



# Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2016/17



## **Implementing the Welsh Language Standards in South Wales Police**

### **Introduction to the Welsh Language Standards**

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993. As part of the new legislation, in Wales the Welsh language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated less favorably. Public bodies no longer need to develop and implement Welsh Language Schemes but instead now must comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards.

The purpose of the Welsh Language Standards is to increase and normalise the use of the Welsh language so that Welsh speakers can use the Welsh language in all walks of life.

The Welsh Language Commissioner has issued a Compliance Notice that sets out which of the 176 Standards in the legislation apply to South Wales Police, along with any exemptions and their implementation dates.

From 30 March 2017, South Wales Police was required by law to comply with new Language Standards.

### **Our Commitment to the Welsh Language Standards**

We take our responsibility towards the Welsh language seriously and see the Welsh Language Standards as an opportunity to reinforce this and to provide high quality services to our communities. We fully recognise the right of individuals to live their lives through the medium of Welsh and we will not treat the language less favourably than English when we deliver these services.

We aim to comply with the legislative requirement to provide a bilingual service, and to offer language choice and linguistic courtesy on a routine basis to all those who make contact with us and, additionally, as an internal business language to our staff who speak Welsh.

The Force has invested time and money to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh; we are committed to delivering against our Standards and have made a number of changes to the way we work to deliver bi-lingual services.

Whilst we are working hard to ensure that people receive the highest possible service, we are realistic that we may not always get things right. To help us improve our Welsh language services we actively encourage our communities to tell us what we are doing well and where we can improve.

This document provides an overview of the processes in place across the Force to promote our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

## **Internal Oversight**

Governance arrangements have been put in place to ensure we deliver a service that complies with the Welsh Language Standards. A Strategic Board, chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Jeremy Vaughan, is supported by a tactical Working Group chaired by Chief Superintendent Martin Jones. Underpinning this governance structure is a project plan that tracks and records progress against each of the Standards. The Force has committed a budget to deal with Welsh language translations and development costs to support our Welsh language service provision.

## **Promoting the Standards**

In anticipation of the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards, the Force developed a comprehensive Communications Strategy to promote the implementation of the Standards both internally and externally.

The **Internal Communication** strategy was developed to:

- Increase officer and staff awareness about the Standards
- Help ensure that South Wales Police are compliant with the Standards
- Give officers and staff a sense of ownership in how the Standards are applied
- Reassure officers and staff about the implications of the Standards
- Inform officers and staff of where they can obtain more information and guidance

Additionally, the Force has developed a procedure document that provides staff with an overview of processes in place to ensure we comply with the Standards; this is available on our Intranet site.

Internally, key messages have been developed and delivered through a variety of channels including posters, videos, marketing materials, a dedicated internal microsite and articles on the Force intranet. Communications activities were undertaken prior to the implementation of the Standards to allow officers and staff to prepare themselves appropriately.

As well as ensuring compliance, officers and staff continue to be encouraged to promote Welsh language services through the plethora of interactions they have with the public.

We have Welsh Language Champions across the Force who are responsible for providing leadership, advice, guidance and support regarding Welsh language matters. Because not all of our staff are able to speak or write Welsh fluently, we have arrangements in place to provide translation support and a training plan to upskill our front line staff.

As a Force, we recognise and celebrate our Welsh learners at an annual ceremony, which has been in place for many years. The event recognises the efforts of our officers and staff who have worked hard to develop and use their new Welsh language skills. The 2017 awards recognised 35 officers and staff, who received support to learn or improve their Welsh. Ten of these individuals have now qualified as assessors and

are using their skills to support other colleagues who are interested in learning or improving their Welsh.

The **External Communication** strategy was developed to:

- Increase public awareness about the Standards
- Inform members of the public that all South Wales Police services are available through the medium of Welsh
- Reassure members of the public that accessing South Wales Police services through Welsh will not result in receiving a lesser service
- Inform members of the public where they can obtain more information and guidance

External channels, including web and social media, are being use to promote our Welsh language services.

In addition, South Wales Police has used public engagements opportunities such as Eisteddfod yr Urdd and Tafwyl to engage with members of the public about the Standards.

### **Skills Policy**

The Force recognises that the ability to speak Welsh is a skill alongside other policing skills and has developed a new Welsh Language Skills Policy.

This new policy provides a practical framework in which managers and staff can implement our Welsh language aspirations. Attention has been given to enhance the bilingual capability of the Force and to ensure that staff can demonstrate linguistic courtesy in the Welsh language as a minimum.

