

# The democratic process must continue

UKIP Leader Paul Nuttall, "We are all horrified by the horrific events that took place in Manchester. Following those events it is right and proper that political parties suspended their campaigns for a short period as a mark of respect to those who lost their lives or suffered appalling injuries.

"But we cannot be cowed or allow our way of life to be undermined by those who wish to do us harm. These people hate the way we live, hate our freedom and hate our democracy.

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## First Act of Assembly term receives Royal Assent

Land transaction tax will replace stamp duty land tax in Wales when it is devolved in April 2018.

At an official sealing ceremony, the Land Transaction Tax and Anti-avoidance of Devolved Taxes (Wales) Bill became an Act of the Assembly. It is the first Act of this Assembly term.

A Bill receives Royal Assent when Letters Patent under the Welsh Seal signed with Her Majesty's own hand signifying Her Assent are notified to the Clerk of the Assembly.

The First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones applied the Welsh Seal to the Letters Patent at the sealing ceremony, which was also attended by Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

"This Act is a significant step in our devolution journey – for the first time in almost 800 years we will have our own taxes.

"It will bring additional responsibility as we become responsible for raising a proportion of our own money and an opportunity to make a real difference to public services in Wales."

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

" This Act will enable us to introduce a new made-in-Wales tax on land transactions to replace stamp duty land tax, ensuring public

services continue to benefit from the revenues raised by this important tax.

“I would like to thank all those who have helped us shape this Act and look forward to continuing to work with them as it is implemented.”

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## **Our democratic process must continue, it's the best response to those who rely on terror**

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## **Accelerated Growth Programme passes the 1000 job creation milestone**

To-date the programme – which offers a bespoke package of support helping businesses to grow faster, stronger and for longer – has created 1,200 jobs, helped participating companies attract £21.4m of private sector investment and generate £8.3m worth of exports.

It means that every £1 spent on the programme leverages a further £5 of private sector investment – and a further £2 of exports for the Welsh economy.

The programme, launched just two years ago with EU and Welsh Government funding, is currently supporting 370 companies, including start ups, working across Wales in a wide range of sectors.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“SMEs and start ups are the lifeblood of the Welsh economy and this programme is specifically designed to help these businesses overcome any strategic constraints that may be hampering their true

high growth potential.

“This approach is working – these businesses are delivering results, creating jobs, increasing turnover and export sales which in turn are providing benefits to local communities throughout the country. I am pleased to note that a number have already created more than 50 jobs each and some have attracted in excess of £1m of private investment.”

One example is Laser Wire Solutions, based in Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd, that has seen exports increase by more than £1m since it joined the programme in 2015 – and which it aims to double over the next twelve months.

The company manufactures laser based equipment that strips ultra-fine wires used in industries such as medical device manufacturing, high speed data and aerospace. The business has tripled turnover in the last three years and employs more than 20 highly skilled engineers.

CEO Paul Taylor said:

“We joined the programme to help us overcome the challenges we faced in rapidly scaling the business and fulfilling our true growth potential. We see ourselves as very much a global business and the support we have had has helped us to focus on growing an international company. The Accelerated Growth Programme has been a fantastic resource as it is so flexible and responsive to our needs as we develop.”

The company has benefited from: specialist 1-2-1 consultancy on market research to identify high value clients; HR advice to support management of people in a growing business and ICT advice to ensure they have robust systems critical for back office management and information.

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## [Kezia Dugdale's statement on campaigning being suspended today](#)

This is a heartbreaking moment for our country, and our thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives in Manchester and with those who remain injured.

As a party, we are grieving for the people of Manchester. Yesterday in the Scottish Parliament I paid tribute to the dedication of the brave emergency service workers who ran into danger, as well as the actions of ordinary

people who opened their doors, cared for scared youngsters, provided transport to concert-goers, and gave blood at donor banks to help those injured.

A further statement is expected by today following the raising of the threat level yesterday evening.

In the coming days there will be a toughening of our resolve in the face of terror, and a renewal of our belief in the enduring British values of tolerance and respect. We are all determined to make sure that such horrific acts will never undermine our freedom, nor our democracy.

But it is right to pause and remember those who have lost their lives. General Election campaigning at a local and national level will remain on hold in Scotland today.

Wednesday night's televised leaders' debate on STV has been postponed and all media engagements have been cancelled. When we resume our campaign it will be with fervour, and Jeremy Corbyn will shortly be joining us in Scotland as we all work tirelessly to elect a Labour Government for the many, not the few.