# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Funding for Advice Services** |
| **DATE** | **25 July 2024** |
| **BY** | **Jane Hutt, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip** |

I am issuing this Written Statement to update Members on how we are renewing our long-term commitment to support information and advice services.

Information and advice services play a vital role helping people, often those who are least able to help themselves, to access their rights to social justice. Investing in these services provides value for money for the public purse. If left unresolved problems with housing, welfare benefits and maintaining financial commitments can push people into poverty, act as a barrier to employment, result in homelessness and negatively affect physical and mental health.

Since the Welsh Government’s Single Advice Fund was introduced in January 2020, services have helped 280,000 people to deal with more than one million social welfare problems. People have also been helped to claim additional income of £137 million and have debts totalling £38.5 million written off. Making them, and the local communities where they tend to spend their extra money more financially resilient.

The services delivered through the Single Advice Fund make a real difference to the lives of people in Wales and I am pleased to announce I will provide £36 million grant funding for the provision of information and advice services delivered through the Single Advice Fund over the next three financial years. The longer-term funding means grant recipients can plan their services more effectively, invest in partnership working, and offers stability for their services during a period when more people need their help.

Applications for funding will be managed through a competitive, open grant application exercise. The application process will be launched today (25 July) with applicants having a 12-week period to research and develop their proposals for the delivery of accessible and integrated advice services that reach people in our most disadvantaged and marginalised communities. Information on how to apply is available on GOV.WALES [here](https://www.gov.wales/apply-single-advice-fund-grant). The funded services will commence on 1 April 2025.

The Welsh Government is committed to using all its levers to tackle poverty and maximise household income by putting money into people’s pockets. I am also making available £300,000 to continue to provide free training sessions for frontline workers. These sessions help frontline workers to build their knowledge of financial support systems and their understanding of how to help their service users access additional income. During the last two years over 6,000 frontline workers from the Social Care, Housing, Health, Education and Advice sectors have attended a free training session with 70% confirming they have used their knowledge to help their service users access the support they need to claim additional income.

I am proud of the Welsh Government’s continued commitment to funding information and advice services. It is more important than ever that we have an advice sector in Wales where resources are used as effectively as possible, with quality assured providers delivering services targeted at people in our communities who need them most. Together with the work we are leading to maximise household incomes our projects are making a real difference right across Wales.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.