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Meeting

NORTH WALES CJC ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

Date and Time

9.30 am, FRIDAY, 2ND OCTOBER, 2026

Location

Virtual Meeting

For public access to the meeting, please contact us

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NORTH WALES CJC ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

Voting Members

Councillors

Gary Pritchard	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Nia Jeffreys	Cyngor Gwynedd
Julie Fallon	Conwy County Borough Council
Hugh Evans	Denbighshire County Council
Dave Hughes	Flintshire County Council
Mark Pritchard	Wrexham County Borough Council

Co-optee Members – Non Voting

Professor Edmund Burke	Bangor University
Professor Joe Yates	Wrexham University
Yana Williams	Coleg Cambria
Aled Jones-Griffith	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
David Roberts	Chair of the Regional Skills Partnership
Edgar Wyn Owen	Eryri National Park
Dave Penrith	Non-executive Adviser

Constituent Council Chief Executives

Dylan Williams	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Dafydd Gibbard	Cyngor Gwynedd
Rhun ap Gareth	Conwy County Borough Council
Helen White	Denbighshire County Council
Neal Cockerton	Flintshire County Council
Alwyn Jones	Wrexham County Borough Council

Officers in Attendance

Alwen Williams	CJC Chief Executive
Mark Watkins	Monitoring Officer
Helen Edwards	Deputy Monitoring Officer
Dewi Morgan	Chief Finance Officer
Hedd Vaughan-Evans	Portfolio Director
Nia Medi Williams	Senior Operations Officer

A G E N D A

1. ELECT VICE-CHAIR

To elect a Vice-chair for 2026-27.

2. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

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

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 5 - 17

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2026 be signed as a true record.

6. NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT 18 - 48

Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Portfolio Director) to present the report.

7. 2026/27 REVENUE AND CAPITAL POSITION - END OF JULY 2026 REVIEW 49 - 64

Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance and CJC's Statutory Finance Officer) and Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance) to present the report.

8. FREEPORT GATEWAY PROJECT, LLANGFNI - GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT 65 - 68

David Mathews (Land and Property Programme Manager) to present the report.

9. LPWAN PROJECT DEPLOYMENT PLANS 69 - 77

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

10. HOME ADOPTION OF RENEWABLES PROGRAMME (HARP) 78 - 82

Meghan Davies (Energy and Net Zero Programme Manager) to present the report.

11. NORTH WALES REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP (RSP) 83 - 112

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

Cath Morris-Roberts (Interim Regional Skills Manager) to present the report.

12. LOCAL GROWTH FUND IN NORTH WALES 113 - 117

Alwen Williams (Chief Executive) and Iain Taylor (Programme Manager) to present the report.

13. FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM INVESTMENT ZONE - PROJECT AND ALLOCATION APPROVALS 118 - 128

Alwen Williams (Chief Executive), Iain Taylor (Investment Zone Programme Manager) and Milly Cross (Programme Manager) to present the report.

Appendix 1-4 are exempt under Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as they contain information relating to the financial and business affairs of identifiable organisations, including detailed project financial information, funding requirements and assumptions, commercial and delivery arrangements, project risks, future investment requirements and other commercially sensitive information provided for the purpose of appraisal and funding decisions.

14. 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 defined in Paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972: Information relating to the financial business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

While there is a public interest in transparency and accountability, this is outweighed at this stage by the need to protect commercially sensitive information given that disclosure would likely prejudice ongoing negotiations and the authority's ability to secure best value and protect the proper use of public funds.

15. STRATEGY FOR REMAINING UNALLOCATED GROWTH DEAL FUNDING

Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Portfolio Director) to present the report.

NORTH WALES CJC ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE 17/07/2026

Present:

Councillors:

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

Co-opted Members: Chris Drew (Bangor University), Laura Gaugh (University of Wrexham), David Roberts (Chair of the Skills Partnership), Ifor Glyn Lloyd (Eryri National Park) and Dave Penrith (Non-Executive Adviser),

Chief Officers of Constituent Councils: Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Sioned Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd), Rhun ap Iarthur (Conwy County Borough Council), Helen White (Denbighshire County Council) and Andrew Harradine (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Other officers present: Alwen Williams (Chief Executive), Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Portfolio Director), Mark Watkins (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Section 151 Officer), Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance), Sara Jane Jones (Senior Accountant), Eilw Alaw Hughes (Growth Deal Programme Manager), David Mathews (Land and Property Programme Manager), Catherine Morris-Roberts (Regional Skills Manager), Angharad Evans (Skills and Employment Project Manager), Iain Taylor (Amion), Nia Medi Williams (Operations and Resources Manager) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

Observers: Wendy Boddington and Bryn Richards (Welsh Government)

Others invited:

Item 9: Dylan Griffith (Cyngor Gwynedd)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was resolved to elect Councillor Mark Pritchard as Chair for 2026/27.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was resolved to elect Councillor Jason McLellan as Vice-chair for 2026/27.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Professor Edmund Burke (Bangor University) with Chris Drew deputising.
- Professor Joe Yates (Wrexham University) with Laura Gaugh deputising.
- Yana Williams (Coleg Cambria)
- Aled Jones-Griffith (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai)
- Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council)

- Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Sioned Williams deputising
- Alwyn Jones (Wrexham County Borough Council) with Andrew Harradine deputising.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Councillor Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council) for Item 7. It was noted that this was not a prejudicial interest and he did not withdraw from the meeting for the discussion.

A declaration of personal interest was received from Councillor Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council) for Item 11, as he is a board member of Menter Môn in his role as Council Leader. It was noted that it was not a prejudicial interest and he did not leave the meeting during the discussion.

5. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the meetings held on 12 June 2026 as an accurate record.

7. FREEPORT GATEWAY PROJECT - REQUEST TO EXTEND VALIDITY PERIOD

The report was presented by the Land and Property Programme Manager.

DECISION

To approve the request to extend the validity period to complete the Grant Funding Agreement by three months to the 1st of October 2026.

To confirm that the Portfolio Director is authorised to take all necessary operational steps to proceed with and complete the Grant Funding Agreement within the extended validity period, subject to customary legal, financial, procurement and governance requirements.

To confirm that the Sub-Committee's approval is valid until 1st October 2026 and should the project not proceed to a signed Grant Funding Agreement by this date, it will be required to return and resubmit the business case to the Sub-Committee for approval.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Sub-committee's approval to extend the review date for the Grant Funding Agreement by three months for the reasons set out in the report.

DISCUSSION

Members were reminded that this project had been approved by this Sub-committee at its meeting on 3 October 2025, approving a 6-month validity period to discuss and deliver a grant funding agreement for the project.

It was acknowledged that those requirements could not be delivered within the timetable provided by the Sub-committee, therefore the item was re-submitted in Spring 2026 to receive three additional months to deliver the discussions and receive a grant funding

agreement. There was confidence that the discussions could be achieved within three months, but it was confirmed that the discussions had not been completed on this project. Similarly, it was explained that discussions were ongoing on the Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises project, and further discussions had been achieved with the Local Authority on that project.

It was reported that the Freeport Gateway project was now in a procurement process, with the tendering process underway until 7 August. It was noted that the Isle of Anglesey County Council would score the tenders before appointing the successful company before the end of the month. It was elaborated that the hope was to complete discussions with the local authority in September 2026, for the work to commence in October.

It was asked to extend the validity period for three months to allow this schedule to take place, and for the project to proceed.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

It was considered that a 3-month extension was not a substantial period of time. The need to ensure that any extension was sufficient to ensure that no need arose to return to the Sub-committee for a subsequent extension was discussed. In response to the observations, the Land and Property Programme Manager emphasised that lessons had been learned in conducting discussions on the Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises project to save time on discussions. Assurances were given that this would be in place for this project, declaring confidence that the project would develop in a timely manner should the extension be approved.

It was confirmed that there was a wish to see this project succeeding, in the hope that the discussions would come to fruition in a timely manner.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

8. NORTH WALES SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PLAN 2026-2028

The report was submitted by the Chair of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership and the Regional Skills Manager.

DECISION

To approve the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan and the priorities as set out in the plan.

To ask the Regional Skills Partnership to submit an update report in 12 months' time.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To report to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee on the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan and seek endorsement of its priorities to support regional delivery.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that Skills and Employment Plans operated on a 3-year cycle, noting that the latest cycle had ended at the beginning of this year. It was noted that no clear guidance had been provided by the Welsh Government during recent months because preparations were underway for the Senedd Cymru Election in May.

It was reported that the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership had decided to continue with a new Plan for the next three years to ensure development and continuity of momentum, hoping that the new Government would adopt it in due course. It was acknowledged that there was a possibility that minor amendments were being made as the Government considered it, but there was confidence that the Plan was robust enough to cope with that.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan was unique to the three other plans seen in Wales, as it was closely tied with the Corporate Joint Committee. There was confidence that this was a strength because support could be provided on a regional level.

It was reported that approximately 30 partners were part of the Board, including colleges and universities, noting that their attendance on the Board helped them with their individual plans. Pride was expressed that the Board had engaged with over 350 employers across the nine priority sectors, through surveys, employer networks and meetings, to be able to develop the Plan.

It was confirmed that three themes continued from the previous Plan, to ensure continuity in the Board's good work and the support proposed within the region. It was detailed that these included providing support to employers, individuals and teaching how support was provided and making the connections between individuals and employers.

It was explained that the plan included the insights of employers about the recruitment needs and the necessary skills within the sectors, as well as information about the barriers that individuals faced. It was elaborated that the plan provided an overview of significant challenges and opportunities available with large investment projects. Attention was drawn to the fact that many of the Corporate Joint Committee projects had used the Plan in the past. It was noted that the plan addressed the fact that the labour market was evolving, such as Artificial Intelligence, Net Zero, and how employers could make the best use of these matters.

It was highlighted that economic connectivity difficulties impacted individuals within the region, acknowledging that 15.1% of 16-24-year-old people in north Wales were not in education, employment or training - the highest rate in Wales. It was noted that mental health was the factor that contributed the most to inactive economic cases at present.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

The Board was thanked for their work of developing skills across the region.

The new Plan was welcomed, and concern was expressed about the startling statistic that 15.1% of people aged between 16 and 24 were not in education, work or training in the region. The importance of looking into this further was emphasised, to facilitate those individuals. In response to the observations, the Chair of the Board confirmed that they wished to see north Wales with the lowest rates on this matter, emphasising that it was the responsibility of all partners to ensure that the situation improved.

It was considered that broader work was required on the apprenticeship opportunities available in the region. It was acknowledged that it was not possible for the Board to create apprenticeships, but its ability to place pressure on the Government to consider the apprenticeship system, compared with other authorities, to acknowledge apprenticeships as a way of providing skills to employees was considered. In response to the observations, the Chair of the Board confirmed that ongoing pressure was being placed on the Government to take advantage of apprenticeships and provide budgets for them, confirming

that encouragement and information was consistently shared with employers as part of the Board's implementation on apprenticeships.

It was felt that not enough emphasis was placed on the genuine needs across the region to attract workers within the field of health and social care. It was emphasised that recruitment challenges within the field of health was an exceptional challenge for the local authorities, and this should be highlighted in detail within the Plan. There was a wish to see this field receiving more priority within the Plan to attract people into work in the care field, as well as find methods to develop careers. It was agreed with these observations, acknowledging that there was a need to highlight the situation within the Plan.

It was acknowledged that gaps in skills and expertise were seen within the local authorities themselves, as the main employers within the region's areas. It was acknowledged that this was not relevant to the majority of workers, but that it had an impact on specialist fields such as planning and legal. There was a wish to see this being reflected wider within the Plan.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the rural economy within the region relied on small businesses, instead of large companies that employed many people. The importance of ensuring that those companies benefited from the Plan was emphasised, noting that skills were being developed for the businesses to thrive. In response to the observations, it was confirmed that the voice of small businesses was being heard because the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) was a valuable partner. It was also noted that businesses of every size had input into the plan as the Board held discussions and surveys. It was confirmed that this collaboration would continue over the plan period.

Following the observations received during the discussion, it was considered to ask the Board for an update in 12 months on the development of the Plan.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

9. A LOCAL GROWTH FUND IN NORTH WALES - ADVANCE PLANNING FOR GREATER REGIONAL COLLABORATION FROM 2027/28

The report was presented by the Chief Executive.

DECISION

- 1. To note the update on the transitional arrangements for the Local Growth Fund since the relevant reports were submitted to the CJC in March and June.**
- 2. To note that the Year 1 Transition Plan (2026-27) for the Local Growth Fund was submitted on the 9th of June to the Welsh Government by Cyngor Gwynedd as the lead accountable body for Year 1, and that this plan sets out the approach to maintaining continuity from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) while preparing the region for a fully regionalised delivery model under the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) in Years 2 and 3.**
- 3. To endorse the proposed programme of work and milestones required before the next meeting of the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee in October 2026, recognising that the preparatory work must begin immediately if the CJC is to be ready to take responsibility for the Local Growth Fund from April 2027 onwards, subject to confirmation from the Welsh Government.**
- 4. To authorise the officers to proceed with the necessary requirements, including planning, engagement, commissioning and capacity-building work over the**

summer, using the funding provided by Welsh Government to support preparation for delivery of the Local Growth Fund from 2027/28 onwards, subject to confirmation from the Welsh Government.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To update the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee on the Local Growth Fund and to obtain the Sub-Committee's support to progress the work required over the summer to begin planning to meet the Welsh Government's requirements for greater regional collaboration and co-ordination of the fund from 1 April 2027.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the purpose of the report was to ensure that north Wales was prepared for the Local Growth Fund's exchange arrangements, and the expectations that the Welsh Government set for April 2027 onwards.

It was noted that the report provided an update to Members on developments, whilst also seeking approval for a preparatory work programme when forward planning this change, which would need to be implemented during the summer 2026.

Members were reminded that the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) was now being replaced by the Local Growth Fund. However, it was stressed that emphasis was placed on productivity growth, balancing economic imbalance whilst also highlighting the need for a more substantial capital budget.

It was reported that the Local Growth Fund implemented three priorities, namely:

- Supporting competitive and productive businesses
- Increasing skills and employment opportunities
- Improving regional infrastructure

It was confirmed that the 2026/27 financial year was being considered by the Welsh Government as a transition year, noting that existing arrangements for the SPF continued to be operational. It was highlighted that Cyngor Gwynedd was the lead authority on the matter for north Wales.

It was declared that Cyngor Gwynedd was the lead authority for the Fund, and they had already received a grant proposal letter for 2026/27 which made it a requirement on the implementation of the pragmatic transitional Transition Plan. Members were reminded that the final Regional Development Plan had been submitted to the Welsh Government on 9 June 2026, as a way of sharing information with the Government on the administration of the Plan in its first year.

It was noted that the local authorities had developed plans to implement the plan for its first year. It was reiterated that they did so by considering the Plan's priorities as well as local needs.

It was reported that recent guidelines provided by the Welsh Government confirmed the expectation that the responsibility for strategic planning, priorities and supervision from the Fund would move to the Corporate Joint Committee from April 2027 onwards (instead of the Local Authority). It was emphasised that this region had expressed objections to this decision as it impacted the ability to make decisions locally. It was assured that officers had made an application for formal consent from the Welsh Government's insight on this matter,

reporting that a letter from the Cabinet Minister for Enterprise, Connectivity and Energy was expected to provide an update. It was emphasised that this letter would be shared with all local government leaders in Wales.

It was mentioned that the Welsh Government's vision was clear within the guidelines, explaining that there was an expectation for Corporate Joint Committees to prepare a regional growth plan for a 10-year period, to provide a strategic framework for investments in the future. It was reported that the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee had received £200,000 grant funding to implement this application, noting that a draft of the plan was expected by the end of September 2026 and a final plan by the end of November 2026.

It was emphasised that there was no intention to replace local priorities, but to provide a mechanism where they could be aligned with regional priorities to maximise investment opportunities.

It was noted that the draft work programme had been included in the report, including considering evidence and existing strategies, renewing the existing economic baseline, developing a long-term growth vision, forming governance arrangements, as well as conducting key engagement work with local authorities and regional partners. Attention was drawn to the milestones that had been noted by the Welsh Government to develop this plan and emphasise that a failure to do this could lead to risks in applying for budgets in the future, and the Government could decide how to allocate any funding centrally. Frustration was expressed that the timeframe provided by the Welsh Government was very challenging, with a significant amount of work required to present it on time. It was highlighted that those milestones were as follows:

- 30 July 2026 - Submit a progress report to the Welsh Government
- 30 September 2026 - Submit a draft Regional Growth Plan to the Welsh Government
- 2 October 2026 - Submit the draft Regional Growth Plan to the Economic Well-being Sub-committee for consideration
- 30 November 2026 - Submit the Final Regional Growth Plan to the Welsh Government

It was considered that the initial priorities were engagement with the local authorities and partners, as well as commencing the work of establishing governance arrangements.

