

Financial incentives to attract new teachers extended

< ?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" /?>

The incentives, of up to £20,000 per student, aim to attract the best graduates into teaching priority subjects such as maths, chemistry, physics, computer science and modern foreign languages.

Iaith Athrawon Yfory, the incentive scheme of up to £5,000 to train to teach secondary education in Welsh, will also continue in 2019-20. *Iaith Athrawon Yfory* can be applied for alongside the incentives for priority subjects, making the maximum incentive up to £25,000.

The highest value incentives are available to graduates undertaking Initial Teacher Education in the priority areas who hold a first class degree, Masters or PhD, with other incentives for graduates with 2:1 and 2:2 degrees.

The funding is for postgraduates starting Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses in the following subjects:

- Up to £20,000 for mathematics, physics, chemistry, Welsh or computer sciences
- Up to £15,000 for modern foreign languages
- £3,000 for graduates with a first-class degree, a Masters or a PhD to teach all other main secondary subjects and primary
- A £3,000 supplement for graduates with a first-class degree, a Masters or a PhD undertaking primary PGCE studies with subject specialism in English, Welsh, mathematics or science.

Kirsty Williams, said:

“Giving school pupils the best possible education means attracting the best teachers into the profession, especially in priority subjects where the demand for new teachers is highest.

“We are also extending the *Iaith Athrawon Yfory* incentives to help increase the numbers teaching Welsh and through the medium of Welsh, to help us achieve our aims in *Cymraeg 2050*.

“These incentives of up to £20,000, with an additional £5,000 available for Welsh-medium teachers, will help recruit the best teachers we can and support them on their career pathway. Maintaining a strong and skilled teaching workforce is essential to achieving our ambitions in our National Mission for Education in Wales.”

Further information on the incentives can be found at:

<https://www.discoverteaching.wales/teacher-training-incentives/>

Prime Minister gambling with nation's future – Jeremy Miles

With the Prime Minister facing the prospect of a heavy Commons defeat and the threat of a no deal Brexit increasing, the Counsel General also announced further funding from the European Transition Fund would be made available to help Wales prepare for the possibility of the UK crashing out of the EU.

The Welsh Government’s white paper, *Securing Wales’ Future*, sets out an alternative to the PM’s deal, which would prioritise the Welsh economy and protect jobs and services.

We are continuing to press the UK government to work with us to secure a deal which provides the best possible outcome for the whole of the UK.

Jeremy Miles said:

“We are scheduled to leave the EU in just over 70 days and we have no agreed deal in place. We have been led to this cliff-edge by an inept government more interested in its increasingly-desperate attempts to hold its own party together than the national interest.

“The UK government has been playing dice with this country’s future. It took 2 years to come up with the Chequers proposals – effectively the government’s opening gambit on the long-term relationship – which should have been in place when we triggered

Article 50 almost 2 years' ago.

"This was vital time lost posturing over red lines instead of developing a viable strategy and building coalitions of support, including those, like the Welsh Government and this National Assembly, which advocated a sensible withdrawal based on respect for the European Union and the vital interests of this country.

"There is no avoiding the serious reality of the difficult position we now face. No deal is a very possible outcome and as a responsible government we must do all we can to work with others to prepare and mitigate where possible.

"Through our European Transition Fund we have been able to help hundreds of Welsh businesses, as well as public service organisations and other partners, plan and prepare for the impacts of Brexit."

Finance Minister Rebecca Evans will today confirm 3 more projects have received funding from the £50 million European Transition Fund.

These are:

- The Police Partnership Resilience – £435,000 to support the police services' preparations for Brexit. The funding would provide dedicated capacity and capability to support local resilience forums in planning and responding to adverse scenarios and civil emergencies, particularly in the context of a no deal scenario.
- ADSS (Association of Directors of Social Services) Cymru Brexit support – £150,000 for ADSS Cymru to provide professional advice and intelligence about the potential impact of Brexit on the delivery of social care in Wales.
- Preparations for successor arrangements to EU structural investment funds – £590,000 to support the implementation of a post-EU regional investment model for Wales. This includes external support for project development and evaluation of the preparations for a new multi-annual, multi-billion pound regional investment system. This work will help ensure that Wales has the strongest possible approach to secure full replacement funding and autonomy over successor arrangements for EU structural funds.

She said:

"As the threat of 'no deal' looms, we have focused our attention on bids which address immediate priorities in a no deal scenario.

"None of us wants to be in this position; but we will work to protect Welsh businesses, the public sector and our communities wherever possible from the worst impacts of a no deal situation should it arise."

And Jeremy Miles added:

“We will find out soon how the UK government and Parliament intend to resolve this position. We have already called for the Article 50 deadline to be extended.

