

Welsh Language Scheme: Annual Compliance Report

Meeting
07/12/07

Agenda Item
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Reference No
HEFCW/07/112

1 Issue

- 1.1 The paper presents for information the second annual compliance report on HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme and the response of the Welsh Language Board to the report.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 HEFCW has a statutory responsibility to have a Welsh Language Scheme, approved by the Welsh Language Board, and to submit an annual compliance report to the Board.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. note the annual compliance report at **Annex A** and the exercise of delegated authority in submitting the report to the Welsh Language Board;
 - ii. note the feedback on the report by the Welsh Language Board in **Annex B**.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 This paper is presented for information. There are no timing implications.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting.

6 Further information

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7 Background

- 7.1 At its meeting in May 2007 the Council received the draft annual compliance report on HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme. This set out the progress made by HEFCW in achieving its targets as set in the Scheme's implementation plan. The Council delegated authority to the Chief Executive to finalise the report which we submitted to the Welsh Language Board in June 2007 (**Annex A**).

The Council is invited to note the annual compliance report at Annex A and the exercise of delegated authority in submitting the report to the Welsh Language Board.

8 Feedback on the compliance report by the Welsh Language Board

- 8.1 We received feedback from the Board on our report in November. The feedback was generally very positive (a translation is at **Annex B**).
- 8.2 The Board made some minor points and suggestions on Part One of the Scheme, which sets out how we deal with the Welsh-speaking public and HEFCW's bilingual public face. Officers will discuss how to respond to these.
- 8.3 Part Two of the Scheme deals with our policies on supporting the development of Welsh medium higher education. In response to the Board's comments, we will be updating the Board on recent developments and clarifying matters on a few of the points raised, for example, that we provide advice to the Minister in confidence. We will note that the Welsh Medium Higher Education Sector Group operates under the auspices of HEW and that the Welsh Language Board will be invited by HEW to send a representative to a new consultative forum which will have its first meeting in the new year and where further information on progress will be provided.

The Council is invited to note the feedback on the report by the Welsh Language Board in Annex B.

9 Revised Scheme

- 9.1 HEFCW's current Welsh Language Scheme runs to April 2008. We will be preparing a revised Scheme for the three-year period from April 2008 to March 2011. Officers have already had some informal discussions with the Board on what their expectations would be for this next period.

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no financial implications attached with this paper.

11 Communications implications

- 11.1 The annual compliance report will be published on the HEFCW website.

12 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 12.1 This report has direct implications for the Council's responsibilities to support and promote the Welsh language. It has no direct implications for race, gender or disability equality.

13 Risk Assessment

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
Failure to meet a statutory requirement/ judgement by the Welsh Language Board that insufficient progress has been made in implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstration of progress in the annual report and highlighting of positive developments.• Noting to the Board particular issues which affect the operation of our Scheme, such as relatively low Welsh language contact with the public.• Ensuring that we respond positively to feedback and suggestions for improvement from the Board.