



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-655
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/01128/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

11 January 2016

Dear William,

I am writing in response to your letter of 15 December regarding petition P-04-655 - "Demanding our rights for the Welsh Language in the Private Sector". I am pleased that you are considering this matter.

I note that Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg has asked the Government to confirm that we will act on any timetable for preparing standards. Like the Welsh Language Commissioner, the Welsh Government wishes to include as many organisations and sectors as possible within the new standards regime, and to do so as soon as we can. The process for making standards has been prescribed by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. When preparing Regulations to make standards specifically applicable to organisations, the Welsh Ministers are under a duty to give due regard to the Welsh Language Commissioner's conclusions following a standards investigation. It is very difficult to know the time needed to prepare Regulations which are suitable for different sectors until we receive and give due regard to the Commissioner's conclusions, and consider responses from the organisations which were subject to the investigation. To ensure that we are able to prepare Regulations which are suitable to be implemented, we will prepare and publish a timetable for specific sectors following our consideration of the Commissioner's standards investigation reports and conclusions.

You asked in your letter for my views regarding the Government's intentions for amending the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. As I noted in my letter dated 14 October 2015, I am happy to commit to amending the Measure, and to do so on the basis of the lessons that we have learnt during the last four years. It is early in the process to give details on the amendments that I would like to introduce, but I am keen to consider ways of facilitating the process of making standards, and will consider whether the scope of the Measure needs to be extended to allow the Commissioner to impose standards on other sectors.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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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.

You also ask for the reasons why the Government apparently asked for certain businesses to be withdrawn from the Commissioner's third investigation. The Welsh Government has not tried to influence which bodies the Commissioner has included in any of the standards investigations. In the case of the third investigation, the Commissioner originally noted that 259 persons would be subject to that investigation. I sent a letter to the Commissioner on 23 September 2014 noting that it would be unlikely that Regulations could be prepared for that amount of Bodies before the 2016 election. The Commissioner's response was to reduce the number of bodies that were in the third investigation. A number of the bodies taken out of the third investigation were bus and train service providers. I am pleased to see that the Commissioner has decided to include those sectors in her plans for the standards investigations that she will be conducting in 2016.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', written in a cursive style.

CARWYN JONES