

“Let’s keep up the pace on local government reform” – Mark Drakeford

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“I congratulate all councillors – both new and returning – who were elected last week.

“Local government plays a vitally important role in the lives of every person in Wales. Councils provide the services which educate our children, care for the elderly, dispose of our waste and light our streets.

“Wales’ newly-elected councillors have taken on a valuable role in our society and know the many responsibilities that come with public office.

“The coming weeks will be busy as new administrations are formed and council leaders are elected. Councillors are facing many challenges but none of us must lose sight of the wider issue of local government reform.

“After I announced new proposals for local government reform last year, I have been encouraged by the willingness of leaders to engage and I’ve had some very constructive and positive conversations.

“I want to continue this dialogue and work with council leaders in the same spirit of mutual respect as we take the next steps in reforming local government in Wales.

The Cabinet Secretary added:

“Inevitably, we will not always agree but I want to stress this is not an open-ended process – I will listen to different views but we will be moving forward with mandatory regional working.

“The Welsh public have heard us talking about local government reform for many years and the time has come to bring this to a long-lasting resolution.

“We have had thoughtful and well-considered responses to the White Paper consultation and I will shortly set out our next steps.

“I will be writing to council leaders over the coming weeks and am very keen to meet with them over the next few months as we discuss how we can move forward and build a solid working relationship for

the years to come.”