



Complete Agenda

**Bwrdd Uchelgais Economaidd
Gogledd Cymru**

**North Wales
Economic Ambition Board**

Meeting

NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD

Date and Time

9.00 am, FRIDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

Location

Virtual Meeting

(For public access to the meeting, please contact us)

Contact Point

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NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD

MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Voting Members

Councillors

Gary Pritchard	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Jason McLellan	Denbighshire County Council
Mark Pritchard	Wrexham County Borough Council
Dave Hughes	Flintshire County Council
Charlie McCoubrey	Conwy County Borough Council
Dyfrig Siencyn	Cyngor Gwynedd

Advisers - Non-voting

Maria Hinfelaar	Wrexham University
Yana Williams	Coleg Cambria
Aled Jones-Griffith	Grwp Llandrillo Menai
Askar Sheibani	Business Delivery Board
Professor Edmund Burke	Bangor University

Chief Officers - Non-voting

Dylan Williams	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Rhun ap Gareth	Conwy County Borough Council
Neal Cockerton	Flintshire County Council
Dafydd Gibbard	Cyngor Gwynedd
Ian Bancroft	Wrexham County Borough Council
Graham Boase	Denbighshire County Council

Officers in Attendance

Dewi Morgan	Section 151 Officer
Iwan G. Evans	Monitoring Officer
Alwen Williams	Portfolio Director
Hedd Vaughan Evans	Head of Operations
Nia Medi Williams	Senior Operations Officer

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declarations of Personal Interest

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5 - 14

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2024 be signed as a true record.

5. 2024/25 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET - END OF AUGUST 2024 REVIEW

15 - 23

Dewi Morgan (Host Authority Head of Finance and Statutory Finance Officer) and Sian Pugh (Host Authority Assistant Head of Finance) to present the report.

6. NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD JOINT COMMITTEE - DETAILED AUDIT PLAN 2024

24 - 41

To present the Detailed Audit Plan for the NWEAB Joint Committee provided by Audit Wales.

7. ADVANCED WIRELESS - OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

42 - 103

Stuart Whitfield (Digital Programme Manager) to present the report.

8. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair shall propose that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussions on the following items due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

There is an acknowledged public interest in openness in relation to the use of public resources and related financial issues. It is also acknowledged that there are occasions, in order to protect the financial and commercial interests that matters related to such information need to be discussed without being publicised. The reports deal specifically with financial and business matters and related discussions. Publication of such commercially

sensitive information could adversely affect the interests of the bodies and the Councils and undermine the confidence of other Growth Deal participants in sharing sensitive information for consideration. This would be contrary to the wider public interest of securing the best overall outcome.

9. TOURISM TALENT NETWORK - FULL BUSINESS CASE

Dafydd Owen Jones (Agri-food and Tourism Project Manager) and Colin David Mathews (Growth Deal Land and Property Programme Manager) to present the report.

NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD 19/07/2024

Present:

Voting Members – Councillors: - Jason McLellan (Denbighshire County Council), Gary Pritchard (Anglesey County Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council), Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy County Borough Council), and Dyfrig Siencyn (Cyngor Gwynedd) (Chair).

Advisors – Askar Sheibani (Business Delivery Board), Maria Hinfelaar (University of Wrexham) and Chris Drew (Bangor University).

Chief Officers – Dylan Williams (Anglesey County Council), Rhun ap Gareth (Conwy County Borough Council), Andrew Farrow (Flintshire County Council), Llyr Beaumont Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd), Ian Bancroft (Wrexham County Borough Council) and Graham Boase (Denbighshire County Council).

Officers in attendance -

Host Authority - Iwan G Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Statutory Finance Officer), Siân Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

Ambition North Wales - Alwen Williams (Portfolio Director), Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Operations Manager), Stuart Whitfield (Digital Programme Manager), David Mathews (Land and Property Programme Manager), Robyn Lovelock (Growth Deal Programme Manager), Elgan Roberts (Energy Programme Manager) and Nia Medi Williams (Senior Executive Officer).

Observers - Wendy Boddington (Observer, Welsh Government) and John Hawkins (UK Government).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:-

- Councillor Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council) (Vice Chair)
- Professor Edmund Burke (Bangor University) with Chris Drew deputising;
- Professor Joe Yates (University of Wrexham)
- Yana Williams (Coleg Cambria)
- Aled Jones-Griffith (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai)
- Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council) with Andrew Farrow deputising;
- Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Llyr Beaumont Jones deputising.
- **Gareth Ashman and Susan Concoran (UK Government Observers) with John Hawkins deputising.**

The Chair welcomed the deputies to the meeting.

Robyn Lovelock (Growth Deal Programme Manager) was thanked for her significant contribution to the work of the Ambition Board over several years, as she attended her last meeting. Good wishes were expressed to her for the future.

Expressions of good wishes were shared to Llinos Medi (former Leader of Anglesey County Council) after her recent success at the General Election. She was thanked for her

contribution to the Board during her tenure as Councillor and was wished every success in the future.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Chris Drew (Bangor University) for Item 11. It was noted that it was a prejudicial interest, and he withdrew from the meeting for the item.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent matters were raised.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 June 2024 as a true record.

5. NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT 2024/25

The report was presented by the Head of Operations with the support of Ambition North Wales officers.

RESOLVED

- 1. To consider and note the Quarter 1 Performance Report and the updated Portfolio Risk Register.**
- 2. To approve the Quarter 1 Performance Report to the Welsh Government and UK Government, as well as the local authority scrutiny committees.**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Quarterly reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is one of the requirements of the Final Growth Deal Agreement. Following consideration by the Ambition Board, the reports will be shared with the Welsh Government, UK Government and the local authority scrutiny committees.

DISCUSSION

Members were guided through the Ambition North Wales updates and the following programmes were specifically highlighted:

The Digital Programme

Pride was expressed that an Outline Business Case for '4G+' Linked Sites and Corridors had been approved by the Board in March. It was explained that the development of a Full Business Case including preparations for market engagement has already begun.

It was noted that the Gateway 2 Review on the Outline Business Case of the Connected Campuses Advanced Wireless scheme had been completed in May. It was confirmed that the project had received an Amber rating, and it was stressed that work was under-way to address the recommendations prior to the presentation of the Outline Business Case to the Board in September.

Reference was made to a number of regional projects under way to support SMEs to research new technologies and improve broadband connectivity in local communities. It was noted that these projects were funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Low Carbon Energy Programme

It was stated that the Bangor University-led 'Egni' project was making good progress. It was noted that RIBA Phase 3 was ready to be signed off and it was hoped that a Full Business Case would be presented to the Board in the spring. Similarly, it was confirmed that positive progress has been made to overcome key issues relating to the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Project funding agreement, before submitting the Full Business case to the Board for consideration.

It was noted that there was positive co-operation with the Welsh Government to realise the Holyhead Hydrogen Hub project. It was explained that the project hoped to strengthen the offtake purchase position for Hydrogen before moving on to the next step.

It was confirmed that the Fund's Advisor tender documents attached to the Smart Local Energy project was currently being finalised, together with the timetable for the launch of the tender and review of submissions - these were currently being planned.

Land and Property Programme

Reference was made to several programme projects including Warren Hall, Western Gateway, Former North Wales Hospital, Parc Bryn Cegin, Wrexham Gateway and Holyhead Port.

It was explained that Stage Fifty Ltd, developers of the Kinmel Studios project, had been placed in administration in early April 2024 by their main funder. It was stressed that the proposed discussions had taken place between Ambition North Wales officers, Conwy County Borough Council and the key individuals involved in the original proposal. It was confirmed that decisions would be made to consider whether the revised application could be developed. It was trusted that the project could be delivered before the end of the year despite the risks. It was hoped that funding agreements for the project would be confirmed by the autumn.

Agri-Food and Tourism Programme

It was reported that the Responsible Adventures project was continuing to develop an Outline Business Case through site visits with stakeholders and preparation for pre-planning applications. It was noted that it was hoped that the Outline Business Case would be presented to the Board before the end of this year.

It was mentioned that the Tourism Talent Network team and the Portfolio Management Office were working together to complete the procurement and the Full Business Case. It was also made clear that work was under-way for a re-brand, a project funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund to boost student engagement. It was noted that work was ongoing to select the project's final sub-centre.

It was recognised that officers were considering alternatives to Glynllifon's Rural Economy Hub after receiving the environmental survey feedback from Natural Resources Wales.

The Committee was reminded that a task and finish group had been set up to explore the gaps in the agriculture and horticulture areas of the Growth Deal and that a draft research report had been received. It was confirmed that the group was working with the Programme Board and wider stakeholders to complete the report and share it regionally.

Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Programme

It was mentioned that the construction of the Optics Centre and Enterprise Engineering was progressing well and it was noted that further procurement for the project has been launched to refurbish optics, possess suitable equipment as well as develop its hydrogen component.

The details of the Portfolio Risk Register were then given and it was confirmed that the 'Planning and Statutory Consent' gross risk had increased during the quarter. This risk had been identified as high; however consent was managed at programme and project level within the Growth Deal to ensure it was managed effectively.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

6. NWEAB'S STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2023/24

The report was presented by the Statutory Finance Officer.

RESOLVED

To accept and note the Ambition Board's Draft Statement of Accounts (subject to audit) for 2023/24.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Board is not statutorily required to approve the draft version of the Joint-Committee's Statement of Accounts, but we consider that presenting the draft statement for information to be good practice to be followed.

The Board will need to approve the final version following receipt of the Audit Wales report, and the submission of the draft now was an opportunity for Board members to consider the content and enquire the financial officers about the content. This was an opportunity for Members to equip themselves with relevant information to consider relevant risks, and other matters that would be subject to audit, in their context.

DISCUSSION

Members were reminded that the information presented in the report had already been shared in an alternative form at a board meeting on 17 May this year when considering the Ambition Board's Revenue and Capital Out-turn position for 2023/24, and Members were reminded of the decisions made. It was stressed that the information presented in this Report was consistent with that information.

It was explained that the Report presented technical issues relating to accounting conventions. Reference was made to the various sections of the Departments detailing on capital expenditure, fund balances and total grants received up to 31 March 2024.

It was confirmed that the value of the pension assets continued to exceed the value of the commitments. It was elaborated that there was a net asset position of £404,000 at the end of the financial year. This was recognised as a decrease from the previous year where the net asset position of pensions assets was £572,000. It was explained that there was a reduction this year as actuary prices used UK corporate bonds. It was noted that the yield of the corporate bonds has been high as a result of high interest and high inflation, resulting in higher accounting discount rates which placed a significantly lower value on the asset as a result of high interest and inflation of pension additions. The value of the asset on the balance sheet was confirmed and shown as £0 as directed by the actuary.

It was reported that the Statutory Finance Officer signed the Statement on 21 June 2024 and testified that he considered it had been prepared in accordance with the code of practice laid down by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Accounting for Local Authorities. It was believed that the statement presented a true and fair picture of the financial position of the Ambition Board as of 31 March 2024 as well as the income and expenditure of the Joint-Committee for the year that ended on that date.

It was stressed that the Statement was currently being reviewed by Audit Wales and the Ambition Board's external auditors. It was elaborated that the final accounts as well as the auditors' report would be submitted to the Joint-Committee during the autumn.

It was considered that the level of reserves had doubled in recent years to fund an interest income fund. It was explained that this money would be spent in the future if interest rates remain high and should the need to borrow arises as the grant monies received was not sufficient to meet the expenditure needs. It was noted that this fund would be used to fund those interest rates. Plans to spend the reserves in the coming years were highlighted, such as funding the employment of Portfolio Office officers. It was emphasised that officers were keeping a constant eye on the funds and the situation but the Board at this time was considered to be in a comfortable position.

It was explained that the Joint-Committee was not statutorily required to approve the draft version of the accounts but submitting the draft Statement was considered to be good practice.

7. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The report was presented by the Head of Operations.

DECISION

To accept and approve the Annual Governance Statement.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Accounting and Audit (Wales) Regulations (as amended) impose specific requirements on public bodies implementing partnership management through formal joint committees.

Regulation 5 requires the Joint Committee to review and approve annually a statement of internal control. The Annual Governance Statement had been prepared in compliance with this requirement. The document had been prepared to offer a framework to the Economic Ambition Board's operation.

DISCUSSION

The Report was submitted in its annual form confirming that small changes had been made this year in line with the comments and recommendations from the auditors.

It was made explained that the Report presented information on a number of issues to ensure that internal governance was robust and fit for purpose.

8. LPWAN (LOW-POWER, WIDE-AREA NETWORK) - BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE

The report was presented by the Digital Programme Manager.

DECISION

- 1. To approve a Business Justification Case for the LPWAN project and authorise the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to procure and establish the required frameworks to carry out the project, subject to the Portfolio Management Office dealing with the ongoing issues as set out in Section 7.1 of the report.**
- 2. That the Board note the process for accessing funding through the frameworks will involve the submission of a delivery plan for each local authority area and delegate authority to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Lead Member for the Digital Programme and the Digital Programme Board to approve the delivery plans and delegate solely to the Portfolio Director the subsequent allocation of funding through the frameworks.**
- 3. Noting that the LPWAN Business Justification Case is a sub-series of the larger Connected Campuses project from which the funding will be allocated and agrees to the principle that any underspend in the LPWAN project budget is earmarked to the Connected Campuses project in the first instance.**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Board's approval of the Business Justification Case for the LPWAN Project.

As a project delivered by Ambition North Wales, approval was required by the Board to establish the frameworks that will deliver the project. Due to the nature and value of the project, in line with the Better Business Case guidance, a Business Justification Case is presented that requires only a single approval from the Board.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the use of the Internet of Things (IoT) - a network of devices and sensors that can collect and share data with people or other devices, and operate in accordance with the information - had grown rapidly in use and diversity since 1999. It was confirmed that there were around 950 gateways to the Internet of Things over Britain. It was elaborated that these advances in high-quality data collection allow users to make informed decisions. Details were given that this was possible as users received detailed information about an asset at different scales, distances and frequencies, through a medium that disposes of the overall challenges of data collection. It was explained that a number of private Internet of Things Networks already exist in Britain such as smart meters and environmental monitoring systems.

It was noted that the Internet of Things were used in Britain and globally to deliver economic benefits across the public and private sectors. It was confirmed that the aim of this project was to expand the use of the Internet of Things, which had wide applications in the region, using the public sector as an anchor user to support wider accessibility to the private sector.

It was reported that the LPWAN project had four main expenditure objectives, namely:

1. Delivering affordable and easy-to-use, LPWAN connectivity to priority locations in the region's counties by 2027 (enabling efficiency across public services and supporting innovation in both the private and public sectors).
2. Supporting the adoption of the new 10-20 LPWAN technology programmes across the public and private sectors in the region by 2032.
3. Supporting between £0.1m and £0.5m investment in the region by 2032.

4. Supporting the creation of 20 jobs in the region by 2032.

It was confirmed that LPWAN networks were designed for Internet of Things applications and servicing with low data rates, long-life batteries and can operate in remote and hard-to-reach locations.

It was explained that several technologies were to be used as part of the LPWAN scheme, including LTE-M and NB-IoT. It was noted that these are used in association with mobile phone networks and detailing that it would be possible to integrate the LPWAN network with existing mobile base stations (telephone masts). Using these as part of the network was considered suitable as they had been optimised for very long battery life and could cope with higher data rates because they are usually allowed to provide a service to users for a monthly fee in accordance with the provider company's management.

It was elaborated that LoRa technology was also used within the LPWAN scheme. It was explained that this was an open-source technology using a **spectrum-free licence**. It was noted that it was an effective method of providing a good service with very low transmission power while also allowing the construction of an end-to-end private solution.

It was recognised that receiving access to the LPWAN network could be challenging for small businesses due to the required initial investment, particularly where they had not trialled the network's use to their business before committing financially. However, attention was drawn to areas where the use of the LPWAN network had been a success such as: improving fertiliser use and monitoring soil conditions in the agricultural area as well as monitoring parking bay use and visitor numbers in buildings within the tourism area.

It was declared that there were currently around 100 gateways to the network over the North Wales region and it was noted that the project would fill the gaps currently seen in the system by developing more gateways to the network. It was hoped there would be around 250 gateways to the network as the project develops. Conwy County Borough Council was congratulated on successfully implementing LPWAN over a large portion of the County, but it was explained that these gateways will ensure network access across the region in line with requirements to fill in the gaps.

It was mentioned that the first phase of the scheme would be to develop the initial mapping of the best possible gateway locations. It was explained that Ambition North Wales will acquire the portals giving local authorities the opportunity to invest in those portals. It was confirmed this will ensure that the framework remains intact and has the same management across the region. It was elaborated that the second phase of the scheme secured the use of sensors to show applications and benefits across the services. It was explained that this would lead to the third phase of the scheme calling on local authority Leaders to promote it and stimulate the ability to add additional users to the network.

It was stressed that set dates for joining the network would be given for a period of three years once the local authorities had provided a list of sites for the required gateways. It was elaborated that the authorities would be asked to report on the benefits they had seen after they use the network as well as monitoring the numbers who adopt the network from the private sector.

It was stated that the business justification case had been reviewed and that strategic, economic, commercial, and financial feedback had been received. Further details were given of the managerial feedback received and it was confirmed that a part-time project manager would be appointed in September to oversee the updates. It was noted that

officers would also update the risk register and keeping in constant contact with local authorities to be aware of their network requirements.

It was recognised that there were some risks to the scheme including:

- **Revenue Funding** - It was noted that the local authorities were meeting the revenue costs in supporting the additional capacity and carrying out activities to promote moderate demand over a three-year period. It was noted the councils' local delivery plans would confirm the use levels that can be coped with, and it was stressed that the authorities had provided positive feedback that the increase in use costs was not a cause for concern.
- **Public sector adoption** - It was mentioned that if councils fail to identify productive programmes that could lead to benefits, there was a risk that extended gateway services could become unsustainable. It was explained that the risk could be managed through local use plans to commit the councils to an acceptable level of capable use and the network would grow in response to demand. It was emphasised that the key mitigation approach was intensive promotion and reviewing opportunities within local authorities and public bodies before and while it is in use.
- **Private sector adoption** – It was confirmed that should the level of commitment from the private sector be limited, the wider indirect benefits associated with innovation, growth and employment would not be realised. The importance of local promotion activities was stressed. It was noted that Ambition North Wales will also work with stakeholders already promoting the Internet of Things to raise awareness and receive further funding to extend engagement.

Promoting the network with the private sector was seen as key to the success of the scheme within the region. It was hoped that a bespoke promotional programme would be developed to ensure that this risk was addressed as well as promotion activities. The details of the anticipated promotion scheme were given and it was noted that it included workshops, seminars and sharing information on the internet. It was emphasised this would be the responsibility of the local authorities and the project manager.

It was reported that it was hoped that Local Use Plans would be approved within the local authorities by March 2025 with the first activities to promote demand taking place in spring 2025. Project spending had been confirmed to be approximately £1.1m.

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following items due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - information about the financial or business transactions of any specific person (including the authority that retains that information).

There was an acknowledged public interest in being open about the use of public resources and related financial issues. It is recognised, however, that there were occasions in order to protect public financial and commercial interests, where such information must be discussed without being publicised. The reports related specifically to financial and business matters and related discussions. Publication of such commercially sensitive information could adversely affect the interests of the bodies and the Councils and undermine the confidence of other Growth Deal participants in sharing sensitive information for consideration. This would be contrary to the wider public interest of securing the best overall outcome.

