



---

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## **SINGLE ADVICE FUND**

### **GUIDANCE NOTES**

### STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1. The Welsh Government is committed to promoting sustainable improvements to the health and well-being of all the people of Wales and recognises social welfare<sup>1</sup> information and advice has an important role in helping people make informed decisions to access their rights to civil justice and ensuring everyone in Wales has a fair and equal chance in life.
2. Within this context, in December 2016 the Welsh Government published its five-year **Information and Advice Action Plan for Wales (IAAP)**
3. In summary, the nineteen actions within the IAAP aim to:
  - improve the quality of information and advice services by supporting providers to develop quality assured services;
  - streamline the commissioning and funding processes and ensure that funding for services is based on an assessment of need;
  - improve access to services, particularly amongst people who tend not to access services until they are in crisis;
  - embed the prevention agenda within the delivery of advice services and promote public legal education for children and adults;
  - encourage better collaboration amongst all stakeholders around the commissioning and delivery of services;
  - develop outcome measures for information and advice interventions, which are linked to the goals within the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015.
4. Alongside its commitment to lead the strategic development of advice services, the Welsh Government also has a long-standing commitment of offering Grant funding to providers to deliver social welfare advice services.
5. To progress the commitment within the Information and Advice Action Plan, for the Welsh Government **‘to introduce better coordination with its own advice service funding’**, the Welsh Government has merged a number of its separate Grant funding programmes for advice services into a Single Advice Fund.

---

<sup>1</sup> Social welfare advice includes debt, discrimination, education, employment, housing, immigration and welfare benefits.

## **GRANT FUNDING - PURPOSE**

6. The Single Advice Fund will not core fund advice providers. It will fund the delivery of 'free to the client social welfare information and advice services', which demonstrate and evidence how they will '***attain the most effective and sustainable outcomes for those seeking advice***'.
7. The Single Advice Fund aims to offer a positive contribution to help meet the ongoing increase in demand for access to advice services and help to ensure more people throughout Wales have access to the information and advice that they need.
8. It is a principle of the fund that the grant will support the most effective advice providers whether they operate within the third sector, the private sector or within local authorities.
9. The social welfare information and advice services delivered by the Single Advice Fund will have a focus upon effectively promoting early access to advice amongst the more vulnerable households and ensuring that people accessing advice are given the opportunity to develop their resilience to future social welfare problems. The fund will also enhance access to services that can deliver the type of specialist advice that people need to resolve complex and often entrenched problems.
10. The allocation of the grant funding available across Wales from the Single Advice Fund is based on identified need and in line with the findings of the Welsh Government's independently commissioned report '**Modelling the Need for Advice on Social Welfare Topics in Wales**', (2017).
11. The Welsh Government intends to make the grant funding available during the period **01 January 2020 to 31 December 2020**. Given we are at the end of the Welsh Government's current funding settlement, we are only able to offer a grant commitment to be made for a 12-month period at this time. It is possible that the grant funding to successful applicants could be extended beyond the initial 12-month period. In this event, the Welsh Government reserves the right to revise grant expectations for any extended period.
12. The Welsh Government would like providers to put forward proposals for how they would deliver Regional Community Focussed Advice Services and/or Regional Specialist Advice Services and/or a Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service.
13. Applications for the delivery of the different types of service should meet the requirements relevant to the service type set out below and should demonstrate how they will integrate with the other advice services supported by this grant Fund.

### **Community Focussed Advice Services**

Community Focussed Advice Services: These services will be responsible for the delivery of all types of social welfare information and advice up to and including generalist advice with casework (See Annex 1 for definitions of types of Information and Advice).

The services will have a clear focus upon both prevention and emergency crisis response, with providers asked to design innovative service delivery models that ensure services are well known, accessible and can effectively promote and target early access to advice amongst the more vulnerable households across Wales.

Providers will also be asked to design services that will ensure people accessing advice to resolve their social welfare problems are given, as far as practical, the opportunity, through building their awareness, skills and knowledge, etc., to develop their capability and resilience to future social welfare problems occurring.

The Community-Focused Advice Services will predominately be delivered via face-to-face services. However, in their funding proposals, providers will be able to recommend additional means of the delivery of services via other channels, such as telephone and web-based, where these will better meet the particular needs of people who will struggle to access face-to-face services. This will apply particularly to rural areas, where a greater proportion of remote delivery may be expected, to enable widespread access and to keep the cost of delivery affordable.

Bidders are expected to propose service delivery models that target those in most need first.

Bidders are expected to propose service delivery models that both ensure widespread access but also to consider how their service delivery model can proactively target services to groups of people who may have a greater need for generalist legal social welfare advice as a result of specific characteristics they may possess or as a result of the specific circumstances that they are experiencing. The Welsh Government does not wish to be prescriptive over who these groups might be, but they could for example include people experiencing domestic violence or those living with a chronic medical condition. The requirement is that bidders consider those most in need of advice in the respective region and put forward proposals that ensure that access for these groups is prioritised within any service delivery model. Where specific groups of people are being targeted, service models will be expected to incorporate and utilise the expertise of organisations that specialise in supporting those particular groups of people.