It was highlighted that the report noted the need to commence the preparatory work whilst officers continued to seek clarity about the Fund's long-term arrangements, to ensure that no negative financial implications were having an impact on the region.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

It was considered that it was essential for the Joint Committee to address the Government's tight timescale to ensure that decisions impacting the region were not decided centrally, considering whether officers had capacity to do so in a timely manner. In response to the observations, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Welsh Government had provided a £200,000 grant budget to assist with the work and the capacity to achieve it, as well as publish written guidance on the Fund. It was acknowledged that there was currently insufficient capacity to achieve the work, but there was a plan underway to ensure that a sufficient resource was in place. It was noted that the Welsh Government officers acknowledged that addressing the timeframe was challenging, stating that a plan could be submitted detailing the Fund instead of the 10-year growth plan in its entirety, was acceptable. However, it was considered that it was timely to develop a new 10-year plan as that would be an opportunity to develop the economic vision until the end of the Growth

Deal and Investment Zone period in 2036. There was confidence that the deadlines could be addressed on these terms.

The frustration of Members was expressed that some matters associated with the Plan were unclear, and formal clarity had not been provided by the Cabinet Minister to date. It was emphasised that this made it challenging to make a decision on the matter.

Disappointment was expressed that the criteria for the Fund were very different to the SPF, and that it adapted from being a revenue budget to a capital budget. Examples were shared of key services funded by the SPF and its previous budget but was now ineligible to be funded from the Fund.

A discussion was held on the concern that the Fund could be lost within the wider work of the Joint Committee, should the Joint Committee be responsible for its administration and governance from April 2027 onwards. The need for certainty that the Fund would be administered across the six local authorities within the region was considered, as there was concern that Conwy County Borough Council and Denbighshire Council, as sites in the middle of the region, could be forgotten in lieu of projects in the western and eastern areas of the region. It was asked whether the budget within the Fund would continue to be allocated to every County, as was the case in administering the SPF.

It was considered that the SPF administration and the first year of the Fund had been very effective. Observations were received that it would be beneficial for the arrangements to remain in the current system, as there was certainty that they worked.

It was asked what the cost of the Joint Committee would be administering the Fund, compared with what was the cost for Cyngor Gwynedd to do so at present. It was emphasised that it was necessary that this cost was not significantly higher for the Corporate Joint Committee, to ensure the best use of public funding. In response, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Fund's administration cost arrangements would remain the same as what was operational for SPF. It was detailed that this meant that 4% of the budget was available for the administration costs of the Fund - should it be used by Cyngor Gwynedd or the Corporate Joint Committee. It was explained that the £200,000 grant funding referred to was only available for the transitional year (2025/26).

Observations were noted that this change to the regional administration of the Fund moved democracy decisions away from the region's residents, as they were not decided locally.

An update was received by the Member for the Isle of Anglesey County Council, who noted that he had trouble with the relevant Cabinet Minister recently, where it was confirmed that the Welsh Government continued to commit to previous arrangements about the Plan. Disappointment was expressed that the Government continued with this view instead of responding effectively to the concern of the region, and there was concern that there was a need to approve this report to ensure that the budget reached the region or caused a risk that it would not be allocated efficiently. It was emphasised that not receiving the funding would be very challenging, and it would be less challenging to change the existing arrangements to operate regionally on the implementation of the Fund. In response to the observations, the Monitoring Officer considered whether the Members wished to adapt the Decision Sought as a way of approving the report if the formal confirmation from the Cabinet Minister was received, and that it would fall if that confirmation did not arrive, should the Members be in favour of approving the report.

It was asked whether assessments, evaluation or monitoring was completed, as officers proceeded to develop a new 10-year plan. It was also considered whether the growth vision noted within the original plan in 2016 had been reached. In response, the Chief Executive

confirmed that the vision noted in 2016 was directly relevant to the Growth Plan as it was only the Growth Plan that was operational at that time. It was added that the progress of that Plan was reported to the Sub-committee regularly, emphasising that the Plan responded to the objectives of the vision noted in 2016.

It was highlighted that the economy had adapted significantly within the last decade, and it was important to renew the vision as a region to ensure that equivalent challenges received attention. It was confirmed that conducting evaluation activities would be part of developing a new 10-year plan. Similarly, it was considered that it was necessary to have input from the local authorities as part of that process.

The possibility of arranging a meeting for Members to discuss this matter further following this decision was considered. It was considered that conducting such a meeting would enable consideration of a vision of how the Fund would be able to have the most benefit to the residents of the six authorities and reassured the members whilst the situation continued to be vague from the Welsh Government. The Chair noted his support for this meeting, encouraging Members to make a decision on the report to ensure that the schedule would not slip on the development of the Fund.

The Chief Executive emphasised that the decisions considered within the report allowed the Corporate Joint Committee to prepare for this change, discover the best ways that they could work with the local authorities to ensure that the funding had a positive impact on communities. Attention was drawn to the fact that this was not the first time that the Welsh Government adapted a funding method in this way, as the Corporate Joint Committee had been working with the relevant local authorities on the Wrexham and Flintshire Investment Zone project for many years and had dealt with the same considerations and challenges when establishing that project. It was emphasised that fostering a close relationship with those authorities had enabled decisions to remain local within the Counties, and it was hoped to replicate this success with the Fund to ensure that it would be administered on a structure that worked effectively for everyone.

A vote was conducted on the report, where 5 members were in favour and there was 1 abstention.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair proposed 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 relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

While there is a public interest in transparency and accountability, this is currently outweighed by the need to protect commercially sensitive information given that disclosure would likely prejudice ongoing negotiations and the authority's ability to secure the best value and protect the appropriate use of public funds.

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

11. HOLYHEAD HYDROGEN HUB OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The report was presented by the Portfolio Director.

RESOLVED

To approve the Outline Business Case for the Holyhead Hydrogen Hub subject to Menter Môn addressing the matters identified in the report, as described in Section 7, and requesting that a Full Business Case be prepared for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

To reject the request for advance funding from Menter Môn for the reasons set out in Section 7.

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

To confirm that the Sub-Committee's approval is valid for a period of twelve months and should the project not proceed to an approved Full Business Case during this time, it will be required to return and 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 Holyhead Hydrogen Hub.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

12. BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE FOR ZIP WORLD RESPONSIBLE ADVENTURE PROJECT - SLATE EXPLORER

The report was presented by the Growth Deal Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Business Justification Case for the Slate Explorer element of the Zip World Responsible Adventure project subject to Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process undertaken, and Zip World addressing the matters identified in the report as described in Section 7.
2. To delegate to the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-chair, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer to confirm that the outstanding matters in the report have been completed before the funding is released.
3. To authorise the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair, Vice-chair, Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to agree the terms of the grant funding agreement in accordance with this report, to be approved later by the Sub-committee.
4. To confirm that the Sub-committee's approval 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-present the business case to the Sub-committee for approval.

5. To note that there may be up to three further Business Case approvals to deliver the remaining elements of the Responsible Adventure project and that they will be submitted to the Sub-Committee for future consideration.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Sub-Committee's approval of the Business Justification Case for the Slate Explorer element of the Responsible Adventure project.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

13. ACADEMI CROESO (PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS TOURISM TALENT NETWORK) BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION CASE FOR INCLUDING DYLAN'S RESTAURANT LTD AS REPLACEMENT SPOKE PARTNER

The report was presented by the Growth Deal Programme Manager.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Business Justification Case for Dylan's Restaurant Limited to be a spoke partner for the Academi Croeso project by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, subject to Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Dylan's Restaurant Limited addressing the matters identified in the report, as described in Section 7.
2. To delegate to the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-chair, Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to confirm that the outstanding matters in the report have been completed before the funding is released.
3. To note that a funding agreement has already been entered into with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai for the Academi Croeso (Tourism Talent Network) project following approval of a Full Business Case, and that this agreement will include the delivery of this element of the wider project if the Sub-Committee approves this Business Justification Case.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Sub-Committee's approval of the Business Justification Case for including Dylan's Restaurant Limited as a new spoke for Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's Academi Croeso project.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

14. STRATEGY FOR REMAINING UNALLOCATED GROWTH DEAL FUNDING

The report was presented by the Portfolio Director.

RESOLVED

1. A vote was taken on the strategy, and it was not adopted in accordance with the outcome of that vote.

2. It was decided to hold a workshop for the Members to share information about the options available, as well as procedures that would be underway to ensure that the strategy was implemented effectively.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To seek the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee's approval of the strategy for the unallocated Growth Deal funds, including the creation of two new funds.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

15. FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM INVESTMENT ZONE - YEAR 2 ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN AND WLA PROJECT

The report was submitted by the Chief Executive and AMION Consulting representative.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Annual Delivery Plan's investment allocations for Year 2 and note the Year 1 allocations that will be used as part of the Year 2 programme.
2. To approve the proposal by Wrexham Leadership Alliance and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Wrexham Leadership Alliance for £200,000 (to allow project costs of £150,000, £0,000 VAT and £20,000 contingency).
3. To permit the CJC's Section 151 Officer to sign and issue the Annual Delivery Plan documents to the UK Government and Welsh Government and to make any further non-material amendments that are necessary to agree the Annual Delivery Plan with the UK and Welsh Governments.
4. To confirm that any material change to the approved allocation, recipient, project scope, outputs, funding source, delivery model, risk profile or compliance position, must be reported back to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee for further approval.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Investment Zones are required to agree Annual Delivery Plans with the UK and Welsh Governments.

DISCUSSION

The Report was discussed.

The meeting commenced at 09:30 and concluded at 11:20.

Chair



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

2nd October, 2026

TITLE: North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 1 Performance and Risk Report

AUTHOR: Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Portfolio Director

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the Quarter 1 (April to June) Growth Deal report and updated Portfolio Risk Register.
- 1.2. Quarterly reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement. Following consideration by the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee, the reports will be shared with Welsh Government, UK Government and the local authority scrutiny committees.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Sub-Committee consider and note the Quarter 1 Performance Report and updated Portfolio Risk Register.
- 2.2. That the Sub-Committee approves the submission of the Quarter 1 Performance Report to Welsh Government and UK Government, as well as the local authority scrutiny committees.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. As stated in the report.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. In December 2020, Ambition North Wales and the Welsh and UK Governments agreed the Final Deal Agreement for the North Wales Growth Deal.
- 4.2. Regular reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement.
- 4.3. This report includes two appendices:
 - North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 1 Performance Report
 - Portfolio Risk Register – June 2026
- 4.4. North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 1 Performance Report
 - 4.4.1. The Quarter 1 performance report provides an overview of progress on the Growth Deal programmes and projects.



- 4.4.2. During the quarter, the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee approved the business cases for two projects. This included Business Justification Case for Sustainable Dairy Development part of the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub project; and the Full Business Case for the Albert Gubay Business School. Additionally, a change request and updated business case for the Venue Cymru Futures project. The Sub-Committee also approved extending the validity period for three of the Land and Property programme projects (Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises, Freeport Gateway and Port of Mostyn) to enable the projects to secure their Grant Funding Agreements.
- 4.4.3. A cost inflation reserve was approved by the Sub-Committee which provides an initial £3.96m of Growth Deal funding to support the delivery of projects during the year as a result of the increasing risk around affordability due to cost inflation pressures.
- 4.4.4. The CanfodAu building was named Building project of the year over £5m at the 2026 constructing Excellence in Wales Awards, a great achievement for Ambition North Wales alongside Wrexham University and its construction partner - Wynne Construction.
- 4.4.5. Work officially began on the second building at M-SParc, project partners gathered on the 6th of June to formally mark the start of construction on the new Egni development.
- 4.4.6. The Quarter 1 performance report includes information on projects reporting against the portfolio delivery profile. All projects are now reporting either green or amber.
- 4.5. Portfolio Risk Register – June 2026
 - 4.5.1. The Portfolio Risk Register is updated on a regular basis by the Portfolio Management Office and reviewed by the Portfolio Board and the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee (previously the North Wales Economic Ambition Board) on a quarterly basis.
 - 4.5.2. The risk register has been fully reviewed by the Portfolio Management Office, with changes recorded in the documents, including mitigating actions and the comments updated.
 - 4.5.3. There were changes to two risks with a reduction to the residual risk score on Capacity and Planning and Statutory Consents.
 - 4.5.4. Overall the risk profile has remained stable during the past quarter, with the risk profile remaining high with a number of red residual risks including affordability, private sector investment, planning and statutory consents, and spending objectives.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from approving the decision sought in this report.
- 5.2. The revised delivery and expenditure profile approved by the Sub-Committee is included in the quarterly report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The legal implications are limited. Quarterly reporting forms part of the agreed governance arrangements under the North Wales Growth Deal. The decision sought is to note the performance and risk information and approve its onward submission to the Welsh and UK Governments and local authority scrutiny committees; it does not itself authorise any additional expenditure, project approval or other substantive action.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1	North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 1 Performance Report
Appendix 2	Portfolio Risk Register – June 2026

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. **Monitoring Officer:**

“Regular reporting on Growth Deal performance forms part of the agreed governance framework for the North Wales Growth Deal. The recommendations are consistent with that framework and fall within the Sub-Committee’s role in considering performance and risk information and approving onward reporting to Government and scrutiny bodies.

Although there are no direct legal implications arising from the Report, the Sub-Committee should, however, continue to have regard to the legal and governance implications of the risks identified in the Portfolio Risk Register. Individual project approvals, change controls, funding arrangements, procurement matters and subsidy control issues should continue to be dealt with through the relevant assurance and decision-making processes.”

ii. **Statutory Finance Officer:**

“I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the financial situation of Ambition North Wales during quarter 1. Implementing the decision sought will not create a new spending commitment. I will continue to assist the Portfolio Management Office in managing the relevant risks.”

North Wales Growth Deal Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter 1 2026-27
(April to June 2026)

MAE'R DDOGFEN HON AR GAEL
YN GYMRAEG HEFYD.



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PORTFOLIO DIRECTOR SUMMARY

Progress continued this quarter with key decisions taken by the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee to support delivery. This included the Business Justification Case for Sustainable Dairy Development part of the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub project; Full Business Case for the Albert Gubay Business School; along with a change request and updated business case for the Venue Cymru Futures project. The Sub-Committee also approved extending the validity period for three of the Land and Property programme projects (Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises, Freeport Gateway and Port of Mostyn) to enable the projects to secure their Grant Funding Agreements. A cost inflation reserve was approved by the Sub-Committee which provides an initial £3.96m of Growth Deal funding to support the delivery of projects during the year as a result of the increasing risk around affordability due to cost inflation pressures.

Our first construction project, part of the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre the CanfodAu building was named Building project of the year over £5m at the 2026 Constructing Excellence in Wales Awards, a great achievement for us alongside Wrexham University and its construction partner - Wynne Construction.

Work officially began on the second building at M-SParc, marking a major milestone for North Wales' growing innovation economy. Project partners gathered on the 6th of June to formally mark the start of construction on the new Cogni development, which will expand the park's capacity to support businesses, researchers and innovators working across low carbon energy

This quarter included attendance at a number of events as an opportunity to promote our work. These included Eisteddfod yr Urdd, taking place this year on Anglesey, we joined the Anglesey Council stand as well as Menter Môn, both proving great networking opportunities. The Eisteddfod was part powered by hydrogen, thanks to an initiative funded by ourselves, led by Menter Môn and delivered by GeoPura. Visitors were able to tour the onsite generators and even taste the water - which is the only by-product of this green energy source.

For the first time, we attended the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiF) joining Welsh Government and the other 3 Corporate Joint Committees in Wales at the all Wales Cymru Pavillion. The three days included a number of insightful panel discussions, alongside demonstrating Wales's credentials as an investable location. We as Ambition North Wales hosted a breakfast event sponsored by Ontix discussing the importance of planning for indoor and outdoor digital connectivity, the challenges affecting deployment, and the opportunity to create more effective public-private models for regional connectivity.



Hedd Vaughan-Evans

Portfolio Director
Ambition North Wales

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Egni

Work started on site on the Egni build at the M-Sparc site, with a turf cutting with project partners on the 6th of June 2026.



Cydnerth

Work completed on Phase 1 of the Cydnerth project.



CanfodAu

CanfodAu building was named Building Project of the Year over £5m at the 2026 Constructing Excellence in Wales Awards.



Parc Bryn Cegin

Phase 1 on site works at Parc Bryn Cegin commenced in May.



Former North Wales Hospital

The Grant Funding Agreement was completed for Phase 1 demolition, remediation and site security works with Denbighshire County Council and works commenced in early June.



Hydrogen

We funded a project alongside Menter Môn and GeoPura to power Eisteddfod yr Urdd using Green Hydrogen.

