

£4.2m to boost teaching of Welsh

A new one-year pilot sabbatical scheme for primary teachers to develop their Welsh-language skills will be delivered. This new pilot will be added to the range of courses currently delivered across Wales.

Additional money will also be provided to Regional Education consortia to undertake a programme of work which will include mapping the Welsh language skills of the workforce; mentoring and school-to-school support; and providing a programme of Welsh language professional learning for practitioners.

The full allocations are as follows:

£1,200,000 to support the provision and expansion of the national sabbatical scheme

A new one-year pilot sabbatical scheme course for primary teachers to develop their Welsh-language skills will be delivered. As part of the full-time course, teachers will be released from school to significantly develop their Welsh-language skills, reflecting the increased expectations that will be placed on all schools as part of the introduction the Welsh language continuum.

£600,000 to improve Welsh language skills of learners through informal opportunities

A programme of support will be developed to help English-medium schools to improve learners' Welsh language skills to ensure that children and young people have more opportunities to use their Welsh language skills in an authentic and constructive way beyond Welsh language lessons.

£50,000 to attract Welsh-medium graduates

We recognise there is a need to recruit more graduates into teaching in the Welsh-medium sector and to teach Welsh as a subject. A campaign, in conjunction with key stakeholders will be developed with a view to targeting undergraduates to go into teaching. This funding will be directed to the Discover Teaching campaign.

£2,055,000 for education consortia to support professional learning for Welsh language and Welsh-medium practitioners

Each regional education consortium will receive an allocation to support the professional development of practitioners' Welsh language skills and teaching pedagogy.

Consortia will be required to undertake a programme of work which includes mapping the Welsh language skills of the workforce; identifying practitioners to take part in the Sabbatical scheme; mentoring and school-to-school

support; sharing effective practice, and providing a programme of Welsh language professional learning for practitioners.

£200,000 to be allocated to undertake research

There is a need for research to ensure a sound evidence base for the proposed language continuum and effective pedagogy for teaching the language.

This money will deliver a programme of research and evaluation to support Welsh in education and to develop capacity to promote a vibrant research culture in the areas of Welsh-medium education and language acquisition.

Education Secretary Kirsty Williams said:

“Developing a teaching workforce to teach Welsh and deliver education through the medium of Welsh is essential in creating more Welsh speakers and will be a priority over the next five years.

“This means planning to support the development of teachers and assistants and expanding the sabbatical scheme and other professional learning opportunities for the present workforce. Well crafted and delivered professional development is important because it delivers benefits to the individual, their profession and the public.

“ This investment aligns with our proposals for new teaching standards in Wales which will provide opportunities for teachers to develop their skills throughout their career to meet the needs of the education system. ”

Business Summit will help Welsh businesses capitalise on Heathrow expansion

Around 90 Welsh businesses have gathered in Cardiff to learn more about the existing supply chain opportunities and future associated with the Heathrow expansion which is expected to deliver up to 8,400 new skilled jobs and £6.2bn in economic growth in total.

The aim of the summit is to help Welsh based SMEs better understand the needs of Heathrow and its supply chain, and help them explore the associated

opportunities for their businesses.

In March this year, the First Minister and Lord Deighton, Chairman of Heathrow Airport, signed a Statement of Intent aimed at improving collaborative working opportunities between Wales and Heathrow. Today's Cardiff summit is as a direct result of that statement.

Speaking ahead of the summit, Ken Skates said:

"A third Heathrow runway will be Europe's largest privately-funded infrastructure project, creating significant growth opportunities across the UK.

"We want to work constructively with Heathrow and their tier 1 suppliers to ensure that Welsh businesses have every opportunity to play their part in delivering this huge project which is expected to create up to 8,400 new skilled jobs and £6.2bn in economic growth.

"The Summit is a great platform for Welsh SMEs to get a foot in the door and capitalise on the business opportunities available at Heathrow while also gain a better understanding of the needs of the airport and its supply chain.

"It is this kind of pro-active and collaborative partnership approach that will ensure we spread prosperity to communities right across Wales.

"I am also delighted that Cardiff Airport will have a presence at the Summit which will allow Welsh SMEs to understand the needs of our own National airport and ensure that we maximise the Welsh supply chain opportunities for future projects there."

Emma Gilthorpe, Heathrow's Executive Director for Expansion said:

"We're keen to sustain a diverse supply chain and embrace innovation to help achieve new standards of delivery which includes Heathrow's commitment to our Statement of Intent, with the Welsh Government.

"To do this, we need more SMEs from Wales to deliver innovative and affordable solutions for Britain.

"That's why I'm excited to be hosting the Heathrow Business Summit in Cardiff this year so that we can tap into that pipeline of expertise and strengthen our new partnership with the Welsh Government and Welsh businesses."

Majority of cancer patients in Wales say they receive high quality care – new survey shows

The survey, of more than 6,700 cancer patients, was conducted on behalf of the Welsh Government and Macmillan Cancer Support. It has been designed to measure and understand patient experience of cancer care and treatment in Wales to help drive improvement at the national and local level.

The survey showed that overall, patients reported high levels of patient satisfaction for cancer care in Wales, improvements in the allocation of a key worker and experience among lung cancer patients.

This survey has highlighted many positive aspects of cancer care in Wales. These include:

- 93% of respondents rated their overall experience as 7/10 or more;
- 97% of respondents who had a choice of treatments said that their treatment options were explained to them;
- 90% of respondents rated the overall administration of their care as “good” or “very good”;
- 86% of respondents reported that they were given the name and contact details of their Key Worker.