10. CYDNERTH OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The report was presented by the Low Carbon Energy Programme Manager.

DECISION

1. To approve the Outline Business Case for the Cydnerth project, subject to Menter Môn Morlais Cyf, addressing the matters noted in the report, as described in Section 7.1, and requesting a Full Business Case to be prepared for the Board's consideration.
2. To authorise the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Host Authority's Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to agree on draft terms in accordance with the Report as a basis for the final financial arrangements for the project, which will determine the funding to be agreed by the Board at the Full Business Case stage.
3. To note that the proposed funding model for the project is 100% commercial loan, subject to confirmation of the subsidy control position on approval of the Full Business Case and approves in principle that the interest from the loan once the cost of borrowing payments for the loan element have been paid, is allocated to a reserve to be used to fund the Portfolio Management Office in future years.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Board's approval of the Outline Business Case for the Cydnerth project.

DISCUSSION

The report was discussed.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL BIOTECHNOLOGY CENTRE - BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE

The report was presented by the Growth Deal Programme Manager.

DECISION

1. To approve the Business Justification Case for the Environmental Biotechnology Centre and to authorise the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the chair, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to agree and enter into a funding agreement with Bangor University for the delivery of the project, subject to Bangor University addressing the outstanding issues noted in Section 7 of the Report and securing all necessary internal approvals for the project.
2. To note that there will be two further procurement steps to deliver the project and to delegate to the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-chair, Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to approve procurement details and allocate prior to releasing funding for these steps.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Board's approval for Full Business Justification Case for Environmental Biotechnology Centre Project.

Bangor University has completed the procurement work for the project with a plan to buy equipment. The Business Justification Case will be submitted to the Board for a final Investment decision. Due to the nature and value of the project, in line with the Better

Business Case guidance, a Business Justification Case is presented that requires only a single approval from the Board.

DISCUSSION

The report was discussed.

The meeting commenced at 09:30am and concluded at 10:40am.

Chair



REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD

20/09/2024

Title: 2024/25 Revenue and Capital Budget – End of August 2024 Review.

Author: Dewi A Morgan, Host Authority Head of Finance (Statutory Finance Officer)

Sian Pugh, Host Authority Assistant Head of Finance

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report intends to provide the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) with details of the actual revenue expenditure and income up to the end of August 2024, as well as projected full year out-turn against its annual budget. It also shows the revised proposed capital programme as at the end of August 2024.
- 1.2 In order to operate effectively, the Joint Committee needs to be aware of its projected expenditure position against its approved annual budget.

2. Decision Sought

The Board is asked to:-

- 2.1 Note and accept the NWEAB's revenue end of August 2024 review (Appendix 1).
 - 2.2 Note and accept the NWEAB's reserves update (Appendix 2).
 - 2.3 Agree the NWEAB's revised capital expenditure profile (Appendix 3).
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3. Reasons for the Decision

- 3.1 To note a forecasted underspend of £5,966 against the revenue budget in 2024/25.
- 3.2 To note a further slippage on the capital programme, with an estimated expenditure of £14.28m in 2024/25 compared to an approved budget of £24.67m for the year.

4. Background and Relevant Considerations

- 4.1 The NWEAB in its meeting on 15 March 2024 approved its 2024/25 revenue and capital budget.
- 4.2 The budget will continue to be monitored and reviewed throughout the 2024/25 financial year, and the third quarter review will be presented to the Portfolio Board and the NWEAB in January 2025.

Revenue

5. Expenditure and income in 2024/25

- 5.1 Appendix 1 provides a detailed analysis of the actual expenditure and income up to the end of August 2024, together with projected full year out-turn against its annual budget.
- 5.2 The net out-turn position at the end of the 2024/25 financial year is forecasted to be an underspend of £5,966.

Portfolio Management Office

- 5.3 The net overspend of £9,368 forecasted for the Portfolio Management Office is mainly due to the overspend on supplies and services. The overspend is due to IT system costs and this budget heading will need to be reviewed for future years.

Accountable Body Support Services

- 5.4 The net underspend of £20,000 on Cyngor Gwynedd's finance services support will be used to fund the external financial support overspend on the Projects heading.

Joint Committee

5.5 The expenditure under the Joint Committee heading is expected to be within the budget for 2024/25.

Projects

5.6 The Projects heading shows a net overspend of £70,000 and this is mainly due to external legal support costs on numerous projects in the capital programme.

Grant schemes

5.7 The expenditure under this heading mainly includes grant funded Local Area Energy and Shared Prosperity Fund projects. An extension until March 2025 has been recently received on the Local Area Energy grant, therefore although it's showing as an overspend, it will be funded by the surplus grant shown in the income section.

Funding Contributions

5.8 The main income streams for 2024/25 include partner contributions, the revenue allocation of the North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD) grant, Welsh Government Energy grant, The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (staff secondment), UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the earmarked reserve.

NWEAB Reserves

5.9 Appendix 2 shows the estimated reserve balances at 31 March 2025.

5.10 The total general earmarked reserve balance at 31 March 2024 was £277,927, and £66,950 of this reserve has been allocated in the 2024/25 budget to give an estimated balance of £210,977 at 31 March 2025.

5.11 The estimated projects reserve balance at 31 March 2025 is £152,300.

5.12 The interest reserve is ringfenced to fund the cost of borrowing in future years. Its estimated balance at 31 March 2025 is £7,233,483 and this includes an estimated £2.5m of interest on balances that will be received during the year.

Capital

- 5.13 Appendix 3 shows the revised proposed capital programme as at the end of August 2024.
- 5.14 There is a net reduction of £10.39m in the anticipated expenditure for 2024/25 and this is due to slippage on four projects (Smart Local Energy, Deeside Waste to Fuel, Holyhead Gateway and Former North Wales Hospital). The expenditure on the Centre of Environmental Biotechnology and the Tourism Talent Network (TTN) projects have been brought forward to 2024/25 to correspond to the capital profile in the full business case and business justification case.
- 5.15 There has also been two years delay on the profiled expenditure for the Kinmel Studios (from 2026/27 to 2028/29) and the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub (from 2025/26 to 2027/28) projects.
- 5.16 Based on this revised expenditure profile, the growth deal grant of £56.9m that has already been received is sufficient to finance the capital programme until the end of 2025/26. Ambition North Wales did not receive a growth deal grant payment in 2023/24, and are currently waiting on confirmation from Government on the revised grant funding profile for the remaining years.

6. Consultations Undertaken

- 6.1 The appendices of this report were presented to the Portfolio Board on 6 September 2024.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – 2024/25 North Wales Economic Ambition Board’s Revenue Budget – End of August 2024 Review

Appendix 2 – NWEAB’s reserves position.

Appendix 3 – 2024/25 North Wales Economic Ambition Board’s Capital Budget – End of August 2024 Review

STATUTORY OFFICERS' RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer – Accountable Body:

No observations to add in relation to propriety.

ii. Statutory Finance Officer – Accountable Body:

Author of this report.

2024/25 North Wales Economic Ambition Board's Revenue Budget - End of August 2024 Review

Appendix 1

	Base Budget	One-off virements	Total Budget	August 2024	August 2024 Commitments	Estimated Final Position	Overspend / (Underspend)
Expenditure	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Portfolio Management Office							
Employee Expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	1,395,940	0	1,395,940	544,571	0	1,399,308	3,368
Advertising and Assessment of Candidates	3,000	0	3,000	2,185	0	3,000	0
Travel and Subsistence	11,000	0	11,000	1,848	0	8,000	(3,000)
Training	11,000	0	11,000	5,992	150	11,000	0
Engagement, Events and Meetings	10,000	0	10,000	47	0	10,000	0
Communications and Public Relations	25,000	0	25,000	13,365	4,990	25,000	0
Supplies and Services	11,000	0	11,000	13,010	837	20,000	9,000
Premises	36,000	0	36,000	0	0	36,000	0
Portfolio and Programme Development	30,000	0	30,000	17,000	0	30,000	0
Portfolio Management Office Total	1,532,940	0	1,532,940	598,018	5,977	1,542,308	9,368
Accountable Body Support Services							
Finance Services Support	110,860	0	110,860	0	0	90,860	(20,000)
Legal (includes Monitoring Officer)	29,690	0	29,690	0	0	29,690	0
Corporate Support	45,700	0	45,700	13,080	0	45,700	0
Information Technology	21,920	0	21,920	0	0	21,920	0
Insurance	4,130	0	4,130	0	0	4,130	0
Accountable Body Support Services Total	212,300	0	212,300	13,080	0	192,300	(20,000)
Joint Committee							
External Legal Support	18,000	0	18,000	0	0	18,000	0
External Financial Fees	10,000	0	10,000	1,545	0	10,000	0
External Audit Fee	27,520	0	27,520	0	0	27,520	0
Business Delivery Board	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	0
Joint Committee Total	70,520	0	70,520	1,545	0	70,520	0
Projects							
Project Business Case Development	200,000	0	200,000	8,500	75,496	165,000	(35,000)
External Legal Support	100,000	0	100,000	66,556	10,787	200,000	100,000
External Financial Support	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	20,000
External Procurement Support	35,000	0	35,000	0	0	20,000	(15,000)
Assurance	40,000	0	40,000	8,910	0	40,000	0
Projects Total	375,000	0	375,000	83,966	86,283	445,000	70,000
Grant schemes							
Employee Expenditure - Local Area Energy Project	99,420	0	99,420	56,498	0	144,840	45,420
Local Area Energy Plans	0	0	0	3,799	32,982	36,781	36,781
Employee Spending - Shared Prosperity Fund	122,640	0	122,640	64,037	0	119,456	(3,184)
Shared Prosperity Plans	550,500	0	550,500	85,954	157,137	550,500	0
Agri-food Status Research	0	0	0	5,783	0	5,783	5,783
Grant schemes Total	772,560	0	772,560	216,071	190,119	857,360	84,800
Total Expenditure	2,963,320	0	2,963,320	912,680	282,379	3,107,488	144,168

2024/25 North Wales Economic Ambition Board's Revenue Budget - End of August 2024 Review

	Base Budget	One-off virements	Total Budget	August 2024	August 2024 Commitments	Estimated Final Position	Overspend / (Underspend)
Income	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Funding Contributions							
Partner Contributions							
Conwy County Borough Council	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	0
Denbighshire County Council	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	0
Flintshire County Council	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	0
Cyngor Gwynedd	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	0
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	0
Wrexham County Borough Council	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	(57,880)	0	(57,880)	0
Bangor University	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	0
Wrexham Glyndwr University	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	0
Coleg Cambria	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	0
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	(28,950)	0	(28,950)	0
Local Authorities' Supplementary Contributions							
Conwy County Borough Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Denbighshire County Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Flintshire County Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Cyngor Gwynedd	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Wrexham County Borough Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Other							
North Wales Growth Deal Grant	(1,100,000)	0	(1,100,000)	0	0	(1,100,000)	0
Welsh Government Energy Grant	(106,180)	0	(106,180)	0	0	(184,994)	(78,814)
The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee	0	0	0	0	0	(70,396)	(70,396)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	(973,600)	0	(973,600)	(97,336)	0	(973,600)	0
Welsh Government Grant - Student Placement	(13,510)	0	(13,510)	0	0	(8,651)	4,859
Agri-food Status Research Contributions	0	0	0	(1,967)	0	(5,783)	(5,783)
Earmarked Reserve	(66,950)	0	(66,950)	0	0	(66,950)	0
Total Income	(2,963,320)	0	(2,963,320)	(802,383)	0	(3,113,454)	(150,134)
Net Overspend / (Underspend)	0	0	0	110,297	282,379	(5,966)	(5,966)

	£
Total earmarked reserve at 31 March 2024	(277,927)
2024/25 budget allocation	66,950
Total earmarked reserve at 31 March 2025	(210,977)

	£
Total projects reserve at 31 March 2024	(152,300)
Usage in 2024/25	0
Total projects reserve at 31 March 2025	(152,300)

	£
Total interest reserve at 31 March 2024	(4,733,483)
Estimate interest on balances 2024/25	(2,500,000)
Total interest reserve at 31 March 2025	(7,233,483)

Programme	Project	Project Sponsor	2021/22 (£m)	2022/23 (£m)	2023/24 (£m)	2024/25 (£m)	2025/26 (£m)	2026/27 (£m)	2027/28 (£m)	2028/29 (£m)	2029/30 (£m)	2030/31 (£m)	2031/32 (£m)	2032/33 (£m)	2033/34 (£m)	2034/35 (£m)	Total (£m)
Digital	Digital Signal Processing Centre (DSP)	Bangor University	0.12	1.66	0.37	0.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.96
Digital	Connected Key Sites and Corridors	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	4.00	2.00	2.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.87
Digital	Connected Campus	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.94	10.10	4.93	4.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.68
Digital	Connecting the last few percent	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.32	1.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.17
Low carbon energy	Cydnorth (Morlais)	Menter Môn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.33	4.44	1.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.87
Low carbon energy	Egni (Low Carbon Energy Centre of Excellence)	Bangor University	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.97	1.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.94
Low carbon energy	Trawsfynydd Power Station	Cwmni Eginio	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.50	2.50	5.00	5.70	5.00	0.00	19.70
Low carbon energy	Hydrogen Hub and Transport Decarbonisation	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.61	5.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.23
Low carbon energy	Smart Local Energy	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	9.25	9.25	3.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	24.63
Low carbon energy	Deeside Waste to Fuel	The Circular Economy Ltd	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.20	3.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.40
Low carbon energy	Holyhead Hydrogen Hub	Menter Môn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.90	1.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.80
Land and property	Holyhead Gateway	Stena Line	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.64	17.00	9.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	34.47
Land and property	Warren Hall Strategic Site	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.38	7.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.77
Land and property	Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.47	3.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.94
Land and property	Parc Bryn Cegin Strategic Site	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.91
Land and property	Western Gateway, Wrexham	NWEAB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.48	4.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.96
Land and property	Kinmel Studios	Stage Fifty	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.40	3.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.80
Land and property	Wrexham Gateway	Wrexham County Borough Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.79	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.79
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Centre of Environmental Biotechnology (CEB)	Bangor University	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.71	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.96
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre	Glyndŵr University	0.00	0.00	0.75	6.52	4.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.55
Agri-food and tourism	Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.20	4.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.82
Agri-food and tourism	Tourism Talent Network	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.14	1.28	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.43
Agri-food and tourism	Responsible Adventure*	Zip World	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.30	3.70	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.20
2.15% to fund the NWEAB's revenue budget			0.22	0.28	0.56	1.10	1.15	0.82	0.30	0.15	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.07	0.05	5.15
Anticipated expenditure by 31/03			0.34	1.94	1.68	14.28	30.28	55.35	57.15	45.48	14.88	2.60	5.10	5.80	5.07	0.05	240.00
Approved budget (March 2024)			0.34	1.94	1.05	24.67	58.68	68.53	44.81	19.71	1.65	2.60	5.10	5.80	5.07	0.05	240.00
Variance			0.00	0.00	0.63	(10.39)	(28.40)	(13.18)	12.34	25.77	13.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

North Wales Economic Ambition Board Joint Committee – Detailed Audit Plan 2024

Audit year: 2023-24

Date issued: August 2024

Document reference: 4430A2024



This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions. Further information can be found in our [Statement of Responsibilities](#).

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

About Audit Wales

Our aims and ambitions

Assure



the people of
Wales that public
money is well
managed

Explain



how public
money is being
used to meet
people's needs

Inspire



and empower
the Welsh
public sector to
improve



Fully exploit
our unique
perspective,
expertise and
depth of insight



Strengthen our
position as an
authoritative,
trusted and
independent
voice



Increase our
visibility,
influence and
relevance



Be a model
organisation for
the public sector
in Wales and
beyond

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Introduction

This Detailed Audit Plan specifies my statutory responsibilities as your external auditor and to fulfil my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice.

It sets out the work my team intends undertaking to address the audit risks identified and other key areas of focus during 2024.

It also sets out my estimated audit fee, details of my audit team and key dates for delivering my audit team's activities and planned outputs.



Adrian Crompton

Auditor General for
Wales

Audit of financial statements

I am required to issue a report on your financial statements which includes an opinion on their 'truth and fairness' and the proper preparation in accordance with accounting requirements.

I will also report by exception on a number of matters which are set out in more detail in our [Statement of Responsibilities](#).

In addition to my responsibilities for auditing the North Wales Economic Ambition Board Joint Committee's (the Joint Committee) financial statements, I also have responsibility for responding to questions and objections about the accounts from local electors (additional fees will be charged for this work, if necessary).

I do not seek to obtain absolute assurance on the truth and fairness of the financial statements and related notes but adopt a concept of materiality. My aim is to identify material misstatements, that is, those that might result in a reader of the accounts being misled. The levels at which I judge such misstatements to be material is set out later in this plan.

There have been no limitations imposed on me in planning the scope of this audit.

Performance audit work

I must satisfy myself that the Joint Committee has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. I do this by undertaking an appropriate programme of performance audit work each year.

My work programme is informed by specific issues and risks facing the Joint Committee and wider local government in Wales. I have also taken account of the work that is being undertaken or planned by other external review bodies and by internal audit.

My performance audit work is designed to comply with auditing standards set out by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI). This is a global umbrella organisation for the performance audit community. It is a non-governmental organisation with special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

Your audit at a glance



My financial statements audit will concentrate on your risks and other areas of focus

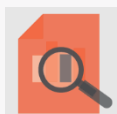
My audit planning has identified the following risks:

Significant financial statement risk

- Management Override

Other areas of audit focus

- Valuation of pension fund net liability



My performance audit will include:

Local Project: Governance Arrangements

Financial statements' materiality



Materiality £83,000

My aim is to identify and correct material misstatements, that is, those that might otherwise mislead the user of the accounts.

Materiality is calculated using:

- 2023-24 gross expenditure of £4.159 million.
- Materiality percentage of 2%

I report to those charged with governance any misstatements above a trivial level (set at 5% of materiality). This level for 2023-24 is £4,159.



Areas of specific interest

There are some areas of the accounts that may be of more importance to the user of the accounts, and we have set a lower materiality level for these:

- Senior officer remuneration £1,000
- Related party disclosures - £10,000 for individuals and £83,000 for other bodies

Significant financial statements' risks

Significant risks are identified risks of material misstatement for which the assessment of inherent risk is close to the upper end of the spectrum of inherent risk or those which are to be treated as a significant risk in accordance with the requirements of other ISAs. The ISAs require us to focus more attention on these significant risks.

Exhibit 1: significant financial statement risks

Significant risk	Our planned response
<p>The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk [ISA 240.32-33].</p>	<p>The audit team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• test the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements;• review accounting estimates for bias; and• evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Other areas of focus

I set out other identified risks of material misstatement which, whilst not determined to be significant risks as above, I would like to bring to your attention.

Exhibit 2: other areas of focus

Audit risk	Our planned response
<p>Valuation of pension fund net liability The Local Government Pension scheme (LGPS) pension fund liability as reflected in the financial statements are material estimates.</p> <p>The nature of this estimate means that it is subject to a high degree of estimation uncertainty as it is sensitive to small adjustments in the assumptions used in its calculation.</p> <p>The impact of economic conditions, particularly interest rate levels also have a significant impact on the liability. At 31 March 2024 for example, the liability was in fact a surplus, primarily due to higher interest rates.</p>	<p>The audit team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the instructions issued by management to their management experts (actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary’s work; • assess the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the valuations; • assess the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Joint Committee to the actuary to estimate the liability; • test the accuracy of the pension fund net liability and disclosures in the financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary; and • assess the reasonableness of the assumptions made by the actuary by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (auditor’s expert) and undertaking any additional procedures required.

