



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-652
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/00749/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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14 September 2015

Dear William,

P-04-652 Android and iOS, Welsh in the 21st Century?

I am writing in response to your letter of 26 August regarding the above petition from Merlyn Cooper asking the Welsh Government to work with Google and Apple to develop a Welsh language version of their operating systems Android and iOS respectively.

The Welsh Government wants to see more such services available in Welsh. Since the publication of the Welsh-language Technology and Digital Media Action Plan, meetings have been held with many of the international technology companies – including Apple and Google – where Welsh-language services, interfaces and systems were the focus of discussions.

Since these meetings were held, in the case of Apple, users of iOS8 can now select Welsh as their favourite language for third-party apps. This means that, in addition to the clock times and calendar dates, which were already available in earlier versions of iOS, multilingual apps downloaded from the App Store which include support for Welsh now display interfaces and notifications in Welsh by default. To take advantage of this feature, we have funded a Cardiff-based app localization agency to provide free Welsh language localizations to their international clients. This has resulted in a suite of high-profile apps now being available in Welsh.

This falls short of full localization of the iOS operating system. iOS8 currently supports around 40 languages, including variations of languages such as English, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese. One difficulty is the lack of a Welsh speech-to-text infrastructure needed for Siri to be available in Welsh. To address this, we have funded work by Bangor University's Language Technology Unit through our Welsh-language Technology and Digital Media Fund to work towards a Welsh speech-to-text solution.

In the case of Google's Android, this is an open source operating system. It would be a challenging and big piece of work, but Android is available for anyone to translate into Welsh. We will continue to press for developments of Welsh-language services by companies such as Google as we did when Amazon opened their Kindle store to Welsh language titles and created a new e-book directory for Welsh-language titles on their website.

The point this petition makes about the importance of opportunities for informal use of Welsh such as with mobile phone and tablets is one we support. We will continue to try to motivate Apple and Google to offer more for Welsh speakers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', written in a cursive style.

CARWYN JONES