

Carwyn Connect heads to Swansea

The Carwyn Connect event will give local people the opportunity to meet the First Minister and ask him questions on any issues which affect them or their local community.

The session will take place between 6pm and 7.30pm at Pen yr Heol Comprehensive School (Gorseinon, SA4 4FG).

People are encouraged to register their interest in attending the free event: [Register your interest](#).

Questions can be asked in a number of ways – they can be submitted when people arrive at the venue when doors open at 5.30pm, in advance via email cabinetcommunications@wales.gsi.gov.uk or via Twitter using [@fmwales](#) with the hashtag [#carwynconnect](#).

First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones said:

“Over the past year, I have travelled across the country to hear the views of local communities and answer the burning questions of the people of Wales.

“I am pleased to announce the next event will take place in Gorseinon. I want to see as many people as possible at the event, so if you have a question for me, want to raise issues affecting your community or have a great idea to make your home town a better place to live, come along to the event.

“A wide variety of topics have come up in previous events – from questions about hyper-local issues, to discussions about broad Government policy.

“This is your chance to meet and speak with me in person. I’m really looking forward to meeting you all.”

£3m boost for the Welsh Language

Enabling people to use the language at work, along with ensuring the public have access to high quality Welsh language services is essential if we are to achieve our goal of a million speakers.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh is responsible for providing strategic leadership to the Welsh for Adults sector. This role includes the development

and provision of Welsh for Adults courses in the workplace, particularly for bodies that fall under the language standards regime.

The Welsh Government has worked closely with the National Centre to develop a plan for the additional money earmarked in the 2017-18 budget agreement with Plaid Cymru.

The Plan includes five strands:

- Information and advice for employers 'Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh'
- On-line welcome / reception courses 'Croeso Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh Welcome'
- Intensive courses 'Dysgu Cymraeg Gwaith/Learn Work Welsh''
- Courses for the early years workforce 'Cymraeg Cynnar/Early Welsh'
- Residential courses to improve confidence and provide specialist terminology 'Defnyddio Cymraeg Gwaith/Use Work Welsh'

Alun Davies, Minister for the Welsh Language, told Assembly Members:

"The goal of this Government is to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050. In line with our shared ambition with Plaid Cymru we are allocating an additional £3m to ensure the Welsh language is used more extensively and to encourage more people to speak it.

"This investment will enable the National Centre for Learning Welsh to provide practical support to bodies, putting them in a position to provide an outstanding bilingual service to the public and comply with the Welsh language standards."

Efa Gruffudd Jones, Chief Executive of the National Centre for Learning Welsh, added:

"We welcome this additional funding which will allow the Centre to build on progress already made in the Welsh for Adults sector in recent months and further support the Government's ambitions for the Welsh language.

"Putting learners first is at the heart of the Centre's work and this funding will enable new opportunities for individuals who want to learn or improve their Welsh to do so with the support of their employers.

"The 'Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh' courses will sit alongside existing provision and we look forward to working with partners, employers and the Government to deliver this new learning programme, which will feature innovative interactive elements."

Carl Sargeant thanks Armed Forces Expert Group

At the 13th meeting of the group, Carl Sargeant said the multi-agency group provided valuable insight into the needs of the Armed Forces community and ways in which service delivery might be improved.

Carl Sargeant said:

“We are committed to providing high quality services to the Armed Forces community in Wales. The Expert Group brings together people with detailed knowledge of issues which affect this community in a number of areas such as health, education and housing.

“Our meetings generate positive discussion between all members and I am keen to continue this, identifying issues of interest to the Armed Forces Community that we can address collaboratively.”

£3.7 million to regenerate communities

Communities and Children secretary Carl Sargeant has today announced funding for the projects which include the creation of a new 3G facility adjacent to the existing stadium at Parc Eirias in Colwyn Bay which will create or safeguard 17 jobs; the development of commercial property in Swansea which will enable the creation of 40 jobs; demolishing a derelict pub in Tredegar to allow the building of 28 new affordable homes; and providing supported accommodation for up to 8 homeless people each year in Caernarfon.

The money from the Vibrant and Viable Places programme is a mixture of newly allocated funding and the reallocation of underspent funds from other projects.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“This additional £3.7 million is a big boost to these twenty five regeneration projects across Wales which will make a very real difference to their local communities.

“As well as improving important local services and facilities, the

funding will create jobs and traineeships, boost the housing supply and create environments in which small businesses can flourish.

“These projects are an excellent example of how regeneration funding is supporting important improvements that will benefit whole communities.”

Financial technology company Monitise to expand its Nantgarw-based team

The expansion, which will see the specialist in financial services technology retain 34 high-value jobs in Wales as well as creating 26 new jobs, is backed by £527,000 business finance from the Welsh Government.

The focus for the investment and expansion will be the continued development of FINKit®, a new comprehensive cloud-based platform launched last year and set up specifically to enable banks and financial services organisations to transform and accelerate the delivery of their digital services to customers.

The new jobs will support the existing FINKit® development team as it continues to design, build, test, and service this new platform. FINKit® delivers bank-grade security and is geared towards helping banks innovate more rapidly and cost-effectively and interact with their customers via smartphone, tablet, PC, digital TV, smartwatch, or any other digital medium.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Fintech is an area of huge growth potential, and attracting investment into this sector is a key focus for both the ICT and financial and professional services sector strategies.

“That Monitise has chosen to reinforce its team in Nantgarw, rather than create these new jobs in London or its other locations, is evidence of the expertise and experience to be found in the growing fintech ecosystem in Wales.”

Will Jones, MD Europe at Monitise Group, said: “There is an impressive pool of technology talent in Wales, and in particular in the Cardiff area. We are pleased to be able to support the continued growth of the industry here as we expand the team of pioneers working on FINKit to empower banks to provide better, more innovative products and services for their customers.”