Financial statements' audit timetable

I set out below key dates for delivery of my accounts audit work and planned outputs.

Exhibit 3: key dates for delivery of planned outputs

Planned output	Work undertaken	Report finalised
2024 Detailed Audit Plan	July 2024	August 2024
Audit of financial statements work: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit of Financial Statements Report• Opinion on the Financial Statements	July – August 2024	November 2024

Planned performance audit work

I set out below details of my performance audit work.

Exhibit 4: Planned performance audit work

Local project work – Governance Arrangements	A review of the Board’s compliance with its Governance Arrangements.	Timescales for the project will be discussed with the Council and detailed within the specific project brief produced for the audit.
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Statutory audit functions

Statutory audit functions

In addition to the audit of the accounts, I have statutory responsibilities to receive questions and objections to the accounts from local electors. These responsibilities are set out in the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004:

- Section 30 Inspection of documents and questions at audit; and
- Section 31 Right to make objections at audit.

As this work is reactive, I have made no allowance in the fee below. If I do receive questions and objections, I will discuss potential audit fees at the time.

Fee and audit team

In January 2024, we published our [Fee Scheme](#) for the 2024-25 year as approved by the Senedd Finance Committee. My fee rates for 2024-25 have increased by an average of 6.4%, as a result of unavoidable inflationary pressures and the ongoing need to invest in audit quality.

I estimate your total audit fee will be **£26,754**.

Planning will be ongoing, and changes to my programme of audit work, and therefore my fee, may be required if any key new risks emerge. I shall make no changes without first discussing them with the Joint Committee.

Our financial audit fee is based on the following assumptions:

- The agreed audit deliverables set out the expected working paper requirements to support the financial statements and include timescales and responsibilities.
- No matters of significance, other than as summarised in this plan, are identified during the audit.

Exhibit 5: breakdown of audit fee

Audit area	Proposed fee for 2024 (£) ¹	Actual fee for 2023 (£)
Audit of financial statements ²	15,023	14,119
Performance audit work ³	11,731	11,025
Total fee	26,754	25,114

¹ The fees shown in this document are exclusive of VAT, which is not charged to you.

² Payable November 2023 to October 2024.

³ Payable April 2024 to March 2025.

The main members of my team, together with their contact details, are summarised in **Exhibit 6**.

Exhibit 6: my local audit team

Name	Role	Contact details
Matthew Edwards	Engagement Director	Matthew.Edwards@audit.wales
Gary Emery	Audit Director (Performance Audit)	Gary.Emery@audit.wales
Yvonne Thomas	Audit Manager (Financial Audit)	Yvonne.Thomas@audit.wales
Carwyn Rees	Audit Manager (Performance Audit)	Carwyn.Rees@audit.wales
Siwan Glyn	Senior Auditor (Financial Audit)	Siwan.Glyn@audit.wales
Alan Hughes	Audit Lead (Performance Audit)	Alan.Hughes@audit.wales

There are some threats to independence that I need to bring to your attention relating to the Audit Manager who is an acquaintance of a member of the Joint Committee’s Executive Group. The work of the Audit Manager does not require any direct contact with the member outside of Joint Committee meetings, and appropriate steps will be implemented to ensure that any potential conflicts are managed. With the exception of this, I can confirm that all other members of my team are independent of the Joint Committee.

Audit quality

Our commitment to audit quality in Audit Wales is absolute. We believe that audit quality is about getting things right first time.

We use a three lines of assurance model to demonstrate how we achieve this. We have established an Audit Quality Committee to co-ordinate and oversee those arrangements. We subject our work to independent scrutiny by QAD* and our Chair, acts as a link to our Board on audit quality. For more information see our [Audit Quality Report 2023](#).

Our People



The first line of assurance is formed by our staff and management who are individually and collectively responsible for achieving the standards of audit quality to which we aspire.

- Selection of right team
- Use of specialists
- Supervisions and review

Arrangements for achieving audit quality



The second line of assurance is formed by the policies, tools, learning & development, guidance, and leadership we provide to our staff to support them in achieving those standards of audit quality.

- Audit platform
- Ethics
- Guidance
- Culture
- Learning and development
- Leadership
- Technical support

Independent assurance



The third line of assurance is formed by those activities that provide independent assurance over the effectiveness of the first two lines of assurance.

- EQCRs
- Themed reviews
- Cold reviews
- Root cause analysis
- Peer review
- Audit Quality Committee
- External monitoring

* QAD is the quality monitoring arm of ICAEW.

Supporting you

Audit Wales has developed a range of resources to support the scrutiny of Welsh public bodies, and to support those bodies in continuing to improve the services they provide to the people of Wales.

Visit our website to find:

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	our newsletter which provides you with regular updates on our public service audit work, good practice, and events.
	our publications which cover our audit work completed at public bodies.
	information on our forward performance audit work programme 2023-2026 which is shaped by stakeholder engagement activity and our picture of public services analysis.
	various data tools and infographics to help you better understand public spending trends including a range of other insights into the scrutiny of public service delivery.

You can find out more about Audit Wales in our [Annual Plan 2024-25](#) and [Our Strategy 2022-27](#).



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REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD
20 SEPTEMBER 2024

TITLE: *Advanced Wireless – Outline Business Case*
AUTHOR: Stuart Whitfield, Digital Programme Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the Advanced Wireless Outline Business Case for consideration by the Board.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Board approve the Outline Business Case for the Advanced Wireless project subject to Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process undertaken, subject to the Portfolio Management Office addressing the outstanding issues set out in Section 7 of the report, and request that a Full Business Case is prepared for the Board to consider.
- 2.2. That the Board delegate to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair final approval of the procurement specification and social value criteria prior to commencing procurement.
- 2.3. That the Board authorises the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Host Authority Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to agree draft terms in accordance with this report for approval by the Economic Ambition Board as a basis for the final funding arrangements for the project which will form the basis of the Grant Offer Letter will be agreed by the Board at the Full Business Case stage.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. To seek the Board's approval of the Outline Business Case for the Advanced Wireless Project.
- 3.2. As a project delivered by Ambition North Wales, approval is required by the Board to establish the frameworks that will deliver the project.

4. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

- 4.1. The North Wales Growth Deal is an agreement between the UK Government, Welsh Government and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to deliver a transformational £1billion investment in the North Wales economy. The aim of the Growth Deal is to build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales, building on our strengths to

boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to delivering inclusive growth.

- 4.2. As per the Final Deal agreement, business cases are to be developed for each project within the Growth Deal in line with the 'Better Business Case' guidance developed by Welsh Government and HM Treasury. Each business case includes five cases which address key questions and should be supported by workshops.
- 4.3. The North Wales Economic Ambition Board acts as the decision-making body for the North Wales Growth Deal. The Welsh Government and UK Government are funders of the Growth Deal, retaining a role in approving the assurance process each project has undertaken. The assurance process undertaken by projects will be included in all reports for consideration.
- 4.4. The Advanced Wireless project Outline Business Case was developed by the Portfolio Management Office in line with the 'Better Business Case' guidance. The Outline Business Case covers the project planning phase. The purpose of this stage is to identify the option that optimises public value following detailed appraisal; and to set out the possible Deal while confirming affordability and putting in place the management arrangements for the successful delivery of the project.
- 4.5. Approval of the Outline Business Case by the Portfolio Board confers members support for delivery of the project as set out in the Business Case and will be considered as advisory by the Economic Ambition Board in its decision-making.
- 4.6. Approval of the Outline Business Case by the Economic Ambition Board would provide the necessary approval for the project to move to the next phase, which, subject to Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process, would see the procurement process completed and a Full Business Case (FBC) developed for a final investment decision by the Economic Ambition Board.
- 4.7. Should the Board decide not to approve the Outline Business Case, it may reject the business case outright or request further information to be included in a revised version of the business case for consideration.

5. INTRODUCTION TO THE ADVANCED WIRELESS PROJECT

- 5.1. The Advanced Wireless project forms part of the Digital Connectivity Programme and is part of the Connected Campuses project, which also includes the LPWAN project (BJC approved July 2024).
- 5.2. The project aims to support both private sector and public sector organisations in the region adopt the latest advanced wireless technologies to deliver benefits associated with improved productivity, business efficiency, innovation, competitiveness and growth. The range of technologies in scope is consistent with the UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy (2023) and is diverse, ranging from 5G and the latest standards of wifi through to low power wide area network technologies such as LoRaWAN and NB-IoT. Welsh Government also recognises the importance of these technologies Digital Strategy for Wales (2021). The importance of

ensuring the UK is equipped with the most effective and high quality digital infrastructure is referenced throughout UK and Welsh strategies, including the UK Digital Strategy, National Infrastructure Strategy¹, Future Wales the National Plan 20240 and the Innovation Strategy for Wales.

- 5.3. The North Wales Growth Vision describes ‘A confident, cohesive region with sustainable economic growth, capitalising on the success of high value economic sectors and our connection to the economies of the Northern Powerhouse and Ireland.’ The Vision sets out the importance of developing effective digital infrastructure across the region to support economic growth, job creation and wider innovation across sectors.
- 5.4. The promotion of the adoption of Advanced Wireless technologies is a current UK Government objective, with successive programmes in recent years delivered to drive awareness and develop markets in this area. Most recently the 5G Innovation Regions Programme (Department for Science, Innovation and Technology) is supporting 10 areas of the UK promote adoptions across a wide range of applications and sectors. The Programme aims to drive innovative applications powered by 5G from proof of concept to widespread adoption. Innovation regions will demonstrate and adopt 5G and other advanced wireless use cases across key sectors of the economy.
- 5.5. The Growth Deal’s Advanced Wireless project aims to deliver a similar scope of investment to the current UK Programme with a focus on the Portfolio’s Spending Objectives of job creation, inward investment and economic growth. Several Combined Authorities, City and Growth Deals around the UK are supporting the adoption of advanced wireless technologies in their areas, including Swansea Bay, Tay Cities, West Midlands Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Glasgow City Region and Belfast City Region. These have common economic objectives and demonstrate a consistent regional approach to intervention.
- 5.6. Following development of an initial Strategic Outline Case, options appraisal and workshops the Connected Campuses project board identified a grant scheme as being the most appropriate mechanism for delivering Growth Deal investment across the region to support adoption of advanced wireless technologies. The scheme is intended to be accessible to a wide range of applicants who can demonstrate uses of the technologies which can deliver the Portfolio and Programme spending objectives and the benefits associated with improved productivity, innovation, sustainability and growth.
- 5.7. The relative low level of familiarity of the full range of technologies in scope amongst organisations nationally is recognised and why UK Government is investing in demand stimulation activities. In North Wales, HE and FE provide a range of training opportunities associated with upskilling on the use of the key technologies with organisations such as AMRC and Coleg Cambria providing specific support for business looking to innovate in an area of growing demand across many sectors particularly including manufacturing and logistics, for example.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-wireless-infrastructure-strategy/uk-wireless-infrastructure-strategy>

- 5.8. To promote the adoption of advanced wireless technologies more widely in the region the project will provide funding to reduce commercial risk to organisations in adopting new systems and processes. In 2024 Ambition North Wales has been delivering a UK Shared Prosperity Fund project across Flintshire, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd and the Isle of Anglesey to support small and medium sized business investigate their options for the adoption of advanced wireless technologies. This work is due to conclude at the end of December 2024 and targets 20 SMEs to provide them with recommendations following expert consultancy. The range of sectors which has engaged with the project is diverse and demonstrates the scope of industries which are expected to be beneficiaries of the Advanced Wireless project, including agriculture, tourism, health, manufacturing and retail.
- 5.9. The project will involve the initial design of a grant scheme which will be tailored to organisations in the region across the economy including the public sector and will be versatile enough to support SMEs through to larger organisations. It is expected that grant awards will range from relatively low value investment (ca. <£50k) through to larger more strategic investments of £1m+), with scheme eligibility criteria informed by previous and current similar schemes across the UK which are supporting similar objectives. While the project will prioritise strategic investment there is also a requirement for the benefits of the project to reach all parts of the region and the economy, particularly in rural areas where there may be relatively few larger organisations. The grant scheme will therefore be structured to be manageable while targeting impact and promoting innovation in organisations both large and small.
- 5.10. During Outline Business Case development three high value (£2m+) concepts have been discussed with stakeholders and suppliers in the region involving strategic investment which would benefit wider groups of businesses. It is therefore clear that there is demand in the short term for funding support to drive the adoption of advanced wireless technologies. Sustained activity to promote the scheme and the benefits of the investment will be required throughout the project to ensure that demand for the Growth Deal investment is maintained and benefits can be delivered. Examples of strategic projects which may be expected include site wide 5G private networks to support single corporate users, such as large organisations operating across an extensive site including multiple buildings and also networks serving multiple individual businesses located across a single site (e.g. business parks). Lower capital value applications may include investments within buildings to enhance connectivity for personnel or to improve the operation of machine to machine communications, such as the control and monitoring of production equipment. The range of use cases is demonstrated by the projects currently being supported in the UK Innovation Regions Programme², including port operations, housing, agritech, tourism and health.
- 5.11. Following grant scheme design the project will be launched with project management, administration and demand stimulation capacity recruited by the Portfolio Management Office to work within the Digital Connectivity Programme for the duration of the project. To support revenue costs the grant scheme will include a requirement for successful applicants to contribute to scheme administration costs as a percentage of the overall grant being sought. This rate will be confirmed during scheme design and will be set to be affordable while

² [5G Innovation Regions: successful regions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/5g-innovation-regions-successful-regions)

providing sufficient project income to sustain activities for the three year period of the project. During the first year of delivery it is expected that revenue costs will need to be met by Portfolio Management Office resources prior to income being received from applications however this would be returned as the scheme progresses. The scheme is expected to run in tranches across each year with applications approved at the end of each. Scheme criteria will be reviewed periodically to ensure appropriate expressions of interest are attracted and the project's spending objectives continue to be met.

- 5.12. At Outline Business Case stage the project is aiming to secure an average of rate of 50% of levered funding from applicants, however this is expected to vary with applications with lower intervention rates potentially applied to higher capital value applications and higher intervention rates for lower value capital awards/ smaller organisations and/or those which provide wider social benefit, for example where grants support public sector organisations. The total amount of additional capital investment secured from applicants at this stage is modelled to be similar to the Growth Deal investment at ca £19.25m over the three-year period. Of the three strategic concepts discussed during OBC development there is evidence to suggest that at least one large supplier is prepared to invest capital alongside the potential beneficiary.
- 5.13. The grant scheme will be funded with £19.54m of Growth Deal capital investment over a four year delivery period with grant expenditure expected to peak by year three following demand stimulation work to start in year 1. Project costs are shown in the table below.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total	
Capital Expenditure						
1	Grant awards	£ -	£ 4,620,053	£ 9,754,264	£ 4,877,132	£ 19,251,448
2	Grant scheme design	£ 57,750	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 57,750
3	Capitalised Staff costs (ANW, project mgt.)	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 182,000
4	Contingency	£ 20,650	£ 9,100	£ 9,100	£ 9,100	£ 47,950
5	Total Capital costs (CAPEX)	£ 123,900	£ 4,674,653	£ 9,808,864	£ 4,931,732	£ 19,539,148
Operating Expenditure						
6	Subsidy Control resource	£ 6,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 6,250
7	Grant operation	£ -	£ 22,750	£ 22,750	£ 22,750	£ 68,250
8	Application assessment	£ -	£ 27,576	£ 27,576	£ 27,576	£ 82,727
9	Demand stimulation	£ -	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 136,500
10	Programme management	£ -	£ 8,367	£ 8,367	£ 8,367	£ 25,102
11	Subtotal OPEX	£ 6,250	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 318,829
12	Contingency	£ 1,250	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 63,766
13	Total Operating costs (OPEX)	£ 7,500	£ 125,032	£ 125,032	£ 125,032	£ 382,595
Total Expenditure						
14	Total Project Costs (CAPEX + OPEX)	£ 131,400	£ 4,799,684	£ 9,933,895	£ 5,056,763	£ 19,921,743
Funding						
15	CAPEX funding (Growth Deal)	£ 123,900	£ 4,674,653	£ 9,808,864	£ 4,931,732	£ 19,539,148
16	OPEX (Subsidy Control resource, Ambition North Wales PMO)	£ 6,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 6,250
17	OPEX (Administration charge to applicants)	£ -	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 312,579
18	OPEX contingency (Ambition North Wales PMO)	£ 1,250	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 63,766
19	Total funding	£ 131,400	£ 4,799,684	£ 9,933,895	£ 5,056,763	£ 19,921,743

Project Spending Objectives and Benefits

- 5.14. The project spending objectives are set out in the table below alongside programme spending objectives, and are in line with those set out in the Portfolio Business Case.



Project Spending Objective	Corresponding Programme Spending Objective
To create between 130-200 new jobs in North Wales through the project by 2036	To create between 315-380 new jobs in North Wales through the programme by 2036
To create net additional GVA of £41m - £62m through the project by 2036	To create net additional GVA of £130m - £158m through the programme by 2036
To deliver a total investment of between £13m and £20m through the programme by 2036	To deliver a total investment of between £37m and £46m through the programme by 2036
To enable 100-200 business and public sector users in each of the counties of North Wales to take advantage of advanced wireless connectivity by 2030	

- 5.15. The impact of the project at the Wales level is estimated at **£61.9m additional GVA (undiscounted), and a discounted NPSV of approximately £23.7m** and a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 3.1 (Total public sector funding).
- 5.16. Over the 15-year Growth Deal term, other measurable benefits the project will deliver include
- Improved efficiency for organisations
 - Increased competitiveness of businesses
- A logic map produced by UK Government demonstrating the path for impact from the adoption of 5G is provided in the Executive Summary.
- 5.17. The Outline Business Case explains how the project aligns with the Economic Ambition Board’s adopted Procurement Principles. To ensure alignment with the above, the project has undertaken a mapping exercise to show how project procurement will deliver against these principles.
- 5.18. The Outline Business Case indicates the extent to which the project will deliver to the Economic Ambition Board’s Emissions and Biodiversity targets, summarised below subject to further assessment by Full Business Case.

Emissions	RAG	Extract from Carbon Assessment 2
Embodied emissions – 40% reduction		Where new equipment replaces existing equipment there will be a target to reduce embodied greenhouse emissions. Where additional equipment is introduced there will be a target to minimise any subsequent embodied emissions using the lowest impact technology options.
Operational emissions – net zero		Where new equipment replaces existing equipment there will be a target to reduce energy related greenhouse emissions through more energy efficient technologies. Where additional equipment is introduced there will be a target to minimise any subsequent energy related emissions using the most energy efficient technology options.
Biodiversity		
10% biodiversity net gain		The potential for biodiversity net gain for the project as a whole cannot be confirmed at OBC stage however given the scope of investment being mainly associated with the installation of equipment within existing premises or mounted on developed land the opportunities for direct biodiversity net gain are expected to be limited.



- 5.19. Social Value will be delivered through the procurement of goods purchased by grant applicants as a condition of funding, in accordance with Ambition North Wales' Procurement Principles

6. ASSURANCE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

- 6.1. In accordance with the arrangements set out within the Final Deal Agreement, the Outline Business Case has been subject to the following assurance activity:

Assurance Activity	Date	Outcome
Business Case Workshops	26 th January 2023 – October 2023	Draft Outline Business Case submitted for board and gateway review
Gateway Review	20 th -22 nd May 2024	Stage Gate Assessment Amber - Recommendations provided
PMO OBC review	19 th April 2024	Recommendations provided
Project Board	22 nd February 2024	Project Board approval
Programme Board Endorsement	5 th March 2024	Programme Board approval
Business Delivery Board Endorsement	10 th September 2024	Business Deliver Board approval
Portfolio Board Endorsement	6 th September 2024	Portfolio Board approval
Ambition Board Approval	20 th September 2024	<i>Pending</i>

7. PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT OFFICE OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS CASE

- 7.1. The following table provides a summary of the main recommendations resulting from the Portfolio Management Office assessment of the updated Outline Business Case (OBC) and the key recommendations that will need to be addressed before it is submitted to the Ambition Board.

	Summary of PMO Assessment	Outstanding issues
Strategic Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify spending objectives, review SMART requirements Clarify project scope, ensure consistency between existing arrangements, business needs and scope. Provide more details on policy alignment Define and categorise benefits more clearly Review constraints, including subsidy control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Strategic Alignment with National policies/strategies is updated by Full Business Case Review Spending Objectives by Full Business Case – proportionate, SMART Confirm constraints Update assessment of benefits by Full Business Case



<p>Economic Case</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant amount of good quality data is shown in the appendices. A clear summary of some of this data around costs and benefits would improve the economic case. • The calculation of Benefit to Cost Ratios is less than clear. Key assumptions need to be set out and empirical evidence should be referenced. • Clear longlist provided, provide detail on discounting of options • Provide further details on business as usual option • Provide further detail in the Benefits Realisation Plan • Reasonable use of Critical Success Factors • Thorough long list of options provided • Provide details of assumptions used in economic appraisal • Consider referencing similar projects to provide empirical evidence for benefits in the economic case • Further work on sensitivity analysis and optimism bias required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review assumptions in Economic Case by Full Business Case using feedback from UK 5G Innovation Programme evaluation, provide details of key assumptions • Update Benefits Realisation Plan • Provide further details on accounting for Emissions and Biodiversity costs/benefits by Full Business Case subject to Grant Scheme design • Update sensitivity analysis and optimism bias, reference more details of other more mature schemes which may provide empirical evidence to improve modelling
<p>Commercial Case</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clearer reference to Procurement Principles • Provide further detail on proposed procurement timescales • Clarify application of social value • Provide further detail on risks and mitigation • Subsidy Control options set out, to confirm by Full Business Case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm cost of grant scheme design following procurement before Full Business Case • Confirm subsidy control arrangements for the grant scheme • By Full Business Case identifying the most suitable operating model and the Accountable Body for the grant scheme, currently assumed to be the future North Wales Joint Committee / Ambition North Wales. • By Full Business Case ensure market testing of the potential supplier base and scope of services proposed for running a fund; identification of suitable and capable providers based in North Wales. • By Full Business Case explore potential partnership arrangements with Development Bank of Wales for Ambition North Wales to deliver grant in conjunction with





		<p>Development Bank of Wales' SME loans offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Full Business Case finalise the most suitable contractual arrangements for procured resources. • By Full Business Case secure legal advice on fiduciary duties and subsidy control considerations relating to the grant scheme
Financial Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify funding sources • Amend tables to clarify cost categories • Provide further details on cost assumptions • Clarify VAT position • Provide further details on risks and constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm costs of grant scheme design by Full Business Case • Provide further detail on cost assumptions associated with Grant Scheme award expenditure using latest information from UK 5G IR programme and other schemes (see Economic Case requirements) • Review financial risks by Full Business Case
Management Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify requirements for stakeholder engagement and requirements for demand stimulation • Clarify implications for skills and training requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Management Case by Full Business Case to confirm Grant Scheme delivery costs • Work with the Regional Skills Partnership to clarify requirements and opportunities for collaboration with regional skills providers and demand stimulation activities • Clarify scope of demand stimulation activities pre and during scheme delivery



8. Key Risks

8.1. The Portfolio Management Office considers the following as key risks which will need to be carefully managed to ensure the delivery of the benefits:

Risk Headline	Risk Mitigation Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If revenue funding not available for project implementation delivery and exploitation, so that options are eliminated or benefits are not realised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant scheme design will consider similar approach to the model proposed for Smart Local Energy with promotion and demand stimulation part of the scheme delivery Additional sources of revenue funding will be sought where available to support demand stimulation activities following initial SPF funded activity in 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If demand for funding is limited the benefits of the project will not be realised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial consultation suggests clear demand from three potential anchor users in the region. Ongoing liaison with UK government regarding its 5G Innovation Regions programme will inform how to direct demand stimulation activities and target sectors Design and scope of the grant scheme will need to account for organisations' requirements and capabilities and its terms will be reviewed periodically to ensure it is fit for purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the administration charge applied to successful applicants deters applicants there may be reduced delivery of the capital grant fund risking delivery of spending objectives and benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult a range of potential applicants to ensure administration charges are proportionate and affordable across a range of project values (high to low) Review administration charges throughout the project lifecycle and revise these where necessary ensuring the project remains affordable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is insufficient demand for the grants at the minimum values prescribed in the scheme the costs associated with delivery and administration may become unaffordable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thorough consultation with potential applicants will need to be undertaken during the design of the scheme and a high level of engagement, promotion and demand stimulation activity planned to ensure a sufficient volume of quality expressions of interest are achieved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the scheme attracts a large volume of unsuccessful applications the cost of administering these may exceed the income secured from successful applications, risking the affordability of the scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grant scheme's design will need to consider effective means of efficiently processing expressions of interest so that only those which have a high probability of success are accepted to full application. Scheme criteria will need to be appropriately balanced to both encourage applications and set proportionate eligibility requirements which reduce risk of failed delivery of the project's spending objectives and benefits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is a lack of procurement, commercial and implementation resource, projects will be delayed or less successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Portfolio Management Office is procuring a support framework to ensure capacity across functions is available



9. PROJECT TIMETABLE AND NEXT STEPS

Activity	Target Dates
Economic Ambition Board Outline Business Case approval decision	20 th September 2024
Complete Procurement Process	30 th November 2024
Draft Full Business Case to Portfolio Management Office	29 th December 2024
Gateway 3 Review	3 rd February 2025
Programme/Portfolio Board Full Business Case Approval	February 2025
Economic Ambition Board Full Business Case Approval	March 2025
Start on Site	April 2025
Final evaluation	December 2028

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The Advanced Wireless project is one of two projects within the Connected Campuses project for which an overall budget of £20.68m is allocated in the Portfolio. The project represents a total capital cost to the Growth Deal budget of £19.54m.
- 10.2. There is a requirement for Portfolio Management Office resources to support the initial phase of revenue costs for the delivery of the project with this to be confirmed by Full Business case stage. The Outline Business Case proposes to secure income from successful grant beneficiaries to fund the schemes' administration with this income expected to start within year 1 as applications are approved. The OBC represents a significant milestone for the project and should the Board approve the business case further work will be required to update the business case post procurement to provide clarity on the costs, risks and benefits associated with the project before a final investment decision by the Board.
- 10.3. Revenue costs associated with completing the procurement process and developing the Full Business Case are to be funded through the existing Portfolio Management Office budget.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. The business case development and the assurance processes have been undertaken in line with the requirements of the Final Deal agreement.
- 11.2. External legal advice has been sought on the project to confirm the ability of the Board to invest in the project in a subsidy control (state aid) compliant manner. The advice received will inform the work leading up to the submission of the Full Business Case. Further legal advice may need to be commissioned following receipt of the Full Business Case before the Board makes a final investment decision.
- 11.3. Should the Board approve the Outline Business Case, the relevant documents will be submitted to Welsh Government and UK Government to approve the assurance process before the project can proceed to the next stage.



12. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 12.1. An integrated impact assessment (Appendix 2) has been undertaken to assess the impact of the project on the Welsh Language, equalities and against the Future Generations Act. No negative impacts were identified through the assessment.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1** Advanced Wireless Outline Business Case
Appendix 2 Integrated Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS (some documents contain exempt information):

- Outline Business Case Appendices – Advanced Wireless (*available on request*)
- OBC_PMO Review Tracker
- NWGD Gateway 2 Review

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer – Host Authority:

“The submission of the OBC for consideration and approval by the Board is a key step in the implementation of the Growth Deal. This is an interim step towards the preparation of the Final Business Case. The report properly highlights the risks and elements which will need to be addressed or confirmed prior to the submission of a Final Business Case. Finalising the legal position on Subsidy Control will form part of this work. There are a range of identified interventions supported by this project and there will need to be further legal support into supporting these activities and the contract and procurement documents.”

ii. Statutory Finance Officer (the Host Authority’s Section 151 Officer):

“The documents submitted show that detailed work has been undertaken in the delivery of this Outline Business Plan. I believe that the relevant financial and non-financial risks have been properly addressed, and appropriate mitigation arrangements are in place, or have been outlined.

I am satisfied with the financial accuracy of the information that has been submitted, in particular Part 4 of the Outline Business Case which is the Financial Case. Work on these aspects will continue during the development of the Final Business Plan. I can confirm that the Growth Deal funding package is capital only.

Therefore, on the basis of the evidence I have seen, I have no objection to the decisions sought.”



**Cynllun Twf
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Growth Deal**

Executive Summary

Outline Business Case – Advanced Wireless

Connected Campuses Project

Ambition North Wales

11th September 2024

V1.2



Document Control

Version	Changes	Date
0.1	Initial draft	Nov 2023
0.2-0.3	Iterative drafts	Nov 2023-Jan 2024
0.4	Reflect feedback from Project Board	Feb 2024
0.5	Reflect PMO feedback from 15/04	Apr 2024
0.6	Reflect PMO feedback from 19/04	Apr 2024
0.7	Reflect Project Board and Programme Board commentary	April 2024
0.8	Formatting and rounding corrections	May 2024
1.0	Financial Case and Management Case updates	August 2024
1.2	Financial Case updates	September 2024

Authorisation

Version		Date
0.4	Connected Campuses Project Board	22 nd February 2024
0.6	Ambition North Wales PMO	19 th April 2024
0.7	Digital Programme Board	5 th March 2024
1.0	Portfolio Board	6 th September 2024
1.2	North Wales Economic Ambition Board	

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Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
5G IR	5G Innovation Regions
ANW	Ambition North Wales
AR	Augmented Reality
BAU	Business as Usual
BCR	Benefits Cost Ratio
BDUK	Building Digital UK
CC	Connected Campuses
CCR	Cardiff Capital Region
CKSC	Connected Key Sites and Corridors
CSF	Critical Success Factors
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
DSIT	Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
EAS	Extended Area Service
ESN	Emergency Services Network
FTIR	Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMW	Growing Mid Wales
GVA	Gross Value Added
IAAS	Infrastructure as a Service
JOTS	Joint Operators Technical Specification
LPWAN	Lower Power Wide Area Network
MMWAVE	Millimetre Wave - these 5G Frequency Range 2 networks can deliver multi-gigabit data rates and very low latency
MNOS	Mobile Network Operators (EE, Three, O2, Vodafone)
MPNS	Mobile Private Networks
NWEAB	North Wales Economic Ambition Board
NWGD	North Wales Growth Deal
OBC	Outline Business Case
OFCOM	Telecoms Regulator
OP	Option
OPEN RAN	Open Radio Access Networks – concept for more open radio access to mobile network architecture
PMO	Project Management Office
RD & I	Research, Development & Innovation
SBCD	Swansea Bay City Deal
SO	Spending Objectives
SOC	Strategic Outline Case
SRN	Shared Rural Network
SRO	Senior Responsible Owner
SUB-6GHZ	Mobile network spectrum
UKG	UK Government
VHF	Very High Frequency
VR	Virtual Reality
WTP	Willing to Pay

Executive Summary

Purpose of this Document

The Advanced Wireless Business Case is part of the Connected Campuses Project of the Ambition North Wales Digital Programme. The Outline Business Case makes the case for Growth Deal investment to support the adoption of advanced wireless technologies across the region by both private and public sector organisations.

The business case identifies the Preferred Option as a £19m fund to operate as a flexible grant scheme to fund adoption of advanced wireless solutions. The scheme will be administered by Ambition North Wales over a three-year period following initial scheme design with project management provided by the sponsor, Ambition North Wales. The first phase of the project will involve the grant scheme design and set up followed by the delivery of capital funding to private and public sector organisations which will apply for funding in accordance with the scheme's conditions and eligibility criteria.

The purpose of this Outline Business Case is:

- To set out the objectives for the Project
- To consider the Case for Change and identify the problem(s) to be addressed
- To identify a Longlist and Shortlist of Options to address the problem and select the Preferred Way Forward and the Preferred Option
- To detail the commercial, financial and management cases to support the Preferred Option

Advanced Wireless technology

When referring to 'Advanced Wireless' technology, the scope of the project is aligned to the UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy (2023):

*"In terms of scope, we take into account the full range of wireless technologies for communications services. Given the continued importance of cellular mobile networks, we naturally have a significant focus on **4G and 5G** but also recognise the role of other wireless technologies such as **Wi-Fi**, as well as the use of **satellite communications** services, **private networks and low power wide area networks**. This strategy recognises the significant and continuing evolution of wireless technologies and the telecoms market more broadly. ... we recognise the continuing importance of technologies such as Wi-Fi for indoor coverage and networks aimed primarily at IoT technologies*

Previous Work

In the original 2020 Programme Business Case the Connected Campuses project set out to support delivery of advanced wireless networks at 18 key economic sites by 2030 with cutting edge connectivity options to increase competitiveness, resilience, and efficiency through digital transformation. It also included the scope of delivery of Low Power Wide Area networks (LPWAN) to support adoption of Internet of Things applications across the region. In November 2022, Spirit Public Sector Ltd (Spirit) was appointed to provide business case support to conduct a Scoping Study, to develop the existing draft Strategic Outline Cases further, and to develop the Outline and Full Business Cases. Following this review,

which included the wider scope of the parallel Connected Key Sites and Corridors project, Spirit produced an Advanced Wireless Scoping Document which set out the draft Spending Objectives and the scope for the project, which at the time focused on 5G mm Wave. The LPWAN investment, which remains within the Connected Campuses project has since been taken forward as a distinct Business Justification Case.

During the development of the SOC and this OBC, the Spending Objectives evolved to address a broader scope of advanced wireless technologies because business requirements may be met with other 5G frequencies and different technologies. The Strategic and Economic Cases describe the rationale behind this evolution. The Strategic Objectives for all projects, including Advanced Wireless were identified and agreed during workshops held with the Project Board during the discovery phase of SOC development.

1. Strategic Case

1.1 Strategic Context

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) is a joint committee of the six local authority leaders and chief executives and advisers from the two universities, two further education colleges and the private sector. The Board's vision for North Wales is to become: 'A confident, cohesive region with sustainable economic growth, capitalising on the success of high value economic sectors and our connection to the economies of the Northern Powerhouse and Ireland.'

The North Wales Growth Deal is the agreement between the UK Government and Welsh Government and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB). The agreement confers £240m of funding to the NWEAB to achieve this vision:

- To build a more vibrant, sustainable, and resilient economy in North Wales.
- To build on our strengths, to boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to deliver inclusive growth.
- To promote growth in a scalable, inclusive, and sustainable way, in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Ambition North Wales manages a Portfolio of five enabling programmes established to deploy Growth Deal funds. Each Programme operates on behalf of the Board to identify, scope, and deliver the initiatives that will support achievement of the vision.

1.1.1 Ambition North Wales Digital Connectivity Programme

The Digital Connectivity Programme aims to “deliver improved coverage of high quality and affordable digital connectivity to premises in North Wales to support the achievement of the Growth Deal aims at comparable or faster rates than the rest of the UK¹”. The Programme is comprised of four projects (1) Connected Key Sites and Corridors (2) Connected Campuses (3) Last Few % and (4) Digital Signal Processing Centre (Bangor University)

¹ Ambition North Wales Digital Programme Business case

- Connected Key Sites and Corridors is concerned with the deployment of 4G+ and fibreoptic network infrastructure. Connected Campuses is concerned with the deployment of LPWAN and Advanced Wireless solutions.
- **Advanced wireless is a focus of intervention for the Digital Programme because the connectivity supports users with high bandwidth, low latency requirements. Such requirements drive the uptake of advanced and emerging technologies that are designed to transform the way in which modern industry and commerce, and in some cases domestic users, operate.**

1.2 National and Local Government Alignment

The Advanced Wireless project supports national and regional economic strategies, and the objectives of the Ambition North Wales Portfolio and Digital Programme by creating an opportunity for businesses, organisations and communities to establish future proof advanced wireless networks across areas of North Wales, and key locations to drive increased GVA, jobs creation and inward investment

Welsh Government strategic documents

The National Strategy (Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021), Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Future Wales the National Plan 2040 and others all describe either the importance of better of digital connectivity or describe outcomes that are enabled by better digital connectivity.

- Innovation Strategy for Wales (Feb 2023)
- Digital Strategy for Wales (Welsh Government, 2021)

The Digital and data strategy for health and social care in Wales (Welsh Government, 2023²) also describes the importance of a solid and stable digital infrastructure, including connectivity, that can operate as a single integrated system to support health and social care in Wales.

UK Government strategic documents

Levelling Up White Paper (2022) Highlights and commits to end the “the geographical inequality which is such a striking feature of the UK”. It recognises that digital infrastructure is a core requirement for levelling up, and like other strategies re-asserts the UKG ambition for “*nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage by 2030, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population*”.³ (p6)

- UK Digital Strategy (DCMS, 2022)
- Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR) (UK Government, 2018)
- National Infrastructure Strategy (UK Government, 2020)

UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy (2023) Describes the ambition for delivery of 4G coverage to 95% of the UK landmass by 2025 and nationwide 5G SA network coverage to populated areas by 2030. It details the role of Fixed Wireless Access, Satellite, wifi and other technologies. It addresses the benefits and challenges of advanced wireless connectivity and describes what government will do to overcome the

² <https://www.gov.wales/digital-and-data-strategy-health-and-social-care-wales-html#127708>

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1095544/Executive_Summary.pdf

challenges and drive the benefits.⁴ **The Wireless Infrastructure Strategy indicates that smart utilities and smart manufacturing are expected to add £9.4 billion and £6.1 billion respectively to UK GDP by 2030.** *“Advanced wireless technologies will be key to driving the government’s ambitions to harness digital transformation to build a more inclusive, competitive and innovative digital economy. 5G in particular, has the potential to unlock significant economic and social benefits for all of the UK”.*

5G Innovation Regions (Department for Science Industry and Technology, 2023) is a Programme to create ten 5G Innovation regions that drive economic growth by increasing advanced wireless adoption, accelerating investment by aggregating demand for 5G and fostering the 5G ecosystem. The programme provides funding to address the same challenges as the Ambition North Wales Advanced Wireless project targets.⁵ 37 projects are exploring many different aspects and challenges with 5G delivery and deployment in different sectors. It also supported the creation of a national innovation network, “UK5G”, to build, connect, and inform the UK 5G ecosystem. The interim evaluation of the programme⁶ concludes that a Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of 15.8:1 was achieved at the time of the report with the final evaluation due to be produced in 2025.

Other Strategies

Other strategies describe the direction of travel for the delivery of mobile connectivity or technical/commercial features of the market, rather than current requirements. They include the “**UK 5G Supply Chain Diversification Strategy (2020, UK Government)**”, the **UK Open RAN principles (2022, UK Government)**, and the **UK Open RAN principles (2022, UK Government)**.

