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# Quality Advice Services

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# Introduction

- ❑ Welsh Government committed to promoting sustainable improvements to the health & well-being of all the people of Wales.
  
- ❑ Recognises social welfare information & advice has an important role in:
  - helping people make informed decisions & enforcing their rights to Civil Justice;
  - ensuring everyone in Wales has a fair & equal chance in life;
  - fulfillment of legislative aims.

# Registered Social Landlords

- ❑ RSL's are a main source of information & advice on social welfare issues for tenants – includes the main types of services:
  - Type One – Information
  - Type Two – Guidance
  - Type Three – Advice
  - Type Four – Advice with Casework
  - Type Five – Specialist Casework
  
- ❑ RSL's progressing applications to be quality assured against an Advice Quality Standard applicable to the kind of services they are providing.

# Information & Advice Action Plan

- ❑ [Information & Advice Action Plan](#) - published in Dec 2016.
- ❑ Five year plan to ensure there is a sustainable provision of joined-up & quality assured advice services throughout Wales.
- ❑ Prevention is at the heart of the plan:
  - promoting public legal education;
  - target early interventions;
  - building the capability & resilience of people to attain sustainable outcomes.
- ❑ IAAP requires the Welsh Government, Advice Sector, LA's & other stakeholders to work together.

# Information & Advice Quality Framework

- ❑ [Information & Advice Quality Framework](#) (IAQF) was developed due to concerns over a lack of consistency amongst providers of what constitutes 'quality information & advice'.
- ❑ IAQF aims to ensure more consistency by the 'different' Advice Quality Standards being accredited to the 'same' key quality areas.
- ❑ Three year programme to implement the IAQF being managed through the Advice Action Plan.
- ❑ When programme is completed Welsh Government will only fund IAQF accredited information/advice providers
  - believe public funds should provide people in Wales with the best services.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Standard</b>
Advice Services Alliance	Advice Services Alliance's Advice Quality Standard
Skills for Justice	National Occupational Standards for legal advice
Money Advice Service	Money Advice Service's Quality Framework for Organisations / MAS Quality Framework - Advice NI Money & Debt Advice
National Youth Agency	NYA Quality Mark for Young People's Services
Cegnet	Quality Standards for young people's information, advice and guidance
Office of the Immigration Standards Commissioner	OISC for immigration advice provision
Legal AID Agency	Lexcel (the Legal Aid Agency's specialist quality mark)
Scottish Legal Aid Board	Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers
Citizens Advice Bureau	Citizens Advice Membership Agreement
Age Cymru	Age UK's Advice Quality Standard
PQASSO	A quality system designed specifically for the voluntary sector, including charities, social enterprises, community interest companies and community groups

# Information & Advice Quality Framework

- ❑ IAQF is not a separate quality assurance process for individual information & advice services:
  - works by assessing the quality assurance processes undertaken by the different Advice Quality Standards as being compliant with the seven areas within IAQF ;
  - IAQF design is flexible & able to meet a Standard Owner's individual preferences – may only wish to seek accreditation against some areas.
  
- ❑ Information/Advice Provider who is quality assured by a Quality Standard accredited to the IAQF - will be accredited against IAQF.

# Information & Advice Quality Framework

- ❑ IAQF designed on the essential components of good quality information and advice:
  - Factually accurate & up-to-date;
  - Impartial & in the best interest of the client;
  - Delivered by an appropriately trained & competent information worker or adviser;
  - Appropriate & relevant to the client's needs & circumstances;
  - Provided in such a way as to enable the client to make informed & appropriate choices from options presented & take positive/beneficial action where possible;
  - Followed-up to assess the impact of the information or advice.

# Information & Advice Quality Framework

- IAQF assesses the essential components of information & advice within seven quality areas:
  1. Well Managed
  2. Well Planned
  3. Accessible, Caring & Safe
  4. Information & Advice Provision
  5. Competent Information & Advice Staff
  6. A Bilingual Service
  7. Delivering Outcomes

# Information & Advice Quality Framework

- ❑ Contractor appointed from January 2018 to:
  - develop the IAQF Assessment Service – administration, audit processes, dispute/appeals procedure;
  - support Standard Owners to prepare their Standards for IAQF accreditation;
  - support for information & advice providers, through a Pathfinder programme, to prepare to be quality assured against an IAQF accredited Standard;
  - produce learning & best practice materials to be shared across information & advice providers;
  - raise awareness & promote the IAQF throughout the information & advice sector, key stakeholders & public, etc.

# Advice Service Funding

- ❑ Welsh Government long standing committed to funding advice services:
  - Financial Inclusion Unit oversees annual funding of around £6 million for three projects:
  - funded services operating pan-Wales & within all 22 local authority areas.
  
- ❑ The Financial Guidance & Claims Act 2018 legislates for a share of the financial levy for the provision of debt advice services, to be transferred to the Devolved Administrations.

# Sustainable Advice Service Funding

- ❑ Welsh Government funded services only meet part of the assessed need for advice across Wales.
- ❑ UK Government's welfare reform & wider austerity measures are:
  - increasing demand for access to advice services;
  - reducing the availability of budgets to fund additional advice service resources.
- ❑ Critical that all available advice service resources across Wales are used as efficiently & effectively as possible.

# Sustainable Advice Service Funding

- ❑ WG's Financial Inclusion Unit merging its separate funding streams into a single fund.
  - aiming to get more resource on front-line delivery & ensure WG funding complements/enhances other advice resources.
- ❑ Working group developing potential funding specifications – put to the WG Minister for approval in the autumn:
  - holistic person-centred service delivery models;
  - more focus on preventative services - tackling root causes & building resilience;
  - collaborative service planning & delivery that reaches deep into communities;
  - quality assured providers - holding/working towards an IAQF Wales accredited quality standard.

# Conclusion

- ❑ Welsh Government's approach aims to ensure advice services are:
  - Quality assured;
  - Sustainable;
  - Accessible to the people who need them the most; and
  - Helping to bring sustainable improvements to people in Wales - positive links between advice services interventions & attainment of the Well-being Goals.

Thank You