



Chartered Institute
of Linguists



Institute of
Translation
and Interpreting

System Dribwnlysoedd Newydd i Gymru / A New Tribunal System for Wales - White Paper consultation

Who we are:

As two leading UK bodies for translation and interpreting, the Chartered Institute of Linguists and the Institute of Translation and Interpreting welcome the Welsh Government's invitation to contribute to your consultation on A New Tribunal System for Wales.

The Success of Language Policy in Wales

The success of measures to generate greater use and engagement with the Welsh language is one of the most significant linguistic achievements of modern times.

Anything which sustains and further embeds bilingualism and indeed multilingualism is to be welcomed, given the intrinsic cultural value of languages and their utility in all manner of working and life contexts.

The Welsh Government deserves full credit for its innovative and impactful support for Welsh language services. Welsh Universities and schools also continue to be a beacon in the UK in terms of their advocacy for the value of languages.

The importance of other languages

Our one observation would be that Question 41 and 42 focus exclusively on Welsh and English and do not mention the many other languages spoken in community settings in Wales.

Securing justice and protecting vulnerable groups through the provision of properly qualified, trained and experienced interpreters is something into which we have poured enormous efforts with the police and Ministry of Justice, but progress is never guaranteed.

Hard won commitments to upholding requirements for qualifications, minimum levels of language proficiency and to professional standards can slip; either through policy change, inadequacies in procurement processes or through loopholes becoming normalised in the delivery against them.

Supporting people who don't have adequate Welsh or English

As part of your New Tribunal System for Wales we would urge you to commit not only to treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English, but to supporting other languages and to safeguarding other communities in Wales who do not have an adequate command of either Welsh or English.

The Welsh Government's commitment to a more equal Wales, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, would be strengthened by this action, and many disadvantaged people would be guaranteed access to fair, safe and equal treatment under the law through the professional support of a properly qualified interpreter with the necessary language skills.

The Chartered Institute of Linguists

The Institute of Translation and Interpreting

Extract from the Consultation Documents:

Question 41

We would like to know your views on the effects that our proposed reforms to devolved tribunals in Wales to create a unified, coherent tribunal system comprising of the First-tier Tribunal for Wales and the Appeal Tribunal for Wales would have on the Welsh language, specifically:

- i. on opportunities for people to use Welsh and
- ii. on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Question 42

Please also explain how you believe the proposed reforms could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i. positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and
- ii. no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Welsh Language

41. We would like to know your views on the effects that our proposed reforms to devolved tribunals in Wales to create a unified, coherent tribunal system comprising of the First-tier Tribunal for Wales and the Appeal Tribunal for Wales would have on the Welsh language, specifically:

a) on opportunities for people to use Welsh and
b) on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

42. Please also explain how you believe the proposed reforms could be formulated or changed so as to have:

a) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and
b) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.