Given the importance of addressing general wellbeing through advice, proposals will also need to demonstrate how they will meaningfully link

service delivery with primary care delivery and other wellbeing services within the voluntary and community sectors.

To ensure maximum benefit take-up across Wales, bidders are encouraged to include, as part of their preventative approaches, a process for ensuring benefit checks are available to all people seeking social welfare advice from any grant-funded service.

A funding proposal will need to explain how the Community Focussed Advice Service will complement other locally and nationally available advice services.

### **Area – Regions of Wales**

The Community Focussed Advice Services will be planned and delivered on a regional basis and bidders are asked to explain how their proposed service delivery model will effectively coordinate the delivery of services within the individual local authority areas in a region and ensure services will be delivered in accordance with the needs of local communities across a region.

Bidders will be able to seek funding in respect of one or more of the identified regions, although **a separate Grant Application Form must be completed for each regional Community Focussed Advice Service bid for.**

### **Funding Available**

A bidder will be required to submit a budget expenditure profile demonstrating how they intend to utilise the funding on the provision of the required information and advice services for the grant period.

<b>Maximum Funding Available</b>	<b>2019/20 £</b>	<b>2020/21 £</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Community Focussed Advice Services</b>	<b>Community Focussed Advice Services</b>	
Region 1	£132,250	£396,751	<b>£529,001</b>
Region 2	£131,937	£395,810	<b>£527,747</b>
Region 3	£211,014	£633,043	<b>£844,057</b>
Region 4	£180,171	£540,513	<b>£720,684</b>
Region 5	£122,440	£367,321	<b>£489,761</b>
Region 6	£117,438	£352,313	<b>£469,751</b>
			<b>£3,581,001</b>

## **Specialist Advice Services**

Specialist Advice Services: These services will ensure people have access to the specialist advice and support, including tribunal and/or Court representation services, which they need to challenge erroneous decisions. This grant is intended to support specialist advice services providing benefits, debt, housing, employment and discrimination (including education) rights advice only.

Bidders will be asked to design service delivery models that can offer integrated specialist advice services, where an individual can seamlessly access specialist advice on a range of legal social welfare problems. For example, an individual with problem debt and facing court action by their creditors will often have other legal social welfare problems that require resolution.

It is expected that regional Specialist Advice Services will predominately be delivered via face-to-face services. However, in their funding proposals, bidders will be able to recommend additional means of the delivery of services via other channels, such as telephone and web-based, where these will better meet the particular needs of people who will struggle to access face-to-face services. This will apply particularly to rural areas, where a greater proportion of remote delivery may be expected, to enable widespread access and to keep the cost of delivery affordable.

Any proposals to deliver in part via additional channels however will need to ensure that they do not duplicate remote services funded under either this grant programme or under other funding streams, which includes UK-wide remote social welfare advice services.

Bidders are expected to propose service delivery models that target those in most need first.

A proportion of the funds (specified in the table below) must be spent on the provision of specialist debt advice services. This is as a result of the fact that these funds have been devolved to Welsh Government via the Single Financial Guidance Body. They result from a levy on the financial services industry, with the purpose of assisting people in debt.

Bidders are expected to both ensure widespread access but also to consider how their service delivery model can proactively target services to groups of people who may have a greater need for specialist legal social welfare advice as a result of specific characteristics they may possess or as a result of the specific circumstances that they are experiencing. The Welsh Government does not wish to be prescriptive over who these groups might be, but they could for example include people experiencing domestic violence or those living with a chronic medical condition. The requirement is that bidders consider those most in need of advice in the respective region and put

forward proposals that ensure that access for these groups is prioritised within any service delivery model. Where specific groups of people are being targeted, service models will be expected to incorporate and utilise the expertise of organisations that specialise in supporting those particular groups of people.

Given the importance of addressing general wellbeing through advice, proposals will also need to demonstrate how they will meaningfully link service delivery with primary care delivery and other wellbeing services within the voluntary and community sectors.

To ensure maximum benefit take-up across Wales, bidders are encouraged to include, as part of their preventative approaches, a process for ensuring benefit checks are available to all people seeking social welfare advice from any grant-funded service.

A funding proposal will explain how their Regional Specialist Advice Service will complement other locally and nationally available advice services.

### **Area – Regions of Wales**

The Specialist Advice Services will be planned and delivered on a regional basis and bidders are asked to explain how their proposed service delivery model will effectively coordinate the delivery of services within the individual local authority areas in a region and ensure services will be delivered in accordance with the needs of local communities across a region.

Bidders will be able to bid in respect of one or more of the identified regions, although **a separate Grant Application Form must be completed for each regional Specialist Advice Service bid for.**

## Funding Available

A bidder will be required to submit a budget expenditure profile demonstrating how they intend to utilise the funding on the provision of the required advice service for the grant period.

