



Programme for Government

The First Wagbo Cabinet, 2019

Foreword by the First Minister

Our nation is a proud one. Wales is a land with a rich cultural heritage, rich supplies of natural resources, and a rich political tradition. Despite this, due to a perverse twist of fate, we are one of the poorest parts of the United Kingdom. As your First Minister, I want to focus my efforts on changing that fact.

This Programme for Government outlines my plans to reform Wales for the better. Stability, growth, and inclusivity, are my three priorities. We must put the turmoil of the past weeks and months behind us, and work across the house for the good of the Welsh people. We must focus on developing our economy, growing, and creating opportunities for young people.

Most of all, though, we must make sure that the benefits of growth and stability are shared by all. We must be inclusive. I hope that this government will be able to leave a mark on Welsh history that will be looked back on as a turning point - away from being the poorest corner of Britain, and towards a brighter future. The work starts now.

- The Rt Hon. Wagbo_ AM (Mid & West Wales), First Minister.

Opportunity for All - Finance

Creating 10,000 apprenticeships: The Welsh Government will be committed to a major pledge of last election, the creation of 10,000 new apprenticeships. This will be done through the creation of favourable tax conditions for private enterprise, as well as considerable public sector push to hire more apprentices.

Invest in co-generation as part of plans for a sustainable Wales: We plan to invest heavily in all manner of green projects, co-generation being a central pillar of this. Wales should lead the way on green energy, and pioneer new industries and job creation.

Save £90m by raising unallocated spending: The Assembly is wasting around £90 million a year on inefficient allocation of conditional block grants. We can save a huge amount of money by simply bringing this spending up to recommended levels.

Make 1% efficiency savings: Across a wide variety of Welsh Government departments, we plan to try and make efficiency savings of 1%, saving around £70 million. This can be invested in our ambitious social and economic programmes.

Commission a steel sustainability strategy: Port Talbot Steelworks employ 4,000, with around 2,500 more employed directly by the steel industry across Wales. We plan to commission a report into the sustainability of steel, aimed at creating a future for the work.

The Welsh Development Bank: We will invest £50 million into a shared private-public Welsh Development Bank, aimed at improving economic infrastructure and creating a competitive environment for SMEs to thrive within.

Empowering Communities - Local Government

Pass the Local Government Reform Act: The Local Government Reform Act, as proposed by the new First Minister earlier in the term, would comprehensively change the way that local government is done across Wales. This department will be pioneering these reforms, ensuring that they go smoothly.

Encourage council mergers: The size of some Welsh local authorities is too small to be effective and efficient. We would give fiscal incentives to local authorities in the valleys to merge once the Local Government Reform Act passes.

Welsh language impact checks: More stringent checks on local authorities for the level of Welsh language use and access to the public will be undertaken.

Services fit for Wales - Public Services

Implement the 22 class size rule: Work to ensure that class sizes are below 22 on average in all 5 Welsh regions by the end of one term, and below 22 in all local authorities by the end of our second terms.

3.5% pay rise for teachers: Welsh educational quality requires a steady supply of teachers. Giving teachers a substantially above inflation pay-rise will encourage Welsh education to continue on as it goes.

All new schools to teach Welsh: No new school in Wales will be built unless it is either Welsh medium or bilingual. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn Welsh, and starting with a new school in Powys, we hope all pupils will.

Community funding for first aid: Grants will be provided, at a cost of £2 million, to vastly spread the teaching of first aid at a local level across Wales.

Taskforce on mental health: The Welsh Government intends to set up a taskforce on ensuring that in schools and the Welsh NHS alike, better mental health provision is provided in a cost-efficient manner.

Protecting our Heritage - Culture & Rural

£10 million for rural GPs: Across rural Wales, especially in the mid and west of the country, access to healthcare and a local GP is too difficult. We will be investing £10 million in a GP access fund for rural Wales.

Supporting hill farmers: A full £25 million will be going into a support grant for our hill farmers, again placing priority on rural Wales. Hill farming is not just about produce, it is a way of life, and vital to the future of the Welsh language.

Commission into succession planning: The inheritance of farmland is very important for the future of Welsh farming, especially with many young people in rural areas leaving for England or cities. We will set up a commission into succession planning to create an Assembly backed strategy.

Re-instate the Ministry for Culture: The Ministry for Culture was an important employer and did a very good job at promoting Welsh heritage both at home and abroad. We will be re-instating it and promoting a strategy for tourism and protecting our history.

Create a presumption against closure for rural schools: Rural schools assessed for closure will be protected for a full three years after the last assessment. There should be no place for making education less accessible to those in rural areas.

Democratic Cymru

STV for local elections: Local elections should, more than anything, exist to give residents proper representation on community issues. Changing to the Single Transferable Vote on

will ensure that communities are best represented by a wide variety of individuals with clear democratic mandates.

Investigate First Ministerial reform: Whether or not the First Minister should be directly elected, chosen by the Assembly, or have any level of power at all is increasingly up for debate. We will seek a progressive consensus on First Ministerial reform.

Further devolution: The Welsh Government does not have the power to grant itself further devolution, but will take an official stance of being in favour of further powers being devolved. We are ready for more powers, and the Senedd make-up reflects that the Welsh people are too.