PROJECT DELIVERY DASHBOARD

	Projects in Delivery (funding committed)	Approved not yet in delivery (funding committed)	Developing business cases (funding ringfenced)	Under Review (funding ringfenced)	Reserve List (unallocated funding)
Number of Projects	8	10	7	1	11
Growth Deal Funding Allocation (£234.85*)	£70.27m	£65.89m	£62.93m	£3.80m	£31.96
Total Investment (cumulative business case targets)	£257.12m	£136.64m	£342.59m	£16.22m	£247.43**
Jobs (cumulative business case targets)	876	1,127	1,371	20	606**

PORTFOLIO SPENDING OBJECTIVES DASHBOARD

Job Creation*

Target by 2036

4,000

Target up until end
of 2026/27

202



Total Jobs

End of 2025/26
Actual

121

Actual Q2
2026/27

Actual Q4
2026/27



New Jobs

End of 2025/26
Actual

63

Actual Q2
2026/27

Actual Q4
2026/27



Construction Jobs

End of 2025/26
Actual

58

Actual Q2
2026/27

Actual Q4
2026/27

Investment

Target by 2036

£1bn Total Investment



Growth Deal Investment

Forecast up until
end of 2026/27

£65m

End of 2025/26
Actual

£30,652,413

Actual Q2
2026/27

Actual Q4
2026/27



Total Investment

Forecast up until
end of 2026/27

£120m

End of 2025/26
Actual

£34,208,618

Actual Q2
2026/27

Actual Q4
2026/27

BENEFITS DASHBOARD

Benefits

Revenue Secured
 **£7,054,089**

Capital Income Leveraged
 **£81,016**

Floorspace Developed
 **2,349m²**

Future Workforce Engagements
 **6,407** participants

Actions to strengthen local supply chains
 **81**

Students completing qualifications
 **1,003**

Procurement

 **£67,733,341**

Total value of Growth Deal contracts awarded (including VAT)

 **£58,23,341**

Total value of Growth Deal contracts awarded to North Wales suppliers (including VAT)

 **86%**

of Growth Deal contracts awarded to North Wales suppliers

 **£54,689,548**

Total value of Growth Deal contracts awarded to SMEs (including VAT)

 **81%**

of Growth Deal contracts awarded to SMEs

DIGITAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE



Programme Aim

Deliver the step change in digital connectivity needed to ensure North Wales is able to satisfy user demand, maintain pace with the rest of the UK, unlock the potential of priority sectors and sites and underpin a flourishing innovation ecosystem.



Job Creation

Current forecast: 272

Actual: 25



Total Investment

Current forecast: £42.73m

Actual: £3.05m

RAG Status



Programme Manager Commentary

- The final items of equipment for the DSP Centre project have been delivered following delays.
- The third meeting of the Regional Telecommunications Forum was held this quarter
- Both Advanced Wireless and 4G+ Grant Schemes have now been developed and are due to be reviewed and approved in July (Q2)
- A pipeline of interest has been developed for the grant schemes with confidence that Expressions of Interest will be received from industry in the first application windows for the grant schemes.
- The second 4G/5G deployment in the region has now been installed with full commissioning expected in Q2



Ian Jones

Senior Responsible Owner



Stuart Whitfield

Programme Manager



Delivering to Plan with no issues to address
(no action required)



Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate
issues to address (management action in place)



Delivery significantly behind schedule and/or significant
issues to address (urgent action required)

DIGITAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Digital Signal Processing Centre Bangor University	Project in delivery	Delivery of final items of equipment.	Launch of structured regional business engagement.		- Final items of equipment affected by supply chain delays. - Project is behind target on additional grant capture. - Regional business engagement delayed due to capacity issues.
4G+ Ambition North Wales	Approved not yet in delivery	Third telecoms forum meeting held.	- Approval and launch of grant schemes. - Fourth telecoms forum meeting to be held		- Grant scheme design has been completed with decision to approve scheduled for early July. - Scheme launch has been slightly delayed however there is strong interest from industry and confidence of early expressions of interest.
Advanced Wireless Ambition North Wales	Approved not yet in delivery	Further engagement of prospective private and public sector applicants.	Approval and launch of grant schemes.		- Grant scheme design has been completed with decision to approve scheduled for early July. - Scheme launch has been slightly delayed however there is strong interest from industry and confidence of early expressions of interest.
LPWAN Ambition North Wales	Approved not yet in delivery	Final LoRaWAN deployment plans submitted.	Approval of Grant Agreements and installations to proceed.		Final deployment plans received and due to be approved in Q2 followed by more installations.

LOW CARBON ENERGY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE



Programme Aim

To unlock the economic benefits of transformational low carbon energy projects and position North Wales as a leading UK location for low carbon energy generation, innovation and supply chain investment.



Job Creation

Current forecast: 662

Actual: 10



Total Investment

Current forecast: £164.27m

Actual: £9.62m

RAG Status



Programme Manager Commentary

- **Cydnherth** – Phase 1 works complete, site debolisation.
- **Clean Energy Fund (Smart Local Energy)** – First investments made from Private and Voluntary sector sub funds
- **Trawsfynydd** – Preparation of ITT for a full service, multi disciplinary team to deliver the required packages of work to inform the FBC, as well as produce the FBC document
- **Egni** – Grant funding agreement preparation underway. Started on site May 2026.
- **Holyhead Hydrogen Hub** – Submission of Outline Buisness Case



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Dylan Williams
Senior Responsible Owner



Meghan Davies
Programme Manager



Delivering to Plan with no issues to address
(no action required)



Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate
issues to address (management action in place)



Delivery significantly behind schedule and/or significant
issues to address (urgent action required)

LOW CARBON ENERGY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Cydnherth (Morlais) Menter Môn	Project in delivery	- Phase 1 works complete - Demobilisation of site	- Continued developer and grid engagement - Year 1 Emissions and Biodiversity report		Project has moved into delivery and is progressing well.
Egni Bangor University	Project in delivery	- Perpetration of Grant Funding Agreement - Gathering conditions precedent evidence - Works started on site Mat 2026.	- Groundworks complete and erection of steel frame - Signing and sealing of grant funding agreement		Project has moved into delivery and works have started on site.
Clean Energy Fund (Smart Local Energy) Ambition North Wales	Project in delivery	- Continued submission of Expressions of Interest across all 3 sub funds. - First funds issued from voluntary and private sub fund. - Promotional events and engagement.	- Promotional events and engagement - Continuation of application assessment and awards 1 year review		Project is green as Full Business Case has been approved and the fund launched.
Holyhead Hydrogen Hub Menter Môn	Developing Full Business Case	- Submission of the Outline Business Case and secure planning within this timeframe. - Transferring £4.8m Department for Energy Security and Net Zero funds underway. - Planning determination granted.	- Menter Môn continued engagement to attract offtakers. - Preparation of Full Business Case.		RAG status moved to amber as project submitted Outline Business Case and secured planning within the 6 month timeframe.
Trawsfynydd Innovation, Business and Skills Centre Cyngor Gwynedd	Developing the Full Business Case	Preparation of ITT for a full service, multi disciplinary team to deliver the required packages of work to inform the FBC, as well as produce the FBC document.	- Outcome of tender process - Preparation of Full Business case. - Addressing outstanding matters recommended by the PMO including planning and land lease agreements.		Project is green as has submitted the Outline Business Case and it has been approved and now has 12 months to submit the Full Business Case.

LAND AND PROPERTY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE



Programme Aim

To address the shortage of suitable land and properties for business growth and to bring forward sites for housing development. To deliver improvements that stimulate investment in sites and premises in the Port of Holyhead and the wider region. Enables other programmes by ensuring the right land and property infrastructure is available.



Job Creation

Current forecast: 1,342

Actual: 0



Total Investment

Current forecast: £242.84m

Actual: £1.58m

RAG Status



Programme Manager Commentary

- **Former North Wales Hospital** - GFA has been completed for Phase 1 demolition, remediation and site security works with Denbighshire County Council and works commenced in early June.
- **Parc Bryn Cegin** - Phase 1 on site works commenced in May.
- **Wrexham Gateway** - WCBC have appointed consultants to address phosphates discharging into the River Dee.
- **Freeport Gateway** - ITT process commenced in early May for the appointment of a Main Contractor for the PEBOC site.
- **Albert Gubay Business School** - FBC approved on the 12th of June.



Delivering to Plan with no issues to address
(no action required)



Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate
issues to address (management action in place)

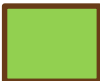


Delivery significantly behind schedule and/or significant
issues to address (urgent action required)

LAND AND PROPERTY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Former North Wales Hospital Jones Bros (Ruthin) Limited / Denbighshire County Council	Phase 1 of the Project in delivery	- Grant Funding Agreement for Phase 1 works completed and signed. - Site Clearance Works contract for Phase 1 works agreed and security works commenced in June.	- Completion of improved perimeter security fence. - Ramboll to commence surveys on the condition of buildings included in the Listed building Consent application. - Demolition and remediation works to commence.		- Substantial health and safety issues on site due to the condition of the buildings and contamination on site. - Challenging work environment and difficulty of accurately assessing cost and scope of works. - Listed Building Application to demolish remaining structures is subject to detailed discussions with CADW.
Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor Welsh Government / Ambition North Wales	Phase 1 of the Project in delivery	- Ecological mitigation works commenced in May. - Proposed variation to the JVA for Phase 2 of the project shared with WG. - Draft variations to the FBC for Phase 2 works completed.	- Groundworks and steel erecting to commence. - Final Tender from Read Construction for Phase 2 of the Project due in August. - Finalise Heads of Terms for Phase 2. - Revised and update FBC.		- Project making good progress onsite. - Possible Request for additional funding due to for cost inflation for Phase 2 works.
Wrexham Gateway Wrexham County Borough Council	Developing the Full Business Case	- Ecological surveys ongoing and solution for phosphates to be determined. - Discussions ongoing with landowners re site assembly.	- On-site ecological surveys completed and advice received from the consultant on phosphate discharges to treatment works. - Continued progress on site assembly. - Outline planning application decision.		- Site assembly, - Appointment of development partner. - Solution for phosphate discharges into the River Dee.

LAND AND PROPERTY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises Isle of Anglesey County Council	Approved not yet in delivery	- ITT process commenced in early May for the appointment of a Main Contractor for the PEBOC site. - IoACC purchased the PEBOC Site and obtaining vacant possession of the site.	- Completion of the Grant Funding Agreement. - Main Contractors appointed for PEBOC and Plot 2 Tregarnedd. - Commencement of site works.		Project on track for delivery commencing on site in Q2 FY26/27
Padeswood Transport for Wales (TfW)	Developing the Full Business Case	- Formal project meetings with TfW and Network Rail (NR) have commenced. - The formal transfer of the project from TfW to NR.	- Provision of a firm timeframe for project delivery. - Completion of MoU between Network Rail and Heidelberg Materials.		- Design and costing of Network Rail track works ongoing. - Alignment of Network Rail and Heidelberg Materials track works in programme.
Albert Gubay Business School Bangor University	Developing the Full Business Case	- Full Business Case approved by Sub Committee on 12th June - Pre-commencement planning conditions agreed. - Baseline Carbon and biodiversity assessments completed. - Final costs received from Wynne's Construction. - Request for additional funding to cover cost inflation in tender works package.	- Complete the Grant Funding Agreement. - Finalised Benefits Plan & Register. - Appointment of Main Contractor. - Enabling works commence August followed by main site works in September 2026. - Cost Inflation Reserve Fund request.		- Completion of grant funding agreement ongoing. - Planning consent granted. - Full Business Case approved. - Main Contractor to be appointed in August 2026.
Port of Mostyn Mostyn Estates	Approved not yet in delivery	Main Contractor commenced the Remedial Grounds Works Package on the Marsh Row Site.	- Confirmation of security fencing, and heavy lift pad work packages tenders. - Completion of the Grant Funding Agreement. - Commencement of Subsidy Control registration.		- Major project risks are all assessed as acceptable at present. - Project rating is green subject to completion of procurement and bespoke approach for carbon assessment.

LAND AND PROPERTY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises Isle of Anglesey County Council	Approved not yet in delivery	IoACC tender date closed and a proposed Main Contractor selected.	- Commencement of works on site. - Completion of Grant Funding Agreement.		Project making good progress with site works due to commence in Q2 FY26/27.
Freeport Gateway Isle of Anglesey County Council	Approved not yet in delivery	- ITT process commenced in early May for the appointment of a Main Contractor for the PEBOC site. - IoACC purchased the PEBOC Site and obtaining vacant possession of the site.	- Completion of the Grant Funding Agreement. - Main Contractors appointed for PEBOC and Plot 2 Tregarnedd. - Commencement of site works.		Project on track for delivery commencing on site in Q2 FY26/27
Padeswood Transport for Wales (TfW)	Developing the Full Business Case	- Formal project meetings with TfW and Network Rail (NR) have commenced. - The formal transfer of the project from TfW to NR.	- Provision of a firm timeframe for project delivery. - Completion of MoU between Network Rail and Heidelberg Materials.		- Design and costing of Network Rail track works ongoing. - Alignment of Network Rail and Heidelberg Materials track works in programme.
Albert Gubay Business School Bangor University	Developing the Full Business Case	- Full Business Case approved by Sub Committee on 12th June - Pre-commencement planning conditions agreed. - Baseline Carbon and biodiversity assessments completed. - Final costs received from Wynne's Construction. - Request for additional funding to cover cost inflation in tender works package.	- Complete the Grant Funding Agreement. - Finalised Benefits Plan & Register. - Appointment of Main Contractor. - Enabling works commence August followed by main site works in September 2026. - Cost Inflation Reserve Fund request.		- Completion of grant funding agreement ongoing. - Planning consent granted. - Full Business Case approved. - Main Contractor to be appointed in August 2026.

LAND AND PROPERTY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Port of Mostyn Mostyn Estates	Approved not yet in delivery	• Main Contractor commenced the Remedial Grounds Works Package on the Marsh Row Site.	• Confirmation of security fencing, and heavy lift pad work packages tenders. • Completion of the Grant Funding Agreement. • Commencement of Subsidy Control registration.		• Major project risks are all assessed as acceptable at present. • Project rating is green subject to completion of procurement and bespoke approach for carbon assessment.

AGRI-FOOD AND TOURISM PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE



Programme Aim

To build a more sustainable, vibrant and resilient foundation economy in the region, optimising opportunities for employment and prosperity through our environment and landscape.



Job Creation
Current forecast: 524
Actual: 0



Total Investment
Current forecast: £75.02m
Actual: £3.94m

RAG Status



Programme Manager Commentary

- **Responsible Adventure** – The Business Justification Case for the Slate Explorer element has been endorsed by Programme and Portfolio members to move forward to EWBS, marking a key milestone as the project progresses.
- **Academi Croeso** – The Business Justification Case for the Dylan's Spoke has been endorsed by Programme and Portfolio members to move forward to EWBS, following their appointment as a new delivery partner.
- **Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub** – Procurement has progressed for the Sustainable Dairy Development element. Construction of the Sheep Milk Wales element is underway and remains on track for completion in early 2027. Engagement with planning stakeholders continues to support development of the hub.
- **Venue Cymru Futures** – The updated Outline Business Case has been approved by the Economic Well-being Sub-committee. Work is now focused on detailed design, business planning and stakeholder engagement ahead of the Full Business Case.



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Sioned Williams
Senior Responsible Owner



Elliw Hughes
Programme Manager



Delivering to Plan with no issues to address
(no action required)



Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate
issues to address (management action in place)



Delivery significantly behind schedule and/or significant
issues to address (urgent action required)

AGRI-FOOD AND TOURISM PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	Sheep Milk Wales in delivery. Sustainable Dairy – BJC approved. Hub developing FBC	- Value engineering nearing completion for main contract for the Sustainable Dairy Development. - Technical Meetings conducted with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and GLLM regarding planning to the Hub.	- Remaining Procurement work for Sheep Milk Wales element. - Complete procurement process for Sustainable Dairy element. - Delegated approval and move into delivery for Sustainable Dairy. - Drafting of Full Business Case. - Planning for Hub to be submitted.		- Planning risk for Hub - Project costs due to inflation - Incomplete Procurement - Hub Project timescales
Academi Croeso Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	Project in delivery	- Dylan's Restaurant Limited confirmed as replacement spoke - Project engagement with other spokes - Replacement spoke BJC endorsed by Programme and Portfolio board.	- Signing of back-to-back Funding Agreement with Zip World. - Advance procurement for Zip World and Dylan's spokes - BJC Approval, signing back-to-back funding agreement and move into delivery for Dylans spoke.		- Pending Economic Well-being Sub-Committee approval - Back-to-back agreements - Incomplete procurement activity. - underspend on current profile - Timeline risk for development of hub
Venue Cymru Futures Conwy County Borough Council	Developing the Full Business Case	- Updated OBC approval. - Ongoing procurement activity - Tourist Information service moved into a temporary location within Venue Cymru	- Begin planning surveys and engagement. - Finalise seating plan design for the auditorium reconfiguration. - Development of Full Business Case - Submission of planning application		- Planning consent. - Not securing full funding package. - Procurement delays.

