

Shadow Cabinet appointments

Ian Lavery and Andrew Gwynne are appointed joint National Elections and Campaign Coordinators for the Labour Party.

Jon Trickett is appointed Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office and will remain Shadow Lord President of the Council.

Ends

News story: Work underway at Kilbowie Road, Clydebank

From:

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Extensive works to fill a 62 metre deep unrecorded mine shaft that caused a collapse under Kilbowie Road in Clydebank are underway.

The Coal Authority has taken responsibility for the site and the repair works will take between 6 to 8 weeks to complete.

Only a 6 metre deep hole is visible at the road surface, but this leads to the shaft which goes down a further 56 metres to a total depth of 62 metres.

Work began last week with stone, pressurised grouting and a concrete plug being needed to stabilise the ground. Once the shaft is filled, work will begin on reconstructing the road.

Tim Marples, Head of Public Safety and Subsidence for the Coal Authority, said that work to repair the collapse in Kilbowie Road has already begun.

He added: "The unrecorded shaft at Kilbowie Road is one of our top operational priorities and our prime concern is the safety of the public.

"Our engineers have designed a solution to safely fill the shaft and repair the road and we're working with West Dunbartonshire Council and the utility companies on our proposals.

“This particular repair is complicated by the exposed utility services within the 62 metre deep void, which we’re working to protect.

“From our experience, the work will take between 6 to 8 weeks to complete and cost in the region of £250,000.

“Our aim is get the road re-opened as soon as possible to minimise the impact on local residents and traffic. We apologise for the inconvenience and disruption caused presently and during the forthcoming works.”

[For more details please read the full press release](#)

[For further updates please visit West Dunbartonshire Council’s website](#)

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Chetwood Financial Ltd comes to Wrexham with Welsh Government support

The new startup, led by a management team who have operated at senior executive levels in UK retail banks and overseas, is supported by £750,000 business finance from the Welsh Government.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates has welcomed the news. He said:

“This is a strategically important project for the professional and financial services sector and great news for Wales.

“The investment will create well paid skilled jobs offering significant employment opportunities in North East Wales, and will also help establish the region as a key location for financial services companies.”

Chetwood is using state of the art technology to make better financial services products. It already has a consumer credit licence and FCA authorisation, and will initially offer innovative loan products through digital channels aimed at prime and near prime customers in the UK.

The company plan to submit their banking licence application in the first half of 2017, with a view to launching savings products in early 2017.

Chetwood will be based on Wrexham Technology Park in one of the offices acquired by the Welsh Government from Moneypenny.

The business will benefit from the growing trend to purchase financial services products online using a bespoke technology platform developed by Yobota, a related company, that will provide the company with the flexibility and agility to innovative.

Andy Mielczarek, CEO of Chetwood said:

“We’re really pleased to be basing our business in Wrexham, and it’s personally exciting for me to be setting up the business in my home town.

“We are grateful to the Welsh government for their support so far

and look forward to working with them over the coming years. We are already hiring into Wrexham, and we are starting to work with Coleg Cambria and the Welsh universities to create a pathway for us to bring in the best talent in to our business.”

This week the Welsh Government has announced that 696 new jobs have been created and an additional 787 have been safeguarded as a direct result of Government support.

[News story: Britain and Cyprus Step Up Defence Co-Operation](#)

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon and Cypriot Defence Minister Christoforos Fokaides signed a Defence Co-operation Programme in the capital Nicosia today, agreeing to closer working.

Building on the agreement signed last year, the Ministers agreed that the key regional partners would now work closely across Special Forces, counter terrorism, Crisis Response, intelligence, Air Defence, hybrid warfare and cyber.

Improved Maritime Search and Rescue co-operation will be a particular focus, and during his visit Sir Michael offered Cyprus the chance to display alongside the international community at Royal International Air Tattoo 2017 and reviewed opportunities for naval personnel exchanges.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Britain is stepping up its global role and Cyprus is a key partner in promoting European security and stability.

We have now committed to strengthen our defence partnership with greater co-operation in areas such as counter terrorism, maritime security, and crisis response.

The Defence Secretary also announced the continuing commitment to train senior Cypriot Officers at the Royal College of Defence Studies together with other training being opened up on the Advanced Command and Staff Course.

While in Cyprus, Sir Michael visited the Zenon Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, on the island’s south coast. Extending the Republic of Cyprus’ crisis response capability, the centre incorporates modern maritime surveillance and warning systems and is central to Cyprus’s efforts to tackle illegal human trafficking.

Sir Michael's visit comes at an important time for Cyprus, following the UN-facilitated talks held in Geneva in January, and as negotiations continue towards a solution to the long-standing Cyprus issue. The Defence Secretary confirmed that as a Guarantor Power, the UK will do whatever necessary to secure a settlement and our priority is for both sides to find an agreement allowing each community to feel secure.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon met UK Armed Forces personnel at RAF Akrotiri during the visit. Crown Copyright.

The Defence Secretary also took the opportunity to thank the Cypriot Minister for their support to Op Shader, with British aircraft operating from RAF Akrotiri, and Cyprus' own contribution including to the foreign fighters part of the campaign. Sir Michael visited RAF Akrotiri, meeting with 903 Expeditionary Airwing later in the day. Since Sir Michael's last visit in September last year, the RAF has attacked 330 further terrorist targets in and around Mosul, working in the closest possible cooperation with the brave Iraqi troops.