

# Welsh Language Standards

## Annual Monitoring Report 2016-2017

The Police and Crime  
Commissioner for Gwent

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# INTRODUCTION

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In September 2016, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent (the Commissioner) received the **Welsh language standards**<sup>1</sup> applied by the Welsh Language Commissioner. To support the delivery of the standards and to further ensure a workplace and operational culture that embraces and promotes Welsh language, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Gwent Police (on behalf of the Commissioner and the Chief Constable) published our first joint **Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2021**<sup>2</sup> that sets out how we intend to comply with the standards. The strategy sets out the Commissioner and Chief Constable's overarching aim to:

*“Work in partnership towards a policing service which treats the Welsh and English languages equally, and support our staff and communities who wish to communicate and engage with us through the medium of Welsh”.*

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also highlighted the importance of providing a bilingual service in the **Gwent Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021**<sup>3</sup>.

Under standard numbers 155, 161 and 167, the PCC is required to produce an Annual Report in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which the OPCC has complied with the service delivery, policy making and operational standards with which the Commissioner was under a duty to comply during that year.

This is the first Annual Report against the Welsh language standards published by the OPCC on behalf of the Commissioner. As the first standards were only imposed at the end of March 2017, this report also highlights compliance-related activity undertaken during the 2016/17 financial year.

The OPCC will also monitor additional indicators to help assess growth in demand, thereby ensuring that we are able to meet the needs of those accessing information and services through the medium of Welsh, both internally and externally. These will be included within the Annual Report for each financial year as well as our progress against our Key Objectives.

## PROGRESS AGAINST THE STANDARDS

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This section provides information regarding the OPCC's activities relating to the specific standards required within the Annual Report. The activity recorded took place during the 2016/17 financial year and incorporates the first compliance date of the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

To support the implementation and ensure progress of the standards, a joint Welsh Language Board was established between the OPCC and Gwent Police. The Board is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and attended by the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and the OPCC Policy Officer with responsibility for Welsh Language. Membership comprises representatives of all the key work streams within Gwent Police, supporting a consistent approach to joint development and implementation activity across both organisations.

The OPCC continues to engage with the Welsh Language Commissioner and her office. In November 2016, the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Policy Officer met with the Welsh Language Commissioner to offer an initial outline of some of the challenges faced by the OPCC and Gwent Police. At the same time, the Welsh Language Commissioner was provided with an invitation to spend some time in Gwent in consideration of the matters raised.

In January 2017, the Commissioner hosted the Welsh Language Commissioner for the familiarisation visit to Gwent Police. This provided an opportunity to explore in real time, some of the challenges faced by the Chief Constable in complying with the applicable standards. The visit was very positively received and found to be a very informative experience by all involved.

The following information is published in line with the requirements under the standards that relate to Record Keeping.

#### **A. Complaints against the Welsh language standards 2016-17**

Under standards 155, 161 and 167(dd), the Commissioner is required report on the number of complaints received each year in relation to compliance with the Service Deliver, Policy Making and Operational standards.

During the reporting period, no complaints were received.

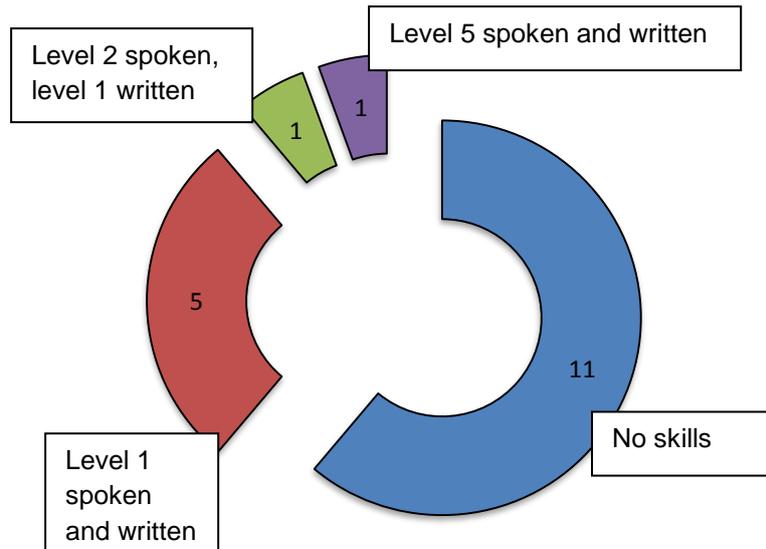
#### **B. Employees' Welsh language skills**

Under standard 167(b), the Commissioner is required report on the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of each the reporting year.

