

Annual report to the Welsh Language Commissioner on implementation of LSB Welsh Language Scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report covers the period from October 2020 to October 2021.
- 1.2. The Legal Services Board (LSB) is the independent body responsible for overseeing the regulation of lawyers in England and Wales. Our vision is to reshape legal services to better meet society's needs. We want to reform and modernise the legal services marketplace by putting the interests of people who need legal services at the heart of the system, reflecting the objectives of the statute that created us, the Legal Services Act 2007 ("the LSA").
- 1.3. Although the LSB has a broad programme of stakeholder engagement, including with legal services providers and members of the public through the public panel, the focus of our powers is on the regulatory bodies. Regulatory rules and guidance that we develop are aimed, amongst other things, at ensuring that the approved regulators have robust internal governance in place and that we can enforce these rules effectively.
- 1.4 The LSB's Welsh Language Scheme ("the Scheme") was developed and approved in 2010, shortly after the LSB took on its full statutory powers. We reviewed the Scheme to inform this report and we have concluded that it remains fit for purpose, subject to minor amendments to job titles and addresses.

2. Progress

- 2.1. During this reporting period, we continued to focus on ensuring that our responsibilities were carried out effectively.
- 2.2. During 2020/21, we engaged with individuals and organisations from across the legal sector in Wales:
 - In December 2020, we translated the narrative report of our [State of Legal Services 2020](#) report into Welsh. This report, alongside the evidence

compendium, offers an evidence-based assessment of the state of legal services in England and Wales in 2020.

- In May 2021, when we published [Reshaping Legal Services, our sector-wide strategy](#), we translated it into Welsh. We also sent it to Welsh ministers, the Welsh legal department, and other key stakeholders in Wales.

2.3. In June 2021 we hosted an online event with LSB board members and stakeholders based in Wales.

- The dual language (Welsh and English) invitations were sent to over 100 people.
- We hosted the bilingual event using a platform that enabled us to provide simultaneous translation for Welsh speakers, in line with the government protocol to allow Welsh speakers to speak in Welsh. Welsh stakeholders, including members of Senedd and academics from Welsh universities, consumer groups and legal services providers, attended.
- The discussion explored technology, diversity and inclusion, market transparency and access to justice in Wales and also addressed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the legal services sector in Wales.¹ The event allowed for a discussion around the challenges of Welsh speakers accessing legal services in Wales. Additionally, there was also a good discussion around the ‘trusted advisor’ relationship between consumer and provider, and how it manifests differently in Wales, as well as it being different in rural Wales compared to the bigger cities.
- One of the invitees, a PhD student from Cardiff University whose research specialises in equality and access to justice in Wales, contacted us and arranged a separate meeting with our Research team in May 2021. They discussed the difference in legal need in Wales compared to England and the methodological challenges in including people with greater vulnerability in legal needs surveys.

3. Research

3.1 Since October 2020, the LSB has maintained an online dashboard to indicate the impact of Covid-19 on the demand for legal services and on the ‘health’ of providers and the justice system in England and Wales (as previously reported in last year’s report paragraph 3.2).²

¹ Published meeting note available on LSB website: <https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/wales-stakeholder-engagement-event-june-2021-note-2>.

² Annual report to the Welsh Language Commissioner on implementation of LSB Welsh Language Scheme 2019-2020 <https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Welsh-Language-Scheme-Annual-Review-2019-2020-LSB.pdf>.

3.2 The LSB has commissioned a survey of small businesses in England and Wales about their legal needs. At the time of reporting, this is the analysis stage, and the dataset includes 642 businesses with bases in Wales.

3.3 As mentioned at 2.2, the State of Legal Services 2020 report published in December 2020 includes our research and evidence concerning Wales as well as England.

3.4 The LSB maintains a public panel of citizens through a research company, Community Research. We engage with members of the panel with evidence and arguments relating to policy issues in legal services. In this last reporting period, we specifically engaged panel members from Wales to ensure representation of their views. This includes:

- In an online deliberative forum (4 out of a total of 23)
- In a separate online survey (46 out of a total of 1,005) on assuring the ongoing competence of legal professionals.
- Also, in two further online deliberative forums, into the use of legal expenses insurance (7 out of a total of 46) and the use of quality indicators for consumer legal services (12 out of a total of 69, with a further 3 out of a total of 19 in follow on focus groups).

