

NORTH WALES CJC ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

5/12/25

Present:

Voting Members – Councillors:- Robin Williams (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 – Sioned Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd), Rhun ap Gareth (Conwy County Borough 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 Incledon (Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader).

Ambition North Wales – Alwen Williams (Chief Executive), Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Head of Operations), Nia Medi Williams (Operations and Resources Manager), Elli 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), Sian Lloyd Roberts (Regional Skills Manager) and David Hole (CJC Operational Programme Manager).

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:-

- Councillor Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council) with Councillor Robin Williams deputising.
- Professor Edmund Burke, Bangor University, with Professor Paul Spencer deputising on his behalf.
- Yana Williams from Cambrian University
- The following Chief Officers: Graham Boase of Denbighshire Council, Neal Cockerton of Flintshire County Council, Dafydd Gibbard of Cyngor Gwynedd and Dylan Williams of Isle of Anglesey Council.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Aled Jones-Griffith (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai) and Professor Paul Spencer (Bangor University) regarding item 8 – the Albert Gubay Business School, Bangor University, Outline Business Case. It was a prejudicial

interest and they withdrew from the meeting during the discussion.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

None to note.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Chair signed the minutes of the meetings held on 3 October 2025 and 7 November 2025 as a true record.

5. PORTFOLIO BUSINESS CASE UPDATE 2025 AND OVERARCHING BUSINESS PLAN

The report was presented by Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Head of Operations.

RESOLVED

To approve the 2025 update of the Portfolio Business Case and submit it to the Welsh Government and UK Government as part of the annual award of funding process.

To request that the Portfolio Director submits all required documentation and the change request form to the Welsh and UK Governments as part of the annual award of funding process and to delegate authority to the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, the Vice-chair, the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer, to negotiate with the Welsh Government and UK Government on the timing of the award of funding and to make any minor amendments as requested by either government.

To approve the updated Overarching Business Plan 2026-2030, which sets out the arrangements for delivering the North Wales Growth Deal.

To note the verbal update given on the 2025 Portfolio Assurance Review and ask the Portfolio Director to develop an action plan to address the recommendations

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

It is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement that the Portfolio Business Case is updated on an annual basis and submitted to the Welsh Government and UK Government as part of the annual award of funding process.

It is a requirement set out in the Delivery and Funding Agreement (previously Governance Agreement 2), for the partners of the North Wales Growth Deal to update the Overarching Business Plan every five years.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented stating that the report was an annual update to the portfolio business case and the overarching business plan. It was clarified that it was a requirement to update the Business Case annually as part of the annual process of awarding funding.

The amendments made to the Business Plan were highlighted, which included minor updates to the Strategic Case, larger changes to the Economic Case to reflect Business Cases that had been approved and revised over the last 12 months, as well as the procedure for creating the Reserve Schemes List.

It was reported that there were now 6 schemes delivering, 9 Full Business Cases approved but not operational, 4 Outline Business Cases approved and working towards a Full Business Case, 1 developing towards an Outline Business Plan, 1 project at risk and reporting red and 18 projects on the reserve list. It was highlighted that this represented significant progress from October 2024, with expenditure having increased by over £20m along with an additional 23 jobs for the region.

It was highlighted that the Portfolio Business Case had looked at the expenditure and the remaining funding that was available for the period of the Growth Deal, highlighting the best, medium and worst-case scenario for jobs and expenditure.

It was confirmed that a review had been carried out which had provided assurance that progress on the Growth Deal had moved this year from red to amber. It was explained that this was a very positive reflection of the work that had been undertaken over the 12 months, which was a significant step change, but the risks were also highlighted. It was explained that the full assessment would be sent to the members over the coming weeks.

The members thanked the officer for the report and also thanked the staff for undertaking the assessment and for their work over the year. It was noted that work had been carried out to move plans forward and that they had progressed from the red level to the amber level. It was highlighted that the steps that had been taken were also acceptable by the Government.

Members emphasised the need to continue to move the work forward and not to take our foot off the pedal. All staff were congratulated for their work in progressing the plans.

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 7-10 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 relates specifically to 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. PORT OF MOSTYN UPGRADE PROGRAMME, BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE+

The report was presented by David Mathews, Land and Property Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

To approve the Business Justification Case (BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE+) for the Port of Mostyn Upgrade Programme, subject to the Welsh Government and UK Government's approval of the assurance process undertaken.

To delegate the right to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair, the Vice-chair, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to confirm the final post-procurement costs and benefits, in accordance with the approved business case and enter into a funding agreement with Port of Mostyn Ltd for the delivery of the project, subject to the Port addressing the outstanding issues in section 7 of the report and securing all necessary internal approvals for the project.

To confirm that the approval from the Sub-committee is valid for a period of six months and should the project not proceed to a signed funding agreement during this time, it will be required to return and re-submit the business case to the Sub-committee for approval.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

It was noted that the Sub-committee's approval was required for the Business Justification Case+ for the Port of Mostyn Upgrade project.

It was explained that the BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE+ was being submitted to the Sub-committee on 5 December prior to completing the procurement due to a commercial requirement to appoint contractors to move in January 2026 and start Phases 1 and 2 of the work in February.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

8. ALBERT GUBAY BUSINESS SCHOOL, BANGOR UNIVERSITY, OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The report was presented by Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Growth Deal Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

To approve the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Albert Gubay Business School, subject to the Welsh Government and UK Government's approval of the assurance process and that Bangor University address the issues set out in the report, as described in Section 7, and request that a Full Business Case be prepared for the Sub-committee to consider.

To authorise the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair, the Vice-chair, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to agree on draft terms in accordance with this report as a basis for the final funding arrangements for the project to be committed subject to Full Business Case approval.

To confirm that the Sub-committee's approval is valid for a period of six months, and should the project not proceed to an approved Full Business Case during this time, it will be required to return and represent 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 Albert Gubay Business School.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

9. PADESWOOD RAIL ENHANCEMENT PROJECT - OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The report was presented by David Mathews, Land and Property Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

To approve the Outline Business Case for Padeswood subject to the Welsh Government and UK Government's approval of the assurance process undertaken, and the Transport for Wales Council addressing the matters noted during the discussion, and request that a Full Business Case be prepared for the Sub-committee to consider.

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.

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 OBC for the Padeswood Rail Enhancement Project.

It was noted that the Outline Business Case was being submitted to the Sub-committee on 5 December so that Transport for Wales can secure the funding for the Project.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

10. RESPONSIBLE ADVENTURE CHANGE REQUEST

The report was presented by Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Growth Deal Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

To agree the change request for the Responsible Adventures project, including the proposed element in Betws-y-coed instead of the eBus.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Requests for changes to projects by Project Sponsors are matters for the Sub-committee to decide.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.05 am

CHAIRMAN