The OPCC undertakes an annual staff audit of Welsh language skills and retains those records in accordance with its information management policy. Skills are measured against the Welsh Language Competency Framework to define levels of ability based on the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) framework definitions.

The following chart identifies the various skills levels across OPCC staff. Level 1 denotes basic skills, while Level 5 demonstrates advanced proficiency in communicating through the medium of Welsh. During 2016/17, there were 18 members of staff within the organisation.

## OPCC Welsh Language Skills 2016/17



We recognise that low numbers of Welsh speakers within an organisation is one of the more significant challenges in terms of providing a bilingual service and the meeting compliance requirements. Therefore, we are working with Gwent Police to explore the most effective strategies to ensure that we have a targeted, sustainable approach to workforce training which firmly embeds Welsh language.

Following a mutual decision by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable, two new posts were created to support compliance with the standards. Activity to employ a Welsh-speaking, Welsh Language Policy Officer was undertaken and the post filled during the year. Part of this role involves exploring opportunities to engage staff in regular campaigns based on Welsh culture, as well as ensuring continued improvements in Welsh language provision. The post of a joint Welsh Language Translator was also advertised but not filled during the reporting period; however, the appointment has since been made.

### C. Training courses

Under standard 148, the Commissioner is required report on the number and percentage of employees who have attended training courses provided in Welsh during each financial year.

The OPCC maintains training records for each member of staff. During the year, there was no attendance of training courses offered in Welsh. However, one member of staff undertook a level 1 Welsh language course.

During the year, none of the staff in the OPCC elected to undertake any internal training in Welsh, in accordance with the identified demand for the provision of training through the medium of Welsh. For that reason, this resulted in a 0% attendance rate within the organisation.

## D. Posts advertised in 2016/17

Under standard 167(d), the Commissioner is required report on the number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where:

- Welsh language skills were essential;
- Welsh language skills needed to be learned when appointed to the post;
- Welsh language skills were desirable; or
- Welsh language skills were not necessary.

During the reporting **two** posts were advertised where Welsh skills were essential.

# OTHER PROGRESS

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As part of our commitment to providing a bilingual service and embedding the Welsh language standards throughout the organisation, the OPCC and Gwent Police have published four key objectives that we will seek to achieve during the four-year lifetime of the strategy.

### Key Objectives

- 1. Engage effectively with Welsh speakers within our communities in order to shape the service we provide**
- 2. Promote our Welsh language services to the public in order to ensure their use**
- 3. Increase the proportion of Welsh speakers that we employ across both organisations**
- 4. Create a workplace culture that recognises the value of delivering a service through the medium of Welsh**

### How will we do this?

- Work in partnership with community-based Welsh language organisations to access the views of, and engage with, Welsh speakers in Gwent
- Establish appropriate external reference groups and consultation mechanisms which mainstream the consideration of Welsh language use across our day to day business
- Offer a high quality, consistent Welsh language service to all those who access our services
- Raise the profile of our Welsh language provision through effective community engagement and advertisement
- Put in place positive action initiatives which target, support and develop potential applicants with Welsh language skills
- Provide basic Welsh language training for *all* of our personnel, and adopt a blended learning approach to further develop these skills
- Work with Welsh medium youth groups, schools and FE/HE providers to promote career opportunities
- Engage all staff in regular, creative campaigns which highlight lived experiences of Welsh speaking staff and communities

The Commissioner and staff of the OPCC have been engaging with our Welsh-speaking communities during the year. This has taken place through radio interviews on a variety of topics, public consultation prior to the production of the *Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021* and consultation on the precept for 2017-18, and engagement with Welsh medium schools and the Police School Liaison Service.

We have already begun to work with local Welsh language organisations to help shape the service we provide. In this way, the OPCC and Gwent Police jointly commissioned Menter Iaith Caerphilly (on behalf of the groups in the Gwent area) to undertake an audit of key buildings within the police estate in terms of public accessibility to the Welsh language. As a result of this, work was undertaken to ensure compliance against the required standards.

