

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-427
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/07182/12

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

7 November 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 22 October about the petition submitted by Gethin Kurtis Sugar, calling for a new Welsh language law.

The Welsh Government has no plans to introduce primary legislation with regard to the Welsh language, in particular, legislation dealing with the use of Welsh by the private sector.

We are currently implementing the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (the Measure) which confirms that the Welsh language has official status in Wales. The Measure strengthened the existing legal framework and will lead to greater clarity for Welsh speakers in terms of the service they can expect to receive in Welsh. By enabling duties to be placed on organisations to provide services in the Welsh language, the Measure leads to the establishment of rights for Welsh speakers in Wales.

The Measure created the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner as an advocate and regulator for the Welsh language. The Commissioner has powers to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language and impose duties on various organisations. The Commissioner's office was established on 1 April 2012 and, since then, the Commissioner has undertaken a non-statutory consultation with regard to developing Welsh language duties, known as standards.

Standards will replace Welsh language schemes. Once imposed they will place a duty on a wide range of organisations to provide services through the medium of Welsh, and the Commissioner has a range of enforcement powers to ensure that organisations comply with their standards. Certain standards may be imposed on private companies offering telecommunications, gas, water, electricity, postal, bus and railway services. Apart from these companies, however, the Government remains firmly of the view that a more appropriate approach for the majority of private sector companies will be to encourage and support their use of Welsh on a voluntary basis.

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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The Welsh Government wishes to see the Welsh language thrive, and to see more opportunities for people to use Welsh in their day to day life. I believe that the Measure, alongside the Government's Welsh language strategy and Welsh medium education strategy will help us achieve that aim.

*Yours sincerely,
Leighton Andrews*

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