4. Engagement with Welsh speakers

4.1 In 2020/21, we did not receive any feedback from the meetings referred to under section 2.2 of the Welsh Language Act that would need to be reflected in future policies or future reviews of our Welsh Language Scheme.

4.2 In 2020/21, we did not receive any phone calls from organisations or individuals wishing to speak in Welsh.

4.3 Where updates have been made to our website and to the auto-response for our enquiries function, we have reflected these in the Welsh language translations.

5. Looking ahead

5.1 We plan to translate the annual update report on our strategy into Welsh and consider Welsh representation in the planning of the LSB annual conference in 2022.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Activity during this reporting period demonstrates the LSB continues to be mindful of its obligations under the Welsh Language Scheme and to seek opportunities to engage more widely with the Welsh community.

October 2021

Action plan

1: Legal Services Board Welsh Language Scheme Annual Review 2020-2021

Section	Action	Success criteria	Updates	Further action
3. Service Planning and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will introduce checks into the policy development process to ensure that the Welsh Language is taken into consideration and to ensure that there are no obstacles to prevent the approved regulators using Welsh when delivering services to the public in Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies, initiatives and services are consistent with commitments made in the Welsh Language Scheme 	2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refresher desk training provided to all members of staff including new starters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required
4.1. Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will issue guidance to colleagues on all aspects of our duties outlined in the Welsh Language Scheme. This will include, in respect of correspondence received in Welsh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The requirement to respond in Welsh to any correspondence sent in Welsh within the same timescale as other correspondence. ○ That we will initiate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welsh correspondence is responded to in Welsh within the same timescales as other correspondence. 	2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No correspondence received solely in Welsh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will continue to log and respond to any correspondence received in Welsh

	<p>correspondence with individuals, groups or organisations in Welsh if we know that this is their preferred language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A database will be established of those organisations who wish to deal in Welsh. ▪ Correspondence received in Welsh will be logged in our existing Correspondence Register and the time taken to respond will be monitored. 			
4.2. Telephone Calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will issue guidance to colleagues on all aspects of our duties outlined in the Welsh Language Scheme. This will include, in respect of dealing with telephone calls in Welsh: ▪ The requirement to offer those who wish to speak in Welsh the option of writing to us or e-mailing in Welsh or continuing the conversation in English. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colleagues will have a clear understanding of how to handle telephone calls in Welsh. 	<p>2020/21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No calls received in Welsh. ▪ Desk training recirculated in 2019/20 to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in respect of dealing with telephone calls in Welsh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required

4.3. Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will issue guidance to colleagues on aspects of our duties outlined in the Welsh Language Scheme. This will include, in respect of holding meetings in Welsh: ▪ Public meetings held in Wales must be publicised in Welsh and English and attendees asked to inform us in advance of their preferred language ▪ Guidance to help colleagues decide whether translation facilities are needed for public meetings held in Wales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colleagues have a clear understanding of the translation facilities that should be offered at meetings in Wales. 	2020-21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desk training recirculated in 2020/21 to all members of staff including new starters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required
4.4. Corporate Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will develop fully bilingual templates and headed paper to use in Wales and for documents that are used in Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A consistent corporate identity is presented on all documentation presented in Welsh or English 	2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Correspondence to the Welsh Language Commissioner produced in Welsh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required
4.5. Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will issue guidance to colleagues on all aspects of our duties outlined in the Welsh Language Scheme. This will include, in respect of translating publications into Welsh: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colleagues have a clear understanding of when a document should be translated into Welsh and that a consistent approach is applied across the organisation. 	2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There were two publications translated into Welsh; the Strategy Document, Narrative Volume in November 2020 and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidance for determining which publications should be translated into Welsh. ○ Ensuring that when new policies are being formulated or documents drafted the linguistic consequences of potential translations are considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documents that have been translated into Welsh are issued in a bilingual format or at the same time as the English version where this is practicable. ▪ Documents presented in Welsh are presented to the same standard as the English versions. 	Strategy Document in May 2021.	
4.6. Press Notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will put in place procedures to ensure that, where time permits, press releases to the Welsh and English language press and broadcasting media in Wales will be simultaneously issued bilingually where deadlines permit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colleagues have a clear understanding of when press releases should be issued in Welsh or bilingually and a consistent approach is taken across the organisation. 	2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No Welsh or bilingual press releases required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required
4.7 Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will ensure that our commitments in the Welsh Language Scheme are reflected in our recruitment policy. This will include: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The commitments made in the Welsh Language Scheme are reflected in our recruitment policy. ▪ Colleagues are aware and understand our 	2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have not placed any recruitment adverts in any Welsh publications or English Language publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the LSB places recruitment advertisements in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, they will be bilingual, or appear as separate Welsh and English. ○ Place Welsh notices in Welsh language publications. ○ The requirement to ensure that the Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence. 	<p>recruitment responsibilities under the Welsh Language Scheme.</p>	<p>distributed mainly or wholly in Wales.</p>	
<p>4.8. Publicity Campaigns and Advertising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will issue guidance to colleagues on aspects of our duties outlined in the Welsh Language Scheme. This will include, in respect of launching publicity campaigns and Advertising in Welsh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That all supporting material will be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colleagues will understand when it is necessary to produce material in Welsh and a consistent approach is adopted across the organisation if publicity campaigns and advertising are launched in Welsh. 	<p>2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No actions required in this reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None required

