



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

Title: Post Office Diversification Fund

Date: 17 December 2008

By: Leighton Andrews, Deputy Minister for Regeneration

The Welsh Assembly Government has a One Wales commitment to reinstate a refocused Post Office Development Fund (PODF). I have announced that the new fund will be open from 1st January 2009.

The fund will enable sub postmasters and sub postmistresses to diversify their businesses by providing funding for such things as business and marketing advice, advertising, training and some set up costs for new services. For this reason the new fund is called 'The Post Office Diversification Fund'. This fund will also pay for physical improvements to Post Office premises which are not funded by Post Office Ltd.

In August I issued a twelve week consultation on proposals for the new fund and the responses we received have helped inform its development. The high number of consultation responses proves the continued need for a fund of this kind.

I am delighted to launch the new scheme today and to be able to confirm that the fund will be open to applications for revenue and capital monies from 1 January 2008.

We have always recognised the social and community value of post offices, particularly in relation to supporting vulnerable people in our most isolated and most disadvantaged communities and in addressing financial inclusion. We want to see post offices thrive so that they can continue to provide an essential service in the community they serve. The launch of the refocused PODF today will help achieve this aim.

I look forward to receiving proposals from sub postmasters/mistresses and local communities seeking support from the Post Office Diversification Fund.