

Theresa May: Why we need a general election

Theresa May: I have just chaired a meeting of Cabinet where we agreed that the Government should call a general election to be held on the 8th June. I want to explain the reasons for that decision, what will happen next and the choice facing the British people when you come to vote in this election. Last summer after the country voted to leave the European Union, Britain needed certainty, stability and strong leadership and since I became Prime Minister the Government has delivered precisely that. Despite predictions of immediate financial and economic danger since the referendum we have seen consumer confidence remain high, record numbers of jobs and economic growth that has exceeded all expectations.

We have also delivered on the mandate we were handed by the referendum result. Britain is leaving the European Union and there can be no turning back. And as we look to the future the Government has the right plan for negotiating our new relationship with Europe. We want a deep and special partnership between a strong and successful European Union and a UK that is free to chart its own way in the world. That means we will regain control of our own money, our own laws and our own borders and we will be free to strike trade deals with old friends and new partners all around the world.

This is the right approach and it is in the national interest, but the other political parties oppose it. At this moment of enormous national significance there should be unity here in Westminster, but instead there is division. The country is coming together but Westminster is not. In recent weeks Labour have threatened to vote against the final agreement we reach with the European Union, the Liberal Democrats have said they want to grind the business of government to a standstill, the SNP say they will vote against the legislation that formally repeals Britain's membership of the European Union and unelected members of the House of Lords have vowed to fight us every step of the way. Our opponents believe because the Government's majority is so small that our resolve will weaken and that they can force us to change course.

They are wrong, they underestimate our determination to get the job done and I am not prepared to let them endanger the security of millions of working people across the country because what they are doing jeopardises the work we must do to prepare for Brexit at home and it weakens the Government's negotiating position in Europe. If we do not hold a General Election now their political gameplaying will continue and the negotiations with the European Union will reach their most difficult stage in the run-up to the next scheduled election. Division in Westminster will risk our ability to make a success of Brexit and it will cause damaging uncertainty and instability to the country.

So we need a general election and we need one now because we have at this

moment a one-off chance to get this done while the European Union agrees its negotiating position and before the detailed talks begin. I have only recently and reluctantly come to this conclusion. Since I became Prime Minister I have said there should be no election until 2020 but now I have concluded that the only way to guarantee certainty and stability for the years ahead is to hold this election and seek your support for the decisions I must take.

And so tomorrow I will move a motion in the House of Commons calling for a general election to be held on the 8th June. That motion, as set out by the Fixed Term Parliament Act, will require a two thirds majority of the House of Commons. So I have a simple challenge to the opposition parties. You have criticised the Government's vision for Brexit, you have challenged our objectives, you have threatened to block the legislation we put before Parliament. This is your moment to show you mean it, to show you are not opposing the Government for the sake of it, to show that you do not treat politics as a game.

Let us tomorrow vote for an election, let us put forward our plans for Brexit and our alternative programmes for government and then let the people decide. And the decision facing the country will be all about leadership. It will be a choice between strong and stable leadership in the national interest, with me as your Prime Minister, or weak and unstable coalition government led by Jeremy Corbyn, propped up by the Liberal Democrats, who want to re-open the divisions of the referendum, and Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP.

Every vote for the Conservatives will make it harder for opposition politicians who want to stop me from getting the job done. Every vote for the Conservatives will make me stronger when I negotiate for Britain with the prime ministers, presidents and chancellors of the European Union. Every vote for the Conservatives will mean we can stick to our plan for a stronger Britain and take the right long-term decisions for a more secure future.

It was with reluctance that I decided the country needs this election but it is with strong conviction that I say it is necessary to secure the strong and stable leadership the country needs to see us through Brexit and beyond. So tomorrow, let the House of Commons vote for an election, let everybody put forward their proposals for Brexit and their programmes for government and let us remove the risk of uncertainty and instability and continue to give the country the strong and stable leadership it demands.

[News story: Veterinary Medicines Pharmacovigilance Annual Review 2015:](#)

Summary

A [summary](#) (PDF, 98.3KB, 7 pages) of the key results from the Veterinary Medicines Pharmacovigilance Annual Review 2015.

The annual review summarises the 5674 UK adverse events in animals, humans and the environment after use of veterinary medicines and other products reported to VMD in 2015.

[Full review](#)

News story: Placing social value at the heart of procurement

CCS today publishes a statement outlining how it will do more to help public sector bodies to deliver additional social benefits in line with legislation including the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

The legislation requires buyers to consider what additional social, environmental and economic benefits can be delivered through the contract.

Sam Rowbury, Director of Policy at CCS said:

“We recognise that for many of our customers across the public sector, maximising value means both saving money and securing social value for citizens.

“We’re making sure that our customers can use our deals to deliver the specific social value benefits they are looking for.

“Social value benefits could be anything from creating more apprenticeships for young people, to reducing carbon emissions or promoting equality and diversity.”

What we’re doing

CCS will work to increase social value by:

- making sure all relevant new deals offer social value opportunities and give customers the flexibility to specify and evaluate social value at call-off
- reviewing current deals to identify social value opportunities
- providing tools and guidance to help build social value into procurements and measure the social value element of bids received

- listening to customers, understanding their needs and learning from other organisations
- working with suppliers so they are ready to respond to the requirements of public bodies

The most popular 20 frameworks that CCS offers to its customers have already been assessed and are ready to help customers secure social benefits now. This includes the Energy Performance Contracting and Technology Products 2 frameworks.

In future, frameworks will be designed to give customers the flexibility they need to decide their own, specific social value benefits, in keeping with their own social value objectives.

Social value in the communications arena

Social & Local, a micro-enterprise agency with a unique social value model, has been awarded a place on the [Communication Services framework \(RM3796\)](#).

Providing specialist services in areas such as hard to reach audiences, challenging social issues and rapidly changing landscapes, Social & Local is on Lot 1 of the framework for Speciality Consultancy Services.

Stephanie Drakes, CEO, said:

“We were founded as a Community Interest Company (CiC), and re-invest half our profit after tax to enable others to make real socially valuable campaigns, creative businesses and communications projects that promote sustainability, freedom, employment, health and well-being. Many of these projects would otherwise not see the light of day without our funding.”

Looking forward to summer following Epic Easter

The Year of Legends 2017 has had a great start with Wales being named as one of the top must-visit destinations globally from the likes of Lonely Planet TripAdvisor, Wanderlust and Rough Guides. The recently launched Year of Legends campaign, which includes an advert starring Luke Evans has also been hailed as a game changer by industry leaders. With the busy holiday season in full flow, the work of marketing Wales continues.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

“Campaign work now continues to convert early interest and opportunities arising from the weak pound into bookings for the summer. A boost to the Visit Wales budget means that there is £26.3m available to invest in

marketing and product development this year – this 41% increase has enabled us to pull together a more ambitious programme than ever before for 2017.

“In what is an extremely competitive market place, tourism in Wales is in a strong position. We’ve had two record breaking years and our aim is to sustain growth – being aware that global events and competition will mean that not every year will be a record breaking one. The overall picture – taking into account tourism day visits, international visitors as well GB overnights visits – indicates that Wales saw an increase of almost 16% in overall tourism volumes during the first nine months of 2016.”

Figures published today shows that one of the measures of tourism performance – [The Great Britain Tourism Survey](#) – showed a decrease in the number of British staying visitors. These provisional figures for overnight visits from the GB for the year ending September 2016, are one indicator of tourism performance in Wales. Although they show a fall of 1.5% in terms of trips, this is in line with figures for the GB as a whole.

The Economy Secretary, continued:

“Last week I announced that £24m will be available for the development and marketing of tourism through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014 -2020. With the existing EU tourism funded projects currently in development with partners in Wales, we are looking at more than a £100 million investment in the sector up until 2020 which will have a big impact on Wales’ competitiveness in the global marketplace.

“We’re also poised to make the most of one of the greatest shows on earth – the UEFA Champions League Final – coming to Cardiff in June. This will not only mean a boost to visitor numbers and economic impact during the event – but will also have an impact on Wales global profile long after the matches come to an end.

“We look forward to working with the industry on making 2017 a legendary year for tourism in Wales.”

Confidence is high among the industry following the first Bank Holiday of the Year.