The North Wales Digital Strategy outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and priorities for action in digital connectivity in North Wales, including introducing a range of mobile connectivity options such as 5G faster than the market plans.

1.3 The Case for Change

1.3.1 Spending Objectives

Analysis from UK government supports the suggestion that advanced wireless can unlock economic benefits. It is widely accepted that advanced wireless adoption will improve GVA and productivity, and by extension also creation of jobs and inward investment. Quantitative modelling of this is however difficult to establish with confidence as the technologies and their applications are relatively new and real-world use cases have only emerged at scale within the last few years. The project contributes to the spending objectives Digital Programme Business Case.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-wireless-infrastructure-strategy/uk-wireless-infrastructure-strategy>

⁵ [5G Innovation Regions: open for applications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/5g-innovation-regions-open-for-applications)

⁶ [Interim evaluation of 5G Testbeds and Trials \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/interim-evaluation-of-5g-testbeds-and-trials)

Spending Objective 1 – Jobs	To create between 315-380 new jobs in North Wales through the programme by 2036
Spending Objective 2 - GVA	To create net additional GVA of £130m - £158m through the programme by 2036
Spending Objective 3 – Investment	To deliver a total investment of between £37m and £46m through the programme by 2036
Spending Objective 4 – Robust and Competitive Market at Key Sites	To introduce robust and competitive connectivity market at 28 strategic key sites in step with or in advance of UK Government 2025 target for gigabit capability coverage
Spending Objective 5 - High bandwidth mobile coverage on transport networks	To introduce high bandwidth mobile coverage on transport networks with deployment in step with or in advance of UK Government 2027 target for 5G coverage. Delivery of coverage across A55, A483 and A5.
Spending Objective 6 – Superfast digital connectivity everywhere	To ensure all inhabited premises in the region have Superfast broadband connectivity in the short term (by 2023) with gigabit upgrade capability built in as far as possible.
Spending Objective 7 – Digital Infrastructure Innovation	To ensure that the region is empowered to participate in innovation and commercialisation of new digital infrastructure technology to achieve and consolidate a long-term role in a strategically important industry

Table 1 Digital Programme Spending Objectives

The Advanced Wireless project will support the three Spending Objectives of supporting job creation, increasing GVA and attracting further investment. These are Portfolio Spending Objectives to which each of the projects within the North Wales Growth Deal contribute.

Spending Objective 1 – Advanced Wireless	1	To enable 100-200 business and public sector users in each of the counties of North Wales to take advantage of advanced wireless connectivity by 2030
Spending Objective 2	Jobs	To create between 130-200 new jobs in North Wales through the project by 2036
Spending Objective 3	GVA	To create net additional GVA of £41m - £62m through the project by 2036
Spending Objective 4 – Investment		To deliver a total investment of between £13m and £20m through the programme by 2036

Table 2 Project Spending Objectives (Portfolio)

The Connected Campuses Project Board on 31st January 2023 agreed in the SOC and in other combined Project Board meetings where the OBC was developed, that the Advanced Wireless project should target the outcome of enabling businesses and public sector users to adopt a range of advanced wireless technologies. The board concluded that the project should not limit investment to a particular technology nor industry and that support should be developed which is relevant to a wide range of use cases given the relative low maturity of the applications in the region.

The project's principal Spending Objective has evolved from earlier versions, including in the project's Scoping Document, which referenced 'Connected Campus' locations. Since these locations are not closely defined at this time, they will be defined in a prioritisation process as part of the delivery. Their specific locations are not a significant factor in identifying the preferred option. In the Programme Business Case, 19 'Campus' locations were provisionally identified for investment to be targeted and while these sites remain of particular interest the project board considered for the Outline Business Case that an open scope should be adopted, not limiting investment to parts of the region.

1.4 Existing Arrangements and Business Needs

1.4.1 Spending objective 1

- To enable 100-200 business and public sector users in each of the counties of North Wales to take advantage of advanced wireless connectivity by 2030

Existing arrangements

- Most organisations in the region are using networks based on earlier standards of wireless technologies and have not yet adopted mobile private networks or WiFi 6. Use of Industry 4.0 technologies is growing however this is limited to manufacturing, particularly larger manufacturers
- Commercial 5G coverage is limited by scale and operator presence in the region although it is growing annually

Business needs

- There is no sustained programme of publicly funded support for businesses providing specific guidance on technologies. Investment in innovative network technologies is risky without a thorough knowledge of the benefits and implications of adoption.
- Sustained sources of relevant training are required in the region to support the growth of the region's skilled workforce. Noting that growth in the adoption of the latest and emerging advanced wireless technologies is expected to be gradual, it is essential that this training provision is both long term and reacts to changing requirements in line with changes in the technology.
- New investments and the transition from current systems may be costly. Current economic conditions (high interest rates, increasing staffing costs, inflation etc) restricts business investment to essential requirements.
- For wireless network technologies other than 5G, i.e. more localised, site-specific use cases involving, for example WiFi 6, the need for intervention may be applicable to more diverse locations

which do not necessarily include aggregated demand (i.e. industrial business premises rather than industrial estates).

1.4.2 Spending Objective 2

- To create between 130-200 new jobs in North Wales through the project by 2036

Existing arrangements

- Employment within organisations using or which have the potential to use wireless network technologies will include staffing with direct responsibility for installation and management of networks, i.e. ICT staff. For smaller organisations this may not be a specific role but part of the work of staff undertaking other tasks. For larger organisations the work will be managed by specialist teams with expertise across a range of ICT specialisms. Where networks support particular functions, for example manufacturing processes, the number and range of job roles *supported* (rather than created in the case of ICT staff) may be significant. Where efficiency leads to business growth and overall increase in the workforce should be expected in time as sales and production volume increases, albeit with the balance of job types shifting toward the skilled ICT staff.

Business needs

- Direct job creation will only be achieved if there are suitably qualified candidates to take on new roles, either through recruitment of new staff or training of existing staff. As explained under the previous business needs, sustained and reactive training provision in the region will be required, building on the existing relevant programmes such as ADAPTS and the medru skills factory.
- The North Wales Regional Skill's Partnership's 2024 Digital Skills Analysis Final Report⁷ concluded from its survey feedback that the main requirements were for product/service delivery, data analysis, and programming, along with data and cloud engineering and cyber security. Power BI development, digital leadership, and full-stack development were separately mentioned. The report produced 8 recommendations to address the challenges reported by employers in meeting their skills requirements and action on these will be taken forward by the RSP.

1.4.3 Spending objective 3 and 4

- To create net additional GVA of £41m - £62m through the project by 2036 and
- To deliver a total investment of between £13m and £20m through the programme by 2036

Existing arrangements

- North Wales has a current GVA of ca. £15.6bn (GVA B) with manufacturing and health being the largest single industries contributing to this. GVA is weighted towards Flintshire and Wrexham which generate 53% of the region's GVA, with their manufacturing industries having a substantial impact. The contributions to GVA across the economy are provided in Appendix H.

⁷ rspnorth.wales/publications

- GVA is a macroeconomic indicator and is affected by a wide range of factors. On this basis it is not possible to attribute observed changes in reported regional GVA with particular interventions. However, investment in 5G has been widely forecast to result in increases in GVA e.g. DCMS 2021 ⁸ *UK economic benefits are projected at £41bn-£159bn cumulatively over 2021-35 depending on the model scenario. Annual UK gross value added is projected to be 0.4%-1.6% higher in 2035 as a result of 5G technology.*
- DCMS (2021) forecast two GVA growth scenarios across the UK, i) 'general purpose technology (GPT) - adoption by nearly all firms and ii) advanced digital technology (ADT) -adoption varies by firm type and size
- For GPT a growth in Welsh GVA of nearly 1.6% by 2035 was estimated and for ADT growth of 0.37% in the same period (baseline 2021). Based on this estimate basic scaling to North Wales suggests an increase of £261m for GPT and £57.9m for ADT by 2035.
- With the Advanced Wireless project, the enhanced adoptions of 'advanced digital technologies' in the ADT scenario is considered most relevant and is in line with the estimated GVA impact in the project's spending objective of £41m-£62m.
- Existing investment in advanced wireless technologies is considered to be negligible in the short to medium term (by the midpoint of the Growth Deal term). However, it is impossible to forecast what this 'Business as Usual' scenario is for the region beyond this. Given the persistent economic challenges in the UK and globally, high levels of inflation and interest rates) the baseline of investment is therefore considered to be zero for the purpose of this business case.

Business needs

- The barriers to adoption of wireless infrastructure in North Wales are not considered to be unique and are consistent with those faced by organisations across the UK. On this basis the conclusions of the DCMS (2021) study are presented as business needs in respect of this spending objective. The spending objective of GVA and job creation is directly associated with the spending objective of increasing adoption by businesses (first spending objective) and therefore the business needs for each are common.
- While limited to 5G technology the study may be considered broadly relevant to all 'advanced wireless technologies. The study identified several key barriers to 5G adoption which, if not addressed by the market and/or via proactive Government action, might either delay or slow adoption of 5G within some or all 5G consumer groups. **Macro barriers** are cross-market barriers cutting across multiple areas/consumer groups and 5G applications.
 - i. Willingness to pay for 5G services by individuals and businesses
 - ii. lack of awareness concerning suitability of 5G and/or the benefits that 5G will deliver
 - iii. the mobile industry's uncertainty over further 5G investment within public networks ahead of demand being established.

⁸ [Realising the Benefits of 5G \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

- There is also significant awareness in the market on what 5G ‘could’ deliver. However, behind the 5G vision is a complex range of implementation issues, and some 5G users at least (**especially smaller businesses**) are **challenged by not having the internal capability and skills** needed to set up and integrate 5G connectivity into existing business systems
- Businesses whose core activity is not telecommunications may also not be well placed to drive the broader 5G features and evolution agenda. **Thus, there is a key role for 5G solutions experts (be those the large 5G vendors, system integrators or large IT firms) to provide professional support services to smaller firms.**

Business needs are therefore summarised as:

- Financial support with initial investment by regional users and/ or the MNOs as suppliers
- Support for MNOs to scale up 5G public networks
- Addressing knowledge and skills gaps

1.5 Scope and Service Requirements

Range	Core	Desirable	Optional
Potential scope			
Activity	Direct capital investment for organisations (users)	Direct capital investment for service providers <i>plus Core</i>	Demand stimulation and direct support for users (subject to revenue affordability) <i>plus Desirable</i>
Location	Targeted locations hosting ‘ADT’ users/ early adopters only	Locations determined by demand from ADT or GPT users	Not limited by location or target user
Key service requirements	Management of a capital investment fund	Delivery / promotion of a demand stimulation service <i>plus Core</i>	Delivery of direct operational support service <i>plus Optional</i>

Figure 1 Potential Scope and Service Requirements

1.6 Benefits

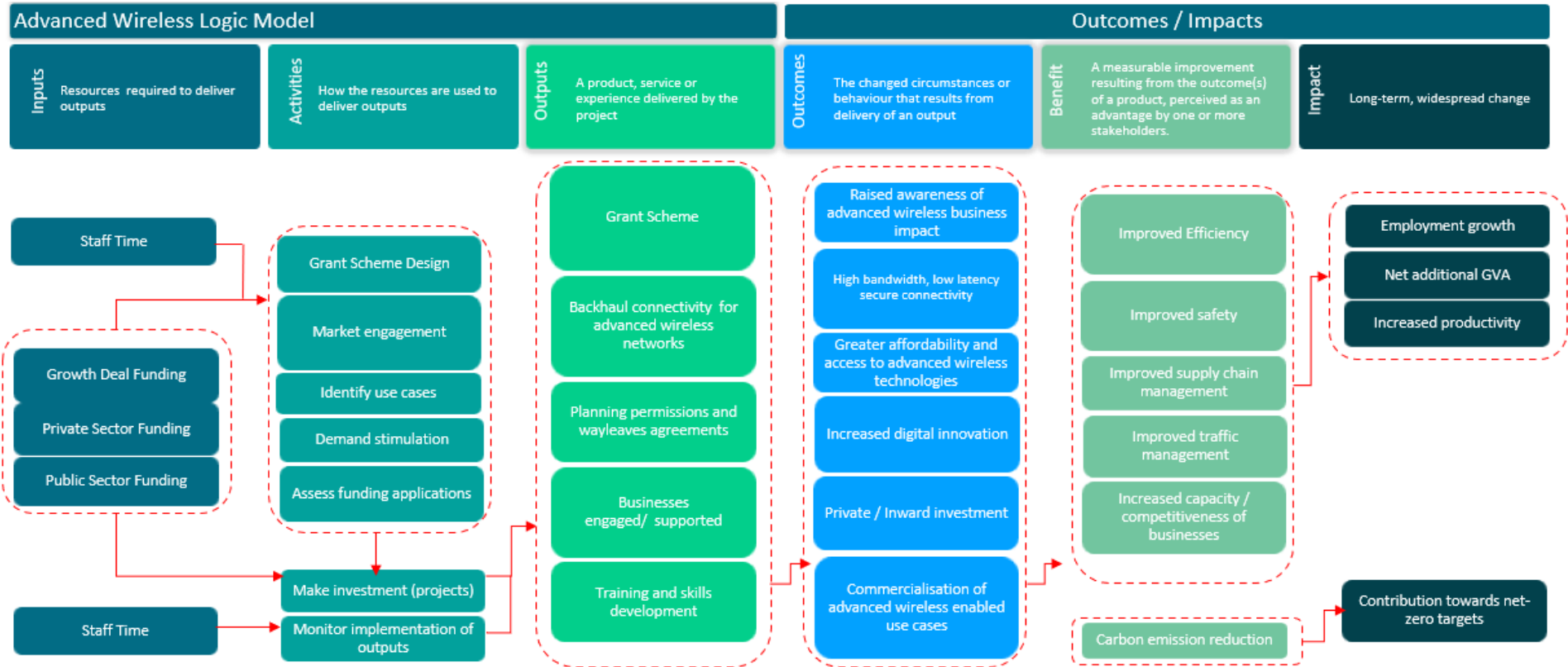
Some examples of likely benefits are shown below. A project logic model (

Figure 3) demonstrates the links from the project’s spending objectives through to the benefits and impact. DCMS’s 2021 report provides a logic map of 5G adoption and benefits (Appendix A) which splits these into benefits for commercial and domestic users. The scope of the project is focused on the applications for commercial users.

Benefits Category (Type)	Beneficiary	Benefit class (Measurement)	Benefit classification
Improved efficiency	e.g., Manufacturing organisations Public sector	Decision response times and productivity improvements	Direct Public Sector benefit (Cash releasing) Wider benefit to UK society (monetisable, including cash benefits)
Improved safety – enhanced CCTV	e.g., Local Authorities, police force, wider public	Reduction in crime More efficient detection and evidencing of crimes	Direct Public Sector benefit (Cash releasing) Wider benefit to UK society (Quantifiable but not readily monetisable)
Improved supply chain management	e.g., Goods providers	Inventory stock levels, cost of storage	Wider benefit to UK society (monetisable, including cash benefits)
Improved traffic management	e.g., Local authorities and Trunk Road Agents, local industries	Levels of congestion	Wider benefit to UK society (Quantifiable but not readily monetisable)
Increased capacity/competitiveness of businesses	e.g. Businesses	Change in turnover, sales	Wider benefit to UK society (monetisable, including cash benefits)

Figure 2 Expected main project benefits

Figure 3 Project Logic Model



1.7 Risks

A risk register has been developed through the business case process to support the OBC and is provided as Appendix E.

Business Risks

- The project may not have political stakeholder support
- The project and its part focus on 5G may attract adverse publicity or public opposition

Service Risks

- There may not be commercial appetite for the project. The project activities may not be enough to bring advanced wireless services to North Wales.
- There may be no user demand for advanced wireless at this time. Businesses may not be ready to use advanced wireless, for example because other pillars of Industry 4.0 are not yet in place.
- There may be no practical way to buy public advanced wireless network connectivity.
- The capital-only profile of Ambition North Wales funding may not be appropriate to the desired intervention. The best action for the public purse, may require some element of revenue funding.

External Risks

- The market may evolve so that there is no requirement for a demand side intervention.
- Global supply chains may be adversely affected, reducing the availability of key components
- Inflation and increasing interest rates / economic uncertainty

1.8 Constraints and Dependencies

- Delivery of advanced wireless services may be subject to the Public Contracts Regulations and the Subsidy Control Act and other legislation.
- Ambition North Wales policies, including the procurement principles and carbon and biodiversity methodology may constrain delivery
- The level of demand for advanced wireless networks in North Wales may be higher than can be addressed by the funding available.
- Revenue funding may be required to support some elements of the project. Since Ambition North Wales funding is primarily Capital, this could be a constraint.

The following internal and external dependencies have been identified

- The project's scale will be a function of the level of demand that can be stimulated for advanced wireless adoption
- Supplier capacity to meet the needs of organisations across the region

2. Economic Case

2.1. Dimensions, Types and Variants

The options appraisal was reviewed by the combined Connected Campuses and Connected Key Sites and Corridors Project Board at its meeting of 13th July 2023. The Dimensions, Types and Variants identified for the Advanced Wireless project are shown below.

DRef	Dimension	Type	Notes	Variants	Valid Intermediates
1a	Scope (What)	Technology	Technologies in scope	4	1
1b	Scope (What)	Network Type	Types of network, public or private, or both	5	1
1c	Scope (What)	Activity	Types of activities that can be undertaken e.g. build, skills, or enablement	8	3
1d	Scope (What)	Location	Whethe to specify location	3	1
2a	Solution (How)	Intervention Type	Methods of deploying the intervention funding	6	2
2b	Solution (How)	Solution Ownership	Parties who may own the solution	4	2
3	Delivery (Who)	Who	What organisations might deliver the solution	5	2
4	Implementation (When)	When	When the solution could be deployed	3	1
5	Funding	Funding	How the solution could be funded	4	1

Critical Success Factors

- **CSF1: STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:** The option supports the delivery of the Ambition North Wales Portfolio strategic economic objectives, including GVA, jobs creation, and inward investment.
- **CFS2: OPTIMISES VALUE FOR MONEY:** The option delivers long term value for money for the public purse in terms of costs, benefits, and risks – net benefit.
- **CSF3: ACHIEVABLE IN MARKET:** Suppliers can deliver the required services; appealing to the supply side.
- **CSF4: AFFORDABLE:** The cost of the option is affordable through available funding sources.
- **CSF5: ACHIEVABLE:** Ambition North Wales has the capacity and capability to deliver the option.
- **CSF6: SUPPORTS** Ambition North Wales ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS on carbon reduction and biodiversity improvements

2.2. Longlist Assessment Outcome – identifying the Shortlist

From a Longlist of 28, 4 Options are taken through to Shortlist, three dictated by the methodology, and one because it rates well against the CSFs and Spending Objectives.

The Shortlisted Options are:

- **OP1: Business as Usual** – No Ambition North Wales Intervention.
- **OP2: Do Minimum:** Buy WiFi6,6E solutions from a single supplier, customer oversees delivery. Ambition North Wales funding only.
- **OP3: Preferred Way Forward:** Grant fund WiFi 6/6E, 5G mmWave and other advanced wireless technologies according to requirements, supported by demand stimulation and training, *managed by Ambition North Wales*, solution ownership to be defined. Multiple sources of funding, including clawback and other evergreen mechanisms.

- **OP4: Intermediate Option:** Grant fund WiFi 6/6E, 5G mmWave and other advanced wireless technologies according to requirements, supported by demand stimulation and training, *managed by customer*, solution ownership to be defined. Multiple sources of funding, including claw-back and other evergreen mechanisms.

Dimension	OP1: BAU	OP2: Do minimum	OP3: Preferred Way Forward	OP10: Intermediate Option
1a Scope (What) Technology	1a.1 Market dictates technical solution	1a.2 WiFi6/6E	1a.4 Market proposes appropriate technical solution for requirements	1a.4 Market proposes appropriate technical solution for requirements
1b Scope (What) Network Type	1b.1 Market dictates network type	1b.2 Market dictates network type according to requirement	1a.5 Public and Private networks delivered according to ANW requirements	1a.5 Public and Private networks delivered according to ANW requirements
1c Scope (What) Activity	1c.1 No ANW activity	1c.2 Demand stimulation	1c.6 Equipment and commissioning, demand stimulation, and skills and training	1c.6 Equipment and commissioning, demand stimulation, and skills and training
1d Scope (What) Location	1d.1 No location specified	1d.2 Specified location	1d.3 Any North Wales location	1d.3 Any North Wales location
2a Solution (How) Intervention Type	2a.1 Do not deploy ANW funds for solutions	2a.2 Buy one solution for all use cases from a single supplier	2a.6 Fund applications that meet criteria with grant or voucher	2a.6 Fund applications that meet criteria with grant or voucher
2b Solution (How) Solution Owner	2b.1 Market determines solution ownership	2b.2 Supplier owns the solution	2b.1 Market determines solution ownership	2b.1 Market determines solution ownership
3 Delivery (Who) Who	3.1 Market delivers	3.2 Supplier Delivery, customer oversight	3.3 Supplier Delivery, ANW oversight	3.2 Supplier Delivery, customer oversight
4 Implementation (When) When	4.1 Market sets deployment timescale	4.2 Supplier sets deployment timescales within criteria set by ANW and Customer	4.2 Supplier sets deployment timescales within criteria set by ANW and Customer	4.2 Supplier sets deployment timescales within criteria set by ANW and Customer
5 Funding Funding	5.1 Funded by others	5.2 ANW funding	5.4 Multiple funding sources	5.4 Multiple funding sources
Carbon & Biodiversity Impact	Limited ability to influence C&B	Some limitations on scope to manage C&B impacts	Good scope to manage C&B	Some limitations on scope to manage C&B impacts
Shortlisting Rationale:	Always Carry Forward	Always Carry Forward	Always Carry Forward	Carry Forward
Description	BAU: Customers and Suppliers deploy advanced wireless with no ANW involvement.	Do Minimum: Buy WiFi 6 solutions from a single supplier, customer oversees delivery. ANW funding only.	PWF: Grant fund WiFi6/5G according to requirements, supported by demand stimulation and training, managed by ANW, solution ownership to be defined, Multiple sources of funding	Intermediate Option: Grant fund WiFi6/5G according to requirements, supported by demand stimulation and training, managed by customer, solution ownership to be defined. Multiple sources of funding

2.3. Selecting the Preferred Option

To select the Preferred Option, each Shortlisted Option next underwent an assessment of delivery costs, risk monetisation, benefits, applying optimism bias.

The Net Present Social Value for the shortlisted options is shown in the table below. The detailed assessment is provided in Appendix B: CC Advanced Wireless NPSV v0 4.

	Total Costs		NPSV	
OP1 BAU	£	145,200	-£	112,384
OP2 Do Minimum	£	635,755	£	303,568
OP3 Preferred Way Forward	£	20,046,891	£	23,691,658
OP10 Intermediate Option	£	20,172,891	£	23,584,005

For each option, the estimated implementation and operating costs are estimated. They are inflated by 20% to account for optimism bias in their estimates. 20% has been selected to reflect that the costs of developing the scheme could be underestimated. The level of spend will be constrained by the budget, so that unexpectedly high-cost projects could be replaced by lower cost ones. The optimism bias is not a differentiator between the options at this stage.

For the risks of each option that can be mitigated, the cost of the mitigation is multiplied by the probability of the risk to provide a monetised expected mitigation cost.

The majority of documentary evidence for benefits is qualitative, with very few transparent measures of the financial value of the benefits. However, the conditions of the grant scheme will set out criteria for economic benefits, ensuring that the project delivers value.

The benefits for the NPSV are calculated based on the assumption that organisations require a payback period of around 3 years for investments that drive productivity improvements, and that the solutions implemented will have a useful life of 10 years, so that there will be 7 years of benefits captured by the beneficiary after the initial investment is recovered. We further assume that those productivity savings will be leveraged by the beneficiary, reinvesting them to add 10% to their value annually.

The NPSV for each option is calculated from the total costs and benefits, adjusted by the GDP Deflator and the Social Time Preference Rate according to the HM Treasury Green Book methodology.

2.4. Benefit Cost Ratio

The Benefit Cost Ratio for the indicative Preferred Option is 280% for the estimated 10-year life of the intervention. The Benefit Cost Ratio for the shortlisted Options is shown in the table below.

	Total Costs	Total Benefits	BCR
OP1 BAU	£ 145,200	£ -	0.0
OP2 Do Minimum	£ 635,755	£ 1,300,000	2.0
OP3 Preferred Way Forward	£ 20,046,891	£ 61,906,953	3.1
OP10 Intermediate Option	£ 20,172,891	£ 61,906,953	3.1

2.5. Preferred Option

The Preferred Option is OP3, confirmed by the Project Board. The Preferred Option calls for a range of activities:

- Set up a flexible grant scheme to fund adoption of advanced wireless solutions
- Secure additional funding to supplement Ambition North Wales funds.
- Oversee the implementation of advanced wireless solutions and drive benefits realisation

2.6. Outputs

The Preferred Option will deliver the following outputs:

- Advanced wireless adoption enabled as far as possible within the available budget
- Ambition North Wales funding of approximately £19m deployed

The precise scope and level of advanced wireless provision will be determined in an initial grant scheme design phase.

2.7. Sensitivity Analysis

The sensitivity analysis considers the margin by which the Preferred Option is preferred, and the factors that could cause another Option to be preferred instead.

The Preferred Option (OP3) is highly robust against the OP1 BAU and OP2 Do Minimum Options because it delivers a far greater level of benefits.

OP10 differs from the Preferred Option only in the lower level of delivery oversight provided by Ambition North Wales, and its correspondingly higher level of risk. The Preferred Option is therefore sensitive to the value of this risk. OP10 becomes preferred if the cost of mitigating the delivery risk is higher than the modest impact of the risk itself. However, since the two Options are very similar, choices about the level of oversight to provide can be made in the delivery phase. This sensitivity should be kept under review in the delivery of the project to ensure that the Preferred Option continues to deliver better value than doing nothing.

3. Commercial Case

3.1. Procurement strategy

The project will involve the design and delivery of a grant scheme and grant beneficiary organisations purchasing advanced wireless technologies. There are therefore two streams of procurement within the project led by Ambition North Wales and led by beneficiaries.

Ambition North Wales will:

- Procure specialist support to design the grant scheme
- Select grant beneficiaries through an application process

Beneficiaries will be responsible for procuring the scope of equipment approved in grant applications.

3.2. Specialist support

Procurement of grant scheme design services may be undertaken through the Crown Commercial Services Dynamic Purchasing System RM6322 (End date 27/11/2030). This has six categories including

1. Design and Development: programme guidance, design elements, application forms and processes, monitoring and reporting, expert consultancy, IT systems.
2. Evaluation Services: design robust evaluation systems, measure impact and outcomes, carry out site visits, evaluate lessons learnt.

Where it is not possible to select a service provider through the DPS an open tender competition will be held through the Sell2Wales portal.

3.3. Selection of beneficiaries

At OBC stage it is expected that the Project Board supported by the advisory group will oversee grant assessments and make recommendations for approval either to the Programme Board, Portfolio Board or Ambition Board according to award value.

3.4. Procurement by beneficiaries

Both public and private sector beneficiaries will be required to undertake their own procurement of the goods and services required for their specific projects. In the case of public sector organisations, they will procure in line with standard practices e.g. open tender, use of frameworks etc and in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations. Where appropriate, beneficiaries with common requirements may pursue collaborative procurements which offer better value for money, economies of scale and reductions in procurement costs.

All procurement will be required to be in accordance with the Ambition North Wales Procurement Principles which describe the region's procurement themes and principles, including in respect of carbon and biodiversity and social value.

3.5. Services requirements and outputs

Grant scheme design

The grant scheme design service will be specified to ensure that the Spending Objective of 'enabling selected business and public sector users to take advantage of advanced wireless connectivity' is met.

The scheme's design should include an assessment of the characteristics of businesses, including size, sector, technical demand, skills etc, across the region, so that funding calls can be designed to deliver value across the region.

The grant scheme criteria will include:

- demonstrating a clear requirement for advanced wireless solutions (utilising publicly available mobile networks will not be eligible)
- demonstrating a clear economic benefit for the funding that exceeds the scheme's minimum threshold
- obligations on grant beneficiaries to operate the infrastructure to provide an agreed level of network coverage for a defined period
- obligations in respect of carbon and biodiversity in accordance with the Ambition North Wales methodology
- Minimum/maximum grant values, with the possibility of larger applications in some calls, especially in the first funding rounds
- a match funding requirement of c. 50% in cash or in kind, subject to Subsidy Control compliance
- a broad range of eligible costs that are capitalisable advanced wireless costs, and could include equipment, engineering and installation costs, but not the operating costs of the solution

- a clear list of eligible costs and payment when they have been evidenced
- clawback provisions to recover grant funding if the terms of the award are later breached
- obligations for use cases to be developed and publicised by Ambition North Wales
- a scoring methodology, potentially including assessment of economic impact

3.6. Social Value

In accordance with Ambition North Wales Procurement Principles, grant beneficiaries will be required to seek Social Value from suppliers through their procurement. The requirement for this will be a condition of grant approval.

3.7. Subsidy Control

With a range of potential use cases and a broad scope of eligibility for applicants, including the private sector, funding will be awarded either on a 'no subsidy basis' or as a permitted subsidy in compliance with the Subsidy Control Act. It is expected most awards will be permitted subsidies.

Where subsidy is awarded, it is anticipated that funding will be granted as Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA), within the value threshold and noting the constraint of cumulation with previous awards. Where MFA is not appropriate a suitable approach will be considered including

- Welsh Local Government Capital Investment Aid & Employment Aid Scheme (SA.60356)
- UK Local Growth Streamlined Route
- UK Research, Development and Innovation Streamlined Route

Ambition North Wales will obtain detailed subsidy control advice when the grant scheme is developed to confirm the scope of criteria ensures compliance with MFA and the other potential routes listed above.

3.8. Risk allocation

Risk apportionment grant scheme design and administration

Risk Category	Potential allocation		
	Public	Private	Shared
Design risk			
Transition and implementation risk			
Availability and performance risk			
Operating risk			
Termination risks			
Control risks			
Financing risks			
Legislative risks			
Other project risks			

Table 3 Risk apportionment (Ambition North Wales procurement)

3.9. Risk apportionment beneficiaries' delivery

Risk associated with the implementation will be apportioned entirely to beneficiaries and confirmed in the Grant Funding Agreements. To control the risk to Ambition North Wales of under performance by beneficiaries, the grants will be payable in stages, in arrears and based on evidence of eligible expenditure and pre agreed key performance indicators.

3.10. Charging mechanism, contract type and accountancy treatment

The project intends to make payments for its key outputs and services over the lifetime of the contracts as set out in tables below. During the pre-delivery phase the grant scheme design will be paid according to a fixed price (Ambition North Wales contract) and external legal advice where required will be paid as a day rate (called off from existing framework).

The accountancy of the deal will follow Cyngor Gwynedd’s relevant accountancy standards. The service contract for the project will be subject to VAT and reclaimed in line with Cyngor Gwynedd’s standard treatment. The balance sheet will feature in the reporting process set out in a Grant Scheme management plan.

3.11. Key Commercial Case considerations for the FBC:

- Identifying the most suitable operating model and the Accountable Body for the grant scheme, currently assumed to be the future North Wales Joint Committee / Ambition North Wales.
- Market testing of the potential supplier base and scope of services proposed for running a fund; identification of suitable and capable providers based in North Wales.
- Exploring potential partnership arrangements with Development Bank of Wales for Ambition North Wales to deliver grant in conjunction with Development Bank of Wales’ SME loans offer.
- Finalising the most suitable contractual arrangements for procured resources.
- Securing legal advice on fiduciary duties and subsidy control considerations relating to the grant scheme

4. Financial Case

Preferred Option – Advanced Wireless grant scheme
A £19M fund will operate as a flexible grant scheme to fund adoption of advanced wireless solutions. The scheme will be administered by Ambition North Wales over a three-year period following initial scheme design with project management provided by the sponsor, Ambition North Wales. The first phase of the project will involve the grant scheme design and set up followed by the delivery of capital funding to private and public sector organisations which will apply for funding in accordance with the scheme’s conditions and eligibility criteria.

It is not possible to establish at this stage how much spend will be required for any single advanced wireless solution because the applications are generally at an early stage of maturity in the UK, and each network will be uniquely tailored to the specification of the user. Lessons learned through the delivery of projects in earlier funding rounds will better inform the later rounds. UK Government’s 5G Innovation Regions Programme (2024-25) which shares a similar scope, will inform grant scheme design initially and evaluation of that programme will assist in reviewing scheme criteria in years 2 and

4.1. Financial constraints

- A budget of £19.54M is allocated from the Growth Deal’s Connected Campuses project. All modelling for the OBC is based on the £19.54M capital.
- The Growth Deal funding package is capital funding only with no revenue funding for projects.

4.2. Funding Sources

Growth Deal capital funding will primarily be used to establish and manage the grant scheme for the duration of the project. Activities to support the deployment, such as demand stimulation, market engagement, awareness raising, the facilitation of forums to bring customers and suppliers together, will require revenue funding. The fund’s design is proposed to include a charge for successful applicants to meet the costs of delivering the scheme, including administration, assessment and demand stimulation. The scheme design will identify a suitable rate to charge for applications based on the grant award sought, with this expected to be in the range of 1% to 5%. Income from this charge will also be required to cover the administration of unsuccessful expressions of interest which do not proceed to successful applications. It will therefore be essential that clear eligibility requirements set out at expression of interest stage are designed into the scheme to ensure a high conversion rate to successful awards.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Funding					
15 CAPEX funding (Growth Deal)	£ 123,900	£ 4,674,653	£ 9,808,864	£ 4,931,732	£ 19,539,148
16 OPEX (Subsidy Control resource, Ambition North Wales PMO)	£ 6,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 6,250
17 OPEX (Administration charge to applicants)	£ -	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 312,579
18 OPEX contingency (Ambition North Wales PMO)	£ 1,250	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 63,766
19 Total funding	£ 131,400	£ 4,799,684	£ 9,933,895	£ 5,056,763	£ 19,921,743

Table 4 Summary of project funding sources

4.3. Private investment

Total investment per beneficiary will be confirmed with each award however for the purpose of the Economic and Financial cases estimates are calculated based on average awards matched by the beneficiary at a rate of 50% of total costs. Subject to the scheme design and Subsidy Control conditions, intervention rates and the value of levered investment per application is expected to vary according to the extent of benefits to be delivered by the applicant, e.g., job creation, productivity etc.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Private / Public sector capital investment (est.)	£ -	£ 4,620,053	£ 9,754,264	£ 4,877,132	£ 19,251,448

4.4. Estimated Capital Costs

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Capital Expenditure						
1	Grant awards	£ -	£ 4,620,053	£ 9,754,264	£ 4,877,132	£ 19,251,448
2	Grant scheme design	£ 57,750	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 57,750
3	Capitalised Staff costs (ANW, project mgt.)	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 182,000
4	Contingency	£ 20,650	£ 9,100	£ 9,100	£ 9,100	£ 47,950
5	Total Capital costs (CAPEX)	£ 123,900	£ 4,674,653	£ 9,808,864	£ 4,931,732	£ 19,539,148

Table 5 Indicative Capital Costs

An average award of £75,000 is modelled (assuming total costs are therefore £150,000 including the beneficiaries' 50% capital contribution) however it is anticipated that the grant scheme will be designed to serve several categories of award value (i.e. small, medium and large awards). All capital costs are expressed as exclusive of VAT.

4.5. Estimated Revenue Costs

Operating costs that do not qualify as capital expenditure will be met with income generated by the scheme administration charge paid by successful applicants. In year 1 revenue costs will be required to be covered by PMO budget in advance of successful applications being processed and this is likely to extend to year 2 during the initial period of applications being received and processed. As the scheme matures and the volume of applications increases the income from applicants will be used to sustain the ongoing delivery of the Scheme through to completion. The estimated revenue costs of the project are shown in the table below. All revenue costs are expressed as exclusive of VAT.

Lifespan		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Operating Expenditure						
6	Subsidy Control resource	£ 6,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 6,250
7	Grant operation	£ -	£ 22,750	£ 22,750	£ 22,750	£ 68,250
8	Application assessment	£ -	£ 27,576	£ 27,576	£ 27,576	£ 82,727
9	Demand stimulation	£ -	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 136,500
10	Programme management	£ -	£ 8,367	£ 8,367	£ 8,367	£ 25,102
11	Subtotal OPEX	£ 6,250	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 318,829
12	Contingency	£ 1,250	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 63,766
13	Total Operating costs (OPEX)	£ 7,500	£ 125,032	£ 125,032	£ 125,032	£ 382,595

Table 6 Indicative Revenue Costs

4.6. Assumptions

- Grant awards will vary from low value awards (ca. £10,000) up to higher value awards of £1M+, based on a range of applications which have been funded by UK Government sponsored schemes such as 5G Innovation Regions and the 5G Test Bed and Trials Programmes. Other grant schemes currently operating in the UK with comparable scope demonstrate that this range is appropriate and the scheme should expect to attract both low and high value capital bids.

- Successful applicants will be prepared to pay the administration charge to access the capital funding. The overall estimated income from this charge represents 1.6% of the total capital grant award and is considered to be a proportionate level of cost to the applicants.

4.7. Risks

Risk	Description	Mitigation
Grants	If the value of individual grants or overall grant scheme is insufficient the scheme may not have a material effect on spending objectives and benefits.	Engage market in grant design. and for each funding call. Review success of each funding call, and delivery projects and adjust scope to reflect feedback. Consider increasing grant values and securing additional funding.
Budget	If project costs are higher than budgeted for outcomes may be reduced or the scheme may be unaffordable	Engage with market to test assumptions. Detailed assessment of costs through development. Ensure that delivery cost is not all-or-nothing, so that higher unit cost simply means less volume delivered, not delivery failure.
Administration charge	If the administration charge applied to successful applicants deters applicants there may be reduced delivery of the capital grant fund risking delivery of spending objectives and benefits.	Consult a range of potential applicants to ensure administration charges are proportionate and affordable across a range of project values. Review administration charges throughout the project lifecycle and revise these where necessary ensuring the project remains affordable.
Demand	If there is insufficient demand for the grants at the minimum values prescribed in the scheme the costs associated with delivery and administration are unaffordable	Thorough consultation with potential applicants will need to be undertaken during the design of the scheme and a high level of engagement, promotion and demand stimulation activity planned to ensure a sufficient volume of quality applications.
Administration of unsuccessful expressions of interest	If the scheme attracts a large volume of unsuccessful applications the cost of administering these may exceed the income secured from successful applications, risking the affordability of the scheme.	The grant scheme's design will need to consider effective means of efficiently processing expressions of interest so that only those which have a high probability of success are accepted to full application. Scheme criteria will need to be appropriately balanced to both encourage applications and set eligibility requirements which reduce risk of failed delivery of benefits.

4.8. Financial Case Summary

		Total
Capital Expenditure		
	Capital costs	£ 19,491,198
	Contingency	£ 47,950
	Total Capital costs (CAPEX)	£19,539,148
Revenue Expenditure		
	Revenue costs	£ 318,829
	Contingency	£ 63,766
	Total Operating costs (OPEX)	£ 382,595
Project costs		
	Project costs	£ 19,810,027
	Project contingency	£ 111,716
	Total project costs (public)	£ 19,921,743
Project income		
	Applicant scheme administration charge	£318,829
	Net project cost (public)	£ 19,914,593
	Private investment	£ 19,251,448
	Total costs (Net Public + Private)	£ 38,854,362

Table 7 Summary of project costs

5. Management Case

5.1. Methodology

The NWEAB has developed a Project Management Framework that sets out how a NWEAB project is to be defined, directed, managed, and communicated. This Framework is aligned with HM Government project guidance with methods tailored to meet NWEAB requirements.

5.2. Governance

The Advanced Wireless project will be aligned with the Ambition North Wales governance structures. The Project Manager will report to the Ambition North Wales Digital Programme Manager, governed by the Connected Campuses Project Board. The project will have a Project Manager and a Senior Responsible Owner (SRO). The Project Board reports to the Digital Programme Board, which in turn reports to the Portfolio Board. The North Wales Economic Ambition Board is the authority with ultimate responsibility for approving business cases. Escalation of risks, issues and change management is applied up the hierarchy according to the level of significance.

5.3. Resources

The project will require a combination of dedicated staff for activities like project management, and support for specialist matters such as technical, financial, legal, commercial, and grant setup activities. The project should be resourced by a team of internal and external project resources and sup-

port from the Ambition North Wales PMO. A hybrid approach will ensure the availability of the necessary capacity and capabilities, some of which will be short term or of a specialist nature. A high degree of demand stimulation and market engagement will be necessary to ensure that customers and private sector partners are encouraged to apply for scheme funds. The Financial Case states 1 FTE to support these activities.

5.3.1 Scheme Operation

The operation of the scheme will require 0.5 FTE to administer the scheme and a panel to evaluate applications:

- Publish funding calls and manage the application process along with any clarifications
- Triage applications to ensure the eligibility criteria have been met
- Coordinate the evaluation of eligible applications
- Notify successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Administer and track the award of funds against the Ambition North Wales budget

5.3.2 Skills and Training Activities

To deliver benefits from advanced wireless delivery projects, beneficiaries may need training to fully exploit the features and opportunities posed by the technology. These requirements are beyond the scope of this project, but Ambition North Wales will facilitate access to appropriate training courses, for example through the Regional Skills Partnership.

5.4. Project Delivery and Management

5.4.1 Design - Duration: approx. 6 months

- Defining the eligibility criteria for the grant scheme, and designing the supporting operational processes
- Develop outline schedule of funding rounds

5.4.2 Market engagement - Duration: approx. 6 months in parallel with Design.

- Engaging the market to confirm that the proposed approach will be attractive to the market and that it will be capable of delivering the intended benefits
- Engaging local skills partnerships to identify opportunities to support training activities Develop and issue market notices
- Develop information packs and supplier/ customer engagement forums to raise awareness of the scheme, highlighting the opportunities Advanced Wireless present.
- Stimulating demand by creating a customer ecosystem that engages Ambition North Wales partners and potential customers to identify locations and use cases for advanced wireless application
- Creating a regional advanced wireless supply chain ecosystem that brings solution component suppliers and investors together in the region

5.4.3 Scheme Operation - Per funding round - Duration: 2.5 years initially

- Setting the award criteria for each round and geographical and sector focus of the round, ensuring that all parts of the region can benefit from the fund
- Monitoring and updating eligibility criteria, design and grant value based on lessons learned from previous tranches of the grant
- Publishing funding calls
- Managing the application process along with any clarification questions posed
- Supporting the evaluation of eligible applications by a specialist panel
- Notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Administering and tracking the award of funds against the Ambition North Wales budget
- Creating case studies

5.5. Specialist Resources

The Advanced Wireless project will be supported by supplementary third-party resource to provide technical, financial, legal, commercial, procurement, and grant scheme design and set-up expertise. The Ambition North Wales PMO is planning procurement activity to ensure the requirements for these delivery specialisms are met before the projects commence.

5.6. Assumptions

- Stakeholders will work together with Ambition North Wales to define the eligibility criteria for fund applications. The criteria will recognise any requirements stipulated by Ambition North Wales funding sources, for example beneficiary match funding, Capital and revenue limitations and so on.
- The market will aid in educating customers as part of its sales and marketing effort and services provision.
- The Regional Skills Partnership could play a role in engagement with customers and facilitation of skills and training activities where required.

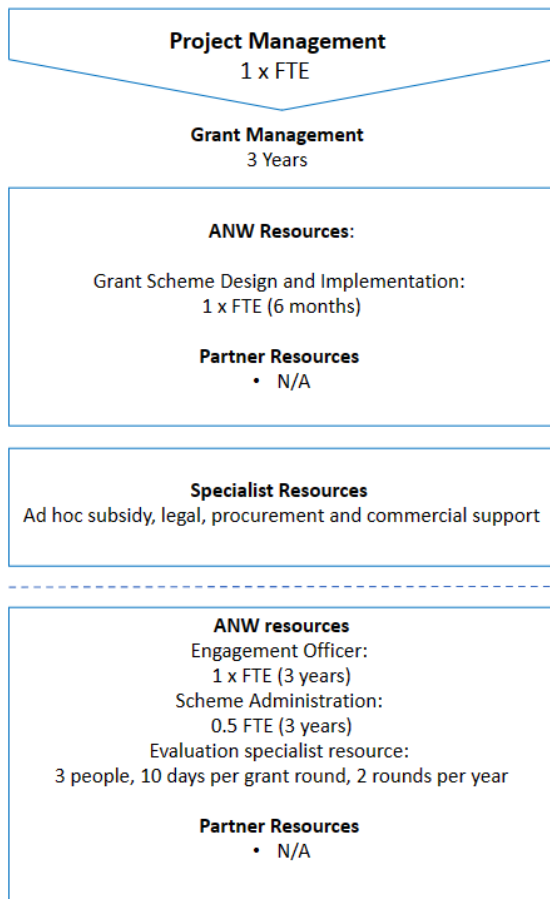


Figure 4 Summary of project resources

5.7. Risks and Issues

The Ambition North Wales Portfolio Management Office has developed a Risk and Issues Management Strategy for use across all Growth Deal projects. The strategy covers the management of risks and issues across the several categories including regulatory, environmental, financial, reputational and social, programme and project delivery and health and safety. The risk register will be owned by the SRO and managed by the Project Manager. Risks will be reviewed and scrutinised at all Project Board meetings and escalated to the Programme Board where required. The Programme Manager will have access to, and oversight of the project risk register with a remit to challenge and provide a quality assurance function.

The Risk Escalation process

- Project > Programme Risks: Project risks of significant concern will be escalated for consideration as part of the Programme Risk Register if they are considered to pose a threat to the wider programme and its expected benefits.
- Programme > Portfolio Risks: Programme risks of significant concern will be escalated for consideration as part of the Portfolio Risk Register if they are considered to pose a threat to the wider portfolio and/or the strategic goals of the NWEAB.

Risk	Impact	Mitigating Action
If there is a lack of commercial and implementation resource to support scheme set up	The project is delayed or less successful.	Understand and describe the resource implications early enough to allow Ambition North Wales sufficient lead time to identify and appoint appropriate resources
If revenue funding for the operation of the advanced wireless grant scheme is not available	The project cannot be delivered.	Seek out sources of revenue funding. Consider feasibility of Ambition North Wales partner contribution, or customer contribution as part of the eligibility criteria.
If planning and other constraints hinder progress of the resulting beneficiary delivery projects	Timescales are difficult for projects to achieve	Identify ways that Council partners can remove barriers to deployment, e.g., facilitate access to existing infrastructure. Plan early for this long lead-time item
If there is lack of interest and take up of the grant scheme	The project has a limited impact	Demand stimulation and raising awareness of the scheme, the benefits of private 5G networks and existing use cases in similar industries.

Table 8.1 Key Delivery Risks

5.8. Quality Management

The products to be delivered by the project are likely to be diverse in their nature ranging from Initiation documentation through to eligibility criteria, communications materials, Engagement Forums, scheme processes, and application guidance materials. Products will be assured and accepted in accordance with the Ambition North Wales approach to Quality Management, by either the Connected Campuses Project Board or other appropriate Ambition North Wales representatives.

5.9. High Level Timescales

The high-level timescale for the project is shown below. The delivery project plan is provided in Appendix C.

5.10. Stakeholder and Market Engagement

Engagement will ensure that key NWEAB political and stakeholders are engaged and briefed throughout the design, procurement (where appropriate), and implementation and operation stages of the project. The take up and exploitation of advanced wireless is considered a demand-led challenge. The Project team will engage with local businesses to raise awareness of the project, its objectives, and the scheme to drive participation leading to greater exploitation. Engagement will test Ambition North Wales's requirement, test the proposed assumptions about the management and operation of the scheme, test the commercial and delivery approach, confirm the attractiveness of the proposition both to potential scheme applicants and market partners, and encourage participation.

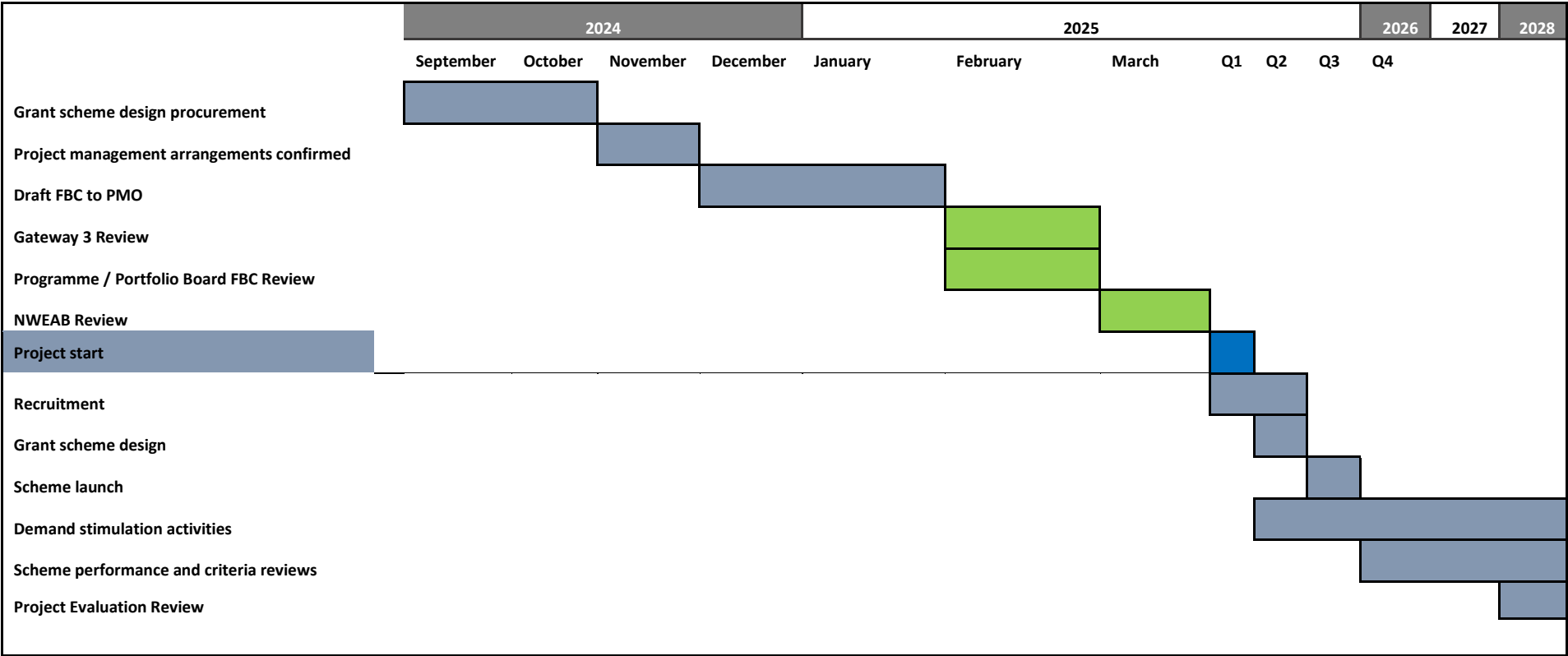
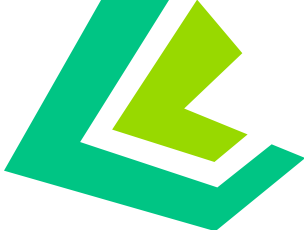


Figure 5 Outline Project Plan

5.11. Market Engagement Overview

A market engagement plan has been developed which sets out the approach to be taken to support the Advanced Wireless project. The Market structure diagram in Fig 8.4 below, shows the scope of market engagement. The market engagement approach comprises several engagements scheduled at different stages of the project scoping and delivery process. An overview is provided below.

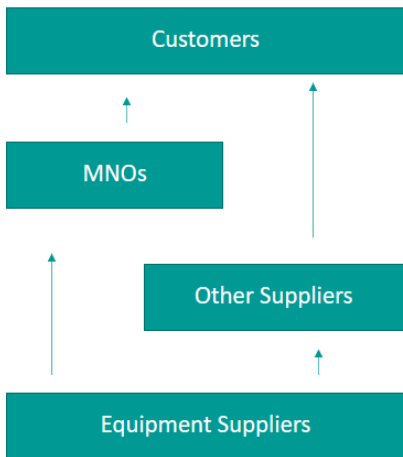


Fig 8.4 Scope of Market Engagement

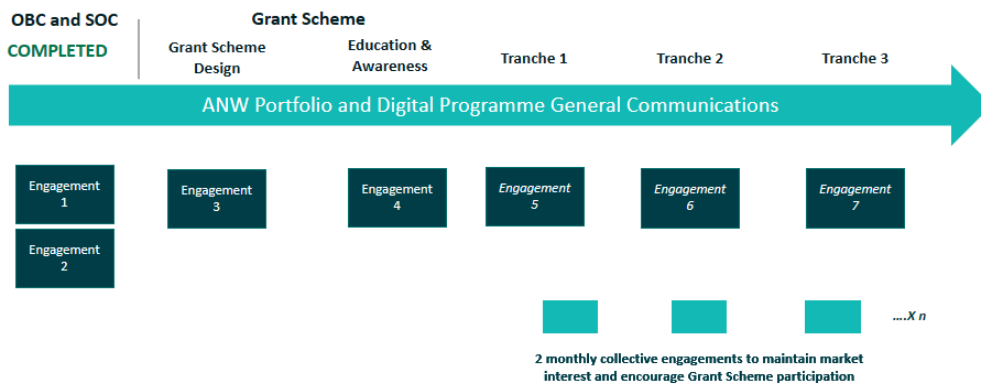


Fig 8.5 Market Engagement Overview

Engagements 1 and 2 engaged the market to inform the Strategic, Economic and Commercial Cases of the SOC and OBC development and have now been completed. Appendix D outlines the market engagement conducted in respect of Advanced Wireless.

The focus of Engagements 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are shown in Fig 8.6 below.

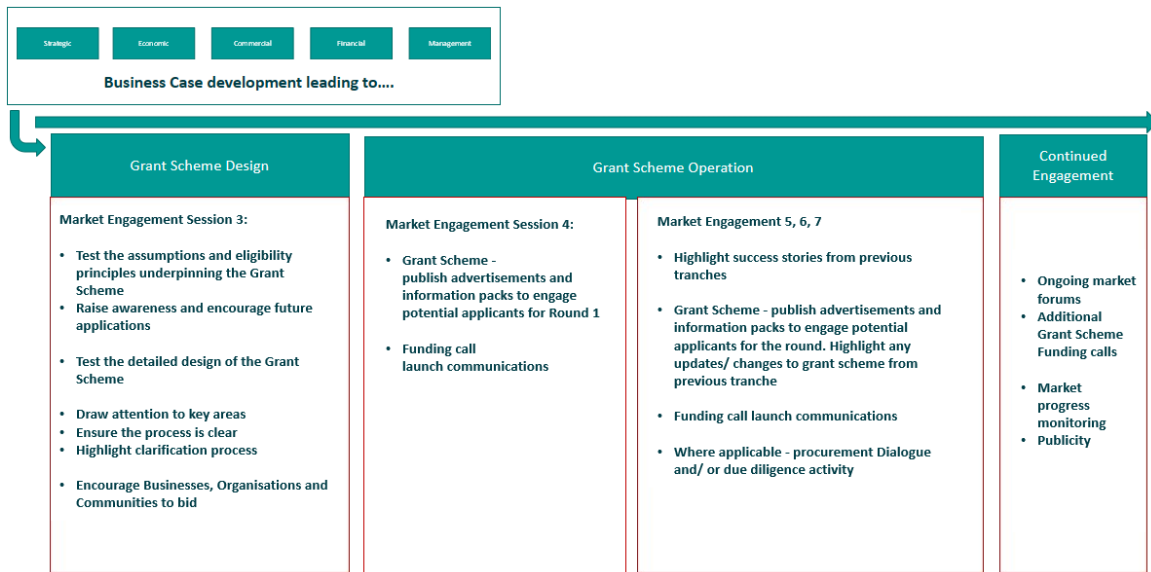


Fig 8.6 Engagements 3,4, 5, 6 and 7 focus

5.12. Project Evaluation

A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has been developed for use across the Portfolio which describes the arrangements to monitor and evaluate the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Growth Deal programmes and projects. Key components of the plan are set out below:

- Monthly Highlight Reports for all programmes (produced by Portfolio Management Office) and all projects (produced by Project Manager)
- Formal Quarterly Reports to the NWEAB, UK Government and Welsh Government (produced by Portfolio Management Office)
- Formal Annual Report to NWEAB, UK Government and Welsh Government (produced by Portfolio Management Office)
- Independent economic impact evaluation to be undertaken every 3-5 years against suite of indicators agreed with UK Government and Welsh Government
- Wider benefits to be achieved through procurement where appropriate, particularly social and community value will be monitored and evaluated to ensure maximum benefit is derived to the region from such activity

5.13. Benefits Management

The project will adopt the Ambition North Wales standard approach to benefits management. Mechanisms for tracking and measuring the outcomes and benefits that the Ambition North Wales project and resulting beneficiary delivery projects have been set in place to achieve will be established, demonstrating

the contribution of the projects to the Ambition North Wales Programme and Portfolio strategic objectives. Many of the primary outcomes that the projects will deliver, especially GVA are very difficult to measure and attribute directly to digital infrastructure investment. There may be a lag before the projects' effects are detectable, and improvements may be attributable to other initiatives of the Ambition North Wales Portfolio and other bodies.

The primary focus will be on the projects' outputs, in the form of the take up of the grant and the number of private Advanced Wireless networks established in line with the targets specified in the Spending Objectives. These will be simpler to analyse, more immediate, and more directly relatable by stakeholders. Case study and questionnaire analysis will be used to supplement the output analysis and to estimate the eventual benefits of the projects.

