



Ein cyf/Our ref: WAQ76888

Siân Gwenllïan AM
Sian.Gwenllian@assembly.wales

15 August 2018

Dear Siân,

You asked on 27 July for my commitment to publish approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) either on the Welsh Governments' website or by direct link to the local authority's website. I would like to take this opportunity to provide some context and by doing so, answer your question.

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013, places a clear duty on local authorities to publish their final plans on their websites (regulation 8). Each authority is aware of their statutory duty regarding this matter and they are regularly reminded by my officers. Since announcing the first cycle of WESPs in 2014, emphasis has been placed on local authorities taking ownership and full responsibility of their plans and the work derived from it. This has ensured that the public have had a clear route of accountability, which is important for local planning purposes.

You are aware that the process for approving the 2017-2020 plans has led to delays in the usual timetable. For example, it has come to my attention that there have been cases where plans have not been published on the relevant authority website as expected or are not easily accessible. My officers have contacted each authority to remind them once more of their statutory duty.

It is not my intention to place the plans on the Welsh Government website. These are local authority plans and it is important, as already stated above, that they take ownership of them. Having said that, I consider it entirely reasonable to publish links to the local authority plans and I commit to doing so once all WESPs have been approved. Discussions with the remaining authorities yet to have their plans approved have now concluded and I intend to make an announcement soon.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

On another point, you will be aware that I have established an independent advisory group chaired by Aled Roberts, to consider amendments to the WESP Regulations. How the regulations deal with the publishing of plans is being considered.

The delay in approving plans is not in vain. Our intervention over the last few months has led to authorities demonstrating an ambition for growth in Welsh-medium education that is now comparable with our long term Welsh language Strategy, Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers. We are at the cusp of an exciting period in the way Welsh-medium education is planned for in Wales and I'm grateful for the continuous interest in this work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AC/AM

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning