# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Living Wage Week**  |
| **DATE**  | **12 November 2019** |
| **BY** | **Mark Drakeford AM, First Minister** |

The Welsh Government is committed to making Wales a Fair Work Nation where all workers are fairly rewarded, heard and represented; where they have access to fair and secure work and able to progress in a healthy, inclusive environment where their rights are respected.

Ensuring more workers benefit from the Living Wage is an important step towards this ambition. The Living Wage for Wales is independently calculated every year and is based on the real cost of living. The hourly rate is calculated by the Resolution Foundation and overseen by the Living Wage Commission, based on the best available evidence about living standards in the UK.

I am delighted to launch this year’s Living Wage week (11to 15 November) by announcing this year’s Living Wage for Wales will be £9.30 an hour – an increase of 30p from last year. The hourly rate is rising by 3% in recognition of inflation and the continued prevalence of in-work poverty. This will mean an important pay rise for thousands of working people in Wales.

We now need to ensure more organisations and employers sign up and become accredited as Living Wage employers.

I made the Living Wage announcement in Cardiff – a city where the council is an accredited Living Wage employer and is working with other public and private companies to encourage them to do likewise.

The city – a Living Wage city – wants to double the number of workers receiving the Living Wage, helping to lift families out of the low pay trap and businesses benefit from a more engaged workforce.

The Fair Work Commission, which we established, produced a recognised definition of fair work and what good practice looks like in relation to fair work employment. It recommended employers use the Welsh Living Wage as the minimum wage floor for all working hours and that employers should either achieve or work towards accreditation as a Living Wage employer.

We accepted the commission’s recommendation that we adopt and use its definition and characteristics of fair work across the Welsh Government and in our promotion of fair work, including in relation to the Economic Contract and the Economic Futures Fund. We are working with our social partners and other stakeholders about how to take the commission’s other ambitious recommendations forward.

The definition and characteristics of fair work will be given prominence in the *Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains.* Signing up to the code will be a requirement for all organisations receiving public funding – all organisations which sign the code will need to demonstrate how and what consideration has been given to paying the Welsh Living Wage.

I will be writing to all public bodies in Wales asking them to achieve Living Wage accreditation. For many organisations this will be a journey – the Welsh Government will be with them on that journey.