“The UK government has perplexed its friends, undermined our country’s interests, caused anxiety to Europeans in our community and exacerbated deep division among its own citizens. If the UK government cannot bring forward a deal that commands strong support then it should stand aside. The current chaos cannot continue.”

£1m for central Newtown business centre

Powys Council will receive £1m of Welsh Government Targeted Regeneration Investment funding towards the £3.8m project to refurbish the building.

Hannah Blythyn, Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister said:

“The project will modernise the building in the centre of Newtown, creating 2,500 square metres of flexible office space for smaller businesses to establish and grow in the centre of the town.

“We know there is a need for more good quality office space for businesses, and this investment aims to attract growing businesses and high value jobs to Newtown.

“The work will also improve the building’s energy efficiency, generate solar energy and offer charging points for electric vehicles.

“We are committed to using regeneration funding to revitalise areas and to promote economic growth that benefits our towns and communities. I look forward to seeing this investment bring jobs and businesses to Newtown.”

The Welsh Government’s flagship Targeted Regeneration Investment programme is providing £100m of capital funding across Wales over three years to support regeneration projects in town centres and neighbouring areas.

This funding is supported by estimated further investment of at least £60 million from other organisations and businesses, providing an overall boost

of £160 million to communities all over Wales. This is part of the Welsh Government's overall regeneration strategy, which will invest £800m between 2014 and 2023. This includes around £250m from the Welsh Government supported by more than £550m from other organisations and businesses.

Powys County Council Cabinet Member for Property, Councillor Phyl Davies said:

"The council is committed to strengthening the county's economy and providing modern offices in Newtown our largest town is a key part of that strategy.

"Having modern flexible office accommodation will support local businesses and help create a vibrant economy in the heart of the town. The Ladywell House project is a long term investment for the council and will generate income to support service delivery and we are grateful to Welsh Government for their support."

£7m to improve the mental health of children and young people in Wales

The new investment will support the implementation of the Welsh Government's response to the recommendations made by the National Assembly's Children, Young People and Education Committee in its Mind over Matter report last year.

The funding will build on previous investments to improve child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and will also support the whole-school approach to improve mental health and wellbeing in schools.

The Minister will make the announcement during a conference in Cardiff today, which will bring together Wales' directors of education to discuss 'Developing a partnership Approach for Mental health and Wellbeing'.

Health Minister, Vaughan Gething said:

"Improving mental health for everyone is a top priority for me as Health Minister and for the Welsh Government.

"In Wales, we've taken action to put services in place to help children and young people deal with the pressures of everyday life. In recent years we have been able to provide additional funding to expand the numbers of specialist staff and develop new services.

“The extra funding I’m announcing today is a significant and meaningful investment to help us do more to protect, improve and support the mental health and wellbeing of our children and young people by further developing these services.”

The £7.1m investment is in addition to £1.4m being invested by the Welsh Government in a programme of mental health in-reach support for schools to strengthen the support from CAMHS in schools in four pilot areas across Wales.

Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, said:

“The mental health and wellbeing of our children & young people is an absolute priority, and our ‘whole school’ approach ensures this is central to the way schools work and touch on all the different aspects of school life.

“This funding will help build on the dedicated, professional support we provide to schools, including through our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), to ensure our pupils are fully supported through each stage of their education.”

Appointment of a Member to the Board of Natural Resources Wales announced

Geraint’s appointment means the Board now has 13 members, including the Chief Executive. Geraint is a first language Welsh speaker, who will strengthen the Welsh language skills of the Board. He has been an upland farmer in North Wales for 20 years, and is an advocate for producing sustainable food whilst delivering environmental goods.

Minister Lesley Griffiths said:

“Following the recent scheme to recruit new members for NRW’s Board, I asked the Advisory Panel to look again at those who applied and are able to converse fluently in Welsh.

“I attach great importance to NRW’s role and the work of its Board and am pleased to announce Geraint appointment to the Board.”

Sir David Henshaw said:

"I am looking forward to working with Geraint and supporting NRW to deliver for Wales."

Natural Resources Wales is the largest Welsh Government Sponsored Body – employing 1,900 staff across Wales with a budget of £180 million. It was formed in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions.

Geraint Davies has been farming for over 20 years in the Snowdonia National Park, North Wales.

He is an advocate for producing sustainable food whilst delivering environmental products.

His land management experience encompasses upland habitat management including upland water retention, ancient woodland, soil health and effective grassland management. He has a particular interest in creating and maintaining bird habitat on his farm.

Geraint is the former Wales Chair and Director of Nature Friendly Farming Network, Director of Partneriaeth Penllyn, Chair of the Farmers' Union of Wales Younger Voice Committee as well as being active in local committees in Meirionnydd.

Geraint is a fluent Welsh speaker.