
NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD

12.4.19

Present:

Voting Members - Councillors:- Hugh Evans (Denbighshire Council), Llinos Medi Huws (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Gareth Jones (Conwy County Borough Council), Mark Pritchard (Wrexham Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire Council), Dyfrig L. Siencyn (Gwynedd Council).

Advisors – Dafydd Evans (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai), Maria Hinfelaar (Glyndwr University), Bryn Jones (Bangor University), David Jones (Coleg Cambria), Ashley Rogers (North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council) and Sasha Davies (Business Delivery Board).

Chief Officers - Marc Jones (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Iwan Davies (Conwy County Borough Council), Colin Everett (Flintshire Council), Judith Greenhalgh (Denbighshire Council) and Ian Bancroft (Wrexham Council).

Officers in attendance – Dafydd L. Edwards (Section 151 Officer), Iwan Trefor Jones (The Board's Lead Director), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Nia Medi Williams (Senior Operational Officer) and Eirian Roberts (Member Support Officer).

The meeting was chaired by the Vice-chairman, Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd Council) as the Chair, Councillor Aaron Shotton had stood down as Leader of Flintshire Council.

The Vice-chair noted that it had been an honour to work with Councillor Aaron Shotton and that he would be greatly missed. It was agreed to write to him, on behalf of the Board members, to thank him for his work for the people of North Wales and to wish him well in the future.

Councillor Ian Roberts, the new Leader of Flintshire Council, was welcomed to his first meeting of the Ambition Board.

1. APOLOGIES

Prof. Graham Upton (Bangor University), Dr Gwynne Jones (Isle of Anglesey County Council) and Dilwyn Williams (Gwynedd Council).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 March 2019 as a true record, subject to the following corrections:-

Attendance - to note that Dr Gwynne Jones, not Marc Jones, had been present as chief officer on behalf of Isle of Anglesey County Council.

Update on the NWEAB Work Programme:-

- To note that the Business Delivery Group had emphasised the importance of including Adventure Tourism within the Regional Land and Property Joint Venture project.
- To note that the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council had emphasised the importance of ensuring that Low Carbon Construction was a part of the Land and Property project.

5. UPDATE ON THE NWEAB WORK PROGRAMME

The report was presented by Iwan Trefor Jones, Lead Director.

RESOLVED

- 1. To approve the RAG status of all actions within the Work Programme, in accordance with the report.**
- 2. To delegate the authority to the Programme Director in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the NWEAB to agree the job description and appointment process for the Digital Programme Manager.**
- 3. To commit up to £55,000 (subject to job evaluation and the success of the Growth Deal) of the “Project, Planning, Development and Support budget” to finance the Digital Programme Manager post for a year.**
- 4. To submit a quarterly progress report on the work of the Board to the individual partners for the reporting and scrutiny purposes of the individual partners.**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Update and keep an overview of the progress of the Work Programme tasks.
Approve the appointment process for the Digital Programme Manager.
To ensure a flow of information about the project to the partnership bodies.

DISCUSSION

The education institutions expressed dissatisfaction and concerns regarding the system of prioritising projects. It was also noted that the letters to Nigel Adams MP and Ken Skates AM had not been shared with them prior to being sent to both Governments. Attention was also drawn to the fact that the logos of all partners had not been included on those letters. They were of the opinion that this undermined the partnership and their role as advisors to the Board.

In response, the Vice-chair confirmed that it had not been the intention to undermine any aspect of the partnership and that the partnership was equal. He also confirmed that no hard decisions had been made regarding individual projects and that the projects had been scheduled, rather than prioritised.

The Lead Director explained that a letter had been sent to both Governments since the last meeting of the Board noting that the projects would be scheduled. During the previous meeting of the Board, it had been recognised that some of the projects were at a more advanced stage of readiness. It was noted that five transformational projects had been identified as ones which would be ready for the first phase: Digital Connectivity Project; Regional Land and Property Joint Venture project, Holyhead Port; Smart Local Energy Network Project; Trawsfynydd Power Station Project. It was agreed that the 14 projects would be included within the Heads of Terms, in two phases. By ‘readiness’ it was meant that the project met the tests of (a) proof of concept (b) outcomes and impact (c) private sector investment and leverage and (d) readiness for delivery on time.

