

Board of Trustees Meeting

Welsh Language Policy

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Purpose

Wales is a bilingual country: the Welsh language forms a major part of its cultural identity as a nation. THT Cymru is committed to operating in line with the Welsh Language Act (1993), as well as the culture of Wales. Through THT Cymru, our clear ambition is to treat Welsh and English speakers, including making sure Welsh language speakers are able to access services and information no less favourably than English-language service users in Wales.

This Welsh Language Policy sets out our guiding principles in relation to providing Welsh language services in Wales. It is supported by our Board of Trustees (as agreed in September 2023) and recognises our achievements to date and will be updated as new policies, services and initiatives are introduced.

Recommendations

The Board is invited to consider and formally approve the policy outlined in this report.

Contribution to strategic objectives

A Board-approved Welsh Language Policy formalises our existing practice, which is strongly bilingual, so as to maximise the work of the Trust and information about HIV, safer sex and how to access support.

We are committed to treating Welsh no less favourably than the English language in Wales where practical to do so and we encourage its use wherever possible in the resources we have.

Staffing implications

All staff need to be aware of the policy, in particular staff responsible for producing information for distribution in Wales. Staff should also be aware that any queries, complaints or other feedback which is received in Welsh must be replied to in Welsh.

Financial implications

Approval of this policy will have little to no budgetary implications in-year as budgets have been included and funding have been sought. Long term, this will be built into our budgeting process and/or covered from external funding opened up by adoption of this policy.

Legal implications

While there is no legal requirement for third-sector organisations such as THT Cymru to have a Welsh language scheme or policy in place, we recognise that doing so is good practice.

In order to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Government, contracting organisations must be able to demonstrate the existence of an approved policy around the use of the Welsh language, so as to deliver a bilingual service. Under the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993, both English and Welsh must be delivered equally in public services. The custodian of this requirement sits with the Welsh Language Commissioner, information about which is available, here: [Welsh Language Commissioner \(comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru\)](http://comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru).

Risk implications

The lack of a Board-approved policy will – by default – exclude THT Cymru from participation in procurements with the Welsh Government and its agencies. This would impact on our capability to be successful in contract processes.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Adopting a bilingual approach with Welsh and English used in communications is a positive step which maximises our ability to work with and on behalf of people living with HIV and those who want to know more about HIV and safer sex.

As the UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity, we strive to support people living with HIV, amplifying their voices and helping people achieve good sexual health. Use of appropriate language is critical to this work.

Welsh Language Policy

1. Introduction

We are the UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity. We strive for a future where there are no new cases of HIV, where people living with HIV get the support they need and there is good sexual; health for all. We operate in Wales under Terrence Higgins Trust Cymru or THT Cymru. The charity takes its name from a proud Welshman, Terry Higgins, who was born in Haverfordwest in June 1945.

Our Welsh Language Policy spans activities across the full range of THT Cymru work. It is designed to be inclusive and responsive.

THT Cymru aims to support and amplify the voices of people living with HIV. To do this effectively, where there is a bilingual framework in situ, the charity is committed to ensuring that all communications are written or presented in both English and Welsh.

The policy is segmented into three broad areas of THT Cymru activity:

- publicity and promotional material,
- service delivery
- internal operations.

2. Publicity and Promotional Material

Correspondence

We respond to correspondence received in Welsh, in Welsh, regardless of which staff member is involved in correspondence, regardless of where in the UK they work from or operate.

Our website

Our new THT Cymru website (launched October 2023) which outlines our work in Wales is bilingual, and we will continue to increase the use of Welsh in our news releases and updated content.

Our social media

We post in English and in Welsh on our social media channels in Wales under THT Cymru, and we strive to increase the use of Welsh on social media.

Written materials

Literature such as leaflets for our services in Wales are bilingual and our publications, such as reports and e-newsletters, must be bilingual, wherever possible and where the audience is exclusively in Wales. We publish written materials as bilingual documents wherever we can in Wales.

In terms of corporate identity, throughout our work in Wales, we will endeavour to ensure that our stationery, such as business cards, compliment slips and other items, are bilingual.

Press activity

Our media releases are mostly issued in English, however we offer Welsh-speaking spokespeople and story contributors whenever they are available.

Signage

We will strive to ensure that signage at service sites in Wales will be bilingual.

3. Service Delivery

Information for people living with HIV

We will strive to ensure our leaflets and information for people living with HIV in Wales are bilingual.

Services delivered for the NHS in Wales

We currently deliver services on behalf of the NHS in Wales. We follow the guidance on the Welsh language as set out by the LHBs that we are working with in the delivery of our services on the ground in Wales.

4. Internal Operations

Supporting Welsh language skills for THT Cymru staff.

THT Cymru encourages and supports staff in seeking to learn or improve their Welsh language skills. We encourage and support staff to develop their Welsh language skills and will facilitate training through learnwelsh.cymru.

Staff recruitment

When advertising/recruiting for staff in Wales, we advertise bilingually and will include Welsh language skills as a desirable skill for all posts.

5. The Future of this Policy

This policy will be made available to all our staff, volunteers and service users. We will regularly review the implementation of our bilingual policy with a view to making further improvements where we can.

For further information about the policy contact:

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