



Procedure Committee

Huw Irranca-Davies MS

**Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee,
Welsh Parliament**

By email only

17 January 2024

Dear Huw,

Thank you for your letter of 13 December in relation to House of Commons procedures in respect of the laying of Welsh language statutory instruments (SI).

The advice I have received from officials in the House of Commons matches that contained in my predecessor's letter of October 2018 which you quote.

There is no procedural or other bar to a statutory instrument that contains text in Welsh, including bilingual instruments, being laid before the House of Commons if the relevant Act requires it to be. As you know, this already regularly happens.

The determining factor of how SIs are drafted, including in what language(s), is the relevant enabling legislation and wider law on statutory instruments. From the House of Commons' point of view the content and form of SIs is in essence a legal rather than a procedural question.

It might also be helpful to note that if Ministers wanted to, they could lay a command paper alongside a SI that was in English only containing a translation into Welsh (or any other language). The practice of the House is not to accept for laying standalone documents in languages other than English. However, it does accept documents in multiple languages, if they include the full text in English, or separate documents containing a translation of another laid alongside it.

You indicated that you were writing in similar terms to the Chair of the House of Lords' Committee on Procedure and Privileges, who I understand has received similar advice in relation to House of Lords procedure from his officials.

I also understand that the Chair of the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments is writing to you separately on the question of how her committee scrutinises SIs that contain Welsh. I am copying my letter to her, and Lord Gardiner of Kimble.



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I expect my Committee will decide to publish our letters in due course.

Best regards,

Karen Bradley

Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley MP
Chair of the Procedure Committee