

Submission from Kris Campbell

Please find below my responses to the BSL consultation.

1

Yes. Lead should be taken from New Zealand, where NZSL is the nation's third official language, after English and Māori. This not only protects and promotes the first language of thousands of Deaf people but also allows it legal protection and equal status and respect to the English language. Deaf Aotearoa has responsibility in ensuring the language is promoted and protected. In South Africa, SASL is protected under the constitution and the Pan-African Language Board has responsibility for the language. Almost all newscasts and parliamentary broadcasts provide live in-vision translations into SASL.

2

Yes. Guidelines or suggested specifications are not likely to be voluntarily followed at this time due to organisations perusing other issues.

3

Benefits:

Increased public and business knowledge of BSL and Deaf communication issues. A protection of the national sign language. Better access to services by BSL users. Increased respect for Deaf people and their inclusion in society. Increased friendship and social opportunities between Hearing and Deaf people. Better access to signing classes.

Challenges:

Costs of implementation in the current financial climate.

4

Yes. Those who speak Gaelic, Scots, Polish or Urdu generally speak English as well, and so are better equipped to access services. Those who use BSL as their primary language are unlikely to be able to speak English.

5

Greatly. Only with legal protection can equality for Deaf children and families be guaranteed.

6

Yes, as it is important to have someone with leadership over BSL and overall responsibility. That said, all MSPs should have shared leadership over it. MSPs should be trained in BSL, and the lead MSP should be trained to at least Level 3 in order to facilitate proper communication with Deaf citizens who will wish to give their representations to the minister.

The lead minister should be charge with overall implementation and review of a national BSL plan as well as localised adaptations of the plan, similar to the Gaelic Language Plans.

7

Yes, in order to give a wide representation from a spectrum of BSL users. It should include Deaf people, BSL learners, mainstream and special school teachers, BSL tutors and both Deaf and Hearing families with Deaf children as well as individuals from organisations that the Scottish Government see fit.

8

Yes, however, specific emphasis should be placed on Education and Health. All bodies should be included unless genuine and substantial evidence can be submitted to prove there is no need.

9

Costs of training and translation. Web hosting costs in order to add video translations to website (increased bandwidth costs).

10

Positive. It will ensure BSL is respected and treated as an equal national language.

11

As a teacher, I have self-funded my training in BSL. I found it very difficult to find and attend classes and to pay for them. This is my experience as someone who actually wanted to learn BSL. It is therefore important that the Act will not only motivate individuals to learn the language, but also provide opportunities, classes and assistance with financing the courses. Local councils should provide CPD to teachers. East Ayrshire Council, for example, provides no such provision for staff.