

WCVA to deliver £1.5m Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme

The scheme will go live in April 2018 and will support environmental and community projects in areas affected by the disposal of waste to landfill. £1.5m per annum will be allocated to the grant scheme for 4 years from 2018-19. The scheme will fund environmental and community projects which support biodiversity, waste minimisation and wider environmental enhancements in areas located 5 miles around a landfill site or waste transfer station.

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

“The Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme recognises there can be a negative impact for communities through the disposal of waste to landfill and will fund projects which aim to offset these impacts.

“This is why the Welsh Government placed the new Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme on the face of the bill. I’m pleased to announce that the contract to deliver the Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme has been awarded to Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

“The WCVA will distribute the funding directly to projects helping to improve the environment for those who live near a landfill site.”

£500,000 for Welsh Language Education Resources

The resources will support the teaching and learning of Welsh as a subject in its own right and other subjects studied through the medium of Welsh for 3 to 19 year olds and will help to address the current shortage of resources identified by teachers.

The projects are funded as part of an annual budget for the commissioning of Welsh language resources. This funding will be supplemented by another £500,000 in 2018/19 as part of the budget agreement between Plaid Cymru and Labour.

Seven suppliers from across Wales have been commissioned to develop the new

resources for the National Curriculum and qualifications for Wales for Art and Design, Music, Welsh; Geography; Drama; Design and Technology; History; Government and Politics; Mathematics; and Modern Foreign Languages.

Announcing the funding, the Cabinet Secretary for Education said:

“We want to ensure that all our pupils, regardless of the language in which they study, have equal access to relevant, engaging and modern educational resources. These projects will ensure the gaps in Welsh provision that have been identified by teachers are filled and that learners are not disadvantaged by their choice to have their education through the medium of Welsh.”

The Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning added:

“Education is vital to achieving our target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Children and young people who attend Welsh medium schools are the Welsh speakers of tomorrow. It is therefore vital they have the necessary resources to ensure they have the best education and that the resources available to them are in the language in which they use, day in day out.”

[Licensing scheme for Mobile Animal Exhibitions in Wales](#)

The Welsh Government will engage with stakeholders and enforcement agencies to develop the licensing scheme.

Earlier this year, the Welsh Government consulted on the introduction of a licensing or registration scheme for Mobile Animal Exhibits (MAEs) in Wales. The majority of those who responded favoured licensing over registration.

The consultation also asked for views on banning the use of wild animals in circuses. The majority of the almost 1,000 responses only answered this question. There was strong support for a ban and, whilst a licensing scheme would include circuses, the Cabinet Secretary has asked officials to consider this as a separate work stream and develop options to address this issue.

Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths said:

“Earlier this week I made clear our position on animal sentience. Animals are sentient beings and should be protected from pain,

injury, fear and distress at all stages of their life. Animal welfare is a priority for us as a government and it is clear to me from the responses we received to our consultation, that it is also a priority for the people of Wales.

“There is concern the welfare needs of some animals kept by MAEs, including circuses, cannot be met in a travelling environment. MAEs are diverse and there is no standard licensing regime or requirement for routine inspection.

“We received a great response to our consultation, with most favouring a licensing regime over registration. I have now asked my officials to begin work on developing a licensing scheme for MAEs in Wales.

“This will not be done in isolation. We will need to engage with stakeholders and enforcement agencies in its development, particularly on how we define MAEs, as well as working collaboratively with our counterparts in the other Devolved Administrations to ensure there are no cross border issues.

“By adopting this approach, we will deliver a scheme which will have a lasting impact on welfare standards to achieve our goal of promoting and improving animal health and welfare standards in Wales.”

“It was clear from the consultation responses that there was support for banning the use of wild animals in circuses. My officials will now consider how we address this issue.”

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Regional investment funding and decisions must not be stripped from Wales post-Brexit – First Minister

Launching the Welsh Government’s latest Brexit paper, the First Minister will also warn against the UK government using our exit from the EU as an opportunity to take money and funding decisions away from Wales.

The paper, ‘Regional Investment in Wales after Brexit’ proposes a new,

simplified and less bureaucratic way of supporting Welsh communities and driving economic development.

It calls for every penny of the £370m that Wales currently receives from the EU each year to be replaced by the UK government and added to the Welsh Government's annual budget.

The paper rejects the idea of a Westminster controlled UK Prosperity Fund and calls for regional investment decisions to continue to be made in Wales. The proposals include:

- simplifying the rules, administration and systems for regional investment funds
- developing plans for the regions of Wales led by partnerships involving local authorities, businesses and communities in those areas
- regional investment focused on places where it is needed and in line with the Welsh Government's Economic Action Plan (EAP)
- continuing the ability to provide state aid to businesses
- the 4 national governments of the UK agreeing rules on regional support to avoid a race to the bottom that could damage communities
- creation of a Council of Economic Ministers from all 4 nations to ensure co-ordination of policy across the UK.

The First Minister said:

"The decades of Wales' partnership with the EU leaves us a legacy upon which we can build our economic future.

"However, the vote to leave the EU was also a call for change and so we are proposing a way forward for regional investment based on local knowledge, which does away with unnecessary bureaucracy and focuses on the needs of businesses and communities.

"A way forward which improves our roads and railways, improves broadband networks, gives people the skills they need, boosts entrepreneurship and promotes innovation to support economic growth across Wales.

"The people of Wales are best placed to make those decisions and to create a new system for the future. We have the local knowledge, the people and the networks to deliver this. Any move to a system where unelected officials in Whitehall can veto much needed investment in our local communities would be completely unacceptable and a betrayal of devolution.

"We will also not stand for any loss of funding as a result of Brexit. During the referendum campaign, we were promised Wales would not lose out on a penny if we left the EU. This promise must now be honoured or the people of Wales were misled."