	<p>produced fully bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. Both versions will be available simultaneously and will be equally accessible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General advertisements, that are not for recruitment purposes and are of specific interest to the public in Wales or of major significance to the public of Great Britain, will be issued as a bilingual version in the Welsh press 			
4.9. Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When designing a new website, or redeveloping our existing website, we will take the Welsh Language Board's <i>Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards</i> into consideration and any other guidance issued by the Welsh Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welsh language publications will be available on the website. ▪ If appropriate the website will reflect the Welsh Language Boards <i>Bilingual Software Standards</i> 	<p>2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No feedback was received with regards to Welsh content on our website. ▪ Existing Welsh language versions of the home page/contact us pages were transferred to a new site as part of a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress for developing further Welsh content on the LSB website will be monitored

	<p>Board with regard to developing websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whenever we post English language publications on our websites, if they have been produced, the Welsh versions will be posted at the same time or as soon as practically possible We will agree with the Welsh Language Board a programme to increase the Welsh content on our website 		redesign of the LSB's website	
4.10 Official Notices and Public Notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All official and public notices published or posted in public places in Wales will be issued bilingually or in both Welsh and English language versions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will have a clear understanding of their responsibilities when issuing official or public notices in public places in Wales. 	<p>2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action required in this reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None required
5. Implementing the Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal guidance will be produced for colleagues to ensure that they are fully aware of the terms of the Scheme and understand their duties under it. A training session will be arranged for colleagues to increase awareness of the Scheme and to explain how it will affect their day-to-day work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal guidance will be produced and issued to staff. Colleagues will fully understand their responsibilities under the Welsh Language Scheme The commitments made in the Welsh Language Scheme will be applied consistently across the organisation by each colleague. 	<p>2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk training recirculated to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in respect of the Welsh Language Scheme All members of staff re-issued with a copy of the Welsh Language Scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Correspondence received in Welsh will be logged in our existing Correspondence Register and the time taken to respond will be monitored. ▪ We will contract the services of a fully qualified translator to help with delivering aspects of the Scheme. ▪ Requests for telephone conversations and the number of times the option to use Welsh at a meeting in Wales is taken up will be logged so that we are able to monitor the number of instances these requests have been made and review the Welsh Language Scheme as appropriate. 			
6. Monitoring the Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will monitor our performance in meeting the commitments made in the Scheme and record the demand for Welsh language services, including any demand for services that go beyond the commitments we have made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress in implementing the commitments made in the Welsh Language Scheme will be incorporated into the LSB performance management process. ▪ The LSB will submit an annual report to the Welsh Language Board 	<p>2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No actions required in this reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The LSB will continue to monitor any developments regarding Welsh Language requirements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Each October the LSB will provide the Welsh Language Board with a completed assessment form evaluating performance in implementing the Scheme. The report will be agreed by the senior leadership team before being submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner.	in an agreed format and on time.		
--	---	----------------------------------	--	--