The EPIC installation had a great reception at Margam Park.

Margam Park Manager Michael Wynne said:

“We are delighted that Visit Wales chose Margam Country Park as the first stop on the EPIC sign’s tour of Wales during the Year of Legends campaign, and the response has been fantastic. We’ve had a

lot of visitors to the park over the Easter Weekend and many selfies have been taken in front of the sign already!

“Margam Park has a long history and more than a fair share of its own myths and legends so this year’s campaign is a great way to showcase what we have to offer. Our bank holiday events saw the park host some epic battles involving medieval knights, archers and horsemen and we are looking forward to welcoming visitors throughout the Easter holidays and beyond to enjoy the beautiful surroundings here at the park.”

Speaking on behalf of The Welsh Rarebits Collection, Wales’ premier marketing consortium for the best independent boutique hotels, Mike Morgan, said :

The whole sector has benefitted from continued capital investment by our member Hoteliers. We know, from over 30 years of marketing high end hotels, that there is always strong demand for genuine quality, but that intangible ‘Croeso’ helps us to compete on the global stage. A notable Year of Legends campaign is the icing on the cake, and Visit Wales has given us all something to get behind and take the Welsh hospitality industry to the world. A strong set of Easter figures usually points to a busy summer season, and we can’t wait to welcome the many new converts to Wales who are visiting for the first time as a result of the exchange rate.

Following refurbishments over the winter months, Folly Farm had a busy start to the holiday season:

Chris Ebsworth, Managing Director at Folly Farm, said;

“We’re feeling confident about the season ahead following heavy investment in a new visitor entrance and gift shop, a new pirate themed playground and improvements to several of our zoo enclosures. Easter is generally a good measure for the season and we’ve had an excellent weekend with visitor numbers up by 25%. Visit Wales’ marketing campaign for this year is bold and confident, building on their success last year and we feel that Pembrokeshire is well placed to play a significant role in helping Wales achieve long term success.”

[Press release: Richard Scudamore](#)

appointed Sports Business Council co-chair

The government has recruited Premier League Executive Chairman Richard Scudamore to co-chair a new Sports Business Council that will bring the government and leading sports figures from the public and private sector together to ensure the sport economy continues to grow and prosper.

The sports economy is already worth billions to the UK's economy, with around a million people employed in the sport and physical activity sectors, but has traditionally not been supported in the same way as other parts of the economy.

The [Sports Business Council](#) will focus on supporting growth for the sports sector, improving access to finance and developing skills. It will look to exploit the UK's reputation as a global sporting power with expertise in hosting major events and developing international brands like the Premier League, driving exports abroad and seeking opportunities at home.

It will also provide an important channel for representatives from the sports business world to work with government and help to make decisions quickly that have public sector and private sector buy-in.

Membership of the Sports Business Council is being finalised with the first meeting due to take place in the coming weeks, and the Council set to meet every quarter. Industry representatives will lead on specific pieces of work as required between meetings.

Sports Minister Tracey Crouch said:

Sport makes a major contribution to the economy with major events, sports equipment and media rights generating billions in spend and the sector employing around a million people in the UK. But there is more that we can do to support the sector and spread jobs, prosperity and opportunity around the whole country. The Sports Business Council will bring together key players in the industry to help us do just that. I am pleased that Richard Scudamore, with his long-standing experience at the very top of sport administration, has agreed to co-chair the Council and help this important piece of work.

Premier League Executive Chairman Richard Scudamore said:

Sport has long been recognised for the cultural and social benefits it brings to the country. Increasingly, it is apparent that a strong and vibrant sports economy is making a significant contribution to the overall economy, in terms of development,

employment and tax, at both a national and local level.

I am extremely pleased that Government has recognised this and am looking forward to helping shape policies that will cement and further enhance the UK's reputation for sporting excellence whether hosting events, delivering community facilities and programmes, setting standards in governance as well as attracting the investment that makes this all possible.

The Sports Business Council was a recommendation in the government's strategy [Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation](#).

Economic development is one of the five outcomes in the government's sport strategy alongside physical health, mental health, individual development, social and economic development.

For further information contact the Department for Culture, Media and Sport press office on 020 7211 6971