Maximum Funding Available	2019/20 £	2020/21 £	Total
	<b>Specialist Advice Services</b>	<b>Specialist Advice Services</b>	
Region 1	£110,964 (*£71,587)	£332,893 (*£214,760)	<b>£443,857</b> (*£286,347)
Region 2	£110,630 (*£71,371)	£331,891 (*£214,114)	<b>£442,521</b> (*£285,485)
Region 3	£178,115 (*£114,908)	£534,344 (*£344,723)	<b>£712,459</b> (*£459,631)
Region 4	£151,013 (*£97,424)	£453,040 (*£292,271)	<b>£604,053</b> (*£389,695)
Region 5	£106,207 (*£68,518)	£318,620 (*£191,079)	<b>£424,827</b> (*£259,597)
Region 6	£98,729 (*£63,693)	£296,186 (*£191,079)	<b>£394,915</b> (*£254,772)
			<b>£3,022,632</b> (*£1,935,527)

(\* Minimum amounts that must be spent on specialist debt advice services to meet levy-payer obligations.)

### Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service

Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service: This service will ensure people have access to the specialist advice and support via remote channels (to include as a minimum telephone and email channels). This grant is intended to support remote specialist advice services providing benefits, debt, housing, employment and discrimination (including education) rights.

It is acknowledged that remote advice services will by their nature typically undertake a higher proportion of one-off or enquiry work than face-to-face specialist advice services typically do. Accepting this, this grant is intended to support an integrated Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service that offers advice at the specialist level and, where it is in the best interests of the client, is able to undertake a full case-working service remotely.



## **Area - Pan-Wales**

The Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service will be planned and delivered on a pan-Wales basis and bidders will be asked to explain how their service delivery model will link with and complement the regional Community Focussed and Specialist Advice Services. For example, setting out how a provider handling the first contact will ensure that a person is offered direct access to face-to-face caseworker services when needed. The Welsh Government is keen to receive proposals for a pan-Wales telephone service which is accessed through a single telephone number and which quickly enables the person calling to access the particular advice they most urgently require.

To ensure maximum benefit take-up across Wales, bidders are encouraged to include, as part of their preventative approaches, a process for ensuring benefit checks are available to all people seeking social welfare advice, regardless of the subject type.

A funding proposal will explain how their Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service will complement other nationally available remote social welfare advice services, to include those delivering on a UK-wide basis.

### **Funding Available**

A bidder will be required to submit a budget expenditure profile demonstrating how they intend to utilise the funding on the provision of the required Pan-Wales Remote Advice Service for the grant period.

The breakdown of available funding for this service is as follows:

<b>Maximum Funding Available</b>	<b>2019/20 £</b>	<b>2020/21 £</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Pan-Wales Remote Advice Services</b>	<b>Pan-Wales Remote Advice Services</b>	
Pan-Wales	£360,404	£1,081,212	<b>£1,441,616</b>

**A separate Grant Application Form must be completed for the pan-Wales Remote Advice Service.**

## **WHEN TO APPLY**

14. The application to apply for grant funding was published by the Welsh Government on Wednesday the **24th April 2019** and the deadline for applications is **5pm on Tuesday the 16th July 2019**.
15. Late applications will not be accepted.
16. The deadline for receipt of any questions relating to the grant will be 5 pm on Tuesday the **18<sup>th</sup> June 2019**. A list of the responses to all questions asked will be published on the Welsh Government website [here](#) and updated regularly. Any questions should be submitted via [FinancialInclusion@gov.wales](mailto:FinancialInclusion@gov.wales). Interested parties asking questions should do so in the knowledge that their question and the response to it will be published.

## **WHO CAN APPLY**

17. Applications for the funding can be submitted by an individual advice provider or by a collaboration of providers, although it is anticipated that collaborations of providers will generally be better able to demonstrate how they will meet the full range of advice needs of the diverse communities of Wales.
18. The Welsh Government's Single Advice Fund is a competitive scheme and the Welsh Government intends to support only one collaborative application in each of the thirteen grant opportunities. If there are no applications in respect of any particular opportunity that fully and adequately meet the aims and requirements of the grant then Welsh Government reserves the right to support more than one application where doing so would result in combined services that met the aims and requirements of the grant.
19. Individual bids will be expected to set out proposals that largely utilise the full amount of funding available for each of the thirteen funding opportunities.
20. A collaborative application for funding must identify a lead provider. This provider will accept the contractual responsibility for the delivery of the grant funded services.
21. An application must also contain full details of all the other partners who will be involved in the collaborative delivery of the funded services.
22. The Welsh Government is committed to the people of Wales having access to quality assured information and advice services. In line with this commitment, a provider, in a single or a collaborative funding application who will be involved in the direct delivery of generalist or specialist social welfare advice services must, at the date of the commencement of the funding period, hold a recognised advice Quality Standard at the appropriate level for the service they are proposing to provide.