AGRI-FOOD AND TOURISM PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Responsible Adventure ZipWorld	Developing BJC/Full Business Case	• Slate Explorer Business Justification Case endorsed by Programme and Portfolio board • Continued engagement with Consenting authorities with consenting across different elements of the project	• Complete two large procurement processes • Slate Explorer Business Justification Case approval • Commence build at Llechwedd for the Slate Explorer. • Planning approval for Slate Explorer • Prepare remaining Business Cases • Continue with stakeholder/community engagement • Share first draft of the Grant Funding Agreement		• Economic Well-being Sub-Committee approval pending • Planning consent challenges. • Procurement risk due to project uniqueness • Timescales delays.

INNOVATION IN HIGH VALUE MANUFACTURING PROGRAMME

PERFORMANCE



Programme Aim

To consolidate North Wales position as a powerful and innovative high value manufacturing cluster, building on existing specialisms and leading expertise to create a higher value, more diverse economic base that supports the transition to a low carbon economy.



Job Creation
Current forecast: 594
Actual: 21



Total Investment
Current forecast: £228.41m
Actual: £14.94m

RAG Status



Programme Manager Commentary

- The Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre has completed the refurbishment of the OpTIC Centre in St Asaph, including procurement activities for the Hydrogen Lab, and continues to deliver training on newly installed equipment.
- The Centre for Environmental Biotechnology has progressed into the design and procurement phase for the additional works funded through the reallocation of project underspend.
- Society 5.0 continues to procure and install equipment in line with project delivery plans.
- Project Prince Knauf continues to progress through the planning process. Securing planning consent remains complex, with Environmental Permit requirements representing a key challenge. Extensive stakeholder engagement, support, and option appraisal activities are ongoing. A two-phase planning approach has been adopted, covering both the remediation works and the vertical build, with applications for both phases now submitted.
- The Wrexham University Business Gateway has awarded the contract for the first phase of works and continues to progress development of the Full Business Case.



Tony Ward
Senior Responsible Owner



Elliw Hughes
Programme Manager



Delivering to Plan with no issues to address
(no action required)



Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate
issues to address (management action in place)



Delivery significantly behind schedule and/or significant
issues to address (urgent action required)

INNOVATION IN HIGH VALUE MANUFACTURING PROGRAMME

PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre Wrexham University	Project in delivery	- Waterjet cutter installed and actively being used for internal projects. - Hosted Maltese Trade Delegation seeking to work with local companies. - Upgrade of equipment such as a scanning electron microscope. - Training on new equipment such as the infra red system - Completion of the OpTIC renovation.	- Approval of Business Justification Case for Plas Coch equipment. - Procurement for hydrogen lab. - Draft BJC for Hydrogen lab.		- Project nearing full completion. - No significant issue within project, project progressing well. Slight delay to project due to procurement/contract finalisation. - Benefits being realised.
Centre for Environmental Biotechnology Bangor University	Project in delivery	- CEB hosted the annual meeting of the UKRI Engineering Biology Mission Hub Project. - Additional works design completed and procurement process began. - Training on new equipment	- Procurement activity completed for underspend additional works. - Commissioning of the large bioreactor for the CEB +scale up facility.		- Project nearing completion of delivery stage. - Benefits being realised - Slight delay to additional works but - Low risk project.
Society 5.0 Wrexham University	Project in delivery	- All 3D printers installed. Bamboo 3D printer used for outreach activities to increase next generation STEM talent pool. - All purchase orders raised for every equipment	- Progress all purchase orders for internal University approval. - Claim full expenditure of project.		- Equipment only project. - Ample testing of market conducted for remaining equipment. - Short project life span from start to completion of delivery. - Delay in claiming.

INNOVATION IN HIGH VALUE MANUFACTURING PROGRAMME

PERFORMANCE

Project (Project Sponsor)	Project stage	Key Milestones (this quarter)	Key Milestones (next quarter)	RAG Status	RAG Rationale
Project Prince Knauf	Developing the Full Business Case	• Planning submission on Vertical Build • Environmental permit application submitted. • Significant critical stakeholder discussion in order to obtain planning consent. • Detailed design proceeding to RIBA stage four. • Rented offices at the TATA site for the Knauf Engineering and site team to set up and be operational.	• Planning committee meeting 15th July - on site remediation • Site remediation / ground preparation and move into delivery. • Continued engagement on environmental issues to obtain Planning consent for Vertical Build. • Share first draft of the Grant Funding Agreement		• Complex Planning and Environmental process to obtain consent, but ample stakeholder engagement being made to mitigate as much risk.
Business Gateway Wrexham University	Developing the Full Business Case	• Awarded contract for first phase of work. • Design development and cost planning for the Nick Whitehead component substantially complete.	• Workshop with Welsh Government stakeholders. • Progress Phase 1 through the PCSA stage. • Prepare for the JCT Design and Build contract for Catrin Finch Centre works. • Procure contractor for the second phase.		• Progression towards FBC going well. • Grant Funding Agreement being drafted. • Procurement activity alignment with Ambition North Wales processes.

JOBS AND INVESTMENT PROFILE

Project	Consenting Stage				Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Stage 7	Stage 8
	Pre-application stage	Outline planning / Consent	Full planning / Consent	Conditions discharged	Determine the Project context	Preparing the Strategic Outline Case	Preparing the Outline Business Case	Approval of the Outline Business Case	Preparing the Full Business Case	Approval of the Full Business Case	Project implementation and monitoring	Project Evaluation
Digital Signal Processing Centre	No planning required				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4G+	Consenting requirements TBC				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
LPWAN	No consenting requirements				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Advanced Wireless	No consenting at grant scheme level				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cydnherth (Morlais)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Egni	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Smart Local Energy	No consenting required at fund level				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Holyhead Hydrogen Hub	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Trawsfynydd Business, Innovation and Skills	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Former North Wales Hospital	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wrexham Gateway	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Freeport Gateway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Padeswood	No consenting requirements (TBC)				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Albert Gubay Business School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Port of Mostyn	No planning consent required.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Academi Croeso	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Responsible Adventure	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Venue Cymru Futures	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Centre for Environmental Biotechnology	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Enterprise Engineering and Optics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Society 5.0	No planning required				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Project Prince	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Business Gateway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

JOBS AND INVESTMENT PROFILE

PROJECTS IN DELIVERY

Programme	Project	Rag Status	Jobs		Growth Deal		Total Investment	
			Target	Actual	Allocation (£m)	Actual (£m)	Target (£m)	Actual (£m)
Digital Connectivity	Digital Signal Processing Centre (DSP)		40	25	2.96	2.58	3.08	2.76
Low Carbon Energy	Cydnherth (Morlais)		253	8	8.87	8.87	15.99	8.87
	Clean Energy Fund		186	2	24.63	0.70	102.5	0.75
Land and Property	Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh - Phase 1		0	0	2.00	0.00	5.00	0.00
	Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor		83	0	7.49	0.83	8.84	0.83
Agri-food and Tourism	Academi Croeso		68	0	4.43	2.20	19.28	3.94
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre		109	13	11.99	11.11	18.82	12.25
	Centre for Environmental Biotechnology		67	8	2.96	2.19	3.46	2.69
TOTAL			806	56	65.33	28.48	176.97	32.09

PROJECTS APPROVED NOT IN DELIVERY

Programme	Project	Rag Status	Jobs		Growth Deal		Total Investment	
			Target	Actual	Allocation (£m)	Actual (£m)	Target (£m)	Actual (£m)
Digital Connectivity	Advanced Wireless		173	0	19.54	0.02	30.31	0.02
	4G+		39	0	6.17	0.24	8.20	0.24
	LPWAN		20	0	1.14	0.04	1.14	0.04
Low Carbon Energy	Egni		63	0	3.94	0.00	10.01	0.00
Land and Property	Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh - Phase 1		70	0	4.94	0.00	80.85	0.00
	Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises		95	0	7.00	0.29	10.44	0.75
	Freeport Gateway		223	0	3.48	0.00	19.09	0.00
	Albert Gubay Business School		90	0	7.3	0.00	20.45	0.00
	Port of Mostyn		299	0	4.0	0.00	14.70	0.00
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Society 5.0		19	0	1.5	0.21	3.0	0.21
Agri-food and Tourism	Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub		106	0	11.82	0.00	19.30	0.00
TOTAL			1,197	0	70.83	0.80	217.49	1.26

APPENDIX A - GROWTH DEAL PROJECTS SUMMARY

	Project	Sponsor	Summary
Digital	Digital Signal Processing Centre (DSP)	Bangor University	The project will allow the DSP Centre to expand its presence and remit, integrating fully with the National Strategy Project (NSP) and enable the scaling of key assets including a 5G testbed, research capacity and state-of-the-art equipment.
	4G+ (Connected Key Sites and Corridors)	Ambition North Wales	This project will improve 4G mobile connectivity at key economic sites in the region, targeting transport routes, business and tourism hubs while supporting the further deployment of 5G network coverage in these areas.
	Advanced Wireless (Connected Campuses)	Ambition North Wales	The Advanced Wireless project will support private and public sector organisations adopt the latest wireless technologies to support improved service delivery, business efficiencies, innovation and growth, particularly through the use of internet of things applications.
	LPWAN (Connected Campuses)	Ambition North Wales	This project aims to deliver extensive and accessible LoRaWAN (Long Range Wide Area Network) network coverage throughout the region, providing businesses and public sector users with a cost effective solution for adopting internet of things applications and supporting innovation.
Low Carbon Energy	Cydnerth (Morlais)	Menter Môn	Investing in infrastructure to connect to the National Grid network and monitor marine environmental effects. This will enable an increase in the deployment of turbines by tidal developers and the generation of renewable energy.
	Egni	Bangor University	Investing in the development of facilities at Bangor University and Menai Science Park, enhancing the North Wales and UK capabilities for innovation in low carbon energy and related areas, helping to create the conditions for new inward investment and business growth in the low carbon energy supply chain in North Wales.
	Smart Local Energy	Ambition North Wales	To help achieve renewable energy, decarbonisation and local ownership targets, the project will support innovative enabling projects and demonstrators that overcome market failures and unlock private and community sector investments in smart local energy solutions.
	Holyhead Hydrogen Hub	Menter Môn	This project will build a green hydrogen production facility at Parc Cybi, Holyhead, producing around 2000+kg/day of green hydrogen, supplying road, maritime and rail transport customers across North Wales.
	Trawsfynydd Business Innovation and Skills Centre	Cyngor Gwynedd	A scheme which will include a building to include office spaces, laboratory spaces (exact specification to be confirmed) and ancillary facilities (meeting space, café/canteen etc), to support the nuclear and low carbon energy industry together with the scientific community, located on Trawsfynydd Site.
Land and Property	Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh	Ambition North Wales	The Growth Deal funding will assist in the delivery of a cleared and remediated site with primary services to bring forward a mixed-use commercial and residential development
	Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor	Ambition North Wales	Provide industrial floor space to meet known demand for units.
	Wrexham Gateway	Wrexham County Borough Council	This project is a sustainable development of a vibrant regenerated area, creating a focal point to support business investment and a multi-modal transportation hub with links to active travel.
	Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises	Isle of Anglesey County Council	Delivering 2,200sqm of business space in North Anglesey creating at least 59 jobs, and leveraging the Freeport and low-carbon energy growth.
	Freeport Gateway	Isle of Anglesey County Council	Unlocking 6,750sqm of business space in Llangefni, creating at least 186 jobs and maximising benefits of the Anglesey Freeport.
	Padeswood	Transport for Wales	Rail line enhancements to remove constraints and address access/egress for rail freight into the Padeswood Cement Works
	Port of Mostyn	Port of Mostyn	Upgrading berth and regeneration of former industrial site.
	Albert Gubay Business School	Bangor University	Construction of the Albert Gubay Business School at Bangor University.
Agri-food and Tourism	Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	The vision is to create a distinctive, world-class Rural Economy Hub at Glynllifon, offering a range of facilities and services to strengthen and enhance the regional economy, specifically through growing the food and drink sector.
	Academi Croeso (Tourism Talent Network)	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	Future-proofing the pipeline of skills provision and increase commercial benefits from one of the most established sectors in the region. The talent network will stimulate public-private collaboration to coordinate action on skills and product development to transform and accelerate the growth of the tourism and hospitality sector in the region.
	Responsible Adventure	Zip World	A multi-element project as part of a sustainable and eco-tourism package including a new sustainable Cable Car, Slate Explorer including visitor viewing platform, Swing and an eBus Network.
	Venue Cymru Futures	Conwy County Borough Council	A project that will expand facilities at Venue Cymru, boost jobs, cut carbon, and attract major shows, conferences, and cultural investment.
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Centre for Environmental Biotechnology (CEB)	Bangor University	The Centre for Engineering Biotechnology will be a world-leading centre in the discovery and characterisation of novel extremophilic enzymes of industrial relevance. The Centre for Engineering Biotechnology will provide a strong foundation for attracting world-leading researchers, significant public and commercial research funding, and inward investment to Wales.
	Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre	Wrexham University	The Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre will provide facilities targeted to boost high-level skills development for the region and enable Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large businesses to work in partnership with Wrexham Glyndwr University on commercially driven research and development in optics, composites and hydrogen fuel cells.
	Society 5.0 Manufacturing & Capability Project	Wrexham University	Enhance the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre to enable industry to access further world-class high precision engineering resources.
	Project Prince	Knauf	Construction of 110kt rock mineral wool plant with submerged arc furnace (SAF), primarily to serve the UK and Ireland markets.
	Wrexham University Business Gateway	Wrexham University	Serving as a bridge between Wrexham University and local industry, fostering collaboration, innovation, job creation and inclusive economic growth.

NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL PORTFOLIO RISK REGISTER

Risk ID	Date Raised	Risk Category	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Description of the Risk	Current Gross Risk Rating			Trend	Mitigating Actions	Action Due Dates	Action owner	Residual Risk Rating			Trend	Status (Open / Closed)	Commentary	Date of last update
						P	I	Score					P	I	Score				
R001	21/10/2020	Programme and Project Delivery	Capacity	Portfolio Director	If sufficient resources are not in place at portfolio, programme and project level, there is a risk that this could impact on the successful delivery of the deal	4	5	20	↔	Ambition North Wales approved Revenue budget to extend fixed term contracts. Additional procurement, finance, legal and technical capacity to be secured for projects and PMO as required. PMO engage partners to ensure capacity for delivery and promote recruitment activity Recruitment completed for Portfolio Director, Project Managers, and other new CJC Roles increases resources supporting the PMO. Approval from both Governments to increase the top slice from to 2.15% and enabling PMO to draw down additional funding through Growth Deal budget and extend contracts as required PMO resources directed to priority projects to ensure FBC completion.	In place Ongoing Reviewed monthly In place In place In place	PMO PMO PMO, Project Sponsors PMO PMO PMO	3	4	12	▼	Open	Risk reviewed. Residual risk reduced following recruitment.	21/08/2026
R002	21/10/2020	Programme and Project Delivery	Delay	Portfolio Management Office	If there are delays to project delivery, there is a risk this could have an impact on the realisation of benefits or could result in projects not progressing.	5	5	25	↔	Routine reallocation of staff capacity to priority projects Monthly highlight reports to Programme Board with escalation routes to Economic Well Being Sub Committee Programme and project RAID logs in place to record risks and manage issues with mitigation managed at project level. Project business cases and implementation plans to clearly set out risks to project delivery and mitigations. PMO working with sponsors to identify opportunities to minimise delay and where delay is unavoidable minimise impact Quarterly reports to the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee and Portfolio Board with specific issues to escalate where necessary. PMO working with sponsors at project-level to identify opportunities to minimise delay and where delay is unavoidable minimise impact	Ongoing Monthly N/A Quarterly In place In place	PMO PMO PMO PMO, Project Sponsor PMO PMO, Project Sponsors	3	4	12	↔	Open	Risk Reviewed. No change to residual risk however minimising delays remains a priority for the PMO. Mitigating capacity risk (R001) will contribute to mitigation however progress is still affected by sponsors OBC and FBC approvals have addressed some delays. Use of PMO resources more flexibly has proven to be effective to accelerate business case development. Risk probability will reduce further if progress is sustained. A number of projects are experiencing delays which will impact on the timing of benefits realisation. Withdrawal of projects from the Portfolio which have experienced sustained delays reflects reduction in residual probability from 4 to 3. Selection of new projects has prioritised deliverability and low risk delay.	21/08/2026
R003	21/10/2020	Financial	Affordability	Portfolio Management Office	If projects increase in cost, there is a risk they may not go ahead or project scope may need to be scaled down	5	5	25	↔	Project Business Cases will set out detailed project level financial, commercial and risk management measures to manage costs. Robust performance, risk and financial reporting arrangements will be established for all projects Once Project Business Cases are approved, any additional costs incurred will be the responsibility of the Project Sponsor and alternative funding options will be considered. PMO engaging with sponsors at project level to identify mitigation for cost increases Introduction of new projects introduces further potential for affordability risk, to be managed through business case development.	N/A Monthly N/A Monthly N/A	PMO, Project Sponsor PMO PMO PMO PMO	4	4	16	↔	Open	Risk reviewed. No change to residual risk. Ongoing conflict in the Middle East presents further risk on supply chains and project sponsors are currently being consulted on their assessment of this risk. Indications suggest there will be an increase in costs across many categories, with the full impact on global supply chains not yet understood. Residual risk to be reassessed across the Portfolio when further details are available. The residual risk rating remains high as costs have increased significantly since the Growth Deal was agreed in December 2020. While costs have stabilised at the moment, the Growth Deal funding from government is fixed at the amount agreed in 2020 therefore affordability remains a challenge for project. This is being managed on a project by project basis with some projects able to look at design changes, changes to deliver models and others needing to secure additional funding from other sources.	21/08/2026
R006	21/10/2020	Environmental	Climate Change and Biodiversity	Portfolio Director	If projects do not take account of carbon emissions or biodiversity loss within project level assessments, there is a risk the portfolio could contribute towards the issues of climate change and biodiversity loss	4	3	12	↔	Position statement on Climate Change and Biodiversity adopted by the Economic Ambition Board. Project business cases to demonstrate delivery against the adopted the position. Methodology on how to take account of carbon emissions and biodiversity loss within project business cases now published and shared with all projects.	N/A N/A In place	NWEAB PMO, Project SROs PMO PMO	3	3	9	↔	Open	Risk reviewed. No changes to gross or residual risk scores. Roll out of methodology and associated training continues	21/08/2026
R007	21/10/2020	Financial	Private Sector Investment	Portfolio Management Office	If the private sector investment is not secured, there is a risk that projects will not be delivered or delivered at reduced scale impacting on the benefits to the region.	4	5	20	↔	Continued engagement with Project Sponsors and private sector partners and coordination of funder/investors Development of robust project business cases and contractual agreements for Growth Deal funding New investment strategy in place to support PMO engage funders and secure private investment	N/A N/A In place	PMO, Project SROs PMO, Project SROs PMO	4	4	16	↔	Open	No change to residual risk. Global economic conditions associated with conflict in Middle East presents further risk to investor confidence and project sponsors are currently being consulted on their assessment of this risk. Securing the private sector investment for the Growth Deal remains a high risk however the position has improved with the creation of the reserve list and subsequent approved business cases. Risk also relates to R020 Subsidy Control.	21/08/2026

Risk ID	Date Raised	Risk Category	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Description of the Risk	Current Gross Risk Rating			Trend	Mitigating Actions	Action Due Dates	Action owner	Residual Risk Rating			Trend	Status (Open / Closed)	Commentary	Date of last update
						P	I	Score					P	I	Score				
R008	21/10/2020	Financial	Public Sector Investment	Portfolio Management Office	If the public sector investment is not secured, there is a risk that projects will not be delivered or delivered at reduced scale impacting on the benefits to the region.	4	4	16	↔	All Ambition North Wales partners have signed up to the Growth Deal and Governance Agreement. Development of robust project business cases and contractual agreements for Growth Deal funding Support project sponsor applications for other public funding sources where appropriate	Complete N/A As required	Partners PMO, Project SROs PMO	3	4	12	↔	Open	Risk reviewed, no changes at present however the risks associated with the current conflict in the Middle East may cause affordability challenges which cannot be met by existing public sector investment commitments. Project sponsors are being consulted and risk to be reviewed as further details become available. Risk also relates to R020 Subsidy Control	21/08/2026
R009	21/10/2020	Regulatory	Planning and Statutory Consents	Portfolio Management Office	If projects do not receive the necessary statutory consents and planning approval, there is a risk that projects will not be delivered and the benefits would not be realised.	5	5	25	↔	Project business cases will set out the consenting requirements for each project and the risks to project delivery Lead Role in PMO assigned for planning Continued engagement with project sponsors and consenting authorities to understand consenting process and risks with support provided where appropriate at project level Lessons learnt review to be delivered following project-level consenting delays Chair and/or Portfolio Director to write to consenting authorities highlighting the impact of delayed decisions when individual project risks are escalated. Refer back to Programme SRO to review risk/issue of Phosphate consenting affecting multiple projects to propose appropriate mitigation. For reserve list projects criteria on planning has been set prior to business case submission ie. no commitment of funding until business case approval Direct planning input, advice and support from the CJC to project sponsors and liaison with LPAs and other relevant parties	N/A N/A N/A In place As required N/A N/A N/A	PMO, Project SROs PMO PMO PMO, Project sponsors Portfolio Director Programme SRO PMO CJC	5	4	20	▼	Open	Risk Reviewed. The process to upgrade water treatment works to mitigate phosphates from their discharges is taking longer and this is now impacting planning applications. No Growth Deal projects affected yet but the Wrexham Gateway has had an outline application submitted. There is an emerging risk associated with SUDS/SABs potentially affecting consenting.Consenting remains a high risk and is being managed at a programme and project level within the Growth Deal. Planning support provided to projects by the CJC has enabled a refocus on finding solutions to planning issues that have previously stalled the consideration of projects. Those projects where this was the case now have a positive momentum towards a planning permission, or providing additional evidence required to get to that stage. Projects receiving early stager planning support from the CJC to ensure risks are better understood, reducing the likelihood of later issues.	21/08/2026
R010	21/10/2020	Reputational and Social Impact	Spending Objectives	Portfolio Director	If projects fail to deliver against the portfolio spending objectives, there is a risk that the Growth Deal may not meet its targets in relation to job creation, GVA and investment.	5	4	20	↔	Robust business cases will be developed for each programme and project in line with 5 Case Business Model and will need to set out contribution to portfolio spending objective targets Grant Funding Agreements to contractually commit sponsors to delivery of spending objectives, with regular reporting and monitoring to ensure early intervention where required. Portfolio review and change control process in place. New project process was completed in early 2025 with a reserve list of projects established (total of 21 projects - 17 new projects, and a further 3 projects moved to reserve list). Investment strategy has been developed and approved by the Economic Ambition Board.	N/A Ongoing N/A Complete In place	PMO, Project SROs PMO PMO PMO	4	4	16	↔	Open	No change to Gross and residual risk. While the creation of the Reserve List has mitigated the impact of projects withdrawn and provided momentum with recent business case approvals the risk remains high.	21/08/2026
R013	21/10/2020	Reputational and Social Impact	Political Change	Portfolio Director	If stakeholders are not managed effectively, there is a risk that political change could impact support for the portfolio, programme and projects.	4	4	16	↔	Prepare briefing packs and sessions for new members of the Senedd and new Ministers post election. Frequent engagement with UK, Welsh Government and local government politicians and officials. GA2 and Final Deal agreement to confirm commitments of all parties. New members to be briefed on the Growth Deal Portfolio following change to the leadership. . Engagement with new Government Ministers	N/A Complete Complete Ongoing	Ambition North Wales, PMO Ambition North Wales PMO PMO	3	4	12	↔	Open	Risk reviewed. No change to residual risk. Local Government elections in 2027 mean this risk may increase in the future.	21/08/2026

Risk ID	Date Raised	Risk Category	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Description of the Risk	Current Gross Risk Rating			Trend	Mitigating Actions	Action Due Dates	Action owner	Residual Risk Rating			Trend	Status (Open / Closed)	Commentary	Date of last update
						P	I	Score					P	I	Score				
R014	22/10/2020	Financial	Fraud	Portfolio Director	If appropriate processes are not put in place and managed, there is a risk that the portfolio could be subject to fraudulent claims resulting in misuse of public funds	4	4	16	↔	Projects to have robust financial monitoring processes in place including due diligence checks on project sponsors and funding recipients. PMO to review claims and applications submitted before passing them onto accountable body for payment Code of conduct and conflicts of interest policy incorporated as part of Governance Agreement 2 Conflict of Interest Register maintained for all programmes, projects and advisory groups.	N/A N/A Complete N/A	PMO PMO Monitoring Officer PMO	2	4	8	↔	Open	No changes to gross or residual risk scores. Residual risk remains low due to the processes in place by Ambition North Wales. From 2025 projects in delivery will include grant/fund schemes will be managed according to PMO's approach to due diligence. UK Government due diligence service 'Spotlight' has been introduced to PMO from 2026 to support due diligence reviews. Fraud awareness session with the Senior Leadership Team held with WG Head of Counter Fraud in July 2026.	21/08/2026
R015	22/10/2020	Reputational and Social Impact	Benefits Realisation	Portfolio Management Office	If project benefits are not realised, there is a risk that the overall Growth Deal could fail to deliver the benefits set out within business case.	4	4	16	↔	Each programme and project will be responsible for benefits management through a Benefits Realisation Plan. Monthly highlight reports to Programme Board to monitor benefits realisation Procurement Principles adopted with focus on community benefits and social value Benefits Realisation guidance developed and being disseminated to project sponsors for use in project business cases Impact system launched and project teams trained.	N/A Monthly Complete N/A	PMO, Programme and Project SROs PMO PMO PMO	3	3	9	↔	Open	Risk reviewed. No changes to gross or residual risk scores. A recent assurance review highlighted the work of the PMO on benefits realisation as good practice which will ensure the structures and systems are in place to help projects realise and report on benefits realisation. Period for benefits realisation continues to reduce however emphasis on deliverability for reserve list projects minimised risk (see R002)	21/08/2026
R016	22/10/2020	Programme and Project Delivery	Assurance	Head of Operations	If agreed assurance processes are not followed, there is a risk that project approval could be impacted and could result in suspension/postponement of government grant payments.	3	5	15	↔	Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP) agreed with Welsh and UK Government as part of Final Deal. Continued engagement with Welsh Government Assurance Hub to refine and update the Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP) PMO assurance lead to coordinate delivery of assurance in accordance with the IAAP Streamlined approach to assurance introduced for new projects	Complete Quarterly N/A	PMO PMO PMO	2	4	8	↔	Open	Risk reviewed. No changes to gross or residual risk scores.	21/08/2026
R017	22/10/2020	Financial	Financial Management	s151 Officer	If appropriate financial arrangements are not put in place, there could be a risk to the delivery of the deal, draw-down of the funding grant and allocation of funds.	3	4	12	↔	Ambition North Wales will utilise existing financial processes of Cyngor Gwynedd as the Host Authority. Project Business Cases will set out detailed project level financial, commercial and risk management measures to manage finances Robust monthly performance, risk and financial reporting arrangements will be established for all projects Robust financial claims process established for the drawdown of funding	N/A N/A Monthly N/A	PMO PMO, Project SRO PMO, Project SRO PMO	2	3	6	↔	Open	No changes to gross or residual risk scores. Residual risk remains low due to the processes in place by Ambition North Wales and the funding agreements with project sponsors.	21/08/2026
R018	01/10/2020	Financial	Revenue Funding	Portfolio Management Office and Project Sponsors	If sufficient revenue funding is not in place to support the activities of the PMO and delivery of the Growth Deal, then project delivery and achievement of spending objectives and benefits may be impacted	4	5	20	↔	Economic Ambition Board approved Revenue budget to extend fixed term contracts. Longer term solutions continue to be investigated Partners and project sponsors responsible for sourcing revenue funding to support non-Ambition North Wales led projects PMO working to identify additional funding opportunities for Ambition North Wales led projects PMO capitalises salary costs associated with project delivery where appropriate and in line with guidance. Growth Deal top slice increased to 2.15%, allowing extension of Fixed term contracts	N/A N/A N/A N/A Complete	PMO PMO, Project SRO PMO, Project SRO PMO PMO PMO	3	4	12	↔	Open	No changes to gross or residual risk scores. Budget for 2026-27 approved by the Corporate Joint Committee. Medium Term Financial Plan in development	21/08/2026
R019	01/10/2020	Programme and Project Delivery	Supply Chain & Skills Capacity	Portfolio Management Office	If the regional supply chain does not have the capacity to deliver projects, then projects' delivery could be impacted and regional benefits could be lower.	4	4	16	↔	Project business cases and implementation plans to clearly set out risks to project delivery and mitigations, including supply chain risks. RSP working with PMO to identify regional supply chain / skills challenges and identify mitigations Additional funding secured for skills activity Projects to conduct early market engagement where appropriate	N/A N/A In place N/A	PMO PMO PMO Project Sponsors	3	4	12	↔	Open	No changes to gross or residual risk scores. Close collaboration between the PMO and the RSP on skills and supply chain is key to reducing the probability of this risk. This is an ongoing activity to ensure the capacity and skills are in the region to take advantage of the opportunities through the Growth Deal.	21/08/2026

Risk ID	Date Raised	Risk Category	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Description of the Risk	Current Gross Risk Rating			Trend	Mitigating Actions	Action Due Dates	Action owner	Residual Risk Rating			Trend	Status (Open / Closed)	Commentary	Date of last update
						P	I	Score					P	I	Score				
R020	03/10/2022	Programme and Project Delivery	Economic Context	Portfolio Management Office	If there are significant changes to the UK economy (e.g. cost of living crisis and the energy security crisis), then the strategic and economic cases for programmes and projects may be adversely impacted	4	5	20	↔	Project business cases and implementation plans to clearly set out the case for projects and the risks to project delivery, including the impact of recent economic developments	N/A	PMO, Project Sponsors	3	5	15	↔	Open	Risk reviewed: No immediate changes.Ongoing conflict in the Middle East presents further risk on supply chains and project sponsors are currently being consulted on their assessment of this risk. Residual risk to be reassessed across the Portfolio when further details are available Developing global issues affecting supply chains and energy market likely to affect costs in the short to medium term.	21/08/2026
R021	26/04/2024	Regulatory	Subsidy Control	Portfolio Management Office	Link to Public Sector investment risk R008: If subsidy control assessments cannot be confirmed the approval of funding for projects may be delayed or jeopardised.	3	4	12	↔	Review options for no subsidy investment, e.g. commercial loans Address details and assessment with sponsors at earliest stage (Terms sheet) Legal advice commissioned early on all Subsidy Control assessments Subsidy Control lead and support allocated within PMO	As per SOC-FBC stages	Programme Managers	3	3	9	↔	Open	Risk reviewed. No changes to gross or residual risk scores Challenges in completing 7 Principle assessments being supported by external specialist legal advice but these need to be addressed earlier in the assurance process, e.g. at Terms sheet stage pre OBC completion.	21/08/2026

NORTH WALES GROW

Risk ID	Date Raised	Risk Category	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Description of the Risk	Current Gross Risk Rating		
						P	I	Score
R021	26/04/2024	Programme and Project Delivery	Transition to CJC	Portfolio Director	Transition of PMO to CJC. If staffing and process arrangements are not managed effectively there is a	3	4	12

TH DEAL PORTFOLIO RISK REGISTER

Trend	Mitigating Actions	Action Due Dates	Action owner	Residual Risk Rating			Trend	Status (Open / Closed)	Commentary
				P	I	Score			
↔	TUPE consultation with staff Impact on policies and processes to be reviewed before full	Complete	Portfolio Director	2	3	6	↔	Closed	Risk reviewed. Transition completed April 25 No changes to gross or residual risk

**Date of last
update**

24/03/2026

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ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

2 October 2026

TITLE: 2026/27 Revenue and Capital Position – End of July 2026 Review.

AUTHOR: Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer)
Sian Pugh, Assistant Head of Finance

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Economic Well-being Sub-committee with the projected full year out-turn position for the Growth Deal, Investment Zone and Regional Skills Partnership (RSP).
- 1.2. In order to operate effectively, the Sub-committee needs to be aware of the projected expenditure position against the approved annual budget.

