

UK Government to provide up to £23m in extra funding to tackle coronavirus in Wales

Press release

Simon Hart: Additional funding for Wales “highlights our determination to move forward together” in fight against coronavirus



The UK Government has committed up to £23m in extra funding to support the Welsh Government during the coronavirus pandemic.

As a result of recently-announced UK Government funding commitments to the Test and Trace Service and housing for rough-sleepers in England, the Welsh Government will receive up to £23 million in additional funding.

This takes the total given by the UK Government to support the effort in Wales to over £2.2 billion, helping the Welsh Government to deliver urgent priorities across public services in Wales as it works with the UK Government to tackle the pandemic.

The funding boost follows the UK Government’s commitment to provide tens of thousands of antibody tests per day across the UK. The UK Government is arranging supplies of tests on behalf of all UK nations, with the Welsh Government deciding how best to use its test allocations.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

The UK Government is committed to doing whatever it takes to defeat coronavirus.

We are supporting the Welsh Government to meet the exceptional challenges it currently faces, providing £23 million more in additional funding.

Along with the recent roll-out of antibody tests for front-line

workers across the UK, the additional funding for Wales highlights our determination to move forward together in the fight against coronavirus.

As well as providing more than £2.2 billion extra funding for the devolved administration in Wales, the UK Government has set up a range of UK-wide measures that are available to support people and businesses in Wales. £330 billion has been invested in support including UK Government-backed loans, the Job Retention Scheme and mortgage payment holidays. The UK military is also providing both the Welsh Government and the NHS with additional specialist skills and expertise.

ENDS

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[The Secretary of State has appointed Rt Hon Sir Patrick McLoughlin CH as Chair of the British Tourist Authority.](#)

News story

Rt Hon Sir Patrick McLoughlin CH has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as Chair of the BTA for three years from 1 June 2020 to 31 May 2023.



Patrick McLoughlin was the Member of Parliament for Derbyshire Dales from 1986 to 2019.

Patrick was born in Staffordshire in 1957. He attended a comprehensive school, leaving at 16. His early employment included catering and agriculture, before following his father and grandfather to work underground. He became a member of the National Union of Mineworkers working through the 1983-4 miners' strike, in the absence of a national ballot. He has considerable experience in local and national politics as a councillor on Cannock Chase District and Staffordshire County Councils until 1987.

Positions held by Patrick include Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (PUS) at the Department of Transport from 1989 – 1992, PUS at the Department of Employment from 1992 – 1993, PUS at the Department of Trade and Industry from 1993 – 1994, Whip from 1995 – 2012, Opposition Chief Whip from 2005 – 2010, Government Chief Whip from 2010-2012, Secretary of State for Transport from 2012 – 2016, Chairman of the Conservative Party and Chancellor to the Duchy of Lancaster from 2016 – 2018. And from 2018 – 2019 Patrick has been a Member of the Parliament Restoration Board and a Member of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee.

In 2016, Patrick was knighted in David Cameron's resignation honours list. In 2019, he was made a Companion of Honour, in Theresa May's resignation honours list.

In November 2019, Patrick decided not to seek re-election.

This role is remunerated at £40,000 per annum. This appointment has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), the process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Sir Patrick McLoughlin has declared he was a Member of Parliament for the Conservative Party from 1986 until he stood down in 2019.

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[**The Secretary of State has appointed Nick de Bois as Chair of the Visit England Advisory Board.**](#)

News story

Nick de Bois has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Digital,

Culture, Media and Sport as Chair of the VEAB for three years from 1 June 2020 to 31 May 2023.



Nick de Bois was Member of Parliament for Enfield North from 2010 – 2015. Prior to his election he was founder and Managing Director of Rapiergroup, an international events and exhibitions management agency that he set up in 1988 delivering conferences, exhibitions and digital content for U.K. and International based clients.

In 2016 he was appointed Chairman of the government's first U.K Events Industry Board bringing industry and government agencies together to advise the government on the implementation of their Business Events Strategy launched in 2015. This strategy set about securing an increase of inbound international visitors by winning new international events hosted at U.K destinations. In addition, the board advised on securing growth of international visitors to established domestic events.

He resigned as Chair of the U.K Events Industry Board in July 2018 to join DExEU as Chief of Staff and Special Advisor to the Secretary of State Dominic Raab MP.

Nick lives with his wife Helen in Hertfordshire. He is also an author and contributory program host and broadcaster, chiefly with talkRADIO.

This role is remunerated at £345.00 per day. This appointment has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), the process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Nick de Bois has declared he was the Conservative Party candidate for the constituency of Enfield North in the 2017 General Election.

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Dstl Awards £350 million ASTRID contract to BAE Systems CORDA

A contract worth up to £350 million to provide cutting-edge analysis to underpin UK Defence and Security decision-making has been awarded by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) to BAE Systems CORDA.

