

News and information for Wales from:

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Local government reorganisation and public service delivery not on the cards

Addressing the Welsh Local Government Association conference on 23 June, Carl Sargeant AM, the Minister for Local Government and Communities, made it clear that the Welsh Government does not believe that the private sector is best placed to provide public services. The emphasis was heavily upon the provision of services by local authorities in collaboration with each other and with town and community councils, health, the police and fire services and other public bodies.

The Minister also strongly endorsed the thinking in the report *Local, regional, national: what services are delivered where*, presented earlier this year, by Joe Simpson of Local Government Leadership. The report focused on how local government services are organised and '... on the need for change as more functions, or parts of services, are organised on a regional and national basis'. The purpose of regional and national working is to provide better services at a lower cost.

However, the report advocates 'that change should be through collaboration rather than reorganisation because of the need to ensure that the core of our services continue to be organised locally. It is in local communities where the connection with citizens can be most fully developed, where community leadership can be exercised and where the opportunities for service integration can be best grasped'.

Mr Sargeant, in harmony with the Simpson report, affirmed that he had no plans to reorganise local government by stealth but that he would use the considerable powers he secured through the Local Government Measure in relation to local authorities which do not provide adequate services for their citizens.

He went on to quash speculation that he was considering postponing the local government elections next year. They will take place in May 2012 as planned and the Minister expressed his wish that the brightest and best would be attracted to contribute to local politics.

In an earlier statement released on 21 June the Minister had said that the 'current senior staffing structure of 22 local authorities is unsustainable and outdated. How do we justify the cost of so many Chief Executives and senior officers when front line services are under threat?' At the Welsh Local Government Association conference he reiterated the need to appoint senior staff jointly.

WLGA's leader, Cllr Davies said: 'Local Government has been asked to come forward with a "big offer" on the concept of the most appropriate delivery of services: local, regional or national. The WLGA has invested huge energy into this debate and we embrace this approach fully. With confidence I can say that the collaboration agenda is progressing at some pace across many Welsh councils who are driving forward transformation through regional boards, project management and collaborative service groupings.'

But Cllr Davies added: 'My caveat for collaboration is if it doesn't pass the test of providing a better service or save on resources then don't do it. Collaboration must be seen as a means of adding value and not a dogma that is pursued at all costs.'

For further information about the Minister's speech and statement, and the Joe Simpson report can be found on the Welsh Government website local government pages, <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/?lang=en>

Tenovus Chief Executive to address WCVA funding conference in October

Claudia McVie will speak in the main plenary session at this year's Wales third sector funding conference on the challenges and opportunities of raising funds in today's climate and the role of the Chief Executive Officer in raising funds.

WCVA's funding conference is Wales' premier annual funding event and this year is in Cardiff on Tuesday 11 October. The conference is for trustees, chief executives, fundraisers and anyone else concerned with their organisations funding.

As well as inspirational plenary speakers there are 24 workshops including many opportunities to hear from charities first-hand about their successful fundraising:

- David Griffiths from Ty Hafan on running a successful lottery;
- Anna Evans from Wales Air Ambulance on developing successful corporate partnerships;
- Deniz Hassan from Merlin on converting online supporters to donors;
- Tim Finch from Tenovus on running successful charity shops;
- Simi Epstein from Hope House Children's Hospices on developing a community fundraising strategy;
- Allan McLaren from Barnardos on developing successful corporate fundraising; and
- Maddy Eastwood from Battersea Dogs and Cats Home on Direct Marketing..

The workshops cover eight funding streams: community fundraising; corporate fundraising; innovation; individuals; trusts and foundations; statutory; Lottery; and trading.

Other highlights include hearing from WCVA's third sector European team (3-SET) and WEFO about European Structural Funds in Wales post-2013; the Big Lottery Fund on their funding opportunities as well as on evaluation and promotion; trusts and foundations including Santander, Comic Relief, BBC Children in Need and Lloyds TSB.

There will also be the chance to find out the latest on social impact bonds from Alisa Helbitz of Social Finance and on tendering from Dawn Rowley from DHR Interim and WCVA's Gareth Coles.

WCVA's Sustainable Funding Cymru, Giving Wales, 3-SET and Better Bids teams will be on hand to deal with your funding enquiries in the funding market place which will be home to a greater variety of exhibitors than ever before.

Conference programme coordinator, Eileen Kinsman, said: 'I am really excited about the programme for this year's conference. We've managed to bring together some of the best fundraisers in Wales to share their inspirational stories and have also provided the opportunity for you to meet all of the main funders in Wales.'

To book your place for as little as £85, call WCVA's Helpdesk on 0800 2888 329 or e-mail eventsadmin@wcva.org.uk.



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