

Statement – 21/11/07

Ad-hoc Group meeting

The first meeting of the Ad-hoc group under the guidance of the appointed Arbiter, Dr. Trond Trosterud, took place on the 19th and 20th November 2007. The group comprises active Cornish users nominated through the language organisations and the Cornish Language Partnership, in consultation with the Arbiter. It was formed on the advice of the Commission retained by the Partnership to recommend a way forward and is expected to complete its work by the end of December.

The purpose of the group is to seek a consensus on the single written form for formal education and public life as agreed by the Cornish Language Partnership

Discussions were held on the issues involved and opportunities to bring together the work of the various groups on the development of Cornish today.

A key driver for the process has been the development of an accreditation system for Cornish in conjunction with the Department for Children Schools and Families which is proceeding in tandem and will be available to schools and learners from March.

Areas of consensus included

- the need for an agreed standard form to be available for use in formal education and public life
- that the standard form should be inclusive, accessible, consistent and broadly acceptable
- that some variations could be allowed within the standard system
- the need to reach agreement on the key issues relating to consonant quality and vowel length.
- the need to reach agreement on the consistent representation of vowels
- the need to seek further input from linguistic advisers on the above
- that the implementation and dissemination of the standard form will be in clearly defined steps

The next step will be for the representatives to undertake further consultation with their parent bodies and the wider language community. This will be followed by a further meeting in mid December to seek agreement on the outstanding issues.

Background documents attached:

Definition of the requirement for a standard form

Terms of reference for the Ad-hoc group

Membership list for the Ad-hoc group

Definition of a Single Written Form

The aim of the Cornish Language Partnership is to establish a single written form for use in formal education and in public life.

This means that it will be the form to be used within schools and the form in which externally validated accreditation can be gained under the Languages Ladder which will count alongside other public qualifications.

It will also be used for official documentation, by public bodies and for public signage. However, historic place names may well be a special case, to be retained in their original format.

However, any speaker of Cornish will be free to use whatever their preferred form is for their own purposes. Adult classes will be demand led and teachers who wish to continue the form they currently use will be supported in that. It is however to be expected that parents of children learning some Cornish in school will wish to use the form taught to their children and for that reason it is likely that there will be some demand for adult classes in the single written form when it is introduced which, if provision within formal education grows, may well grow alongside. Those learning other forms will be able to take the Language Ladder tests in the teacher assessed form, but this will not be externally validated and therefore will not be accepted as a public qualification in quite the same way. It will be more akin to the current Kesva exams which will continue in parallel in the foreseeable future. It will take three years for the full Languages Ladder, up to advanced level, to be rolled out.

The intention is that the SWF will be introduced gradually, starting with basic language teaching and with official usage in line with the requirements of public bodies. Speakers will be furnished with information which will guide them as to any changes they may need to make from their own orthographies in order to read, understand and, if they wish, use the SWF.

In no way will speakers be forced to alter their current practice and it is envisaged that the change will be gradual rather than immediate. It is to be hoped that as the aim is to reach agreement on a form which minimises the changes for as many as possible, that speakers will find that the new form is fairly easily assimilated over time and that users of Cornish still read material in all forms.

The intention is to support Cornish users and organisations through this change so that it is a positive experience for all concerned.

Brief for the Ad-hoc group

Terms of Reference

The purpose of the group is: To seek a consensus based somewhere between Kernewek Kemmyn and Kernowak Standard, building on Kernewek Dasunys.

The group should take into consideration not just linguistic and historical issues but also social and educational and even personal ones.

Members of the group shall be committed to taking forward the purpose of the group.

The Arbiter will facilitate and guide the group towards consensus.

The Arbiter will also consider the issues that cannot be reconciled by the group and make a binding judgement if necessary.

The Arbiter has a duty to take an overview of the consensus and ensure internal consistency.

Modus Operandi

The Arbiter is empowered and encouraged to take advice from P-Celtic language scholars as he sees fit.

The Arbiter will chair the group.

The group shall operate through face-to-face meetings.

The group shall conclude its work by 1st January 2008

The work shall be undertaken in concentrated sessions of more than a day at a time and the members must be prepared and able to commit to the agreed schedule

Notes will be taken and made available as soon as possible to all members – ideally at the end of each day.

Internet and telephone facilities will be available on site.

Ad-hoc group

Membership list

Trond Trosterud	Arbiter appointed by the Partnership
Albert Bock	Assistant
Jori Ansell	nominated by Kesva an Taves Kernewek
Ben Bruch	Kernewek Dasunys
Andrew Climo	nominated by Agan Tavas
Bernard Deacon	nominated by Cussel an Tavaz Kernuak
Mina Dresser	nominated by Cussel an Tavaz Kernuak
Pol Hodge	nominated by Kesva an Taves Kernewek
Loveday Jenkin	nominated by Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek
Rod Lyon	nominated by Agan Tavas
Polin Pris	nominated by Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek
Jenefer Lowe	Partnership note-taker.

In addition a list of potential linguistic advisers has been compiled whom the Arbiter may consult for specialist advice on P-Celtic languages and he and the group are of course free to consult any other person. The nominated representatives will be consulting and are expected to consult with their own parent bodies and constituencies.