wales.

The CEFR is one of the best-known and most used Council of Europe policy instruments. It was designed to provide a framework for all European languages. Because it is language-neutral it can be used for any language in the world. There are

advantages to aligning our framework for describing Welsh language ability with the CEFR – the question should really be, why aren't we using it?

We **are** developing descriptors specifically for the Welsh language. The CEFR is simply a reference tool used to facilitate this process. The Code will include descriptors developed specifically for the Welsh language. As the descriptors are developed they can be tailored to take account of any unique considerations required in relation to the Welsh language.

The CEFR is already used as a reference tool to provide descriptors specifically for the Welsh language, to inform the National Centre for Learning Welsh curriculum and WJEC's Welsh language qualifications for adults.

**7. Have you sought assurances from the Council of Europe that the Framework is not likely to change?**

The CEFR's A1-C2 six level Global Scale, reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill, was first published in the CEFR Framework in 2001 and updated in 2020. The changes made to it at that time were minimal, mainly to ensure that the language was gender neutral and to delete references to 'native speakers'. We believe it is unlikely the Council of Europe will make change to the six- level proficiency scale for many years to come, if at all. Welsh Ministers can however amend the Table in Schedule 1 by regulations in response to a change made to the CEFR (sections 5(2) and (3) of the Bill). We cannot think of any situation, other than responding to any changes to the CEFR framework, where it would be desirable to have the ability to amend the Table.

Section 6 of the Bill already enables the 'Code to describe Welsh language ability' (that will explain the levels in more detail) to be amended at any time and to include any part of the CEFR framework. The Code can also include anything else related to describing ability in Welsh beyond the CEFR framework if required.

**Welsh language education (Part 3)**

**8. Can you confirm whether the Welsh Ministers have a duty, or rather a power, to make regulations setting a date for the upgrading of the Welsh Language Learning Goals of "Primarily English language, partly Welsh" schools and "Dual language schools"? What factors will the Welsh Ministers consider when doing so and, if it is a power rather than a duty, is there a risk that such goals will never be upgraded and made more ambitious?**

Section 11 sets the Welsh language learning goals and the prospective upgraded learning goals. The learning goals are to be upgraded by regulations. The intention is for the learning goals to be upgraded when a systemic change is underway i.e. when our workforce targets are being met and when effective practice shows evidence of progress towards meeting and surpassing the initial learning goal.

As there are variables and unknowns at play here, it was decided that it was more appropriate to create a power to be exercised when suitable, rather than a duty with an unspecified date. Further, under section 13(5), there is a duty on the Welsh Ministers to decide every 5 years whether to exercise the power to make regulations to increase the minimum of 10%, and this could also affect when the goals are upgraded.

Having said this, it should be highlighted that section 11(3) specifies that the learning goal for primarily English language, partly Welsh schools is that pupils are basic Welsh language users (i.e. A1-A2), at least, by the time they cease to be of compulsory school

age, until a date specified by the Welsh Ministers by regulations. Therefore, the goal is that they will be basic users, at least, up until a specified date when the goal will be upgraded to independent user. These regulations will be in place by the time the statutory categories come to effect, thereby giving assurance that the learning goal will be upgraded by a certain date.

**9. To what extent is the requirement for schools to have their Welsh language education Delivery plan approved by the local authority entirely in line with the ethos and provisions of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, which emphasises school autonomy? For example, schools are not required to have their curriculum approved by the local authority or anyone else.**

As the Local Authority will be subject to targets set by the Welsh Ministers in the National Framework, it is imperative that they have sufficient levers to ensure that they are well-placed to deliver on those targets.

In requiring Local Authorities to:

- o approve delivery plans
- o approve them with modifications, or
- o reject them with a direction to reconsider,

this means the Local Authority will have sufficient influence on the actions proposed by schools to ensure progress.

As the Welsh language education delivery plans are required to include the language category of the school, it is appropriate that the Local Authority has an approval role to the plans, as this will allow the Local Authority to ensure that language categories are applied correctly and consistently across their area.

In the White Paper for the Bill, we consulted on giving Local Authorities an approval role to school categories, and this was welcomed by the majority of the respondents.

If the Local Authority had no approval role, they would have less influence in their attempts to drive progress across schools in its area..

**Planning Welsh Language Education and Learning (Part 4)**

**10. In regulations in 2019, following a recommendation by the Rapid Review of WESPs, the Welsh Government extended the timespan of WESPs from 3 years to 10 years in order to facilitate longer term planning. The Bill reduces this back to 5 years, although the plans will need to set out steps to be taken over a 10-year period. How has the government weighed up the need for WESPs to be short enough to ensure sufficient accountability, while giving local authorities flexibility to plan over a long enough period?**

We are keen that local authorities continue to implement their WESPs with a 10-year vision, but with a 5-year implementation cycle to align with the National Framework. A similar 10-year vision and 5- year planning approach is proposed with the National Framework.

As Local authorities are currently implementing 5-year action plans to support their existing WESPs this is a reasonable expectation that is already in place. Responses to the White Paper generally supported this approach.