Acceptable advice Quality Standards include, but are not limited to, the following quality standards:

Accessible Information Standard (NHS England)  
Advice Quality Standard  
AgeUK Quality Programme for Information and Advice  
Citizens Advice Membership Scheme  
Debt Managers Standards Association Membership Code  
Debt Resolution Forum Membership Code  
Families First Quality Award  
Investors in People  
ISO9000  
Lexcel  
Money Advice Service (SFGB) Quality Framework  
Matrix Standard for Information Advice and Guidance Services  
Rape Crisis National Service Standards  
OISC Code of Standards  
Shelter Standards  
Specialist Quality Mark (SQM)  
The Telephone Helpline Associations Telephone Standard  
Trusted Charity Mark (PQASSO)  
Welsh Women's Aid National Quality Service Standards

23. A provider who will be involved in the direct delivery of **debt advice** services will, in addition to holding a recognised advice Quality Standard, need to be Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) regulated, or be exempted from having to be FCA regulated, i.e., a local authority.
24. A provider whose role does not involve the direct delivery of generalist or specialist advice, does not need to hold an advice Quality Standard. For example, this will include:
- a. a *non-advice delivering partner*, whose role within a collaborative application is to co-ordinate and/or manage the delivery of the funded information and advice services on a local, regional or pan-Wales basis or;
  - b. a provider whose role within a collaborative application, is to facilitate positive engagement with people/groups who are hardest to reach and/or provide information/guidance on social welfare issues and enable a seamless referral of a person to an advice delivery partner, etc.
25. Welsh Government intends this grant to be focussed upon frontline advice delivery. Within a collaborative funding proposal, a *non-advice delivering partner*, whose role is to co-ordinate and/or manage the delivery of the funded services on a local, regional or pan-Wales basis **must be** a Not for Profit organisation who is able to provide evidence of their:

- a. established and successful track record of co-ordinating the delivery of information and advice services and;
- b. comprehensive understanding of the Welsh Social Welfare Advice Sector.

### **COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM**

1. This guidance has been prepared to help ensure those seeking grant funding include all of the information required for the purposes of assessing their application.
2. Incomplete applications will not be assessed and therefore not considered for a grant.

#### **Section One – What You Are Applying For**

A bidder is required to indicate which of the thirteen funding opportunities the particular application form relates to by marking the relevant box. Bidders applying for more than one of the thirteen grant opportunities should complete a separate application form in respect of each opportunity.

#### **Section Two – Organisation/ Lead Provider Details**

In a collaborative application (with delivery involving partner providers), the Lead Organisation is required to provide their full contact details in Section Two.

#### **Section Three – Partner Providers (Collaborative Applications Only)**

This section only needs to be completed if it is a collaborative application. It asks for information about the other provider(s) involved in delivering the proposed service who will receive grant funds.

#### **Section Four – Quality Assurance**

Any provider(s) who are seeking funding to deliver generalist or specialist advice is/are required to provide:

- a. evidence of the advice Quality Standard that they hold **and** confirm the date at which they will have to reapply for this advice Quality Standard; and
- b. a statement to confirm that they are impartial and have the ability to always act in the best interest of the people who will be receiving the free to client funded advice services; and
- c. if a provider will be delivering a debt advice service, evidence that they are Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) regulated, or confirmation that they are exempted from having to be FCA regulated.

#### **Section Five – Expected Start Date of Service Delivery**

A bidder is required to provide confirmation that they can commence delivery of the free to client funded information and advice services from the 01 January 2020.

## **Section Six – About the Proposed Service**

A bidder is required to respond to a series of questions about how the service that they are proposing to deliver will meet the purpose of the Grant.

### **Scoring**

The assessment process will include a weighted scoring system. Where a question will be scored, the relevant score weighting is set out after the question. A summary of the points weighting is as follows:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Maximum Score</b>
1. Prior Experience	20
2. Proposed Service Delivery	25
3. Service Planning & Co-ordination	25
4. Welsh & Community Languages	5
5. Person-centred Services	10
6. Value for Money	15
<b>Total Maximum Score</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Question 1 – Prior Experience**

This question asks for an explanation of the experience and proven ability of a provider(s) to deliver free to client social welfare rights-based information and advice services at a local, regional or pan-Wales level (as applicable). In a collaborative application, this extends to all of the service providers who will receive part of the grant. Where a collaboration includes service providers who do not provide advice, but who may for example facilitate engagement or provide another function, then an explanation of relevant experience regarding that function should also be highlighted in your response to this question.

Bidders are also asked to explain their previous experience of involvement in collaborative service delivery models.

### **Question 2 – Service Delivery**

This series of questions explores how the proposed free to client social welfare rights-based information and/or advice service/s will meet key aims of the Single Advice Fund, including how a proposed service delivery model will:

- i. *Integrated*: Be seamless and fully integrated for people who, for example, have advice needs:
  - across the range of social welfare subject areas, and/or;
  - that pass through various advice types, i.e., guidance to generalist to specialist, and/or;

- if applicable, who have contacted the pan-Wales service and need to access locally/regionally delivered services.

It is acknowledged that bidders will not know what other services could potentially be in place through funding under this grant, given that they will all be subject to this competitive grant exercise. Bidders are however expected to say in general terms how they will seek to ensure that the service they offer will be joined-up with other advice services, many of which would be funded through other funding streams. They are also expected to confirm their willingness to fully integrate their service with the other grant funded advice services both in their region and across Wales, once successful bidders are announced and services are being set up. To further support joined-up service delivery, bidders are expected to confirm their willingness to contribute to and engage with any advice network partnerships established in their respective regions/nationally. The extent to which funded services are effectively integrated will be one of the key areas examined through regular grant monitoring.

