

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (Amendment of Schedule 6) Order 2016

This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by Education and Public Services Group and is laid before the National Assembly for Wales in conjunction with the above subordinate legislation and in accordance with Standing Order 27.1.

Minister's Declaration

In my view, this Explanatory Memorandum gives a fair and reasonable view of the expected impact of The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (Amendment of Schedule 6) Order 2016.

Carwyn Jones AM
First Minister

14 December 2015

1. Description

- 1.1 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (Amendment of Schedule 6) Order 2016 ('the Order') amends Schedule 6 to the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 ('the Measure') which sets out (i) the organisations (referred to as "persons" in the Measure) who are liable to be required to comply with Welsh language standards and (ii) which classes of standards are potentially applicable to each organisation.
- 1.2 The Order deals with changes such as omitting the names of organisations that no longer exist, including new organisations, and amending the names of others to reflect changes that have occurred since the Measure was made.

2. Matters of special interest to the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee

- 2.1 An order to amend Schedule 6 is likely to be made from time to time to capture changes in the names or status of organisations, delete organisations that no longer exist and insert new organisations, to ensure that Welsh Ministers may make standards specifically applicable to them.

3. Legislative background

- 3.1 Section 35 of the Measure enables the Welsh Ministers, by order, to amend the Schedule 6 table so that column 1 of the table includes (i) an organisation who falls within one or more of the Schedule 5 categories or (ii) a category of organisation, all of whom fall within one or more of the Schedule 5 categories.
- 3.2 Section 38 of the Measure enables the Welsh Ministers, by order, to amend the Schedule 6 table so that column 2 of an organisation's entry (or a category of organisations' entry) includes a reference to one or more of the following (i) service delivery standards, (ii) policy making standards, (iii) operational standards and (iv) record keeping standards.
- 3.3 This Order amends Schedule 6 to the Measure by;
- (a) Inserting new organisations and specifying classes of standard in column 2 of each organisation's entry;
 - (b) Removing organisations where appropriate, for example if a organisation has been abolished ;

(c) Amending the names of organisations that have changed since the Measure was made.

3.4 This Order is subject to the approval of the National Assembly for Wales (the affirmative procedure).

4. Purpose & intended effect of the legislation

Background

4.1 The Measure confirmed the official status of the Welsh language in Wales and created a new legislative framework for the language. A key step in giving effect to the Measure is specifying standards and authorising the Welsh Language Commissioner (“the Commissioner”) to require organisations to comply with those Standards.

The issue

4.2 Schedule 6 to the Measure sets out the categories of organisations who are liable to comply with standards. Since the Measure was made the Schedule has become out of date. Some of the organisations named in the Schedule have ceased to exist, some have changed their name and others have merged to create new organisations. In addition the Commissioner has, following a standards investigation, concluded that some organisations that were not previously included in Schedule 6 to the Measure but were included in the standards investigation should be required to comply with Welsh language standards.

4.3 As part of the process of preparing this Order the Welsh Ministers have considered the Commissioner’s conclusions, along with whether these organisations fall into one or more of the categories in Schedule 5 and the appropriateness of including the organisation in Schedule 6. The Order reflects these changes.

Purpose

4.4 This Order will update the list of organisations in Schedule 6 to reflect the changes.

- Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Schedule to the Order inserts the names of organisations into Schedule 6 to the Measure

The Welsh Ministers have considered each organisation included in the Order to ensure that they fall into one or more of the categories in Schedule 5 and are satisfied that they do.

- Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Schedule to the Order omits entries where those organisations no longer exist, already fall into one of the categories in Schedule 6, or where the Welsh Ministers consider an organisation falls within Schedule 7 and 8 to the Measure.
- Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Schedule to the Order changes the entries where those organisations have changed their name.

Effect

4.5 This Order will enable the Welsh Ministers (by separate Regulations) to make Welsh language standards specifically applicable to the organisations or categories of organisations contained in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Schedule to the Order and to the organisations whose names have changed (see paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Order). That will mean that the Commissioner is authorised to require those organisations to comply with standards.

Risk if legislation changes are not made

4.6 Unless an organisation who falls into one or more of the categories in Schedule 5 of the Measure is also included in Schedule 6 the Welsh Ministers will not be able to make standards specifically applicable to them. This will mean that the Commissioner will not be able to require the organisation to comply with standards.

4.7 This could lead to the following risks being realised;

- A key component of the Measure not being implemented. That is introducing the standards regime and authorising the Commissioner to require a organisation to comply with standards.
- An organisation that deals with the public may not be included in the new standards regime.
- There will be inconsistency in terms of the duties placed on organisations in the same sectors.
- The public will be unsure about which services they can expect to receive in Welsh. This uncertainty will continue if this Order is not made allowing standards to be made specifically applicable to organisations that fall into one or more of the categories in Schedule 5 to the Measure.
- Organisations that have a Welsh Language Schemes introduced under the Welsh Language Act 1993 will not transition to the standards regime.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Welsh Ministers have not consulted on this Order, as the Order does not place any duties directly on the organisation. Schedule 6 to the Measure, sets out the organisations and categories of organisations who are liable to comply with standards.
- 5.2 Before an organisation is required to comply with Standards a number of conditions must be met. These are set out in section 25 of the Measure. One such condition is that the Welsh Ministers have to make standards specifically applicable to the organisation by Regulations. Furthermore, the Commissioner will have to give the organisation a compliance notice setting out with which standards (and in which circumstances or areas) the organisation has to comply. The compliance notice will also set out the date from which the organisation has to comply.
- 5.3 Before giving the organisation a compliance notice the Commissioner must consult with them in accordance with section 47 of the Measure (unless the Commissioner is satisfied that they have already been consulted or given the opportunity to be consulted on that matter in connection with a standards investigation).
- 5.4 Any organisation will be able to challenge the requirements to comply with a particular standard on the grounds of whether it is reasonable and proportionate to require them to do so. In the first place, a organisation will be able to present a challenge to the Commissioner. If they are unable to resolve the dispute, there is a route of appeal available to the Welsh Language Tribunal, and thereafter to the High Court.
- 5.5 With two exceptions, all the organisations in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Order have participated in the Commissioner's Standards Investigation; the two exceptions are The British Film Institute and the Canal and Rivers Trust who are successor organisations to the UK Film Council and the British Waterways Board respectively. Both of which are named in Schedule 6. Their inclusion in the Order simply brings Schedule 6 up to date.

6. Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)

- 6.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment is not considered necessary in respect of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (Amendment of Schedule 6) Order 2016 as it does not impose direct costs and is part of updating the 2011 Measure.