6. RISK REGISTER

The report was presented by Iwan Trefor Jones, Lead Director.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the format and structure of the Risk Register and agree that the risks and RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status included are captured accurately and sufficiently and that the mitigation measures noted are proportionate in view of the identified risks.
2. To report on the risks on a quarterly basis to the NWEAB and on a monthly basis to the Executive Officers Group.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In order to operate effectively, the North Wales Growth Deal needs a detailed Risk Register for the Planning and Development phase.

It is considered that reporting on a quarterly basis to the NWEAB is sufficient, as there will be a monthly report to the Executive Officers Group.

7. APPOINTMENT OF A TRANSPORT SUB-BOARD

The report was presented by Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED

1. To appoint a Transport Delivery Sub-board with the Role and Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. To appoint the Leader of Flintshire Council, Councillor Ian Roberts, to act as a link member for the Transport Delivery Sub-Board.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Following the commencement of the First Governance Agreement ("GA1") and the establishment of the NWEAB as a decision-making Joint-committee, the appointment of a Sub-Committee requires a formal resolution of the NWEAB.

8. BUSINESS DELIVERY BOARD

The report was presented by Iwan Trefor Jones, Lead Director.

RESOLVED

1. To defer a decision on this matter until such time as the outcome of the consultation with UK Government and Welsh Government on the proposal is known.
2. That the discussions with the Governments should commence based on the report submitted to the NWEAB.
3. To address the following matters when providing a further draft of the report:-
 - (i) The role of the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council;
 - (ii) The accountability of the Chair of the Business Delivery Board;
 - (iii) The need to simplify the proposed role and responsibilities of the Board;
 - (iv) Concern that there are increasing demands on businesses to take part in similar arrangements;
 - (v) Financial matters

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In order to seek clarity regarding specific matters raised prior to placing the Business Delivery Board on a formal foundation as part of the project's development structure.

DISCUSSION

A verbal report was presented by Sasha Davies regarding a meeting of the Business Delivery Board held the previous day where the need for clarity about some matters, i.e. the accountability of the Chair of the Business Delivery Board, the need to simplify the proposed role and responsibilities of the Board, concern that there were increasing demands on businesses to take part in similar arrangements and some financial matters, such as financial remuneration arrangements for the Board Chairman, had been emphasised. Ashley Rogers accepted that the role of the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council, and what was expected of them, also needed to be identified and defined, and he noted that he had suggestions regarding how to address this.

9. THE WELSH GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER - IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The report was presented by Iwan Trefor Jones, Lead Director.

RESOLVED to accept this summary report on the Welsh Government proposals for Improved Public Transport and the response to the White Paper consultation, attached to the report.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To inform the Board of the regional response submitted.

10. SWANSEA BAY CITY DEAL (SBCD) REVIEW(S)

The report was presented by Iwan Trefor Jones, Lead Director.

RESOLVED

- 1. To accept the report on the recommendations of both review reports, the "Swansea Bay City Deal Independent Review" and the "Swansea Bay City Deal Internal Review of Governance Arrangements".**
- 2. To note the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) assessment of the North Wales Growth Deal's status against each of the recommendations.**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. For the NWEAB to understand the conclusions and recommendations of the Report(s).
2. For the NWEAB to focus on the lessons learned and suggested improvements within the Report(s) to move forward with the North Wales Growth Deal.
3. To assess the NWEAB's position against the recommendations and conclusions of the Report(s).

DISCUSSION

It was noted that some of these recommendations had not been accepted, and were to be considered further in the Swansea Bay region.

The meeting commenced at 11.00am and concluded at 1:05pm.

Chair