



NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD DECISION NOTICE

DATE OF DECISION

25 March 2022

SUBJECT

ITEM 5: CHANGE CONTROL - DIGITAL PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

DECISION

1. To approve the change request to restructure three of the Digital Programme's digital infrastructure projects to create two projects.
2. To note that the Connected Corridors and Full Fibre at Key Sites projects are proposed to be combined into one project to focus on delivery of new fibreoptic network capacity to meet the spending objectives of the two projects. Subject to further assessment of requirements (where a requirement for new fibreoptic networks is identified) an element of the Connected Campus project may be included in this new project. No change is recommended to the Last Few % infrastructure project or DSP research and development project.
3. To note revised programme delivery structure and timetable as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
4. To note that there is a requirement to notify Welsh and UK Government of the change agreed.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The outcome of the Economic Case workshops for the Connected Corridors project was the identification of a preferred option which consists of investment in new fibreoptic network coverage in the region. The Digital Programme's Full Fibre at Key Sites project, currently at SOC stage, is also targeting fibreoptic network coverage, with the current 'key sites' typically close to the transport 'corridors' sites in scope for the Connected Corridors project. This alignment of both locations and now service delivery presents an opportunity to bring the two projects together to deliver spending objectives under a single project. This principle is supported by HM Treasury best practice in its Guide to Developing the Programme Business Case ('Better Business Cases for better outcomes').

To reduce impact to the schedules for project business case development approved by

the NWEAB, changes to the programme structure will need to be implemented at the earliest opportunity. Changes to scope of the next strategic outline cases will need to be made before further consultancy support is commissioned.

Procurement of consultancy support to complete Outline Business Cases for the Connected Corridors, Full Fibre at Key Sites and Connected Campus projects will need to start next quarter and the scope of this work cannot be confirmed until a decision has been made on the programme structure. Regular reviews of the Programme Business Case are recommended by HM Treasury to account for changes in the strategic case and the recent outcomes of project workshops, and both market and Government activity suggest that sufficient changes have happened to require a review.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

The Digital Programme Board and Portfolio Board were consulted.
The Statutory Officers were consulted to seek their views, which have been included in the report.



**Bwrdd Uchelgais Economaidd
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Economic Ambition Board**

NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD DECISION NOTICE

DATE OF DECISION

25 March 2022

SUBJECT

ITEM 6: PROPOSAL FOR DELIVERING LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANS IN NORTH WALES

DECISION

1. To agree to adopting a coordinated, regional approach to delivering the Local Area Energy Plans across north Wales local authorities led by the Portfolio Management Office (via Gwynedd Council as Accountable Body).
 2. To agree to the recruitment of a project manager and two project officers to deliver the LAEPs to be funded by Welsh Government and delegate authority to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the s151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to agree the grant funding agreements with Welsh Government and implement the proposal.
 3. To note that, subject to a grant funding agreement, Welsh Government will provide grant funding to cover the costs of delivering the plans and for the project management resource.
 4. To note that the appropriate project governance arrangements will be implemented in all local authorities to submit and approve the plans.
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REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the agreement of Ambition North Wales to deliver Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) in North Wales.

Welsh Government has made a commitment to support Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) across Wales and proposed a coordinated regional approach to delivery. North Wales' local authority Chief Executives have confirmed their support for this approach

and for delivery to be coordinated by Ambition North Wales' Portfolio Management Office.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

The Portfolio Board was consulted and confirmed by the Chief Executives of the Local Authorities.

The Statutory Officers were consulted to seek their views, which have been included in the report.



NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD DECISION NOTICE

DATE OF DECISION

25 March 2022

SUBJECT

ITEM 7: 2022/23 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET

DECISION

1. Approve the 2022/23 Revenue Budget as presented in Appendix 1 to the report. This includes one-off virements of £85,000 in the revenue budget to be funded from the earmarked reserve.
 2. To approve funding contributions to include the partner contributions, local authorities' supplementary contributions and partner interest contributions.
 3. To approve the Business Delivery Board's request, that the £20,000 underspend against their 2021/22 budget is carried forward to 2022/23 to give them a total budget of £40,000.
 4. To approve the Capital Budget for the Growth Deal as presented in Appendix 2.
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REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In order to operate effectively within the funding available, the NWEAB requires an annual budget to be approved.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

The Executive Group was consulted.

The Statutory Officers were consulted to seek their views, which have been included in the report.



NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD DECISION NOTICE

DATE OF DECISION

25 March 2022

SUBJECT

ITEM 8: PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT OFFICE - STRUCTURE AND CONTRACTS

DECISION

1. To approve the principle of extending the fixed term contracts within the Portfolio Management Office until 31 March 2024 and request that the Portfolio Director action this with immediate effect.
2. To note that costs for this extension will be met from existing funding sources (including reserves) and will result in no additional financial ask on partners.
3. To note that delegated authority has previously been provided [January 2020] to the Portfolio Director to make changes to the Portfolio Management Office structure in consultation with the Chief Executive of the Host Authority and the Statutory Finance Officer to amend the structure as required within the funding envelope.
4. To note that the resource requirements of the Portfolio Management Office for the delivery of the Growth Deal post March 2024 will be part of a review of regional resources to be carried out by the Executive Officers Group which will also take into consideration the wider implications of the Regional Economic Framework, Shared Prosperity and other funding sources and the Corporate Joint Committee and the resources required at local authority level to develop and deliver economic development and local regeneration projects and programmes.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To present a proposal and rationale to the Board for the extension of fixed term contracts within the Portfolio Management Office.

The Board has a responsibility for ensuring adequate resources are in place for the delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal.

The Portfolio Management Office was initially established in January 2020 with a small compliment of staff. Following a successful bid for a European Structural Funds (ESF) grant, the team was expanded and the current structure recruited to over the past 18 months.

The ESF grant secured is until the end of June 2023 and the majority of staff within the Portfolio Management Office are on fixed term contracts until 30 June 2023.

This represents a significant risk for the Portfolio Management Office as staff who are key to delivering the North Wales Growth Deal are approaching the final 12 months of their contracts and could seek other opportunities with a greater degree of contractual certainty.

As a result of a number of factors including the pandemic, project development delays and recruitment challenges the Growth Deal is approximately 12 months behind the original delivery timetable. With one project already in delivery, the next 24 months are crucial in terms of moving the remaining projects forward to the delivery phase where we begin to realise the benefits for North Wales.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

The Executive Group was consulted.

The Statutory Officers were consulted to seek their views, which have been included in the report.