- ii. *Preventative*: Be focused upon both prevention and emergency crisis response;
- iii. *Capacity building*: Be designed to ensure people accessing information and advice services are given tangible opportunities to develop their knowledge, capability and skills with the aim of, as far as practical, improving their resilience to similar problems reoccurring.
- iv. *Accessible*: In the case of regional services, be able to reach into the heart of local communities, ensuring the funded services are well known and easily accessible OR in the case of the pan-Wales remote service, able to achieve a sufficient profile to ensure that the service is well known and easily accessible;
- v. *Holistic*: demonstrate meaningful links with statutory primary care delivery and other wellbeing services within the voluntary and community sectors;
- vi. *Inclusive*: Target those people or groups whose characteristics or circumstances make them more likely to be in most need of advice and encourage early access by them to the funded service, demonstrating innovation in reaching people who may not usually access mainstream advice services;

### **Question 3 – Service Planning and Co-ordination**

This series of questions examines:

- i. the robustness of the planning assumptions used to predict the numbers expected to access the service as set out in the Minimum Volume Expectations table in Question 6 of the application form;
- ii. the effectiveness of the planning of the information and advice service to ensure the funded service/s is/are complementary to the advice service

resources already operating within a region and pan-Wales, offering an overall positive contribution as a result of available resources being maximised and duplication of effort minimised;

- iii. delivery of information and advice services will be co-ordinated to ensure there is equal and consistent access to the funded service(s) across all parts of a region or, in the case of a pan-Wales service, across all parts of the country;
- iv. how the planning of the information and advice service will ensure the funded service will be delivered in accordance with the specific needs of local communities;
- v. how a system of review and innovation will drive forward continuous improvements in effectiveness and efficiency.

#### **Question 4 – Welsh Language and Community Languages**

The Welsh Government expects that the funded service will be offered in the medium of Welsh language to any individuals who states that this is their language preference.

The Welsh Government expects access to interpretation services, across the range of community languages, will be offered, as and when required, to people accessing the funded services.

Therefore, a bidder will need to clearly explain how their proposed service delivery model will ensure there will be consistent and equal access to people accessing funded services who wish to do so in the medium of Welsh, or in any of the community languages.

#### **Question 5 – Person-centred Services that Contribute to Well-being**

The Welsh Government has a vision for the people of Wales to be served by quality assured and sustainable advice services that are delivering empowering services that are aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

The (former) Money Advice Service in 2018 published a series of findings from active engagement with service users, non-service users and debt advisors. Some of the co-production work was undertaken within Wales and was supported by the Welsh Government as it aligns with the 'involvement way of working' within the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. The Welsh Government is of the opinion that the findings from the research "Delivering a Vision For Debt Advice are not restricted to the examples of what best practice 'debt advice' services look like and that the Delivery Principles identified in the work represent the foundations for the delivery of a person-centred social welfare information and advice service, regardless of the advice subject matter. The research can be accessed [here](#).

In their funding proposal, bidders are asked to highlight the ways in which their proposed service will constitute a person-centred service that will contribute to



well-being, ensuring that reference is included to how the service will meet each of the following Delivery Principles:

- Empowering
  - ✓ Promoting a 'can do' attitude amongst advice recipients.
  - ✓ Ensuring that people are always given the opportunity to build their skills and ability to manage by encouraging them to carry out actions independently.
- Efficient
  - ✓ Recognising where process could be more efficiently managed by balancing needs with resources - e.g. through spotting opportunities to innovate.
- Accessible - in terms of developing service delivery:
  - ✓ Presenting information as clearly and simply as possible.
  - ✓ Ensuring the service is easy to reach and enter - for instance, by being flexible and contactable to a range of different people e.g. through multi-channel delivery.
- Future-focussed
  - ✓ Placing long-term change and independence at the centre of advice delivery.
  - ✓ Ensuring advice recipients are reflecting on both their current and future needs and goals.
- Positive and Proactive
  - ✓ Ensuring that advice is appealing to potential recipients by framing advice as a positive action.
  - ✓ Providing ongoing support to recipients – advice for life, not just for crisis moments.
- Thorough & Personal
  - ✓ Being investigative and holistic in the approach to advice delivery - recognising that the root cause of the presenting problem is often the result of other issues.
  - ✓ Maintaining a tailored approach to the style and delivery of advice - recognising the need to balance professionalism with more personal contact.

In addition to these Delivery Principles, bidders should describe how they will ensure that service users are involved in the ongoing design and redesign of their service.

## **Question 6 – Value for Money**

Under this question, bids will be scored to prioritise bids that offer the best all round value for money. Specifically, the information provided regarding minimum volume expectations, the average cost per FTE adviser and the anticipated outcomes will be combined to provide a broad picture of value for money that will be scored, up to a maximum of 15 points.

### ***i) Minimum Volume Expectations***

A bidder is required to state their minimum volume expectations (for the 12-month grant period) for the number of cases and/or enquiries that they expect to undertake.

