

Minister gets BID to boost local economy off the ground with Neath visit

Housing and Regeneration Minister Rebecca Evans will announce the £270,000 funding with a visit to meet local traders in Neath to learn about how their Business Improvement District is making a difference to the town.

Business Improvement Districts are an innovative way of bringing local businesses together by pooling their resources to work as a team. Once the BID is agreed via a ballot, each business contributes financially via a levy, which is then used to fund the agreed activities set out in the Business Plan. These could include marketing, promotion and events, car parking, tackling anti-social behaviour, improving access to towns, or work to make the area more attractive.

Rebecca Evans said:

“The momentum for BIDs is growing across the UK and we’re aware of the real impact they create in towns across Wales, but setting them up takes time, effort and support, which is why we provide Welsh Government funding to get them off the ground.

“Neath Inspired, the Business Improvement District, has developed effective partnerships with the town and county council on several projects, including supporting events, providing hanging baskets and Christmas lights. Members can access social media and marketing training, and their website advertises some fantastic local festivals.”

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Collectively, the eight established Business Improvement Districts which have already received our support will generate over £5m private investment to support activities in their area over the next five years. These projects are supporting economic development and town centre regeneration, making our high streets more attractive and vibrant places to visit.

“We know that a number of towns across Wales are looking at this sustainable funding model, and I hope we see many more potential BIDs come forward as a result of the funding. We are also keen to encourage themed BIDs such as Tourism and Industrial BIDs alongside traditional town centre BIDs”

Andrew Shufflebotham who is the Neath Inspired BID manager, strongly recommends that other towns consider applying for the new funding. He said:

“Towns benefit from establishing a successful BID, especially smaller independent retailers and businesses, where the BID levy is used effectively to increase footfall into the BID area.”

[Energy and Clean Growth cross-border opportunity](#)

Addressing the North Wales and Mersey Dee Energy and Clean Growth Summit in Runcorn on Thursday the Cabinet Secretary will say:

“North Wales and the North West have a lot in common. It is only right that we are considering cross-border approaches to address clean growth and decarbonisation.

“In Wales we are facing up to these challenges. Our Economic Action Plan sets out how we will work with others to respond to the task ahead. We will now address projects on how well they meet our call for action on decarbonisation, enter into an economic contract with investing companies on reducing the carbon footprint of their wider activities, and still aim to secure economic growth through the wider supply chain.

“The future prospects of the nuclear sector within our respective regions also depend on healthy cross border collaboration. Wylfa Newydd on Anglesey and the potential for small reactor technologies at Trawsfynydd provide opportunities for supply chain development and investment in our people across North Wales and North West England. We continue to work closely with the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone Board, the UK Government and other stakeholders to explore the potential for Trawsfynydd to host first of a kind deployment of SMR technologies and associated developments.

“The Fit4Nuclear scheme is working with Welsh businesses to help them prepare for the potential opportunities, and our skills programmes are evaluating how, working with Horizon and the local education authorities, we can make sure local people are in a position to take up the wide variety of roles that will be available.

“There is a great deal we can achieve to bring lasting benefit to

our combined communities.”

Welsh Government approves £25million for Glangwili obstetric and neonatal facilities

The second phase of developments will increase the capacity of the facilities at Glangwili. This will include more high dependency cots, special care cots and parent overnight stay rooms, as well as increase the number of birthing rooms, operating theatres and resuscitation bays. Plans are also in place for an additional 59 car parking spaces.

The plans will provide a safe environment for the delivery of obstetric and neonatal services at Glangwili, and address the urgent areas of concern highlighted in the Royal Colleges’ report into the maternity, neonatal and paediatric services provided by Hywel Dda Health Board.

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething, announced the funding during a visit to Glangwili’s obstetric and neonatal facilities.

Speaking during the visit, the Cabinet Secretary said:

“I’m delighted to approve £25million Welsh Government funding for the further redevelopment of Glangwili Hospital’s obstetric and neonatal facilities.

“This funding will improve the clinical quality, safety and innovation at the site. It will mean better access to services for patients and their parents, as well as improving the well-being of staff. This investment will address the urgent areas of concern highlighted in the Royal Colleges’ report on maternity services in Hywel Dda Health Board.

This should significantly improve the patient experience and accommodation for families and, as it is a larger unit, may also reduce the risk of families having to travel out of our area for care due to capacity reasons.”