We recognise the importance of equipping each individual with the appropriate linguistic knowledge and skills to engage with Welsh speakers effectively and ultimately deliver a full service through the medium of Welsh.

The new policy introduces a matrix to profile Welsh language skill requirements for all roles across the Force – considering the linguistic make-up of our communities. Candidates for external and internal recruitment and promotion are required to demonstrate specific levels of Welsh spoken competency prior to appointment and during their probationary period. All new appointees (with the exception of volunteers, contractors and agency staff) are expected to have a minimum level 1 as a condition of being offered an appointment, and to achieve level 2 within 12 months of their appointment.

Training will be offered in consideration of the needs of each individual, which could include a combination of:

- In-house training courses
- Self-directed learning
- Externally funded training provision
- Continual development of Welsh language skills

## **South Wales Police Welsh Language Standards**

### **Service Delivery Standards**

We aim to meet our 'Service Delivery' Standards through a number of measures, including:

- We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and will not lead to a delay in our response.
- Footnotes at the bottom of all emails and letterheads explain that we welcome correspondence in Welsh and English.
- Our Welsh-speaking staff will indicate their ability to speak Welsh on email footers.
- Email signatures, 'out of office' email messages and voicemails to main landline numbers will be bilingual.
- We have a dedicated Welsh line for 101 calls
- Callers to the Force will be greeted with a bilingual greeting. All callers in Welsh will be treated with courtesy and respect and we will do all we can to provide a positive service in Welsh.
- When we contact people for the first time and are not aware of their language preference, we will aim to ask them if they wish to communicate with us in Welsh. This applies to email, letter and telephone contact
- We will aim to record the details of those that inform us they wish to communicate with us in Welsh.
- All public meetings, events and conferences will provide the opportunity of conversing in Welsh. Individuals will be required to inform us of their wish to communicate in Welsh by a specified date in order that we can arrange simultaneous translation facilities.
- Any new signs erected will be bilingual.
- Any standard documents used within the Force are bilingual.
- Our website is bilingual.
- Our main Facebook and Twitter accounts are available bilingually. Any comments in Welsh requiring a response will be responded to in Welsh during office hours (as with English comments).

The Force has not received any complaints relating to compliance with our Service Delivery Standards.

### **Policy Making Standards**

We aim to meet our 'Policy Making' Standards through a number of measures, including:

- When policies or projects are established or reviewed they are subjected to an 'Equality Impact Assessment' (EIA) process, this includes an assessment of Welsh language implications and identifying opportunities to promote the Welsh language.
- Consultation or research will take opportunities to invite views on how we could promote the use of the Welsh language.

The Force has not received any complaints relating to compliance with our Policy-Making Standards.

### Operational Standards

We aim to meet our 'Operational' Standards through a number of measures, including:

- Members of staff wishing to receive HR documents in Welsh or conduct HR processes in Welsh will be able to do so.
- When we advertise for any post, we will undergo a process to assess the Welsh language skills required for that post.
- Recruitment processes for staff will be offered bilingually.
- All new staff that join the Force will be briefed on the requirements and processes relating to the Welsh Language Standards during induction training.
- To encourage the use of Welsh within the workplace informal 'Siop Siarad' sessions will be held for any employees wishing to attend, whether they are Welsh speakers or not.
- Welsh language training can be made available as part of the overall Learning & Development commitments of the Force and in conjunction with South Wales Fire and Rescue.
- Workplace signs will be bilingual.

The Force has not received any complaints relating to compliance with our Operational Standards.

### Record Keeping Standards

To meet the requirements of our record keeping Standards, we will publish the below information on an annual basis:

The number of employees who have Welsh language skills	Level 1 – 1,929 Level 2 – 196 Level 3 – 201 Level 4 – 122 Level 5 – 95  No Skill – 2,211 Not stated – 464
The number of members of staff who attended training courses we offered in Welsh during 2016/17	Nil
The number of members of staff who wore a badge at the end of the financial year	N/A
The number of new and vacant posts that we advertised during 2016/17 which were categorised as posts where Welsh language skills were essential	5
The number of new and vacant posts that we advertised during 2016/17 which were categorised as posts where Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post	Nil
The number of new and vacant posts that we advertised during 2017/17 which were categorised as posts where Welsh language skills were desirable	232

The number of new and vacant posts that we advertised during 2016/17 which were categorised as posts where Welsh language skills were not necessary	15
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**Complaints**

We have established a policy for dealing with any complaints regarding adherence to the Welsh Language Standards and this can be found on our external website.

