

MEETING:	LANGUAGE SUB-COMMITTEE
DATE:	APRIL 16 2013
TITLE:	LANGUAGE COMPLAINTS
AUTHOR:	EQUALITY AND LANGUAGE OFFICER
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	PRESENT AND PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON LANGUAGE COMPLAINTS

1) COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE COUNCIL

DATE	COMPLAINT	RESPONSE
January 2013	Complaint by a member of the public regarding an English-only message on an answer machine accessed through a Gwynedd Gallery and Museums number	Apology from the Unit: It would appear that this was caused by technical problems which lost the original bilingual message and transferred the call to BT
January 2013	Enquiry from an Elected Member regarding businesses with English names and signage receiving grant aid from the Council	Having raised this with the Legal Department, it would appear that we cannot insist upon Welsh names and we cannot impose conditions on what we do not fund. However, following this, the Economy and Community Department will look at how to improve their Welsh language conditions in relation to grant aid
January 2013	Complaint from an Elected Member that sufficient attention was not given to language requirements when drawing up a tender for conducting a consultation on the Leisure Service	Response from relevant Cabinet Member assuring that all assistance would be given to the successful company in ensuring translation (Simultaneous translation and bilingual documents)

DATE	COMPLAINT	RESPONSE
February 2013	Complaint from a member of the public about language mistakes within a Benefit/ Council Tax form for the self-employed	It would appear that the wrong form was sent out by mistake. Apologies offered and a correct version sent
February 2013	Complaint from Llanystumdwy Community Council on receiving an English-only draft of text for heritage interpretation boards sent by a company working for the Council	The Department apologising and assuring the Community Council that any similar material will in future be sent bilingually
February 2013	Complaint from a member of the public about an English receipt for a fee paid to the Public Protection Unit (although the complainant's choice of language was Welsh)	The Unit apologising to the individual, and sending assurance that they will review their processes in relation to compliance with the Welsh Language Scheme
March 2013	Complaint from an Elected Member about a an English presentation on Active Travel at a Bangor Project meeting	The Department responding that the specialist officer on this matter is a Welsh learner and not yet comfortable presenting a technical report through the medium of Welsh, particularly as the report had to be produced at short notice. With the Department's permission, the officer explained this through the medium of Welsh. The Department apologises that the presentation slides were not bilingual
March 2013	Complaint from Pwllheli Town Council about the use of the English and Welsh versions of "Stryd Penlan" on a diversion sign	Remind relevant Unit of the Language Committee's decision to use Welsh street names (October 2013)
March 2013	Complaint about an English-only letter warning a resident about a dangerous wall	Complaint referred to Consultancy Department- awaiting response

DATE	COMPLAINT	RESPONSE
March 2013	Complaint from a Member regarding English-only Criminal Records Bureau Certificates (School Governors)	Matter raised with the Support Services: They will look into the matter and established the Council's role in this

2) COMPLAINTS AGAINST OTHER ORGANISATIONS

DATE	COMPLAINT	RESPONSE
January 2013	Complaint by an Elected Member about Welsh-medium provision in a maternity class	Complaint referred to Health Board and Welsh Language Commissioner
February 2013	Complaint from an Elected Member that the Planning documents TAN 5,8 and 21 are not available in Welsh	Contact the Welsh Government and Welsh Language Commissioner. The specific documents did not come up as a priority for translation under the Government's scoring system. Since this complies with their current Language Scheme, the Commissioner cannot enforce at the present moment
February 2013	Complaint from the Services Scrutiny Committee about English-only document and presentations from the Health Board	Refer the complaint to the Health Board in the first instance; if the response is unsatisfactory, the Committee may consider referring the complaint to the Language Commissioner

3) UPDATE

Padarn Buses

A meeting was held between the company's Director and the Language Committee's Chair and Equality and Language Officer. It was agreed that the company consider changing the signs "Menai College", "Town Clock" and "Menai Bridge".