Hywel Dda University Health Board Chief Executive Steve Moore said:

“We welcome this news as women, children and their families deserve

to have better accommodation than we are currently able to offer at Glangwili Hospital. We hope this provides our population with confidence that we will now proceed with pace to make these improvements.”

The second phase redevelopments will include:

- Neonatal Unit – 4 high dependency cots plus 1 stabilisation cot, 2 single cot nursery spaces plus 1 isolation lobby, 8 special care cots and 2 double parent overnight stay rooms
- Labour Ward – 5 standard birthing rooms, 1 birthing room with pool, and 6 bedded higher dependency area
- Obstetric Theatres – 2 operating theatres, 2*2 cot resuscitation bays; and
- Car Parking – additional 59 car parking spaces.

Work is expected to start before the Autumn and the aim is for the scheme to be complete by 2020.

[New areas to pilot Welsh Government's free childcare offer](#)

When rolled out across Wales, the offer will provide 30 hours of early education and childcare to working parents of 3 and 4 year olds for 48 weeks of the year.

In September 2017, the Welsh Government began piloting the offer in a number of areas in Anglesey, Gwynedd, Caerphilly, Flintshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Swansea, and across the whole of Blaenau Gwent. This approach has enabled the Welsh Government to test a range of aspects and issues impacting delivery and take-up.

The Minister is today announcing the offer is being extended to cover the whole counties of Anglesey, Gwynedd and Caerphilly from this month, and the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taff from at the start of September 2018. Discussions are also on-going with Flintshire and Swansea with a view to rolling out the offer to all remaining areas within those authorities as soon as possible.

In addition, the offer is also being expanded immediately into the following areas of Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC: The wards of Brynna, Llanharan, Llanharry, Talbot Green, Hawthorn, Graig, Rhydyfelin Central, Taff's Well and Treforest.

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“Our ground-breaking childcare offer is already making a real

difference to parents right across Wales, reducing the strain on family income and helping ensure childcare is not a barrier to them taking up employment or increasing their hours.

“I’m delighted to confirm the offer is being rolled out to new areas across Wales, as we continue the work to roll out the offer across the entire country by 2020.”

As part of the Welsh Government’s Draft Budget 2018/19, the funding to support the childcare offer increases to £25m in 2018-19, and to £45m in 2019-20.

This increase in funding will allow the Welsh Government to expand and test aspects of the delivery of the offer in some additional local authorities from September 2018 onwards.

Welsh Government funding for MEDSERVE Wales volunteer doctors

With the additional equipment funded by the Welsh Government, MEDSERVE Wales aims to expand their responder numbers and capability at incidents attended.

MEDSERVE Wales clinicians can be called to respond at any time of the day or night to help the public of South Wales. They provide enhanced pre-hospital care on a voluntary basis, in support of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST). MEDSERVE are the only enhanced care asset regularly available to assist WAST in responding to emergency calls overnight (2000-0800hrs) in South Wales.

MEDSERVE Wales clinicians come from a variety of Hospital and Primary Care specialities, and have additional training and many years of experience operating within the pre-hospital environment. Many also hold higher qualifications within the field of Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine.

Currently, the charity has clinicians based across South Wales who are available to respond to incidents on behalf of WAST as required; including at to major/ mass casualty incidents, at an operational and tactical level.

MEDSERVE Wales clinicians voluntarily attended over 500 emergency calls for WAST in 2017.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said;

“The Welsh Ambulance Service continues to experience a growing demand for its services every year, and ensuring an urgent response

to the most critical incidents can be a matter of life and death.

“MEDSERVE Wales’ volunteers are an invaluable resource and an incredible group of clinicians who give up their time to make a vital difference to critically ill or injured patients’ lives. This funding will enable them to continue serving the South Wales area, and support the Welsh Ambulance Service to the best of their ability.”

Dr Ian Bowler, Chairman of MEDSERVE Wales said;

“I am very proud of all our dedicated team members across South Wales who volunteer to provide an enhanced care service, supporting WAST 24 hours a day.

“We are delighted that the Health Secretary sees the value we add to the care of this group of patients and thank him for his support with this equipment project. This investment will help us to continue to expand and provide the highest quality of care to our patients; as well as support to our WAST colleagues and the other statutory and voluntary services with whom we work.”

Richard Lee, Director of Operations for the Welsh Ambulance NHS Trust said;

“Being able to call upon the support of advanced care providers such as MEDSERVE is a key part of our response to our most serious incidents. This development in the capability of the MEDSERVE teams will allow us to provide an even more effective service to those patients for whom these skills are required”.