

£3m boost for the Welsh Language

Enabling people to use the language at work, along with ensuring the public have access to high quality Welsh language services is essential if we are to achieve our goal of a million speakers.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh is responsible for providing strategic leadership to the Welsh for Adults sector. This role includes the development and provision of Welsh for Adults courses in the workplace, particularly for bodies that fall under the language standards regime.

The Welsh Government has worked closely with the National Centre to develop a plan for the additional money earmarked in the 2017-18 budget agreement with Plaid Cymru.

The Plan includes five strands:

- Information and advice for employers 'Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh'
- On-line welcome / reception courses 'Croeso Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh Welcome'
- Intensive courses 'Dysgu Cymraeg Gwaith/Learn Work Welsh''
- Courses for the early years workforce 'Cymraeg Cynnar/Early Welsh'
- Residential courses to improve confidence and provide specialist terminology 'Defnyddio Cymraeg Gwaith/Use Work Welsh'

Alun Davies, Minister for the Welsh Language, told Assembly Members:

"The goal of this Government is to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050. In line with our shared ambition with Plaid Cymru we are allocating an additional £3m to ensure the Welsh language is used more extensively and to encourage more people to speak it.

"This investment will enable the National Centre for Learning Welsh to provide practical support to bodies, putting them in a position to provide an outstanding bilingual service to the public and comply with the Welsh language standards."

Efa Gruffudd Jones, Chief Executive of the National Centre for Learning Welsh, added:

"We welcome this additional funding which will allow the Centre to build on progress already made in the Welsh for Adults sector in recent months and further support the Government's ambitions for the Welsh language.

"Putting learners first is at the heart of the Centre's work and this funding will enable new opportunities for individuals who want to learn or improve their Welsh to do so with the support of their

employers.

“The ‘Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh’ courses will sit alongside existing provision and we look forward to working with partners, employers and the Government to deliver this new learning programme, which will feature innovative interactive elements.”

[New candidate for Greater Manchester Metro Mayor contest](#)



Green Party

26 January 2017

Following the tragic and untimely death of Deyika Nzeribe earlier this month, the Greater Manchester Green Parties have selected Will Patterson [1], chair of the Wigan & Leigh Green Party, to contest the Metro Mayor election in Greater Manchester. The vote, due to be held on 4 May, will give more than two million voters across the City Region the opportunity to vote for Green policies.

Will, a Wigan resident who has lived in Springfield for the last three years, joined the Green Party in 2014, and stood as the Green Party Parliamentary Candidate for Wigan in 2015. He has been an active campaigner for more public engagement in the devolution process.

He is a member of Frack Free Wigan, Leigh and Makerfield, and helped establish Wigan People's Assembly Against Austerity. Last year, he supported Wigan Together, an event designed to promote and celebrate the diversity of the local community, and defend it against far right groups who were planning to march through the town. He was also delighted to sit on the organising committee of the inaugural Wigan Pride, which was held last August.

Will said: “These are tough circumstances to run in, but Deyika worked tirelessly to offer Greater Manchester the Green voice that the region desperately needs. I’m honoured to have been called upon to continue the amazing work that Deyika started, and together with party members from across the region, I’m looking forward to working for a fairer, more democratic and

greener Greater Manchester.

Setting out his approach for the campaign, Will said: “This isn’t the devolution I would have hoped for: it’s been dropped on the people following closed-door back-room negotiations between Councils and the Government. If devolution is to work for the people of Greater Manchester, it needs to be owned by the people of Greater Manchester and deliver real solutions to the problems we face. We need a combined authority that will prioritise the real need for social and affordable homes; we need to do more to tackle the chaos of climate change that’s hitting the region right now; and we need to open the doors of our new institutions so that the people of Greater Manchester can see and share in the decisions being taken in our name.

“Successive Westminster governments have left Greater Manchester behind – if we’re to tackle their legacy of poverty and inequality, we need to do devolution differently. I’ll empower not just our cities, but our citizens.”

Notes:

1. Will Patterson

Will is 33. Over the last few years, he has been a contract worker in Manchester, working in IT Project Management until his last contract expired just before Christmas. And as a renter, Will is part of a generation that faces uncertain prospects with permanent jobs and affordable housing seemingly out of reach for many working people under 35. He feels his experiences dealing with the job market and the Government’s new benefits system give him a good understanding of what life is like for many people across Greater Manchester.

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BCC: GDP growth shows strong end to 2016 for the UK economy

Commenting on the first estimate of GDP for the fourth quarter of 2016, released today by the Office for National Statistics, Suren Thiru, Head of Economics at the British Chambers of Commerce, said:

“The first estimate of UK GDP growth for the final quarter of 2016 confirms that the UK economy enjoyed a strong end to the year – mirroring our own survey data. While there was a welcome pick-up in output from manufacturing

and construction, the UK remains heavily reliant on services and consumer spending as the main drivers of growth. The yearly figure of 2.0% UK GDP growth is broadly in line with historic trends.

“However, outperforming last year’s performance in 2017 will be a challenge for the UK economy. Higher inflation and uncertainty over the implications of Brexit are expected to bear down on the UK’s near-term growth prospects. This is likely to squeeze consumer spending and dampen firm’s investment intentions, resulting in a prolonged period of materially below trend growth.

“A key priority for the UK government must be to support long-term business investment, including addressing the escalating burden of up-front taxes and costs, such as business rates, which are impeding the ability of firms to invest, recruit and grow their business.”

Ends

Notes to editors:

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) sits at the heart of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing thousands of businesses of all sizes and within all sectors. Our Global Business Network connects exporters with nearly 40 markets around the world. For more information, visit: www.britishchambers.org.uk

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[This report underlines just how rigged our economy & country actually is in favour of the wealthiest – Jeremy Corbyn](#)

Jeremy Corbyn MP,
Leader of the Labour Party, commenting on a report by the Social Mobility Commission, said:

“This

report underlines just how rigged our economy and country actually is in favour of the wealthiest and the privileged few. While the Conservatives look after the interests of their friends, they are closing down opportunity for the many by slashing funding for education.

"Labour is committed to a country that works for all, a real living wage of at least £10 an hour by 2020, investment in industry, infrastructure and public services and a national education service which equips the next generation with the skills our country needs to succeed, so that no one and no community is left behind."

[Green Party: Poverty to blame for child health inequality](#)



Green Party

26 January 2017

The Green Party is deeply concerned child health in the UK is lagging behind that of most other European countries due to poverty rates [1]. Experts say little progress has been made to address the social factors behind health inequality since it was highlighted in a Government report in 2010 [2].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"It's appalling we're failing to give children the best start in life, even though Britain is one of the richest countries in the world. Children deserve to be happy and healthy, no matter where they are born or how much money their parents make.

"We can't tackle a growing health gap between rich and poor children without looking at the way inequality is entrenched more widely. We're in an age of insecurity where life is getting worse for those who are struggling the most.

"The Government has a dismal record on child poverty, abolishing the child

poverty unit [3] and scrapping child poverty targets [4]. Government cuts to public services have taken a toll and unless the Prime Minister prioritises tackling poverty, inequality will continue to soar, with a flow on effect on children's health and the NHS, which will struggle to cope with increased demand."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/jan/25/poverty-in-the-uk-jeopardising-childrens-health-warns-landmark-report>
2. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-38743574>
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/dec/20/fears-after-government-abolishes-civil-services-child-poverty-unit>
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/01/government-scrap-legal-requirements-child-poverty>

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