The survey highlights areas for continued focus, such as information quality, offer of a written care plan, and experience in certain cancers such as sarcoma and brain cancer.

The findings of the survey will help support ongoing efforts to deliver more person-centred cancer care as part of the Cancer Delivery Plan for Wales.

Welcoming the survey, Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“I would like to thank the more than 6,700 individuals who took the time to respond to the survey. From their effort we can now start to paint a picture of cancer services in Wales and give health boards and trusts important detail on how we can all do better, both policy makers and those delivering services directly to people affected by cancer.

“It is a tremendous testament to the dedication, skill and compassion of those delivering cancer care that 93% of respondents rated their care seven or more out of ten. This is exceptional and is only possible due to the quality and dedication of healthcare professionals across Wales.

“Whilst it would be very easy to focus on only the positive outcomes of this survey – it is vital that we do not lose sight of areas where we can do better. We will not rest until all these issues are addressed. We have a new cancer plan, a new cancer network and new commitment to person-centred cancer care. We will continue to work with key partners such the cancer alliance and cancer network to support progress in these areas.”

Susan Morris, Head of Services for Macmillan Cancer Support in Wales, said:

“Macmillan was pleased to carry out the Wales Cancer Patient Experience Survey with the Welsh Government for the second time as it gives us an in-depth insight into what people with cancer think about their care.

“The survey asked people about their experience from when they suspected they had cancer through to their diagnosis, treatment and end of care and we would like to thank the 6,714 people who took the time to answer questions about this.

“Macmillan believes having a good experience of care is as important as having excellent medical treatment and these results show us what is working well in cancer care in Wales and where improvements are needed.”

Residents’ safety and peace of mind is my priority, says Carl Sargeant

Updating Assembly Members on actions the Welsh Government has taken since the Grenfell Tower tragedy the Cabinet Secretary said he was keen to deal with the understandable concerns of tenants as quickly as possible.

He outlined a range of measures that had been implemented in Swansea since the failed test results on ACM cladding in four of its tower blocks. These include checking fire risk, ensuring residents fully understand emergency fire procedures and providing fire wardens on-site to reassure tenants.

The Cabinet Secretary visited residents in Swansea yesterday in order to understand the experience and views of those living in the affected properties.

Carl Sargeant said:

“I had some very positive and insightful discussions with residents

yesterday which will be helpful in shaping our activity as we move forward. I heard from tenants first hand what their concerns are surrounding the safety of cladding material. I was able to explain the steps being taken to ensure that high rise tower blocks are safe. Residents were very clear that they appreciated the advice provided by the council.

“Clearly this situation demands close cooperation by a range of agencies and services. Resident safety and peace of mind is the very highest priority for all organisations involved with this issue and I am pleased to say that all are working together effectively. Along with others, the Welsh Government is absolutely committed to taking a measured and proportionate response which recognises the importance of tenants’ safety and peace of mind.”

The Cabinet Secretary said it is essential that Government action should be based on the best possible professional advice.

“Our excellent Fire and Rescue Services remain closely involved in supporting landlords and in ensuring that all proper and reasonable steps are taken to safeguard tenants. Their professional and measured approach to risk management and fire safety is crucial,” he said.

Ultrafast Wi-Fi for Llangollen Eisteddfod

Celebrating its 70th anniversary year, the festival has recently connected to ultrafast broadband which provides speeds of 330Mbps through BT’s Fibre on Demand service which is available in Wales as part of the Superfast Cymru programme.

The service will provide fast wi-fi to the 4,000 performers and 50,000 visitors attending the world-renowned event, which is taking place between 3 – 9 July.

The festival already had superfast broadband speeds available in its office and pavilion, but decided to invest in Fibre on Demand to provide improved and faster communications for all those attending the event.

Minister for Skills and Science Julie James said:

“The Llangollen Eisteddfod welcomes thousands of visitors from

across the world every year and what people experience here will give them a lasting impression of Wales. It's excellent news that the festival has taken advantage of Fibre on Demand through the Superfast Cymru programme, which demonstrates how Wales is a digitally connected country.

"This festival was established to create better understanding and build friendships between nations. That makes it even more fitting that visitors will be able to stay connected during their time here.

"Superfast Cymru is transforming the digital landscape in Wales. Over 645,000 premises now have access to superfast broadband as a result of the programme. Wales has the highest availability of superfast broadband among the devolved nations with over eight out of ten premises able to access it."

Rhys Davies, Eisteddfod Chairman, said:

"We are delighted to be bringing Fibre on Demand through the Superfast Cymru programme to the Eisteddfod field in time for this year's event. This additional service will greatly enhance the facilities available for our audiences, exhibitors and competitors who will be able to access information and share their experiences of the Eisteddfod in a way that has never been possible before. This would not have been achieved without funding from Arts Council of Wales and the assistance of the Welsh Government and we are very grateful for their support."

Ed Hunt, Superfast Cymru programme director for BT, said:

"Up and down the country more and more people are seeing the benefits of superfast broadband.

"Our Openreach engineers are working incredibly hard every day to roll-out the infrastructure as quickly and as widely as possible. It's great to see that such a world renowned event as the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, along with its thousands of international visitors, will benefit from the superfast infrastructure that we're building."

Superfast Cymru is the partnership between the Welsh Government, BT, UK Government and European Regional Development Fund, bringing faster broadband to areas which would otherwise not receive it.

The Welsh Government also runs an Ultrafast Connectivity Voucher scheme which provides assistance for businesses which want to upgrade to ultrafast.