The project will baseline the KPIs that can reasonably be used as a direct proxy indicator for project success, including:

Benefit	Type	Beneficiary	Benefit Measurement
Greater awareness of Advanced Wireless networks and their benefits	Qualitative	Public and Private	Survey data
Improved processes and increased efficiency	Quantifiable	Public and Private	Statistics & survey data
Greater number of Advanced Wireless Use Cases	Quantifiable	Whole economy	Case Study collation
Greater Digital Inclusion	Qualitative	Public and Private	Number of connections within an AW network, survey data

Table 8.2 Benefits

5.14. External Assurance

In March 2024 the project underwent a Welsh Government Gateway 2 Review and received an Amber rating. Several recommendations were provided following the review interviews which included stakeholders within the Project and Programme Boards, the PMO, Welsh Government and UK Government (representing DSIT wireless infrastructure policy). The review panel also interviewed two SMEs from within the region who represented examples of potential candidate applicants to the grant scheme. The review concluded its assessment of readiness for the next phase:

“The Review Team concluded that there was sufficient evidence of satisfactory potential for the project to achieve its goals in the next phase, particularly given the broad base of stakeholder support across the region; the viability of the solution; the availability of relevant experience and good practice to draw on from elsewhere; and a sound, pragmatic approach to achieving the required outputs; but there were a number of actions (particularly with respect to project planning/control and design of the Grant scheme, covered elsewhere in this report) that would need to be completed in a timely and effective manner to best ensure that the spending objectives and the benefits would be achieved in the timeframe expected.”

Supporting Documents

Please see accompanying spreadsheets:

Appendix A: CC Advanced Wireless Options Appraisal v1 0

Appendix B: CC Advanced Wireless NPSV v1 1

Appendix C: CC Advanced Wireless Project Plan v0 1

Appendix D: CC Advanced Wireless Market Engagement v0 1

Appendix E: CC Advanced Wireless Risk Log v0 1

Appendix F: Digital Programme Business Case

Appendix G: Overview of technologies and uses cases relevant to North Wales

Appendix H: GVA Distribution

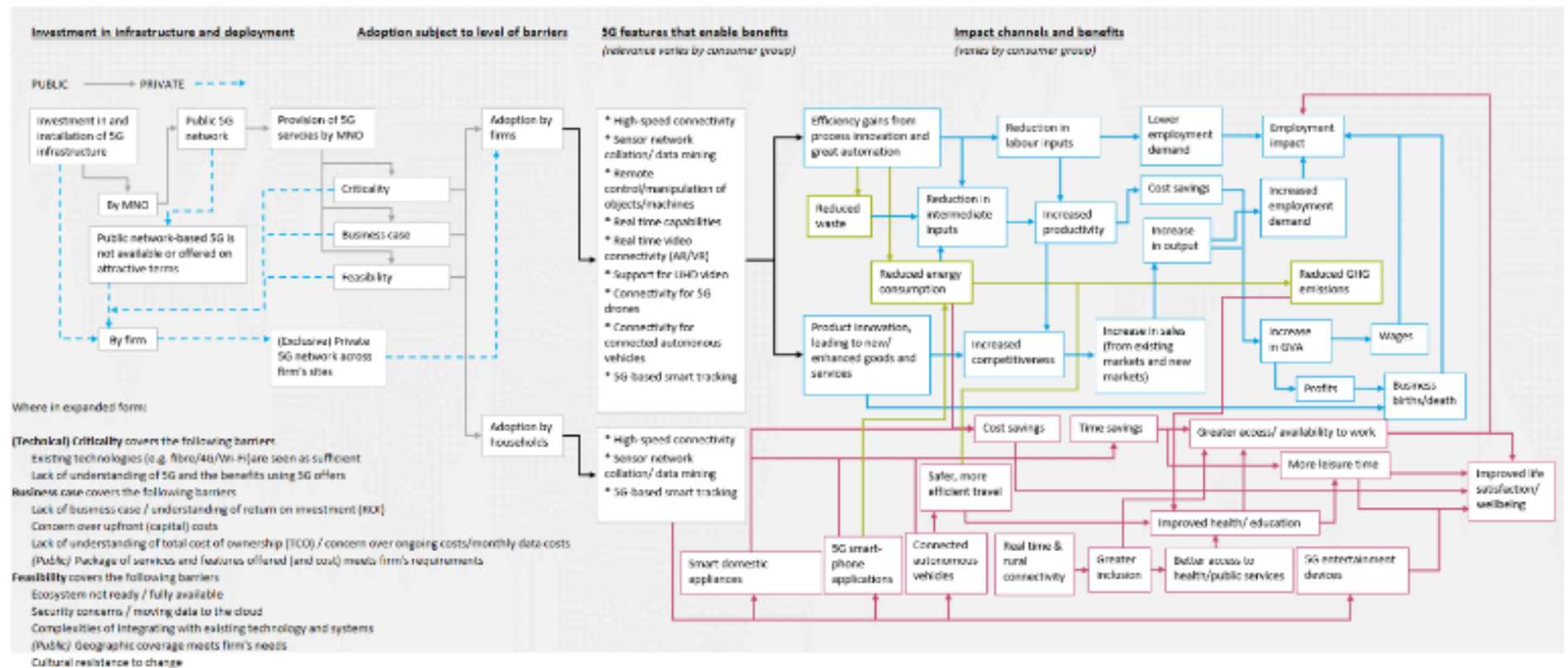
Appendix I: CC Advanced Wireless Benefits Realisation Plan v0 1

Appendix J : ANW Procurement Principles

Appendix K: North Wales Digital Connectivity Strategy 2021

Appendix L Logic map of 5G adoption and benefits

Appendix L Logic map of 5G adoption and benefits (DCMS, 20



North Wales Growth Integrated Impact Assessment Report



Programme	Digital Programme
Project	Connected Campuses
Lead officer responsible for assessment	Stuart Whitfield
Office responsible for monitoring impact	Stuart Whitfield
Date assessment completed	01/02/2024
Version	1

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL - Aim/Purpose/Outcome
 *Proposal refers to what is being assessed and includes, policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals

The Advanced Wireless project aims to drive the adoption of advanced wireless across the region through a combination of revenue and capital activities. The project will address barriers to take up to deliver socioeconomic benefits to communities and businesses in the region associated with productivity and performance improvements enabled by modern connectivity technologies.

The strategic context sets out the alignment between the project and key strategic drivers including:

- Alignment to the Digital Strategy for Wales and the UK Digital Strategy and UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy
- Alignment with the Growth Vision for North Wales, The NWEAB Digital Connectivity Strategy and the Regional Economic Framework as well as NWEAB Statement on Climate Change and Biodiversity.

Purpose

This document outlines the integrated impact assessment undertaken as part of this proposal. This integrated approach ensures that the impact assessment is proportionate and at the centre of policy making and delivery. The aim is to take a rounded view of the main impacts, both positive and negative and involve all persons affected by the proposal; and uses evidence to meet both the requirements of the *legislations* in the short-term and long-term.

The Integrated Assessment covers 3 key areas: Well-Being, Equalities and Welsh Language and provides an overall conclusion as to the impact the proposal will have. It will highlight any positive outcomes, ensure consideration is given against each of the elements within these 3 keys areas and detail any mitigating actions required using the Five Ways of Working.

Well-being:

The assessment will record any positive contributions and potential negative impacts against each of the 7 Well-Being goals in line with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015. The objective will be to seek and secure where possible, sustained improvements in the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of people in the region and Wales as a whole. To identify key learning points through the 5 ways of working and seek to embed these improvements through a range of mediums: stakeholder engagements, looking at the long-term effects of the proposal and implementation of an agreed action plan to ensure monitoring of negative mitigations and contributions to positive impacts.

Equalities:

The duty to undertake Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) arises from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010. This assessment will help to ensure that any policies and decisions do not discriminate, that they promote equality wherever possible and that they foster good community relations. This will involve assessing the likely effects on people in respect of disability, gender, race, language, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion or belief. Where relevant, consideration will also be given to marriage and civil partnership and maternity and pregnancy. Additionally, it will consider it essential that policies and decisions are assessed in order to determine their impact on Welsh language. The assessment will proactively consider the positive and negative impact against the 11 Protective Characteristics as required under the equalities legislation (Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011). This will ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation and there is an equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic. Due regard will be given for advancing equality throughout the proposal.

Welsh Language:

The assessment reviews the impact of the proposal against the 3 Themes within the WG guide in line with the

Monitoring and Review

Any actions identified as part of this impact review will be included in the action plan and reviewed regularly by the programme board. This document may be updated to include additional actions as identified as part of this monitoring process.

Supplementary Evidence - Links to documents/webpages <i>(5 Ways of Working)</i>	Well-Being	Equalities	Welsh Language
<p>Integration: What evidence and data has informed your proposal? <i>Detail any policies and processes used in support of the assessment</i></p>	<p>Various Welsh and UK policies all impacting on well-being, including Well-being of Future Generations Act, UK Industrial strategy</p>		<p>ANW has a Welsh Language policy with Gwynedd Council as host authority in accordance with the Welsh Language Act.</p>
<p>Collaboration: Stakeholders involved in the impact assessment and consultation process</p>	<p>Business case development has involved a wide range of stakeholders from public, private and third sectors, with a project board and stakeholder group to support governance and guidance.</p>	<p>Stakeholders involved the development of the business case consist of both Welsh speakers and non Welsh speakers with a fluent SRO and project manager.</p>	<p>Stakeholders involved the development of the business case consist of both Welsh speakers and non Welsh speakers with a fluent SRO and project manager.</p>
<p>Involvement: Who does this proposal affect and how have they been involved in the consultation process</p>		<p>Workshops and consultation has been inclusive and open.</p>	<p>Stakeholders involved the development of the business case consist of both Welsh speakers and non Welsh speakers with a fluent SRO and project manager.</p>
<p>Long-term: Base line information used to balance short-term needs and safeguard meeting long-term needs</p>	<p>Well being benefits are a core focus for the project with long term objectives associated with promoting access to services and social inclusion through access to better digital connectivity.</p>	<p>By its design the project is non discriminatory in its focus with homes and businesses being targeted for benefits realisation irrespective of the characteristics of those living and working within them.</p>	<p>The project's investment targets are geographically focused on North Wales where the Welsh language is the predominant day to day language, particularly in the south and west.</p>
<p>Prevention: Details of any action plans following consultations to include monitoring</p>	<p>Feedback from workshops, consultation and Gateway Review processes has been recorded and actioned appropriately. The on-going project management process and structured meeting schedule will log risk and issues, provide a platform for stakeholders to discuss and engage, and review follow-up actions regularly</p>	<p>Feedback from workshops, consultation and Gateway Review processes has been recorded and actioned appropriately. The on-going project management process and structured meeting schedule will log risk and issues, provide a platform for stakeholders to discuss and engage, and review follow-up actions regularly.</p>	<p>Feedback from workshops, consultation and Gateway Review processes has been recorded and actioned appropriately. The on-going project management process and structured meeting schedule will log risk and issues, provide a platform for stakeholders to discuss and engage, and review follow-up actions regularly.</p>

WELL-BEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The assessment will identify the impact against each of the 7 Well-being Goals and provide an overall Well-being rating being Positive / Neutral / Negative. It will also provide evidence in support of the results and detail any mitigating actions required to minimise any negative effect.

The overall impact rating for this section will be determined on the highest number of Positive, Neutral and Negative impacts recorded against each Well-Being goals.

Where there may be a negative impact identified and proposed action plan must be completed to determine what mitigating actions will be undertaken and monitored to minimise the effect.



IMPACT AGAINST THE 7 Well-being Goals

A prosperous NW Region	positive	A NW Region of cohesive communities	positive
A resilient NW Region	positive		
A healthier NW Region	positive	A NW Region of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	positive
A more equal NW Region	positive	A globally responsible NW Region	positive
OVERALL WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT		POSITIVE	

Note the overall Well-being assessment conclusion below:

The project has a positive impact on all dimensions of the Well-being goals.

A prosperous NW Region:
An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

Overall Impact	Result:	Positive
Justification for Impact	The project seeks to develop critical improvements in digital connectivity in communities in North Wales. Advanced Wireless facilitates productivity improvement and drives employment and supports existing employment, particularly with new working practices introduced to deal with the coronavirus pandemic which are now embedded.	
Further actions Required	Activities to promote the adoption of digital connectivity, demand stimulation.	
Positive Impacts Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved employment levels greater potential for job creation greater productivity improved access to new technology 	
Negative Impacts Identified	none	

A resilient NW Region:
A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

Overall Impact	Result:	Positive
Justification for Impact	Advanced Wireless may provide additional means of communication where transport links may be limited. Connectivity also provides more options for employment and access to training opportunities associated with new technologies.	

Further Actions Required	
	Activites to promote the adoption of Advanced Wireless connectivity, demand stimulation.
Positive Impacts Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater potential for job creation • greater productivity • improved access to new technology
Negative Impacts Identified	none

A healthier NW Region:
 A society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

Overall Impact	Result: Positive
Justification for Impact	Advanced Wireless can facilitate social inclusion and better access to medical facilities such as remote screening, driving better health outcomes for the region.
Further Actions Required	None
Positive Impacts Identified	Greater social cohesion within communities, well being benefits from better healthcare applications.
Negative Impacts Identified	none

A more equal NW Region:
 A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

Overall Impact	Result: Positive
Justification for Impact	Access to remote employment, training and health services provides support for individuals otherwise unable to access these locally, either through being excluded because of lack of transport options or because services are not available locally. Digital connectivity provides a basic level of access to a range of opporunities for all irrespective of background or circumstances unless they are otherwise digially exlcuded, e.g. cannot afford hardware or services costs or lack skills needed.
Further Actions Required	Promotion of training opportunities and funding to support those digitally excluded.
Positive Impacts Identified	Greater access to employment, training and health services.
Negative Impacts Identified	none

A NW Region of cohesive communities:
 Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

Overall Impact	Result: Positive

Justification for Impact	Better digital connectivity improves communication opportunities for individuals and communities. Accessing local and wider networks online is greatly supported where connectivity is fast, reliable and affordable. Digital connectivity allows for rapid exchange of information including on matters of community initiatives and organisation, safety, health initiatives and social events and activities.
Further Actions Required	Promotion of community websites and online access to social activities
Positive Impacts Identified	Greater awareness of local activities and initiatives and engagement within communities
Negative Impacts Identified	none

A NW Region of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:
 A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

Overall Impact **Result:** **Positive**

Justification for Impact	The project's target area has a large proportion of Welsh speakers and access to digital connectivity will support social interaction through the medium of Welsh (as for Cohesive communities above). Interaction online can widen participation in community activities where the Welsh language can be used more extensively and access to online training resources can support learners improve their use of the language and confidence in using it.
Further Actions Required	Greater awareness of local activities and initiatives and engagement within communities. Promotion of online learning resources.
Positive Impacts Identified	Greater interaction within communities through the medium of Welsh.
Negative Impacts Identified	none

A globally responsible NW Region:
 A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Overall Impact **Result:** **Positive**

Justification for Impact	Advanced Wireless can be a key factor in reducing the use of fossil fuels through reducing necessary travel associated with commuting and accessing services and improving business productivity.
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Further Actions Required

Promotion of Advanced Wireless working practices by regional employers.

Positive Impacts Identified

Fewer car journeys, productivity improvements, reduced carbon emissions, less pollution associated with fossil fuel use, less congestion, lower household and business expenditure associated with car use, safer roads.

Negative Impacts Identified

None

Evidence to support the Well-being Impact Assessment

- We have consulted published research or guides that inform us about the likely impact of the proposal
- We have involved an expert / consulted a group who represent those who may be affected by the proposal
- We have engaged with people who will be affected by the proposal

EQUALITY IMPACT

This sections seeks to identify the impact the proposal will have on the protective characteristics. The aim will be to actively encourage equality and recognise the different needs, requirements and goals; to activity work against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relationships and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members and workforce. The aim is to be inclusive and create equality irrespective of ethic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh Language in line with the Equality Act 2010.

This will included our duty to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.



IMPACT AGAINST THE 11 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS			
Race	Neutral	Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Sex	Neutral	Religion or Belief	Neutral
Disability	Neutral	Age	Neutral
Welsh Language	Neutral	Pregnancy	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	Marriage	Neutral
		Civil Partnerships	Neutral
OVERALL EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT	NEUTRAL		

Note the overall conclusion below:
Advanced Wireless has the potential to drive benefits for the economy as a whole. It has a neutral impact against the 11 protected characteristics

Race

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Sex

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Disability

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Welsh Language

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Sexual Orientation

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	

Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Gender Reassignment

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Religion or Belief

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Age

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Pregnancy

Overall Impact	Result: Neutral
Justification for Impact	
Further Actions Required	
Positive Impacts Identified	
Negative Impacts Identified	

Marriage

Overall Impact

Result:

Neutral

Justification for Impact

Further Actions Required

Positive Impacts Identified

Negative Impacts Identified

Civil Partnerships

Overall Impact

Result:

Neutral

Justification for Impact

Further Actions Required

Positive Impacts Identified

Negative Impacts Identified

WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

As a general rule, if your policy has the potential to impact on people, it will impact in some way on Welsh speakers and therefore on the Welsh language.

On 10 July 2017, the First Minister and the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language launched their strategy Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers. The vision of the strategy is to reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050 where “The Welsh language is thriving, the number of speakers has reached a million, and it is used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society and economy of Wales.” The strategy identifies that the challenge of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050 calls for far-reaching changes. Three strategic themes have been identified within the strategy to achieve its vision:

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers;
- Increasing the use of Welsh; and
- Creating favourable conditions infrastructure and context.

Does the proposal align with Welsh Government strategy for the Welsh language - Cymraeg 2050: A national strategy for increasing the number of Welsh speakers to a million by 2050

YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on the Welsh Language, and explain how you will address these impacts in order to improve outcomes for the Welsh Language?

Overall Impact

Result: Positive

Justification for Impact	The project's target area has a large proportion of Welsh speakers and access to digital connectivity will support social interaction through the medium of Welsh (as for Cohesive communities above). Its effect in strengthening the economy thus has the potential to have a positive impact on the Welsh Language.
Further Actions Required	None
Positive Impacts Identified	Potentially retention of skilled workers and attracting new skilled workers and families, more employment opportunities in the region and therefore more Welsh speakers, stronger Welsh brand identity
Negative Impacts Identified	None

How will you mitigate any negative impact on the Welsh language or promote the positive impact on the language?

Cymraeg 2050 Strategy Themes	Yes	No	N/A
Does the proposal have the potential to increase the number of Welsh Speakers? <i>Workforce, Resources, Qualifications?</i> If the policy has the potential to decrease the number of Welsh speaker outline steps to mitigate the adverse effect	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide details to support this			
Better digital connectivity driven by neutral host ancillary connectivity may support access to learning opportunities and access to online resources for Welsh language learners.			
Does the proposal encourage the use of Welsh? <i>Opportunities in the Workplace, Services or Social use of Welsh</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Provide details to support this			
N/A			

Does the proposal look to create favourable conditions - Infrastructure and context? <i>Community & Economy, Culture & Media, Wales & the wider world, Digital technology, Linguistic infrastructure, Language planning, Evaluation & Research.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide details to support this The project creates stronger wireless infrastructure in North Wales, creating favourable conditions for the Welsh language.			

