

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
12/03/15	14	HEFCW/15/20

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper presents the fourth annual compliance report for HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme, and provides a brief update on Welsh language standards.

2 Rationale for paper

- 2.1 HEFCW's last Welsh Language Scheme, prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993, was approved by the Welsh Language Board in November 2010. This paper presents our annual compliance report under the current Scheme.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. Approve the fourth Welsh Language Scheme compliance report.
 - ii. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any final amendments to the report.
 - iii. Note progress with regard to the Welsh Language Standards.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 The fourth full year of HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme ended in November 2014. We will submit our fourth compliance report to the Welsh Language Commissioner in March 2015.

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 Welsh Language Scheme Compliance Report

- 7.1 HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme was approved in November 2010. The compliance report at **Annex A** is the fourth annual compliance report against the Scheme, which will be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner in March 2015. The Compliance Report is shorter than usual as we were advised by the Welsh Language Commissioner that we did not need to include information previously submitted as part of the Welsh Language Standards questionnaire (see below).

8 Welsh Language Standards update

- 8.1 As reported in the Chief Executive's item on 23 January (HEFCW/15/CE1, Welsh Language Standards) a 'standards investigation' was initiated on 17 November 2014, by the end of which HEFCW was expected to provide information and comments to the Welsh Language Commissioner through an online questionnaire about the extent to which we would be able to adhere to the proposed Welsh Language Standards. The Senior Communications Manager and Management Board held a series of thorough meetings in January to discuss HEFCW's response and the potential implications for HEFCW. HEFCW's response was submitted on 6 February and members received a copy on 9 February.
- 8.2 The Welsh Language Commissioner will consider all responses and will report to Welsh Ministers – issuing a 'standards report' - by the end of May 2015. Welsh Ministers will then produce Draft Regulations for the National Assembly to consider. The regulations will show which of the 179 standards Ministers have determined should apply to HEFCW.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1 **Compliance Report** Welsh language training for staff is part of ongoing activity and is provided for within HEFCW's training programme and budget. In addition, HEFCW has an annual contract in place for English to Welsh translations, and a £10,000 budget to cover English to Welsh and other translation requirements. This part of the paper has no additional implications for either the translation or training budgets.
- 9.2 **Welsh Language Standards** HEFCW's response to the Welsh Government, submitted in February, estimated that it would cost the organisation at least an additional £200,000 annually to comply with all 179 proposed standards.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 The annual compliance report will be published on our website.

11 Diversity, equality and Welsh language implications

- 11.1 The Welsh Language Scheme was impact assessed for equality, and is designed to help HEFCW meet our Welsh language requirements as a public body. We don't believe that the contents of this paper have any additional implications for equality. The implications for the Welsh language are self-evident.

12 **Risk Assessment**

Risk	Management of Risk
<p>Feedback from the Welsh Language Commissioner that insufficient progress has been made against the Scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress highlighted in compliance report. • Noting issues which affect the operation of our Scheme, such as relatively low Welsh language contact with the public. • Ensuring that we respond positively and promptly to feedback. • Management Board to consider actions for future implementation plan.
<p>Non-compliance with the Scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact assessments of policies help mitigate the risk of a potential negative impact of policies on the Welsh language. • Regular checking of progress against the Scheme.
<p>Capacity to comply with standards within current and future running costs budgets, potentially leading to non-compliance notices from the Welsh Language Commissioner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alerting HEFCW’s Council and Welsh Government to potential impact on budget. • Prudent management of future budgets. • Examination of opportunities for further non-pay cost reductions.
<p>Lack of clarity on operational implications of some of the standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and plan internally. • Seek external guidance on best practice, including with the Welsh Language Commissioner’s office.