



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/02533/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

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24 May 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 18 May to the First Minister regarding the Welsh Mountain Zoo. I have been asked to respond as the matters you raise fall under my portfolio.

Animal Welfare is a priority of the Welsh Government and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group. The statement that the Welsh Mountain Zoo has not been successful in securing support from the Welsh Government is incorrect. They have publically referred to their successful application to the aforementioned Economic Resilience Fund in a number of news articles.

On 24 April, officials wrote to all 30 zoos in Wales with details of existing schemes from which they may be eligible for funding, as well as issuing a questionnaire to identify key animal welfare concerns and whether any funding gaps exist. This questionnaire focused on animal welfare needs as a result of an impact of reduced income, and not to ascertain the ongoing or financial viability of the organisation as these business related needs would be determined under the wider UK and Welsh Government schemes available,.

We received 17 responses, including from two animal exhibits which are not licensed zoos. Most indicated they had been successful, or were in the process of applying for funding from various government schemes or their banks. We issued a further update to these establishments on 11 May.

A specific zoo fund is not necessary in Wales due to the existence of the Economic Resilience Fund, which is unique to Wales. The Fund aims to support the Welsh Economy, Businesses and Charities experiencing a sharp drop in trading as a result of the Coronavirus. In addition, any zoo with a charitable status can apply to the Welsh 'Third Sector Resilience Fund' should their application to the Economic Resilience Fund be unsuccessful. We have, however, been clear this decision will be kept under review and encourage zoos to liaise with the Welsh

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Government on their animal welfare concerns going forward. Please note a specific zoo fund is also not currently available in either Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke above the letters.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales