

Lesley Griffiths sets out timetable for Basic Payment Scheme post-Brexit

Speaking in plenary on the future of land management, the Cabinet Secretary confirmed that the Basic Payment Scheme will continue as planned for 2018 and for the 2019 scheme year.

From 2020 when powers return from Europe, a gradual and multi-year transition from existing to new schemes will take place. By 2025 the Cabinet Secretary would like implementation completed and will set out further details in July, which will be subject to consultation.

The Cabinet Secretary also reiterated her five core principles for the future of land and the people who manage it. They are:

- we must keep land managers on the land;
- food production remains vital for our nation;
- future support will centre on the provision of public goods that deliver for all the people of Wales; and
- all land managers should have the opportunity to benefit from new schemes.
- we need a prosperous and resilient agricultural sector in Wales, whatever nature of Brexit.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“Brexit brings significant changes and we must have a well-planned and multi-year transition. I learned the importance of avoiding a cliff edge removal of subsidies during my recent trip to New Zealand.

“I have always been clear that we should not lose a penny of funding as a result of leaving the EU and I will continue to fight to protect a full and fair allocation of funding to support land management in Wales.

“The UK Government has so far failed to provide any detail or commitment beyond 2022 and I recently jointly wrote with my Scottish counterpart to Michael Gove seeking urgent clarity on future funding.

“Despite this uncertainty I want to set a timetable for Welsh farmers. The Basic Payment Scheme will continue as planned in 2018. I can confirm today that I will also continue to operate the Basic Payment Scheme for the 2019 scheme year.

“From 2020 powers will return from Europe. I then envisage a gradual and multi-year transition from existing to new schemes. By 2025 I want to have completed implementation. I will set out

further details in July and can guarantee that changes will be subject to explicit consultation.

“The great challenge of Brexit is to ensure its impact does not undermine the true value land management provides Wales. The great opportunity is to put in place new made-in-Wales policy to help the industry to adjust to future market forces.

“As a Government, we are determined to put Wales in the strongest position to thrive in a post-Brexit world. I am confident our land managers can adapt but it is this Government’s role to provide the time and support needed to achieve this.”