## **National Institute for Learning Welsh (Part 5)**

### **11. Does the EM provide sufficient clarity and assurances about the role of the new Institute in both the post-compulsory sector and in particular, within the compulsory education sector?**

The Explanatory Memorandum makes it clear our policy is that the Athrofa will not be providing courses and activities directly to school pupils, rather the provision it plans and organises for the education workforce will improve provision for children 3-16 and help bring the provision into line with the new Welsh language skills continuum.

The Athrofa will be responsible for developing and maintaining a national Welsh language learning curriculum for people over compulsory school age. It will also provide or facilitate the provision of high quality resources to support the curriculum it develops.

This consistent offer for learners over compulsory school age will provide greater clarity for learners and allow for recognition of prior learning, enabling learners to progress seamlessly between providers and/or learning levels.

The Athrofa will not be responsible for the curriculum taught in schools but will plan and organise specialist training and support to develop the Welsh language skills of the education workforce and share good pedagogical practice in relation to the learning and transmission of Welsh.

### **12. The EM states that it isn't possible to identify where the resource will be moved from or an accurate cost for the new Institute until the Review of School Improvement – the roles and responsibilities of education partners in Wales has concluded. When will you be able to provide the Committee with an accurate analysis of costs for the Institute in order for the Committee to undertake detailed scrutiny?**

As outlined in the EM, the costs are a best estimate at this point in time. The second phase of the Review of School Improvement is expected to conclude by early 2025, when roles and responsibilities and plans are expected to have been agreed by the Cabinet Secretary. Work has already commenced on planning the transition to the new arrangements. We expect to be able to provide a more accurate analysis of the costs once the new arrangements have been agreed by the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

### **13. How much influence will the new Institute have over the statutory education sector to ensure the effective implementation of the single Welsh language skills continuum and therefore "improving the linguistic outcomes of learners aged 3-16"?**

The Athrofa will be expected to plan for the development of the education workforce in order to support the development of Welsh language teaching in all schools. Specific interventions may include training on how to use the continuum; specialist training and support to upskill the education workforce; and sharing good pedagogical practice in relation to Welsh language teaching methods, including literacy.

The Athrofa will support schools specifically by providing opportunities for school staff to learn Welsh and improving levels of ability so that they are more confident to teach Welsh, to use Welsh when teaching other subjects, and to use Welsh in the wider school environment. The Athrofa will also provide or facilitate the provision of materials to support learning and training on implementing the new continuum.

The Athrofa will work with the Welsh Government, partner organisations from the education sector, and local authorities to provide expert advice and support for schools to reach their Welsh language learning goals.

### **Costs of the legislation**

**14. The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) sets out three possible scenarios, which will have an impact on costs – scenario 1 that everything is generally already on track for Cymraeg 2050 and the Bill will simply support and ensure that continues; scenario 2 where things are not fully on track and the Bill will correct that and ensure Cymraeg 2050 can be delivered; scenario 3 where things are substantially off track and meeting the requirements of the Bill will require big changes and considerable funding. The RIA says the Welsh Government anticipates scenario 2 and presumably the estimated costs of the Bill - £103 million over the next ten years – reflect scenario 2. The RIA doesn't estimate the costs of the other two scenarios but can you give any indication of just how much the Bill will cost, if indeed scenario 3 materialises?**

The RIA focuses on the costs and benefits associated with the preferred option (i.e. the Bill). Scenarios were developed as a means of articulating what might reasonably happen to existing arrangements once the Bill/preferred option becomes law. Based on our understanding of current arrangements and progress towards key targets, Welsh Government officials anticipate that the degree of change when compared with BAU is likely to fall within Scenario 2. This essentially means that the Bill will strengthen the current BAU infrastructure and would set reasonable but challenging expectations to ensure that current arrangements (e.g. WESPs, school categorisation, late immersion) deliver enhanced progress.

If scenario 3 materialises instead, we anticipate that there would be additional costs in the following areas -

- o Supporting schools to continuously improve or increase their Welsh language provision
- o Late immersion

However, mitigations included in the Bill mean that Scenario 3 is unlikely to materialise. These mitigations include temporary exemptions for “Primarily English Language, partial Welsh” category schools and a commitment consult on key Bill provisions, including the National Framework.

## Indicative timeline for implementation of the Bill

This document reflects the current planning assumptions for the implementation of the Bill and will be updated as we continue to work on the Bill's implementation and as dependencies between activities are identified.

Year	Financial year	Date	Activity
1	2025-26	May/June 2025 (Upon Royal Assent)	Duty on the Welsh Ministers to include the Million Welsh Speakers target in strategy on promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh under section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 comes into force. [This is already in place therefore, there will be no action required to implement].
		October 2025	Consultation on the Code
2	2026-27	July 2026	Finalise Code
		October 2026	Consultation on the language categories and WESP regulations
3	2027-28	July 2027	Finalise regs relating to language categories and WESPs
		July 2027	Complete review of standards
		August 2027	Establish National Institute of Learning Welsh
		October 2027	Consultation on the revised Welsh Language Strategy (to include targets on use, education and other requirements of section 1 of the Bill) and the National Framework.
4	2028-29	July 2028	Publication of the revised Welsh language Strategy and the National Framework
		August 2028 onwards	Local Authorities prepare the new WESP
5	2029-30	July 2029	Welsh Ministers approve the new WESP
		August 2029 onwards	Schools prepare Delivery Plans (taking the WESP into account)
6	2030-31	July 2030	Deadline for Local Authorities to approve the Delivery Plans (including school categories)
		August 2030	School Delivery Plans in place
7	2031-32		
8	2032-33	October 2032	Revise the National Framework
9	2033-34	January 2033	2nd Delivery Plan submitted to local authority for agreement
		July 2033	End of Delivery Plans (and end of first exemption, if applicable)

10	2034-35		
11	2035-36	July 2036	End of any further exemption

# Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

## Indicative Timeline for Implementation of the Bill

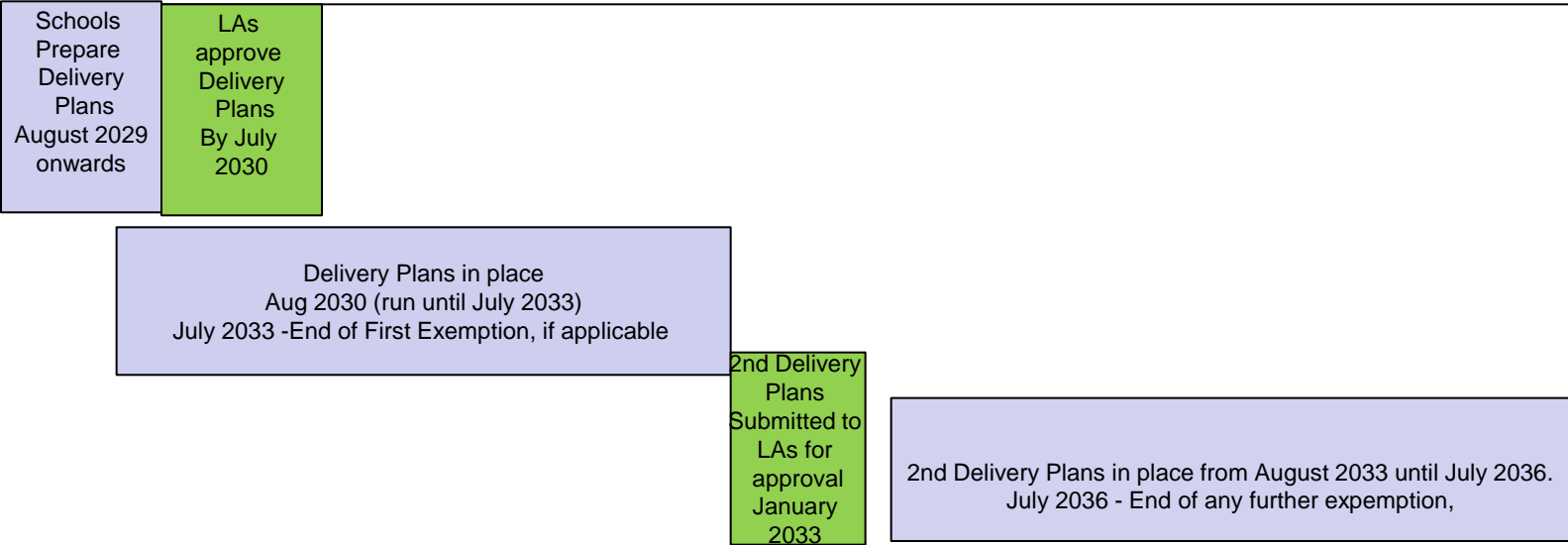
Key	
	Activity for Welsh Ministers
	Activity for Local Authorities
	Activity for schools
	No activity required to implement



**Code**

Consult on Code Oct 2025	Finalise Code July 2026
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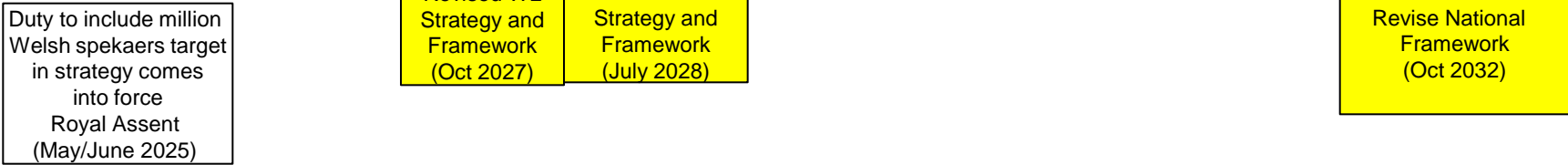
**Language categories**



**WESP**



**Strategy and Framework**



**Other**