Under the ASTRID (Analysis for Science and Technology Research in Defence) contract BAE Systems CORDA will use leading-edge techniques to provide analysis on critical strategy, policy and investment challenges for Dstl and MOD. This will demonstrate, for example, that investment decisions provide the best value for money or offer the most efficient or practical solution. This research can also be re-purposed and shared across other areas within government to solve similar challenges (subject to Intellectual Property rights), improving efficiency across the whole UK government.

BAE Systems CORDA will source and select the best supplier from its specialist supply chain to conduct analysis and inform decision-making. ASTRID will therefore help ensure, for example, that investment decisions provide the best value for money.

The contract will operate across five areas: strategy, policy and enterprise; capability and investment for platform and system level capabilities within current and future force structures; organisational structures, including back-office support, systems and processes; enabling services including modelling and data collection; and horizon scanning.

ASTRID will run for 5 years from April 2020 with options for a further 2 years. It replaces the ASC (Analysis Support Construct) framework contract, also managed by BAE Systems CORDA for Dstl. ASTRID is open to any customers across MOD and wider Government with in-scope requirements, and will build on the success of ASC, which delivered over 300 separate analysis activities for these customers.

Dstl Divisional Head Rob Solly commented: "The ASTRID contract will maintain the provision of high quality analysis to underpin decisions across MOD and our partners in wider Government. It will build on the successful collaborative approach of ASC, providing access to the best talent in the UK and overseas. We also aim to progressively and significantly exceed the MOD target of awarding 25% of the work to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) including non-traditional defence suppliers."

Suzanne Harrison, Director BAE Systems CORDA, said, "We are excited about the opportunity to continue in our role as MOD's partner of choice for analysis and decision support, and about continuing to work closely with partners across the supplier community. It has been fantastic under the ASC to see collaborative teams from across industry and government working to deliver essential support to defence and security decision-makers. Our approach to ASTRID will build on the many strengths of ASC, while bringing in new

innovations to keep improving on the successes of the last 5 years.”

[Report 04/2020: Train collision with material washed out from a cutting slope at Corby, Northamptonshire](#)

Summary

At about 15:53 hrs on Thursday 13 June 2019, a northbound passenger train, travelling at 40 mph (64 km/h), collided with debris washed out by flood water from an adjacent cutting slope, around one mile (1.6 km) north of Corby station. After reporting the incident, the driver found the rear of the train had become trapped by further debris washed out from the cutting slope. All 191 passengers on the train were later transferred to a southbound train, which itself then became trapped by flood water to the north and south. Between 450 and 550 passengers (from both trains) were then taken off the southbound train by 23:14 hrs, and conveyed to nearby stations to continue their journey by rail. No one was reported as injured as a result of the collision or subsequent detrainments. However, conditions on the southbound train were very uncomfortable for passengers due to overcrowding. Temporary repairs were made to the cutting slope and track to allow the railway to reopen the following day with a speed restriction in place.

The investigation found that the cutting slope had failed because it was not designed to cope with a large volume of water that had accumulated at its crest. Flood water had accumulated at the crest because two adjacent flood storage ponds had overflowed with water from a nearby brook. A blockage beneath a bridge over the brook caused its level to rise so water flowed over a spillway and into the ponds, which had not been routinely pumped down for nearly four weeks. The bank of the pond closest to the railway was a low point and the excess water spilled into the field between the ponds and the crest of the cutting slope. Exceptionally heavy rainfall was not a factor in the incident.

The investigation also found three underlying causes. One was a lack of engagement and communication between various parties responsible for the flood management system at this location about the potential for it to cause flooding on the railway. A second was the absence of an effective flood management system to manage the risk to the railway line, which is a principal transport route. Thirdly, although Network Rail was aware that the cutting slope was at risk of a washout failure when the nearby ponds overflowed and had long-term plans to act, it had not taken any action to mitigate this risk in the short term. The investigation also considered why the rescue and evacuation of passengers was significantly delayed and found

that a lack of equipment for transferring passengers from one train to another was a factor.

Recommendations

RAIB has made five recommendations. The first calls for the Environment Agency to work with Northamptonshire County Council, Anglian Water, Homes England, Corby Borough Council and Network Rail to implement an effective flood management system at this location. The second calls for Network Rail to identify similar locations prone to safety critical flooding and review how it manages flood risk at each of those places. The third relates to Network Rail providing its staff with training and guidance on how to better manage the short-term risks to earthworks while waiting for longer term planned work to take place. The fourth calls for Network Rail and the Rail Delivery Group, as part of an ongoing industry-wide programme of work to improve the management of stranded passenger train incidents, to jointly review their procedures for managing stranded trains to identify what emergency equipment is needed, and the fifth relates to Network Rail, as part of the same ongoing industry-wide programme of work, taking steps with train operating companies to make this equipment available for use.

RAIB also identified one learning point, which urges non-railway organisations responsible for managing flood risk to include the effect of flooding on railway lines, which are part of the United Kingdom's national infrastructure, in their planning.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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