Joint work between the OPCC and Gwent Police has been undertaken to promote the key public engagement requirements under the standards, including launching an internal poster campaign (including printed, wall-mounted and electronic desk top versions). In addition, all staff in the OPCC were provided with printed desk 'stands' carrying reminders of the bilingual protocol for answering telephone calls.



Welsh spelling and grammar tools have been provided across desktop and mobile devices throughout Gwent Police and the OPCC and instructions on the use of Windows language translation tools issues to all staff in order to facilitate communications in Welsh, should they be required.

In conjunction with Gwent Police, we are contracting the services of a full time Welsh language tutor employed by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Initially, this resource will provide OPCC and Gwent Police personnel with a mandatory basic Welsh session, including content relating to Welsh culture and history.

Arrangements are also underway to supplement existing Welsh language learning provision, currently available via classroom sessions and residential intensive courses, with online and other interactive platforms that maximise the use of Welsh within all our workplaces.

We have amended our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process to ensure that we meet our 'Policy Making' standards. EIAs are a compulsory part of our policy making procedure and guide policy writers and decision makers in considering adverse or positive impact on people that share Protected Characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Our EIA template now includes a number of questions which mean that any impact on our treatment of the Welsh language in relation to English, or any opportunities for people to use the Welsh language are identified. The EIA also sets out how the writer intends to mitigate any negative impact identified as well as any changes that are necessary.

The OPCC also monitors additional activity relating to the provision of services in Welsh which will form part of the Annual Report. During the compliance period, the OPCC:

- Corresponded with two individuals in Welsh (on the basis of standard 2);
- Did not hold any public meetings through the medium of Welsh (on the basis of standards 24, 24(a), 25, 25(a), and 25(d));
- Held one meeting where one of the invited speakers requested to use the medium of Welsh (on the basis of standard 30);
- Received and responded to one social media contact made in the medium of Welsh (on the basis of standard 56);
- Did not receive any grant applications in the medium of Welsh (on the basis of standard 71). All documentation relating to grants is published in Welsh and English and any Welsh language applications received will be dealt with in Welsh. In future, grant applications through the medium of Welsh will be actively sought;
- Did not receive any tenders for contract in Welsh (on the basis of standard 76). The tender document has been amended to state “The Commissioner welcomes tender responses in Welsh” and all relevant tender documents will be published in Welsh;
- Did not receive any requests from employees wishing to receive employment-related information in Welsh (on the basis of standards 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101). This information is reviewed annually to ensure any changes requested by staff are updated accordingly;
- Did not deal with any employee complaints through the medium of Welsh (on the basis of standard 111); and
- Did not receive or respond to any Freedom of Information requests in Welsh (on the basis of standard 1).

## CHALLENGE APPLICATIONS

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In March 2017, the OPCC submitted a challenge application to in relation to twelve of our March standards. As required, the application included supporting evidence setting out our rationale in identifying areas that we believe require additional consideration. Our aim was to ensure a realistic and constructive assessment of how the standards would impact on the organisation.

In accordance with section 60(2) of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, the requirement on the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent to comply with the below standards have been postponed until the Welsh Language Commissioner has determined whether or not the requirement is unreasonable or disproportionate:

2, 3, 7, 21, 22, 24, 24a, 28, 31, 49, 50, 51.

## CONCLUSION

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Both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable welcome the implementation of Welsh language standards, which have already brought about significant changes to the way we promote Welsh language within the workplace and throughout the services we provide.

The OPCC continues to work with Gwent Police and other partners to improve the provision of Welsh language services to our communities and to those that work for us and wish to use Welsh as part of their daily business.

We continue to seek out engagement opportunities with Welsh language community-based groups to help shape the design of our services and to ensure that their voices are represented in our decision making processes. We will also engage with our Welsh-speaking staff to ensure their views and experiences are reflected.

We will update our website with responses to any information requested by the Welsh Language Commissioner, to help raise awareness of Welsh language activities undertaken by the OPCC in the course of its duties.

## WEB LINKS INDEX

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**1. Welsh language standards for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent**

[www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/about-us/welsh-language/](http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/about-us/welsh-language/)

**2. Joint Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2021**

[www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/transparency/publications/welsh-language-strategy/](http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/transparency/publications/welsh-language-strategy/)

**3. Gwent Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021**

[www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/transparency/publications/police-and-crime-plan-2017-2021/](http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/transparency/publications/police-and-crime-plan-2017-2021/)