2. DECISIONS SOUGHT

- 2.1. To note the revenue end of July 2026 review for the Growth Deal (Appendix 1), including the reserves position (Appendix 2).
- 2.2. To note the Growth Deal's revised capital expenditure profile (Appendix 3).
- 2.3. To note the revenue end of July 2026 review for the Investment Zone (Appendix 4), including the use of the interest on Investment Zone balances to leave a neutral position for 2026/27.
- 2.4. To note the revenue end of July 2026 review for the Regional Skills Partnership (Appendix 5).
- 2.5. To note the virements for the Growth Deal and Investment Zone budgets noted in Appendix 6.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. To note a forecasted underspend of £288,174 against the Growth Deal's budget for 2026/27.
- 3.2. To note a slippage on the capital programme, with an estimated expenditure of £51.26m in 2026/27 compared to an approved budget of £67.07m for the year.
- 3.3. To note a forecasted neutral out-turn position for the Investment Zone for 2026/27, with interest on Investment Zone balances of £227,589 used to fund the difference between the forecasted expenditure and the CJC's allocated £200,000 to support the programme's administration. The use of interest is a temporary arrangement as interest receivable on balances will decrease as the cash outflows of the Investment Zone grant increases.

- 3.4. To note a forecasted neutral out-turn position for the RSP for 2026/27.
- 3.5. To note the virements to the Growth Deal and Investment Zone budgets that will need to be approved by the CJC in line with its Financial Procedure Rules.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The CJC in its meeting on 23 January 2026 approved the 2026/27 budget for the Growth Deal and Investment Zone. Funding of £290,000 for the RSP was awarded by Welsh Government for 2026/27 in March 2026.
- 4.2 The budgets will continue to be monitored and reviewed through the 2026/27 financial year, and the third quarter review will be presented to this Sub-committee in February 2027.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Growth Deal (including Shared Prosperity Fund and Local Area Energy Plan)

- 5.1. Appendix 1 provides a detailed analysis of the Growth Deal's (including Shared Prosperity Fund and Local Area Energy Plan) actual expenditure and income per heading up to the end of July 2026, together with a projected full year out-turn against its annual budget.
- 5.2. It is estimated that the net out-turn position at the end of the 2026/27 financial year will be an underspend of £288,174. This is mainly due to underspends in employee expenditure, additional government roles, accountable body support services and external legal, finance and procurement support. An underspend at the end of the financial year will be used to fund future budgets and reduce any increases in future partner contributions.

Portfolio Management Office

- 5.3. There's a £680,896 underspend on the Portfolio Management Office (PMO) and the main underspend is shown on the employee expenditure and additional government roles heading.
- 5.4. The underspend on the employee expenditure heading is £586,668 and this is due to some staff costs that were included within the core budget were subsequently funded by other sources. Around £348,000 of the underspend is due to staff that are now funded by Ambition North Wales's Growth Deal projects, around £16,000 relates to staff working a proportion of their time on the CJC and nearly £38,000 relates to staff working on the Regional Skills Partnership. Funding was awarded for the Local Area Energy Plan for 2026/27, and confirmation was received that the 2025/26 funding for the Shared Prosperity Fund can be claimed up to early 2026/27. These grants were therefore used to fund staff costs, which together contribute to around £121,000 of the underspend. Vacant posts during the year also led to a further underspend of over £60,000 in employee expenditure.
- 5.5. The Additional Government Roles is showing a forecasted underspend of £93,540 due to a proportion of Ambition North Wales's Non-Executive Advisors' time supporting the CJC and Investment Zone and the expected work to be undertaken by the external Commercial Manager is likely to be more on an ad hoc basis this financial year.
- 5.6. The Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity is showing an underspend of £25,690. In order to further support governance arrangements across the CJC (including the Investment Zone and Growth Deal), 1 FTE Monitoring Officer and 0.6 FTE Section 151 Officer

was identified to be required in the 2026/27 budget. The Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer costs under the Accountable Body Support Services budget are based on 0.35 FTE and 0.18 FTE respectively (which are then split between CJC and Growth Deal). In order to increase capacity to meet these requirements, an additional £32,450 was budgeted to the Growth Deal and £16,230 to the Investment Zone. During 2025/26, an interim Monitoring Officer was appointed to fulfil the role full time, therefore the costs relating to the role are included within External Legal Support in the Joint Committee heading. The estimated expenditure on the Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity heading therefore only relates to the Section 151 Officer Capacity. The estimated underspend on the Additional Section 151 Officer Capacity is £6,760.

- 5.7. There is an overspend of £20,000 on the Portfolio and Programme Development heading due to work on supporting low carbon energy.

Accountable Body Support Services

- 5.8. The estimated underspend on this heading is £92,690. This is due to legal services now being provided by staff within the External Legal Support heading and the recruitment of Cyngor Gwynedd staff providing finance and democratic support to be taken place after the Service Level Agreement has been finalised.

Joint Committee

- 5.9. The Joint Committee heading shows an overspend of £83,970. The External Legal Support consists of the interim Monitoring Officer and the interim Deputy Monitoring Officer. The total budget for legal support (including the Monitoring Officer) for 2026/27 is £69,970 (£18,930 Additional Monitoring Officer Capacity and £50,740 within Support Services) therefore the true forecasted overspend is £14,300.

Projects

- 5.10. The expected net overspend on this heading is £387,428.
- 5.11. The Project Delivery and Project Delivery - Employees headings relate to expenditure on Growth Deal projects led by Ambition North Wales that are currently in delivery and are considered as revenue expenditure. The employees' costs within the heading were initially included within the PMO's core budget therefore leading to under/overspends in the respective headings. The expenditure on these headings is funded by the projects' Growth Deal allocation, and this is shown in the income section.
- 5.12. There are underspends in external legal, finance and procurement, however, these are partly offset by an overspend of £75,000 in Project Business Case Development which relates to support on the Innovation and Growth Fund and the Property Fund Business Cases.

Grant Schemes

- 5.13. The expenditure under this heading includes grant funded Local Area Energy Plan and Shared Prosperity Fund project. The corresponding grants for the £202,170 expenditure are shown in the income section therefore leaving a true neutral position on this heading.

Funding Contributions

- 5.14. The main income streams for 2026/27 include partner contributions, the North Wales Growth Deal grant (revenue allocation and the funding of project staff costs and project delivery costs), Welsh Government energy grant, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the resources reserve.
- 5.15. The forecasted use of the Growth Deal grant for projects is £420,908 compared to the budget of £435,350. This is due to posts on the Growth Deal projects being vacant or filled during the financial year.

Reserves

- 5.16. Appendix 2 shows the estimated reserves balance at 31 March 2027.
- 5.17. The total earmarked reserve balance at 31 March 2026 was £210,977, with no movements expected this year.
- 5.18. The projects reserve balance at 31 March 2026 was £152,300 and there is likely to be no movements on this reserve either this year.
- 5.19. The interest reserve is ringfenced to fund the cost of borrowing in future years. Its estimated balance at 31 March 2027 is £5,218,378 and this includes the partner interest contributions of £154,090. In 2024/25 and 2025/26, interest received on the Growth Deal grant was transferred to the resources reserve; the interest received on the grant balance will revert to the interest reserve at the end of this financial year.
- 5.20. The resources reserve is used to fund the additional government requirements and project development costs, as well as to retain the Portfolio Management Office's capacity. £986,730 of this reserve has been allocated to the 2026/27 budget to give an estimated balance of £3,369,888 at 31 March 2027.

Capital

- 5.21. Appendix 3 shows the revised capital programme as at the end of July 2026.
- 5.22. There is a net reduction of £15.81m in the anticipated expenditure for 2026/27 and this is due to slippage on projects. However, the introduction of the Business Gateway project in the capital profile and the brought forward expenditure on the Reserve List projects have reduced the slippage.

Investment Zone

- 5.23. Appendix 4 provides a detailed breakdown of the Investment Zone's revenue expenditure projections per heading against its annual budget. Over the ten-year duration of the Investment Zone, a total of £6.4m is available to support the programme's administration. From this allocation, £200,000 per annum is allocated to the CJC and £220,000 each to Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council.
- 5.24. The budget for 2026/27 shows the CJC's spend of its allocation of the grant on the Investment Zone Set-Up costs, Legal (includes Monitoring Officer) Support Services and Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity headings. Since the budget were approved,

further information has become available on the forecasted spend and the additional resources required. A neutral out-turn position is forecasted for 2026/27.

Employees

- 5.25. The employees heading is showing a forecasted overspend of £69,161. The employee expenditure includes the Chief Executive, Programme Manager, Operations staff and Regional Skills Partnership staff's time on the Investment Zone. The Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity is showing a forecasted underspend of £12,850 due to reasons noted in 5.6.

External Consultants

- 5.26. The external consultants heading is forecasting an overspend of £127,253 arising from business advisory, legal and programme management support.

Supplies and Services

- 5.27. The supplies and services heading is showing an overspend of £146,600 due to expenditure on marketing and communications, events and consultancy support on project assurance and subsidy control.

Support Services

- 5.28. The support services heading is forecasting an underspend of £28,200. The underspend in legal support (with the reason noted in 5.8), is offset by £5,940 of finance services support (including the Section 151 Officer).

Set-up Costs

- 5.29. There are no costs forecasted against the set-up costs heading due to the Investment Zone being in its second year of delivery therefore the associated support costs are shown within the external consultants heading.

Income

- 5.30. The Investment Zone's expenditure for 2024/25 was £83,067 and this was initially funded by the CJC reserve. £20,662 was repaid to the reserve in 2025/26 and therefore the remaining £62,405 is to be repaid in 2026/27.
- 5.31. In order to leave a neutral position for the Investment Zone, interest from the Investment Zone grant balances of £227,589 will be used, in addition to the £200,000 grant allocation. The use of interest is a temporary arrangement as the cash outflows from distributing the Investment Zone grant will reduce the interest income.

Regional Skills Partnership

- 5.32. Appendix 5 provides an analysis of the RSP's actual expenditure and income per heading up to the end of July 2026, with a projected full year out-turn against its annual budget.

- 5.33. The projected out-turn is a neutral position, with the expenditure of £383,470 funded by Welsh Government grant of £290,000, secondment costs recharge plus a reserve of £10,000 to cover the costs of a RSP event.

Virement

- 5.34. Following the financial review and in line with the scheme of virement in the CJC's Financial Procedure Rules, the virements below are recommended to the Growth Deal and Investment Zone budgets for 2026/27, with further detail shown in Appendix 6.

5.35. Growth Deal

- Employees: £405,910 Employee Expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation) to Project Delivery – Employees.
- Legal: £18,930 Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity and £50,740 Legal (includes Monitoring Officer) Accountable Body Support Services to Joint Committee External Legal Support (therefore total of £69,670 vired).
- Grants: Income of £176,000 Welsh Government Local Energy Area Plan grant and £26,170 UK Shared Prosperity Fund with the corresponding expenditure within Grant Schemes.

5.36. Investment Zone

- Legal: £9,470 Employees: Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity, £34,140 Support Services: Legal (includes Monitoring Officer) to External Consultants: Legal (including Monitoring Officer) (therefore total of £43,610 vired).
- Set-up costs: £7,030 Employees: Employee expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation), £73,600 External Consultants: Programme Management, £69,000 Supplies and services: External Consultants from £149,630 Set-up Costs: External Consultants.

6. CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN

- 6.1 The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee in its meeting on 25 September 2026 will be asked to note and accept the projected financial position for the year as well as approving the relevant budget virements. In addition, the Growth Deal's (which also includes Shared Prosperity Fund and Local Area Energy Plan) projected out-turn position was presented to the Portfolio Board on 11 September 2026.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations in this report are to note the forecast financial position, revised capital expenditure profile and reported virements. Noting these matters does not itself authorise additional expenditure or vary existing project or funding approvals. Expenditure remains subject to the applicable approvals and funding terms.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 2026/27 Growth Deal's Revenue Budget – End of July 2026 Review

Appendix 2 Growth Deal's Reserves Position

Appendix 3 Growth Deal's Capital Profile – End of July 2026 Review

Appendix 4 2026/27 Investment Zone's Revenue Budget – End of July 2026 Review

Appendix 5 2026/27 Regional Skills Partnership's Budget – End of July 2026 Review

Appendix 6 Virements to Growth Deal and Investment Zone's 2026/27 Revenue Budgets

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The proposed budget virements require approval in accordance with the CJC's Financial Procedure Rules, hence the commentary in para 6.1. Any changes to project scope, total approved budgets, or funding agreements would require separate approval under the relevant decision-making arrangements."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

Report author.

	Base Budget	July 2026	July 2026	Estimated Final	Overspend /
			Commitments	Position	(Underspend)
Expenditure	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Portfolio Management Office					
Employee Expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	1,651,470	351,846	0	1,064,802	(586,668)
Additional Government Roles	213,540	17,756	34,774	120,000	(93,540)
External Advisor	0	1,623	4,377	6,500	6,500
Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity	32,450	0	0	6,760	(25,690)
Advertising and Assessment of Candidates	5,000	3,805	1,963	7,000	2,000
Travel and Subsistence	10,000	3,101	0	10,000	0
Training	18,000	1,627	844	15,000	(3,000)
Engagement and Meetings	15,000	11,829	132	15,000	0
Communications and Public Relations	25,000	15,478	200	25,000	0
Supplies and Services	15,000	2,317	5,956	15,000	0
Premises	32,150	7,523	0	32,150	0
Portfolio and Programme Development	30,000	1,931	29,569	50,000	20,000
Insurance	15,720	15,222	0	15,222	(498)
Systems	9,870	473	7,500	9,870	0
Total Portfolio Management Office	2,073,200	434,531	85,315	1,392,304	(680,896)
Accountable Body Support Services					
Finance Services Support	116,870	0	0	80,880	(35,990)
Legal (includes Monitoring Officer)	50,740	0	0	0	(50,740)
Democratic Support	29,430	0	0	23,470	(5,960)
Corporate Services	42,970	0	0	42,970	0
Information Technology	42,420	0	0	42,420	0
Total Accountable Body Support Services	282,430	0	0	189,740	(92,690)
Joint Committee					
External Legal Support	18,000	0	0	101,970	83,970
External Financial Fees	10,000	5,590	844	10,000	0
External Audit Fee	28,350	0	0	28,350	0
Business Delivery Board	25,000	0	0	25,000	0
Total Joint Committee	81,350	5,590	844	165,320	83,970
Projects					
Project Business Case Development	100,000	60,632	112,814	175,000	75,000
External Legal Support	150,000	33,233	26,224	100,000	(50,000)
External Finance Support	30,000	0	0	10,000	(20,000)
External Procurement Support	50,000	0	0	11,520	(38,480)
Assurance	25,000	0	0	25,000	0
Project Delivery	0	10,901	40	15,000	15,000
Project Delivery - Employees	0	124,106	69,150	405,908	405,908
Total Projects	355,000	228,872	208,228	742,428	387,428
Grant schemes					
Employee Expenditure - Local Area Energy Project	0	32,420	0	88,524	88,524
Other related costs - Local Area Energy Project	0	0	2,000	22,678	22,678
External Advisor - Local Area Energy Project	0	11,093	47,839	64,798	64,798
Employee Expenditure- Shared Prosperity Fund	0	11,351	0	11,349	11,349
Other related costs - Shared Prosperity Fund	0	681	0	679	679
Shared Prosperity Plans	0	9,600	0	14,142	14,142
Grant schemes Total	0	65,145	49,839	202,170	202,170
Transfers to reserves					
Partner interest contributions	154,090	0	0	154,090	0
Total Transfers to reserves	154,090	0	0	154,090	0
Total Expenditure	2,946,070	734,138	344,226	2,846,052	(100,018)

	Base Budget	July 2026	July 2026	Estimated Final	Overspend /
			Commitments	Position	(Underspend)
Income	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Funding Contributions					
Partner Contributions					
Conwy County Borough Council	(58,730)	(58,730)	0	(58,730)	0
Denbighshire County Council	(58,730)	(58,730)	0	(58,730)	0
Flintshire County Council	(58,730)	(58,730)	0	(58,730)	0
Cyngor Gwynedd	(58,730)	(58,730)	0	(58,730)	0
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(58,730)	(58,730)	0	(58,730)	0
Wrexham County Borough Council	(58,730)	(58,730)	0	(58,730)	0
Bangor University	(29,380)	(29,380)	0	(29,380)	0
Wrexham University	(29,380)	(29,380)	0	(29,380)	0
Coleg Cambria	(29,380)	(29,380)	0	(29,380)	0
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	(29,380)	(29,380)	0	(29,380)	0
Local Authorities' Supplementary Contributions					
Conwy County Borough Council	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Denbighshire County Council	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Flintshire County Council	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Cyngor Gwynedd	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Wrexham County Borough Council	(40,000)	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	0
Partner Interest Contributions					
Conwy County Borough Council	(18,140)	(18,140)	0	(18,140)	0
Denbighshire County Council	(6,070)	(6,070)	0	(6,070)	0
Flintshire County Council	(9,140)	(9,140)	0	(9,140)	0
Cyngor Gwynedd	(6,780)	(6,780)	0	(6,780)	0
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(28,370)	(28,370)	0	(28,370)	0
Wrexham County Borough Council	(18,970)	(18,970)	0	(18,970)	0
Bangor University	(23,270)	(23,270)	0	(23,270)	0
Wrexham University	(24,250)	(24,250)	0	(24,250)	0
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	(19,100)	(19,100)	0	(19,100)	0
Other					
North Wales Growth Deal grant	(660,000)	0	0	(660,000)	0
North Wales Growth Deal grant (Projects)	(435,350)	0	0	(420,908)	14,442
Welsh Government Energy Grant	0	(39,527)	0	(176,000)	(176,000)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	0	(5,687)	0	(26,170)	(26,170)
Arrangement Fees	0	(428)	0	(428)	(428)
Resources Reserve	(986,730)	0	0	(986,730)	0
Total Income	(2,946,070)	(909,632)	0	(3,134,226)	(188,156)
Net Overspend / (Underspend)	0	(175,494)	344,226	(288,174)	(288,174)