Bidders should indicate the numbers of enquiries and cases by subject category and by advice level. We appreciate that information and advice providers will use differing definitions of enquiries and cases in their recording. For the purposes of providing an indication of the scale of work that is expected to be undertaken in the proposal, we would ask that bidders complete this section with reference to the following interpretation so that applications can be assessed for appropriateness of coverage and to ensure that basic value for money is achieved.

By 'enquiry' we envisage a discrete one-off piece of work with a household seeking advice or information where all of the time spent on that work typically totals less than 30 minutes.

By 'case' we are referring to work typically totalling 30 minutes or more that may require a greater level of recording than an enquiry and which would more often involve the provision of written confirmation of advice.

Where some parts of the proposed service will only be available to people with certain characteristics or people in certain situations, applicants should provide a breakdown of this in brackets after the total number of cases or enquiries, wherever applicable.

In the monitoring reports required under this grant, providers will also be required to provide information on the numbers of people advised, including the proportion of repeat clients, and the number of problems advised upon.

### ***ii) Proposed Grant Expenditure***

A bidder is requested to clearly indicate how much Grant funding they are applying for across the funding period.

Bidders are expected to put forward proposals that largely utilise the full amount of funding available for the particular funding opportunity that they are bidding for.

The maximum funding available to deliver the information and advice service in each funding opportunity is as set out below, together with regional, national and programme totals:

Maximum Funding Available	2019/20 £		2020/21 £		Total Grant
	Community Focussed Advice Services	Specialist Advice Services	Community Focussed Advice Services	Specialist Advice Services	
Region 1	£132,250	£110,964 (*£71,587)	£396,751	£332,893 (*£214,760)	£972,858
Region 2	£131,937	£110,630 (*£71,371)	£395,810	£331,891 (*£214,114)	£970,268
Region 3	£211,014	£178,115 (*£114,908)	£633,043	£534,344 (*£344,723)	£1,556,516
Region 4	£180,171	£151,013 (*£97,424)	£540,513	£453,040 (*£292,271)	£1,324,737
Region 5	£122,440	£106,207 (*£68,518)	£367,321	£318,620 (*£191,079)	£914,588
Region 6	£117,438	£98,729 (*£63,693)	£352,313	£296,186 (*£191,079)	£864,666
Sub-total:	£895,250	£755,658	£2,685,751	£2,266,973	£6,603,632
Pan-Wales remote service		£360,404		£1,081,212	£1,441,616
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>£895,250</b>	<b>£1,116,062</b>	<b>£2,685,751</b>	<b>£3,348,185</b>	<b>£8,045,248</b>

\* Minimum level of funds that must be committed to debt advice as a result of the conditions of the financial services industry levy (discussed in the Specialist Advice Services section above.)

A bidder is required to complete the expenditure profile and to provide a detailed breakdown of proposed expenditure in the embedded expenditure spreadsheet. Bidders should include as much information as possible to detail how the grant funding being requested will be used for the provision of the information and advice services in each financial year across the 12-month funding period.

Although some formulae have been included in the spreadsheet to assist applicants, it is the bidder's responsibility to check that all details shown on the spreadsheets are correct. This will particularly be the case where additional lines are added and formulae may need to be adjusted.

Welsh Government encourages a provider who is seeking grant funding to offer salaries that meet or exceed the Living Wage. If any salaries within a bidder's proposal are below the Living Wage, we will be keen to discuss with the bidder any ways that we can help them to be able to offer salaries that meet or exceed the Living Wage. Further information on the Living Wage is available from <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/>.

### **Important notes**

1. Whilst Welsh Government is not proposing to specify an expected average total cost per FTE generalist and specialist adviser service, the average total cost per adviser will be an important determinant in assessing whether **i)** the average cost is adequate to give confidence that high quality services are likely to be provided and **ii)** that the average cost is sufficiently competitive to ensure that the social impact of the funded service is maximised.
2. Average total cost per adviser is calculated by taking the total proposal costs and dividing this by the number of proposed advisers. A Full-time Equivalent (FTE) is considered to work 37 hrs per week. Where this is not the case, applicants should total the number of hours worked by the proposed advisers and divide by 37 to give a FTE figure.
3. Welsh Government wishes as much of this grant as possible to be focussed on frontline delivery. Costs relating to the co-ordination of different services and to consortia as a whole should be kept to the absolute minimum level necessary for effective integrated delivery and reporting.
4. The Welsh Government will approve the reasonableness of any Management charges/Central costs being requested.
5. The Welsh Government will not provide a financial contribution towards any redundancy costs.
6. Where a bidder is successful in respect of more than one of the thirteen grant opportunities available, Welsh Government would expect they are able to clearly demonstrate the cost efficiencies that will be attained by them delivering more than one service. In this event, Welsh Government will have further discussions with bidders regarding savings that can be made resulting from economies of scale in relation to project management, administration or the technical supervision of staff costs, etc., prior to confirming any grant award.

### ***iii) Outcome Expectations and Monitoring***

A bidder is required to provide information on the key performance measures that they are proposing to report on and explain how the performance measures will demonstrate to the Welsh Government that the information and advice service they are proposing to deliver is attaining the key aims of the Single Advice Fund.

A bidder will also be required to confirm that, if they receive funding, they will work with the Welsh Government to jointly develop and agree additional performance and outcome measures.

