

NORTH WALES CJC ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE
07/11/2025

Present:

Voting Members - Councillors:- Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Nia Jeffreys (Cyngor Gwynedd), Julie Fallon (Conwy County Borough Council), Dave Hughes (Flintshire County Council), Jason McLellan (Denbighshire County Council) and Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Co-opted Members (Non-voting) - Professor Paul Spencer (Bangor University), Professor Joe Yates (Wrexham University), Aled Jones-Griffith (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai), David Roberts (Chair of the Regional Skills Partnership), Edgar Owen (Eryri National Park) and Jonathan Cawley (Eryri National Park).

Chief Officers of Constituent Councils - Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Sioned Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd), Rhun ap Gareth (Conwy County Borough Council), Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council), Graham Boase (Denbighshire County Council), Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council) and Alwyn Jones (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Host Authority - Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Statutory Finance Officer), Sara Jane Jones (Senior Accountant), Claire and Rhodri Jones and Sera Whitley (Democracy Services Officer).

Ambition North Wales - Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Head of Operations), Nia Medi Williams (Resources and Operations Manager), Elliw Hughes (Growth Deal Programme Manager), David Mathews (Land and Property Programme Manager), Meghan Davies (Energy and Net Zero Programme Manager), Stuart Whitfield (Digital Programme Manager) and David Hole (CJC Operational Programme Manager).

Observers - Wendy Boddington (Welsh Government) and Gareth Ashman (UK Government)

1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Charlie McCoubrey was thanked for his work and support to the Ambition Board and the Corporate Joint Committee over the year, and he was wished well for the future.

It was resolved to elect Councillor Jason McLellan as Vice-chair for 2025/26.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:-

- Alwen Williams (Chief Executive)
- Professor Edmund Burke (Bangor University) with Professor Paul Spencer deputising
- Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Sioned Williams deputising
- Sian Pugh (Cyngor Gwynedd)
- Yana Williams (Coleg Cambria)

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Councillor Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council) for item 7 as he was an observer on the Menter Môn board, which had a connection to the project discussed in the item. It was noted that it was not a prejudicial interest, and he did not leave the meeting for the discussion.

A declaration of personal interest was received from Councillor Julie Fallon and Rhun ap Iarhes (Constituent Council Chief Executive) for Item 8 as Conwy County Borough Council led on this project. It was noted that it was not a prejudicial interest, and they did not leave the meeting for the discussion.

A declaration of personal interest was received from Dewi Morgan (Chief Finance Officer) for Item 8 due to a personal contact to him having been involved in the project. It was noted that it was a prejudicial interest, and he withdrew from the meeting for the discussion.

4. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

5. NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT

The report was presented by the Head of Operations.

DECISION

- 1. To note the Quarter 2 Performance Report and updated Portfolio Risk Register**
- 2. To approve the submission of the Quarter 2 Performance Report to 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.

DISCUSSION

Members were guided through the main highlights of the last quarter such as the approval of the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub - Welsh Sheep Milk Business Justification Case and the Advanced Wireless Full Business Case. Reference was also made to the Launch of the Clean Energy Fund on 10 July and that a process had been implemented to appoint two Non-executive Advisers.

It was reported that 6 Projects were currently in operation, with six other projects approved but not in operation to date, with three further business cases underway.

It was confirmed that investment from the Growth Deal to its projects was £23,164,812.52 by the end of the second quarter of the current financial year. It was elaborated that a total of £25,040,328.17 had been earmarked to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee to invest in projects, confirming that these figures continued to gradually increase, with many exciting projects underway. It was acknowledged that the number of jobs created was low, explaining that 49 new jobs and 49 construction jobs had been created to date.

Details were given on the Portfolio's Risk Register, reporting that it continued to be consistent with the developments made during the first quarter of the current financial year. However, it was confirmed that some high risks continued on the register in relation to the

investment of the private sector, as well as general investment targets, following delays. It was elaborated that the residual risk on the 'Affordability' title had been reduced due to a larger proportion of projects being approved, providing assurance that they were affordable.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:

In response to observations that noted that the number of jobs created was currently low, the Head of Operations explained that it was not possible for these figures to increase until more projects were in operation, acknowledging that there was a natural delay between funding the projects and ensuring that they were being constructed. However, it was reported that there was an expectation for these figures to significantly increase very soon as more projects became operational recently, confirming that a further update would be presented at the next meeting of this Sub-committee. In response to further observations, the Head of Operations confirmed that Members would receive a detailed summary of all the jobs created, the nature of the employment and their locations across the north Wales region as members could be reassured that the jobs were bringing a financial benefit to individuals from the region.

Observations were presented by Members that many projects had been approved during the current financial year and their value would be visible to the region in the future, and all the officers were thanked for their work.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

6. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

A vote was taken on the proposal to exclude the press and public and Councillor Nia Jeffreys abstained her vote on this item.

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on Items 7 and 8 due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of 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 is an acknowledged public interest in being open about the use of public resources and related financial issues. However, it is acknowledged that there are occasions, in order to protect financial and commercial interests, that matters related to such information need to be discussed without being publicised. The report is specifically regarding financial and business matters together with associated discussions. The publication of such commercially sensitive information could adversely affect the interests of the bodies and the CJC 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.

7. PORTFOLIO REVIEW 2

The report was presented by the Head of Operations

RESOLVED

To agree on the recommendations specific to the projects and the next steps of the assessment, following completing the second portfolio review.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The decision sought responded to the recommendations approved by the Economic Well-being Sub-committee in April 2025 as part of the first portfolio review, to retain four projects in the Growth Deal and conduct another review in six months.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

8. VENUE CYMRU FUTURES - CONWY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

The report was presented by the Growth Deal Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

- 1. To approve the Outline Business Case for Venue Cymru subject to the Welsh Government and UK Government's approval of the assurance process undertaken, and Conwy County Borough Council addressing the recommendations noted during the discussion, and request that a Full Business Case is prepared for the Sub-committee to consider.**
- 2. To authorise the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair, the Vice-chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to agree on draft terms in accordance with this report as a basis for the final funding arrangements for the project subject to Full Business Case approval.**
- 3. To confirm that the approval from the Sub-committee is valid for a period of six months and should the project not secure planning permission and proceed to an approved Full Business Case during this period, it will be required to return and re-submit the business case to the Sub-committee for approval.**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Sub-committee's approval of the Outline Business Case for the Venue Cymru Futures Project by Conwy County Borough Council.

A decision to approve the Outline Business Case by the Economic Well-being Sub-committee will enable Conwy County Borough Council to progress to the next stage of their Internal approvals process.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

The meeting commenced at 10:00 and concluded at 11:30.

Chair