

Bill to introduce landfill disposals tax in Wales is passed

The Landfill Disposals Tax (Wales) Bill is the third of three Bills to establish tax arrangements in Wales.

Landfill disposals tax, which will replace landfill tax in Wales, will come into effect in April 2018. The revenue raised will help fund public services in Wales.

Landfill disposals tax – similar to the current landfill tax, which is collected throughout Wales and England – will be a tax on the disposal of waste to landfill. It will be paid by landfill site operators who pass these costs on to waste operators.

The Bill extends the application of landfill disposals tax to unauthorised disposals of waste. This will introduce a financial deterrent to discourage people from disposing of waste unlawfully, encouraging them to pay their fair share of tax by disposing of waste at a registered landfill site.

There are currently 25 landfill sites in Wales, operated by 20 landfill site operators. In Wales, the Office for Budgetary Responsibility forecasts that landfill tax will generate £25m in 2018-19.

The Finance Secretary will announce the rates for landfill disposals tax by October 1 and the regulations will be laid after the UK Autumn Budget.

Local communities affected by the disposal of waste to landfill will benefit from a new grant-funded scheme in Wales – the Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme, which will be introduced in April 2018.

Welcoming the passing of the Bill by the National Assembly, Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

“ This Bill is the third piece of legislation to establish tax arrangements in Wales and another important step in our devolution journey.

“In less than a year’s time, we will be introducing the first Welsh taxes in almost 800 years and Wales will become responsible for raising our own money to spend on public services.

“Once law, this Bill will enable us to introduce a tax on landfill disposals in Wales from April 2018. The Bill ensures public services in Wales will continue to benefit from the revenues raised by this tax.

“Wales is at the forefront of waste policy and landfill disposals tax is an important element of achieving our goal of a zero waste

Wales.

“ We have worked closely with stakeholders in developing this Bill. While it is broadly consistent with the existing landfill tax, therefore providing stability to businesses and minimising the risk of waste tourism, we have made a number of improvements to the tax.

“It is simple and clear to apply; addresses areas of confusion and uncertainty; is up to date and relevant to Wales. Together with the other tax legislation we have introduced it will pave the way to a smooth transition to tax powers.”

The Landfill Disposals Tax (Wales) Bill is anticipated to receive Royal Assent in the summer.

“Remove the 1% pay cap and give us the money to give NHS Wales staff the pay rise they deserve” – Vaughan Gething

Welsh Health Secretary Vaughan Gething has called on the UK Government to remove the pay cap and make funds available to the Welsh Government so NHS Wales staff get the pay rise they deserve.

Tuesday 27 June 2017

Vaughan Gething said:

“I’ve today written to the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt, urging him to make the case to the UK Treasury to remove the cap on pay and make funds available across the UK to allow hard working NHS staff to receive a pay uplift of greater than 1%.

“Yesterday, the UK Government found more than £1bn to effectively end austerity in Northern Ireland. I fully expect them to make money available so that we can give our hardworking health service staff the pay rise they deserve. They deserve nothing less.”

Appointment to Human Tissue Authority announced

The appointment will run from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2020.

The Human Tissue Authority is responsible for the regulation of activities concerning the removal, storage, use and disposal of human tissue for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Vaughan Gething said:

“I am pleased William Horne has agreed to continue work on the Human Tissue Authority Board.

“I am confident he will continue to actively contribute to the Board and his wealth of experience will remain of great benefit to the Authority.

“I wish him well in the continuation of his role.”

Award winning social business to launch new service and create 66 new jobs in South Wales Valleys

The new service, which will create 66 new jobs over the next eighteen months in the South Wales valleys, is backed by £222,600 from the Welsh Government and will enable Connect Assist to launch the service imminently.

There is a high demand for such a service following a number of high profile allegations of mal-practice by fundraising agencies in recent years. As a consequent a number of charities pulled their contracts with these agencies, many of which ceased trading.

The new service for charities will include the provision of emergency appeal response lines and fundraising appeals. It will also handle enquiries around the work that each charity undertakes as well as enquiries around supporting charities.

Connect Assist, which is based in Nantgarw and celebrated its 10th anniversary last year, was set up with the main aim of making a positive difference to people living and working in the Valleys

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“The Welsh Government is pleased to support Connect Assist in launching this new service which will be creating a significant number of local jobs and offering a range of career opportunities for people.

“Connect Assist currently employs 100 people and its work over the past ten years has made a real impact, supporting and helping people into employment which has been recognized through a number of well deserved awards.”

Ron Moody, Client Services Director said:

“We are delighted to be launching this much needed ethical fundraising service. Having worked with the charity sector for over a decade helping charities to help their beneficiaries, this new fundraising and supporter care service is a natural extension to our offering. Support from the Welsh Government is a very important element to the launch and our objective of creating sustainable jobs.’’

The organization focuses on providing information, advice guidance and support to individuals facing challenging circumstances. It has a strong track record of providing professional multi-channel helpline and contact centre services, web systems and consultancy services to not for profit organisations throughout the UK.

Connect Assist delivers 365 days a year 24 hours a day running professionally staffed charity helplines for organisations enabling people to contact the service at any time and in the way that suits them best.

If you can't go Superfast yet – let us know

Over 645,000 premises in Wales can already access superfast broadband thanks to Superfast Cymru, and by the end of the year this figure is expected to reach 690,000.

From 2018 the Welsh Government will be working on how to reach the final few per cent of premises without access to superfast broadband. So that this work is as accurate as possible it needs to hear from those not yet connected.

A list of potential premises has been published and is open for comments until July 13. An interactive map can help residents and businesses check if they are already included on the list. The Welsh Government also wants to hear from communities who have an interest in driving their own solutions.

Minister for Skills and Science Julie James said:

“With over eight out of ten premises in Wales now able to access superfast broadband, the situation has improved greatly. This compares with just over half in 2014. This progress has been largely thanks to Superfast Cymru which is continuing to the end of this year.

“However, we are now at the stage where we are looking at the final few percent of premises not covered by the Superfast Cymru rollout or by the telecommunications companies’ own plans. So that the work we carry out from 2018 onwards is as effective as possible we need those without access to superfast broadband to let us know and take part in the consultation.

“The consultation will help us to further refine the list of unconnected premises. The more response we receive, the more comprehensive the list will be.

“If there are communities that have an interest in driving their own solutions, I want to hear from them.

“This is your chance to influence what happens with the final few per cent of premises in Wales who are not yet able to access superfast broadband.”

The consultation is available on:

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/next-generation-access-broadband>.