

30 July 2025

Dear Colleague,

Consultation – British Sign Language (Wales) Bill

The Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee is undertaking Stage 1 scrutiny into the general principles of the British Sign Language (Wales) Bill. A copy of the Bill and its accompanying explanatory notes can be found on the Senedd's website.

Invitation to contribute to the inquiry

The Committee would like to invite you to submit written evidence as part of its consideration of the general principles of the Bill. In responding to the consultation, you may wish to give a view on the Committee's terms of reference.

Terms of reference

The Committee would like to hear your views on the general principles of the British Sign Language (Wales) Bill and the need for legislation to deliver the stated policy intention. In coming to a view you may wish to consider the Bill's key provisions which consist of:

- A duty on Welsh Ministers to promote and facilitate the use of BSL;
- A duty on Welsh Ministers to publish a National BSL Strategy;
- A duty on Welsh Ministers to publish guidance;
- A duty on specified public bodies to publish BSL plans;
- The appointment of a BSL adviser;
- Reporting duties to be imposed on the public bodies and Welsh Ministers in relation to these duties.

You may also wish to consider:

- Any potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and whether the Bill takes account of them;

- The appropriateness of the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation;
- Whether there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill; and
- The financial implications of the Bill.

The closing date for submitting consultation responses is **12 September 2025**.

If you wish to submit evidence, please use the [online Form](#) either to give responses to individual questions or to upload a finished document/video. Alternatively send your submission by e-mail or by post to the addresses listed below. However you intend to submit, please do so by the deadline of **12 September 2025**.

Guidance

In preparing your response we ask that you consider the following guidelines. Please:

- keep the document brief – as a guideline, 3,000 words maximum;
- avoid acronyms and abbreviations (where they are used please ensure they are spelled out in full the first time they are used);
- submit a single document (preferably as a Word document) as your paper, with any tables and annexes incorporated into the paper;
- use headings and numbered paragraphs for structure; and
- use font in at least size 12 (black colour).

It is also possible to respond by online webform, by email or by post. For more information please see the [guidance for those providing evidence to committees](#).

Official languages

The Committee welcomes contributions in both or either of our official languages, English and Welsh. Information not submitted bilingually will not be translated and will be published in the language of submission only. We expect organisations to implement their own standards and schemes and to comply with their statutory obligations.

Submissions in British Sign Language

In addition to the general call for evidence we are also welcoming responses in BSL – these must be submitted via video upload through our [online form](#) and you will find [more information about this process on our website](#).

BSL during the scrutiny process

This Bill is aimed at promoting and facilitating British Sign Language (BSL). The Committee is committed to doing the best job it can to reflect the spirit of the Bill as part of the scrutiny process.

This will include accepting consultation submissions in BSL, and enabling opportunities for individuals to engage with us in BSL.

However, there are time pressures associated with the process that the Committee has no control over. They include the need to allow sufficient time for the Bill to complete each stage before the end of the current Senedd (2021-2026). The pressure to meet these deadlines will have implications for what the Committee is able to provide in BSL. Alongside its overall commitment, the Committee plans to provide regular updates to BSL signers across Wales and ensure all views are taken into account as part of the scrutiny process..

How we use your information

We will usually publish correspondence or written evidence on our website. If you have responded in a personal capacity, your name will be published along with your contribution, unless you have asked for your contribution to be anonymised. If you have responded in a professional capacity, the published version of your response will include your name, your job title/role, if relevant, and the name of your organisation.

Please ensure that you have considered the Senedd's [**policy on disclosure of information**](#) before submitting information to the Committee. For responses in BSL we have also issued a

Supplementary Privacy Notice

Contact details

If you wish to speak to someone regarding this consultation, please use the following contact details:

Committee Clerk
Equality and Social Justice Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

Email: SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales

Telephone: 0300 200 6565

We would be grateful if you could forward a copy of the letter to any individuals or organisations that might like to contribute to this work. A copy of this letter has been placed on the Senedd's website with an open invitation to submit views.

Yours sincerely,



Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English