### **Section Seven - General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).**

All provider(s) must confirm their understanding, acceptance and compliance with, the following conditions:

- All awards of grant funding must be compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- All personal information collected and held by a funded provider will need to be treated in line with the GDPR regulations.
- Carrying out the Purposes of this grant will require a funded provider to process personal data on behalf of the Welsh Government.
- The Welsh Government will be the Data Controller and the successful provider(s) will be the data processor.
- As a data processor, a provider(s) must only ask for data that is necessary and relevant to the purpose of this project, and must only collect data when there is a specific, lawful reason to do so.

In completing Annex A, bidders will advise which personal data items they will collect in the provision of the proposed service. Where a question arises as to whether any area of proposed collected data is necessary and relevant to the purpose of this project, Welsh Government will discuss this with the bidder prior to confirming any grant award.

### **Section Eight - Declaration**

In a collaborative application (with delivery involving partners) the 'declaration/certification should be completed by the lead provider.

Anyone signing this declaration should be fully authorised by both their own organisation and, in the case of a collaborative application, by the other partner(s) involved in the bid.

Although copies of partnership agreements between partners in a collaborative bid are not requested as part of this grant application, this declaration confirms that they are in place and available to Welsh Government if requested.

## **APPLICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

1. The purpose of running this open grant application exercise is to enable the Welsh Government to identify the service delivery models that:
  - best meets the purposes of the Single Advice Fund, and;
  - provides the most confidence in terms of high quality service delivery, and;
  - offers best value for money.
2. There will be an initial assessment of all proposals, and:
  - a proposal not meeting the requirement for a provider involved in the delivery of generalist or specialist advice services to be a holder of a recognised advice Quality Standard (or unable to provide robust evidence that they will be at the date the funded services commence, such as confirmation that they have applied for an advice Quality Standard audit.) will be rejected.
  - a proposal where a provider will be delivering debt advice services who is not FCA regulated (or unable to provide robust evidence that they will be at the date the funded services commence) and is not exempted from seeking such regulation will be rejected
  - a collaborative proposal, where a non-advice delivering partner will be co-ordinating the funded services and they are not a Not for Profit organisation will be rejected.
3. Incomplete applications will also be rejected at the initial assessment stage.
4. The assessment of the responses to the questions in the application form will be based upon a scoring methodology using weighted scoring (as displayed in the table on page 13) with the maximum scores listed for each question to be assessed.

### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

1. At the commencement of the grant funding period, i.e., 01/01/2020, a funded provider involved in the delivery of generalist or specialist advice services **must hold** a recognised advice Quality Standard, appropriate to the level of service being provided.
2. A funded provider who stops holding a recognised advice Quality Standard at any point during the grant funding period shall inform the Welsh Government immediately.
3. The Welsh Government will have the right to withdraw grant funding from any provider who is no longer holding a recognised advice Quality Standard.
4. At the commencement of the funding period a provider, who is delivering debt advice services, must be Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) regulated or provide evidence that they are exempt from needing to be regulated by the FCA.
5. A provider who loses their FCA regulation at any point during the funding period shall inform the Welsh Government immediately.
6. The Welsh Government will have the right to withdraw grant funding in respect of the delivery of debt advice services from any provider who loses their FCA regulation, regardless of whether they still hold an advice Quality Standard.
7. The Welsh Government will also use other methods, i.e. Peer Assessment, to ensure the quality of the information and advice being delivered by a provider is of an acceptable level. A provider, in their acceptance of a grant, will be required to confirm that they (and all the partners in a collaborative application) agree to fully engage and participate within the quality assurance measures that the Welsh Government intends to employ.

### **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

8. A funded organisation must supply an organogram and provide the Welsh Government with templates which outline the job description and essential elements of the person specification for:
  - administrative staff;
  - advisers;
  - supervisors;
  - support workers;
  - advice managers;
  - consortium co-ordinators;
  - all other positions that will be involved in the delivery of the funded services.

It is a principle of the grant that the grant funds pay for **additional activities** that would otherwise not occur if the grant were not paid. The organogram should indicate whether positions are occupied by staff who are already employed and name them or whether they are to be recruited. If they are existing members of a provider's staff and they are currently funded by a different funding source, this must be clearly explained, making clear which funding the staff member will be moving from, to ensure there is no duplication or double counting of funding. If a staff member is to be shared across more than one of the available 13 funding opportunities, the organogram should make clear what proportion of the staff member is being allocated to which particular service.

## **TECHNICAL SUPERVISION**

9. Technical supervisors of the staff engaged in delivering the funded advice services must be experienced social welfare advisers and, in the case of the specialist advice services, a technical supervisor must be an experienced specialist caseworker within the funded subject area being delivered, i.e., welfare benefits, or debt, or housing, etc.

## **RECORDS OF ADVICE SESSIONS AND WORK UNDERTAKEN**

10. All the cases funded by the Welsh Government must be evidenced by a comprehensive case record, regardless of whether consent is given for external evaluation (see point 11 below). This will include client and third-party interactions and any work undertaken to progress or review the case.

