

Eluned Morgan Marks First Year as First Minister of Wales

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Eluned Morgan marks her first anniversary as First Minister of Wales, one year after assuming the role during a period of political instability. She succeeded Vaughan Gething in August 2024 following his resignation, which came in the wake of a no-confidence vote and scrutiny over political donations.

Morgan, the first woman to hold the office, secured the support of 28 Senedd members in the vote that confirmed her appointment. Over the past year, her administration has focused on key public service priorities, with early initiatives including the full rollout of free school meals for primary school pupils and above-inflation pay rises for public sector workers.

In her first 100 days, Morgan's government announced £28 million in targeted investment to cut hospital waiting times and opened a new medical school in North Wales. Her approach to governance has included a national tour to engage with communities, informing her focus on healthcare, transport, jobs, and local services.

The First Minister has also renewed calls for the devolution of Crown Estate assets in Wales, arguing that control over seabed and land rights would help the country maximize its potential in offshore wind and renewable energy development. She continues to press for greater autonomy in areas that impact Wales's economic future.

Morgan's first year in office, however, comes amid declining support for Welsh Labour ahead of the 2026 Senedd election. Polling suggests that both Reform UK and Plaid Cymru are gaining ground in several regions. In response, Morgan has attempted to distinguish Welsh Labour through what she terms the "red Welsh way," a bid to offer a distinct voice within the wider Labour movement.

In October 2024, she met with Prime Minister Keir Starmer to discuss shared priorities, including energy, NHS funding, and support for Welsh industry. However, she continues to walk a political tightrope, balancing

the need for cooperation with Westminster while responding to calls for deeper devolution and a more assertive Welsh policy direction.

As her second year begins, Eluned Morgan faces the challenge of maintaining public trust, delivering on key services, and positioning her party ahead of the next Senedd vote. Her political future, and that of Welsh Labour, may well depend on her ability to unite devolved ambitions with practical governance.