## **REPORTING AND MONITORING INFORMATION**

11. A funded provider will be required to provide the Welsh Government with quarterly monitoring reports on the performance of the funded service, as well as provide compliance checks. The Welsh Government will provide guidance.
12. A funded provider will be required to provide information on the protected characteristics of people accessing the information and advice service. The Welsh Government and the funded provider will agree the information to be provided.
13. A funded provider will be required to provide a copy of their updated risk register to the Welsh Government on a quarterly basis. Where a new significant risk is identified during the reporting period, this should be reported to the Welsh Government within five working days, or sooner if possible.

## **EVALUATION**

14. The Welsh Government is exploring the links between the outputs from the advice services it commissions and longer term outcomes for the people who access these services. Whilst the work is in its early stages, a provider receiving Welsh Government Grant funding will be expected to fully engage in this area of developmental work.
15. This exploration of the long-term sustainable outcomes for people who access Welsh Government funded advice services has the potential to include the use of



a third party to evaluate outcomes and/or undertake additional research with individuals who access the funded advice services.

16. The Welsh Government will work with all the providers it funds to establish best practice approaches to promote the benefits of evaluation to service users and encourage their informed consent to evaluation. A funded provider will be required to confirm they (and all the partners within a collaborative service delivery model) consent to participate in this work during the period they are receiving grant funding.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

17. A bidder is responsible for obtaining at their own expense advice regarding the possible application of any contingencies; or other circumstances; or matters which might in any way affect their application for grant funding. For example, if an employee of a current recipient of one of the Welsh Government's grant funding streams queries whether their current grant funded employment is covered by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE).

**FINANCE GUIDANCE**

1. A funded provider will be asked to confirm the expenditure profiles and provide updates to anticipated expenditure at regular intervals through the grant funding period.

**Claims and Payment**

2. Payment of the grant will be made quarterly in arrears on submission of accurately documented claims in accordance with the provisions that will be set out in the formal grant award letter/conditions. However, payments may be made in advance where a need for this can be clearly demonstrated. If appropriate, providers can request a Payment in Advance template or confirm that one has been submitted for the current financial period for other Welsh Government grant funding.

**Privacy notice: Welsh Government Grants**

3. For information as to how we will handle any personal data you provide in relation to your grant application, please click here [Welsh Government Privacy Notice](#)
4. The information we have collected from you will be shared with fraud prevention agencies that will use it to prevent fraud and money-laundering and to verify your identity. If fraud is detected, you could be refused certain services, finance or employment in future.
5. Further details of how your information will be used by us and these fraud prevention agencies, and your data protection rights, can be found by contacting; [Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales](mailto:Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales).

### Definitions of Types of Information and Advice<sup>2</sup>

#### Type One – Information

Describes a service which gives clients the information they need for them to know more and do more about their situation. It can include providing information about policies, rights and practices; and about local and pan-Wales services and services that may be able to offer the client further help. Responsibility for any further action rests with the client.

E.g. a client asks whether he can get help with his council tax. You provide him with a leaflet “Help with Council Tax” and provide details of two local advice services that offer advice on welfare benefits.

#### Type Two - Guidance

Describes a service that may discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different options without making specific recommendations. It may include making and receiving referrals, identifying emergencies and prioritising issues.

E.g. a client wants to understand his finance options before choosing a new or used car. The money adviser explains the features of various purchasing options but does not recommend a particular finance option or provider.

#### Type Three – Advice

Describes services that diagnose the client’s legal problem and any related legal matters; identify options and relevant legislation and decide how it applies to a client’s specific circumstances; includes identifying the implications and consequences of such action and grounds for taking action; includes form filling; provides information on matters relevant to the problem such as advising on next steps and identifying dates by which action must be taken to secure the client’s rights. Advice may take place on more than one occasion.

E.g. a client asks whether she can get help with caring for an elderly neighbour. You carry out a benefit check and identify she may be entitled to claim Carers Allowance depending on her neighbour’s benefits situation. You advise the client to obtain a claim form to protect her potential date of claim and offer details of services that can offer help to the client and her neighbour.

#### Type Four - Advice with casework

Includes all elements of an advice service and also involves taking action on behalf of the client to move the case on. It could include negotiating on behalf of the client with third parties on the telephone, by letter or face to face. It will involve the advice provider taking responsibility for follow-up work.

E.g. a student is having difficulty in negotiating the return of their damage deposit from a local landlord. You contact the landlord and explain that you will be supporting the student to recover the maximum value of the deposit. The landlord claims there

---

<sup>2</sup> As published within the Welsh Government’s Information and Advice Quality Framework for Wales.

was damage to the property which the student later accepts. You negotiate a reasonable deduction for the damage.

**Type Five - Specialist casework**

Describes services where the adviser or the service as a whole undertakes advice and casework at a level where very detailed knowledge of the law and case law is required. Usually this means that it is delivered by advisers who have the necessary depth of legal knowledge and expertise to undertake representation for clients through the court or tribunal.

E.g. the client has lost a first tier social security tribunal. Your adviser identifies an error of law in the tribunal's decision that they will go on to argue before the Upper Tribunal. Their arguments will reference legislation and case law.