	£
Total earmarked reserve at 31 March 2026	(210,977)
Usage in 2026/27	0
Total earmarked reserve at 31 March 2027	(210,977)

	£
Total projects reserve at 31 March 2026	(152,300)
Usage in 2026/27	0
Total projects reserve at 31 March 2027	(152,300)

	£
Total interest reserve at 31 March 2026	(5,064,288)
2026/27 contributions	(154,090)
Total interest reserve at 31 March 2027	(5,218,378) *

	£
Total resources reserve at 31 March 2026	(4,356,618)
Usage in 2026/27	986,730
Total resources reserve at 31 March 2027	(3,369,888)

** Interest on Growth Deal balances will be added at the end of the financial year.*

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	0.00	0.43	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.96
Digital	4G+ (Connected Key Sites and Corridors)	Ambition North Wales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.19	1.92	2.35	1.57	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.17
Digital	LPWAN (Connected Campuses)	Ambition North Wales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.36	0.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.00	1.14
Digital	Advanced Wireless (Connected Campuses)	Ambition North Wales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	2.08	6.76	8.56	2.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.54
Low carbon energy	Cydnherth (Morlais)	Menter Môn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.87
Low carbon energy	Egni	Bangor University	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.94	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.94
Low carbon energy	Clean Local Energy	Ambition North Wales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.46	5.00	6.95	6.20	6.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	24.63
Low carbon energy	Holyhead Hydrogen Hub	Menter Môn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.80	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.80
Low carbon energy	Trawsfynydd Business, Innovation and Skills Centre	Cyngor Gwynedd	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.20	7.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
Land and property	Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh	NWW Ltd (Jones Bros)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	4.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.94
Land and property	Parc Bryn Cegin Strategic Site	Ambition North Wales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.29	4.10	2.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.34
Land and property	Wrexham Gateway	Wrexham County Borough Coun	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.89	4.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.79
Land and property	Gogledd Môn Sites and Premises	Anglesey Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.32	3.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.00
Land and property	Freeport Gateway	Anglesey Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.70	1.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.48
Land and property	Albert Gubay Business School	Bangor University	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.98	4.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.30
Land and property	Padeswood	TFW / Network Rail	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.40	4.30	4.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.30
Land and property	Port of Mostyn	Port of Mostyn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Centre of Environmental Biotechnology (CEB)	Bangor University	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.58	1.48	0.90	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	Wrexham University	0.00	0.00	0.75	9.06	1.30	0.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.99
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Society 5.0	Wrexham University	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	1.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.50
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Project Prince	Knauf	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.20	12.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.40
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Business Gateway	Wrexham University	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.64	5.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.24
Agri-food and tourism	Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.87	4.79	2.16	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	1.00	1.20	1.15	1.08	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	0.00	1.71	2.49	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.20
Agri-food and tourism	Venue Cymru	Conwy Borough Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.69	2.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.00
Reserve List projects	n/a	n/a	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	28.15
Cost Inflation Reserve	n/a	n/a	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.98	1.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.96
Projects Sub Total			0.12	1.66	1.12	10.64	14.46	50.60	83.67	46.10	14.29	6.00	6.17	0.02	0.00	0.00	234.85
2.15% to fund the Ambition North Wales revenue budget			0.22	0.28	0.56	0.71	0.87	0.66	0.45	0.45	0.30	0.25	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	5.15
Anticipated expenditure by 31/03			0.34	1.94	1.68	11.35	15.33	51.26	84.12	46.55	14.59	6.25	6.27	0.12	0.10	0.10	240.00
Approved budget (January 2026)			0.34	1.94	1.68	11.35	22.15	67.07	58.83	39.38	24.43	12.47	0.12	0.12	0.07	0.05	240.00
Variance			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-6.83	-15.81	25.29	7.17	-9.84	-6.22	6.15	0.00	0.03	0.05	0.00

	Total Budget	Expenditure Forecast	Forecast Overspend / (Underspend)
Expenditure	(£)	(£)	(£)
Employees			
Employee expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	0	82,011	82,011
Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity	16,230	3,380	(12,850)
Employees Total	16,230	85,391	69,161
External Consultants			
Business Advisors	0	13,000	13,000
Legal (including Monitoring Officer)	0	40,653	40,653
Programme Management	0	73,600	73,600
External Consultants Total	0	127,253	127,253
Supplies and services			
Marketing	0	70,000	70,000
Events	0	7,600	7,600
External consultants	0	69,000	69,000
Supplies and services Total	0	146,600	146,600
Support Services			
Finance Services Support (includes S151 Officer)	0	5,940	5,940
Legal (includes Monitoring Officer)	34,140	0	(34,140)
Support Services Total	34,140	5,940	(28,200)
Set-up costs			
Investment Zone	149,630	0	(149,630)
Set-up costs Total	149,630	0	(149,630)
Transfer to reserve			
Transfer to the CJC reserve	0	62,405	62,405
Total transfer to reserve	0	62,405	62,405
Total Expenditure Budget	200,000	427,589	227,589
Investment Zone	(200,000)	(200,000)	0
Interest on balances	0	(227,589)	(227,589)
Total Net Expenditure Budget	0	0	0

Regional Skills Partnership's 2026/27 Revenue Budget - July 2026 Review

Appendix 5

	Budget	July 2026	Estimated Final Position	Overspend / (Underspend)
Expenditure	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Employee Expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	270,170	71,852	270,168	(2)
Travel and Subsistence	4,000	675	4,000	0
Supplies and Services	1,000	0	1,000	0
Lightcast and Data City	12,880	0	12,880	0
Website	9,000	0	9,000	0
Consultancy	27,420	0	27,422	2
Cluster Groups allocation	5,000	0	5,000	0
Skills Portal	12,000	0	12,000	0
Events and Meetings	25,000	3,090	25,000	0
Marketing and Communications	17,000	418	17,000	0
Total Expenditure	383,470	76,035	383,470	0
Income	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Welsh Government Grant	(290,000)	0	(290,000)	0
Secondment Recharge	(83,470)	0	(83,470)	0
Earmarked Reserve	(10,000)	0	(10,000)	0
Total Income	(383,470)	0	(383,470)	0
Net Overspend / (Underspend)	0	76,035	0	0

	Base Budget	Virements	Total Budget
Expenditure	(£)	(£)	(£)
Portfolio Management Office			
Employee Expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	1,651,470	(405,910)	1,245,560
Additional Government Roles	213,540	0	213,540
Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity	32,450	(18,930)	13,520
Advertising and Assessment of Candidates	5,000	0	5,000
Travel and Subsistence	10,000	0	10,000
Training	18,000	0	18,000
Engagement and Meetings	15,000	0	15,000
Communications and Public Relations	25,000	0	25,000
Supplies and Services	15,000	0	15,000
Premises	32,150	0	32,150
Portfolio and Programme Development	30,000	0	30,000
Insurance	15,720	0	15,720
Systems	9,870	0	9,870
Total Portfolio Management Office	2,073,200	(424,840)	1,648,360
Accountable Body Support Services			
Finance Services Support	116,870	0	116,870
Legal (includes Monitoring Officer)	50,740	(50,740)	0
Democratic Support	29,430	0	29,430
Corporate Services	42,970	0	42,970
Information Technology	42,420	0	42,420
Total Accountable Body Support Services	282,430	(50,740)	231,690
Joint Committee			
External Legal Support	18,000	69,670	87,670
External Financial Fees	10,000	0	10,000
External Audit Fee	28,350	0	28,350
Business Delivery Board	25,000	0	25,000
Total Joint Committee	81,350	69,670	151,020
Projects			
Project Business Case Development	100,000	0	100,000
External Legal Support	150,000	0	150,000
External Finance Support	30,000	0	30,000
External Procurement Support	50,000	0	50,000
Assurance	25,000	0	25,000
Project Delivery - Employees	0	405,910	405,910
Total Projects	355,000	405,910	760,910
Grant schemes			
Employee Expenditure - Local Area Energy Project	0	88,520	88,520
Other related costs - Local Area Energy Project	0	22,680	22,680
External Advisor - Local Area Energy Project	0	64,800	64,800
Employee Expenditure- Shared Prosperity Fund	0	11,350	11,350
Other related costs - Shared Prosperity Fund	0	680	680
Shared Prosperity Plans	0	14,140	14,140
Grant schemes Total	0	202,170	202,170
Transfers to reserves			
Partner interest contributions	154,090	0	154,090
Total Transfers to reserves	154,090	0	154,090
Total Expenditure	2,946,070	202,170	3,148,240

	Base Budget	Virements	Total Budget
Income	(£)	(£)	(£)
Funding Contributions			
Partner Contributions			
Conwy County Borough Council	(58,730)	0	(58,730)
Denbighshire County Council	(58,730)	0	(58,730)
Flintshire County Council	(58,730)	0	(58,730)
Cyngor Gwynedd	(58,730)	0	(58,730)
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(58,730)	0	(58,730)
Wrexham County Borough Council	(58,730)	0	(58,730)
Bangor University	(29,380)	0	(29,380)
Wrexham University	(29,380)	0	(29,380)
Coleg Cambria	(29,380)	0	(29,380)
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	(29,380)	0	(29,380)
Local Authorities' Supplementary Contributions			
Conwy County Borough Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)
Denbighshire County Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)
Flintshire County Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)
Cyngor Gwynedd	(40,000)	0	(40,000)
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)
Wrexham County Borough Council	(40,000)	0	(40,000)
Partner Interest Contributions			
Conwy County Borough Council	(18,140)	0	(18,140)
Denbighshire County Council	(6,070)	0	(6,070)
Flintshire County Council	(9,140)	0	(9,140)
Cyngor Gwynedd	(6,780)	0	(6,780)
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(28,370)	0	(28,370)
Wrexham County Borough Council	(18,970)	0	(18,970)
Bangor University	(23,270)	0	(23,270)
Wrexham University	(24,250)	0	(24,250)
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	(19,100)	0	(19,100)
Other			
North Wales Growth Deal grant	(660,000)	0	(660,000)
North Wales Growth Deal grant (Projects)	(435,350)	0	(435,350)
Welsh Government Energy Grant	0	(176,000)	(176,000)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	0	(26,170)	(26,170)
Resources Reserve	(986,730)	0	(986,730)
Total Income	(2,946,070)	(202,170)	(3,148,240)
Net Overspend / (Underspend)	0	0	0

Investment Zone's 2026/27 revenue budget

Appendix 6

	Base Budget	Virements	Total Budget
Expenditure (£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Employees			
Employee expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	0	7,030	7,030
Additional Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer Capacity	16,230	(9,470)	6,760
Employees Total	16,230	(2,440)	13,790
External Consultants			
Legal (including Monitoring Officer)	0	43,610	43,610
Programme Management	0	73,600	73,600
External Consultants Total	0	117,210	117,210
Supplies and services			
External consultants	0	69,000	69,000
Supplies and services Total	0	69,000	69,000
Support Services			
Legal (includes Monitoring Officer)	34,140	(34,140)	0
Support Services Total	34,140	(34,140)	0
Set-up costs			
Investment Zone	149,630	(149,630)	0
Set-up costs Total	149,630	(149,630)	0
Total Expenditure Budget	200,000	0	200,000
Investment Zone	(200,000)	0	(200,000)
Total Net Expenditure Budget	0	0	0

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE
2nd of October 2026

TITLE: Freeport Gateway Project, Llangefni – Grant Funding Agreement
AUTHOR: David Mathews, Land and Property Programme Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval by the Economic Well-being Sub-committee to proceed to enter into the Grant Funding Agreement in relation to this project with Isle of Anglesey County Council.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee note that all outstanding actions at the point of BJC approval have now been completed or incorporated into the funding agreement and authorise the Portfolio Director to take all operational steps to enter into the Grant Funding Agreement with Isle of Anglesey County Council.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. The delegated decision authority previously provided by the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair, S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer could not be completed within the designated period due to the Vice-Chair position being vacant. Therefore, approval is sought from the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to proceed and enter into the funding agreement.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Business Justification Case for this project was approved by the Economic Well-being Sub-committee at its meeting on 3rd October 2025 subject to Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process undertaken.
- 4.2 At the same meeting, the sub-Committee delegated the power to the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Section 151 and Monitoring officer, to confirm the final costs and benefits post procurement are in line with the approved business case and enter into a funding agreement with Isle of Anglesey County Council for the delivery of the project, subject to Isle of Anglesey County Council addressing the outstanding issues set out in the report and securing all necessary internal approvals for the project.
- 4.3 This delegated authorisation was valid for an initial period of six months, whereupon it was subject to review. The authorisation has since been renewed and review dates extended by the sub-Committee on 15th May 2026 (to 1st July 2026) and on 17th July 2026 (to 1st October 2026).

- 4.4 However, due to the absence of a Vice Chair, the Portfolio Director was unable to proceed with the delegated authorisation within the validity period.
- 4.5 It should be noted that Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process has been completed, and the Isle of Anglesey County Council have addressed the outstanding issues as set out in section 4.6. In addition, a final form of Grant Funding Agreement has now been agreed with the Isle of Anglesey County Council and a Subsidy Control Assessment has been settled with the support of external legal advisors to support the project.
- 4.6 The following table provides a summary of the PMO assessment of BJC+ outstanding matters and their current status:

	Summary of PMO Assessment	Outstanding matters at BJC+ approval	Status of outstanding matters
<i>Strategic Case</i>	The BJC+ presents a well written and clear Strategic Case. There are no significant gaps, and a clear case for change is set out.	All matters have been addressed.	No further action.
<i>Economic Case</i>	There is the general approach to the place-based economic appraisal is sound, demonstrating an appropriate use of economic appraisal principles and relevant guidance, including HM Treasury's Green Book.	All matters have been addressed.	No further action
<i>Commercial Case</i>	The PMO's Procurement Manager provided comments about the Procurement timetable covering the Christmas period, raised what meet the buyer events have been undertaken if any and mentioned which KPI's would be used for social and environmental outcomes.	Procurement to be completed in line with approach set out in BJC with successful bidder appointed. Confirmation of final subsidy control position. Confirmation of the Council's Heads of Terms to purchase the Peboc site.	Procurement completed for PEBOC site and main contractor appointed. Main contractor to be appointed for Plot 2 Tregarnedd by end of Sept 2026. Subsidy assessment to be registered on the database on signing of the Grant Funding Agreement. Purchase of site completed.
<i>Financial Case</i>	Clarity on inflation assumptions, contingencies, VAT and Freeport Seed Capital Funding status.	All matters have been addressed.	No further action.
<i>Management Case</i>	N/A	N/A	No further action.
<i>Appendices</i>	Completion before BJC+ sign off: Subsidy Control Position	By Sub-Committee: Subsidy Control Position	Position agreed and assessment to be registered.

	Benefit Management Plan		
	The following appendices are available for the project: • Carbon and Biodiversity Assessment • Project Plan • Communication Plan • Integrated Impact Assessment • Risk Register • Draft Benefits Plan, Register and Logic Model	Final Benefits Management Plan and Realisation Plan Post Sub-Committee: IoACC Procurement Outcome Update report IoACC to complete purchase of the Peboc site IoACC completion of MoU for Freeport Seed Capital Funding	Final Benefits Management Plan and Realisation Plan agreed by IoACC. See comments above re Commercial Case. Purchase completed. MoU completed.

- 4.7 The Sub-Committee is requested to authorise the Portfolio Director to take all operational steps to enter into the Grant Funding Agreement with Isle of Anglesey County Council.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The form of Grant Funding Agreement has been agreed with Isle of Anglesey County Council and all outstanding items in Section 7 of the October 2025 BJC covering report have been addressed for the approval of the Business Justification Case by the Sub-Committee in October 2025.
- 5.2 Ambition North Wales is recommending that the Sub-Committee confirms that the Portfolio Director is authorised to take all necessary operational steps to proceed with and enter into the Grant Funding Agreement with Isle of Anglesey County Council.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no financial implications arising from this decision, the Main Contractor for the former Peboc site has been appointed by the Council and has commenced works on site.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. . The effect of the decision sought is to give fresh authority for the Grant Funding Agreement to be entered into following expiry of the previous delegated authority. Once completed, the Agreement will create binding contractual obligations and funding conditions between the parties. The report records that the subsidy control assessment has been settled, with the required registration to follow on signing. Legal implications are otherwise limited.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 8.1. An integrated impact assessment was undertaken at Business Justification Case approval 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.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS *(available on request)*

- Freeport Gateway Project – BJC+
 - BJC+ Appendices
 - Report to Request to extend Validity Period for three Land and Property Programme Projects (15/05/2026)
 - Freeport Gateway Project - Request to extend validity period report (17/07/2026)
-

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. **Monitoring Officer:**

“The report appropriately brings the matter back to the Sub-Committee for approval following expiry of the previous delegated authority. The decision sought provides sufficient authority for the Portfolio Director to proceed with completion of the Grant Funding Agreement.”

ii. **Statutory Finance Officer:**

“The Business Justification Case has been the subject of a detailed review and from a financial perspective I am satisfied that the necessary steps have been taken to ensure that risks are managed to an appropriate level. I have no objections to the decision sought.”



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

2nd October 2026

TITLE: LPWAN project Deployment Plans

AUTHOR: Stuart Whitfield, Digital Programme Manager

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To present details of the Deployment Plans in respect of the LPWAN project for consideration by the Economic Well-being Sub-committee.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Sub-Committee approve the release of funding for the Deployment Plans set out in section 4.10 of the report in respect of the LPWAN project and authorise the Portfolio Director to take all operational steps to enter into the Grant Funding Agreements with the relevant local authorities.
- 2.2. That the Sub-Committee approve the retention of the underspend set out in section 5.1 within the project budget for a period of 12 months to allow further Deployment Plans to be developed with the local authorities and to delegate approval of these plans to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. To seek the Sub-Committee's approval of the Deployment Plans in respect of the LPWAN project. The previous delegated authority to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Lead Member for Digital and the Programme Board cannot be completed due to a vacancy in the Lead Member role.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. The LPWAN Business Justification Case was approved by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board on the 19th July 2024 on the basis that the individual Deployment Plans for each local authority would be approved by delegated decision.
- 4.2. Following approval of the Business Justification Case in 2024, further background to the project is provided as an appendix to this report (Appendix 1). The project involves capital funding being allocated to five of the region's councils to enable the expansion of 'LoRaWAN' network coverage and deployment of LoRaWAN devices which can enable improved delivery across a wide range of public services. The coverage (provided by 'gateways' installed on public buildings, often schools in rural areas) is also accessible to the private sector and will enable trialling and innovation for businesses wishing to investigate the benefits of this relatively affordable and versatile wireless technology. Alongside the installation of LoRaWAN gateways

and providing network coverage the councils will also support activities to promote LoRaWAN to the wider private sector to encourage adoption beyond the public sector. Where businesses see value in the technology from trialling it they may wish to invest in their own network coverage which is considered to be a cost effective means of supporting 'Internet of Things' (or IoT) applications with an expanding range of business applications for many industries.

- 4.3. Since approval of the original Business Justification Case
- Gateway distribution mapping has been undertaken to identify locations for gateways to be installed in all counties
 - Ambition North Wales has procured a supply framework for all participating councils to purchase LoRaWAN gateways from
 - Deployment Plans have been developed by five of the region's council following internal service level engagement.
- 4.4. Isle of Anglesey Council has chosen not to pursue LoRaWAN deployment at this time, however the council will remain engaged with the project to ensure that the knowledge developed regionally is shared to inform and future considerations of the use of the technology.
- 4.5. Outstanding actions as Business Justification Stage have been addressed:

	Summary of PMO Assessment	Outstanding issues
Economic Case	• Benefits to be reviewed, practicality of benefits assessment / quantification to be considered	• Benefits profiles to at county level to be confirmed within Local Deployment Plans as condition of funding COMPLETE • Final PMO review incl. Hatch review. COMPLETE
Commercial Case	• Review commercial approach, councils' understanding of implications • Sequencing of procurement to be made clearer	• Undertake initial mapping / network design prior to confirming affordability of core/desirable/optional scopes COMPLETE • Final PMO review COMPLETE
Financial Case	• Review cost assumptions; network design, gateway purchase, network management costs	• Confirm capital budget following initial network design COMPLETE • Councils to confirm affordability of delivery resourcing for gateway operation and demand stimulation activities, to be confirmed in Local Deployment Plans. COMPLETE • Section 151 Officer to review COMPLETE
Management Case	• Review project management and delivery resource requirements • Update risk register	• Confirm resourcing arrangements for project manager. Consult councils on secondment opportunity or recruit externally COMPLETE • Update risk register before Economic Ambition Board review

	• Update Benefits Realisation Plan • Confirm evaluation requirements	COMPLETE • Update Benefits Realisation Plan before Economic Ambition Board review COMPLETE • Grant Funding agreement for councils drafted, councils to review COMPLETE
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- 4.6. The individual equipment deployment plans are summarised in the table below, consisting of the number of gateways and sensors, deployment schedules and promotional activities.

The project has four spending objectives

- To deliver affordable and simple to use LPWAN connectivity to in North Wales by 2027, enabling efficiencies across public services and supporting innovation in the private and public sectors
 - To support the adoption of 10-20 new applications of LPWAN technology across the public and private sectors in the region by 2032
 - To support between £0.1m-£0.5m investment in the region by 2032
 - To support the creation of 20 jobs in the region by 2032
- 4.7. The Deployment Plans demonstrate contributions to these with the investment and job creation expected to be delivered indirectly between 2027-2032.
- 4.8. The proposed direct benefits to be realised within each county are summarised below. Indirect benefits will be associated with use of the network by the private sector and other public sector users not directly involved in the project. These benefits will not be readily identifiable and therefore the value for money appraisal for the project will focus solely on those benefits which can be readily identified.
- 4.9. While the Deployment Plans detail a reduced number of gateways to be deployed initially (137) compared to the originally anticipated 250, the overall benefits compare favourably with the lower value of capital investment proposed with a Benefit Cost Ratio now presented as 2.79 compared to the original assessment of 2.46.
- 4.10. The underspend of £691,233 is recommended to be remain available to Local Authorities to draw down over the course of the project to further enhance gateway coverage and applications as new demand for LoRaWAN from within services is identified and confirmed. The process of engaging council services to promote the opportunities LoRaWAN presents in supporting service delivery is ongoing and interest continues to grow as that awareness increases, particularly through engagement between councils demonstrating common themes. In further extending gateway coverage the project will provide wider LoRaWAN coverage for use by the private sector.

	Total costs	Total Benefits (6 years)	Benefit / Cost ratio
2026 Deployment Plans	£449,619	£1,255,545	2.79
2024 Business Justification Case	£1,140,852	£2,816,268	2.46

Details and benefits of public services applications supported in Deployment Plans

Benefit values are provided by each Council which have estimated a range of identified cost savings, including reduced labour costs, replacing existing more expensive systems and reductions in other costs such as avoided repairs, travel time, energy savings etc. Some applications have been identified within several councils, such as flood risk monitoring and ongoing engagement within and between councils continues to identify further applications of potential benefit.

	Application	Description	
Denbighshire County Council	School leaks	Leak detection across schools estate	
	Footfall	System replacement cost saving	
	Dark skies	Automation of currently manual task	
	Council nursery	Automation of monitoring of irrigation levels	
	Footfall	System replacement cost saving	
	Flood risk	Automation of flood level monitoring at culverts	
	Grit bins	Automation of grit bin monitoring	
	Solar power monitoring	Solar Panel Power monitoring	
	Archives	Humidity monitoring in museums	
	Education	Real time monitoring of refrigeration and safety monitoring	
	Footfall	System replacement cost saving	
	Total Benefits (£)		£ 389,283
Flintshire County Council	Flood risk	Automation of flood level monitoring	
	Watering	Tree mortality reduction	
	Water flow monitoring	Leak detection	
	Total Benefits (£)		£ 287,046
Cyngor Gwynedd	Bin monitoring	Reduce waste collections	
	Storm damage	Reduce visits to post storm sites	
	Flood modelling	To predict flooding	
	Vape detection	Detection of vaping	
	Cold homes	To identify damp and mould	
	Total Benefits (£)		£ 351,936
Wrexham County Borough Council	Winter roads maintenance	Road temperature monitoring for savings on gritting	
	Flood risk	Remote monitoring of high-risk sites	
	Total Benefits (£)		£ 81,000
Conwy County Borough Council	Flood risk	Remote monitoring of high-risk sites	
	Soil moisture	Remote monitoring of soil moisture in Lloyd Street Llandudno	
	Network resilience	Enhanced connectivity resilience supporting flood risk monitoring in Conwy valley	
	Flood risk	Water level sensors for manhole covers and restricted access to culverts	
	Water Temperature	Hot water supply monitoring for schools	
	Total Benefits (£)		£ 146,280
	Total Regional Benefits (£)		£ 1,255,545

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Since Business Case approval the main financial matter regards the proposed underspend compared to the original capital budget allocated for the project. A combination of (i) reduced initial council demand for gateways (ii) decision by Isle of Anglesey Council not to submit a Deployment Plan for this round of funding and (iii) lower than expected cost of gateways following a successful framework procurement has led to a reduced capital budget requirement. However, councils have indicated that as internal engagement continues the demand for new gateways and devices will continue. It is therefore proposed that the forecast underspend from current Deployment Plans is reserved to supplement councils' plans over the course of the project, with individual requests for additional funding made directly to Ambition North Wales and approved by the Portfolio Director where the costs meet the minimum value for money threshold of the original Business Justification Case.

Summary of capital costs by local authority (Deployment Plans 2026)

Local Authority	Gateways		Sensors/Devices		Labour (installation)		Total
	No.	£	No	£	Officer	Contractor	
Denbighshire	36	£ 15,453	18	£ 25,059	£ 8,301	£ 23,560	£ 72,373
Gwynedd	30	£ 12,199	16	£ 36,667	£ 2,400	£ 30,000	£ 81,266
Flintshire	31	£ 15,599	56	£ 9,962	£ 3,720	£ 31,000	£ 60,281
Wrexham	25	£ 9,173	10	£ 27,800	£ 2,500	£ 23,000	£ 62,473
Conwy	15	£ 6,825	10	£ 17,300	£ 2,250	£ 2,250	£ 28,625
Total	137	£ 59,249	52	£ 116,787	£ 19,171	£ 109,810	£ 305,018
		Fixed assets £ 176,036			Gateway installation £128,981		

Capital costs in LPWAN Business Justification Case (2024) and Deployment Plans (2026)

Item	BJC Planned Spend	Deployment Plans Spend	Variance
Fixed assets (Gateways, sensors and connection)	£578,750	£176,036	£402,714
Gateway installation (capitalised costs)	£405,000	£128,981	£276,019
Gateway mapping	£20,000	£7,500	£12,500
Other Capital item (equipment renewal)	£43,750	£43,750	£0
Capitalised Staff costs (ANW, project mgt.)	£93,352	£93,352	£0
Total	£1,140,852	£449,619	£691,233

- 5.2 Subject to the approval of the recommendations in this report, the underspend of £691,233 would be retained within the project budget for 12 months to allow the development and agreement of further Deployment Plans with the six local authorities. The use of any remaining underspend at the end of this 12-month period would be a matter for the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to determine.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Approval of the recommendations will authorise the release of Growth Deal funding for the current Deployment Plans and enable the CJC to enter into Grant Funding Agreements with the participating local authorities. It will also delegate approval of further Deployment Plans to the Portfolio Director following the specified consultations. A subsidy control assessment has been undertaken and has concluded that the arrangements constitute no subsidy

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 7.1. No further changes are identified to the impact assessment undertaken at the Business Justification Case approval stage.

Background documents (available upon request):

Summary of Deployment Plans
Cyngor Gwynedd Deployment Plan
Wrexham County Borough Council Deployment Plan
Conwy County Borough Council Deployment Plan
Flintshire County Council Deployment Plan
Denbighshire County Council Deployment Plan
LPWAN Business Justification Case (July 2024)

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1	Background to the LPWAN Project
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STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"I am satisfied that the recommendations provide an appropriate basis for approving the current Deployment Plans and for the controlled use of the remaining project budget for further Deployment Plans."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"On the basis of the information provided in this report, I have no objections to the decisions sought."

Appendix 1

Background to the LPWAN project

The Digital Programme identified a need for investment in LPWAN (Low Power Wide Area Networks) in the Programme Business Case in 2020, initially as an intervention with a rural focus. The project is within the Portfolio which was approved by UK and Welsh Governments in the North Wales Growth Deal. This is a project to deliver digital infrastructure alongside the 4G+ project (mobile networks) and the Advanced Wireless project (wireless technologies such as 5G). The LPWAN project sits within the overall Connected Campuses project alongside Advanced Wireless.

LPWAN is a broad set of technologies which support 'Internet of Things' (IoT) applications and several options are adopted globally to support economic activity across many industries. In the UK LPWAN is increasingly being adopted to serve users who have a requirement for remote monitoring of assets and environments in a cost effective way, which would otherwise be unaffordable. The technology allows greater capacity for the collection and monitoring of data and enables significant improvements in business efficiency and productivity when used appropriately.

In North Wales the main LPWAN technology type being used widely by the public sector is LoRaWAN (Long Range Wide Area Networks), particularly by councils. Some councils have developed a strong familiarity with the technology and the opportunities it presents, others are at an earlier stage of adoption.

Wrexham County Borough Council has invested in LoRaWAN coverage in recent years, trialling various applications, most recently enhancing its flood risk monitoring. Conwy County Borough Council has trialled a broad range of applications including flood risk monitoring, in-building environmental conditions and the remote monitoring of refrigeration, for example. Cyngor Gwynedd has also established the use of LoRaWAN for flood risk monitoring and cites the technology in its corporate Digital Strategy. The social landlord Adra has deployed LoRaWAN sensors extensively across its estate to support the monitoring of conditions in its properties. Denbighshire and Flintshire councils have also adopted the technology and have identified wider applications which can further support service delivery.

In the private sector the use of LPWAN is more difficult to quantify however larger organisations with widely distributed assets, such as utilities companies commonly use forms of LPWAN for remote monitoring of assets and communities of SMEs in the region continue to develop interest in adoption. Welsh Government has sponsored several initiatives in recent years to promote IoT and particularly LoRaWAN, with initiatives including agriculture (through Farming Connect) and town centres (through Smart Towns, delivered by Menter Môn). Welsh Government has also funded councils to deploy LoRaWAN networks across Wales, including in North Wales, establishing coverage around some key areas of interest. In 2025 Ambition North Wales led a Shared property Fund project providing support to 16 farm enterprises

across the region, involving the trialling on the technology to improve farm operations. This project led to positive outcomes identified in different types of farms with many of those participating deciding to continue or enhance the use of LoRaWan further due to the benefits realised in the trials (see for further details [Smart Agriculture IoT Trials - Farmer Profiles - Mentera](#))

The LoRaWAN coverage currently maintained by the councils provides 'open access' to other users, supporting trialling and innovation of use cases in any industry. This is an accessible route for businesses to test and understand how this form of IoT can provide benefits. Access to the network is limited by coverage and providing extended coverage will enable a greater range of potential users to innovate, particularly in rural areas which currently have the least coverage. A relevant and established example of a similar approach taken by the public sector is in Cambridgeshire [LoRa - Connecting Cambridgeshire](#).

LPWAN is used to support and enhance service delivery and in doing so can support productivity and growth. The adoption of the technology requires skills and staffing resources and demand for these develops as demand from users increases. Job creation is therefore to be expected as a consequence of wider adoption, with additional ICT staff, data analysts and maintenance roles. Where the use of LPWAN supports business growth a general expansion of the workforce is expected.



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

2nd October 2026

TITLE: Home Adoption of Renewables Programme (HARP)

AUTHOR: Meghan Davies, Energy and Net Zero Programme Manager

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To seek endorsement from the Economic Well-Being Sub-Committee for the development of the Home Adoption of Renewables Programme (HARP) across North Wales and approval to proceed with the required procurement activity.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Sub-Committee endorses the development of the Home Adoption of Renewables Programme (HARP) for North Wales.
- 2.2. That the Sub-Committee authorises Ambition North Wales to lead the procurement activity to appoint a supplier on behalf of participating local authorities and to delegate to the Portfolio Director to undertake the necessary operational steps to complete this activity.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. The decision to progress with the Home Adoption of Renewables Programme is required to allow Ambition North Wales to procure a supplier to deliver the programme in North Wales.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The Project

- 4.1.1. The programme seeks to deliver a coordinated regional approach to household renewable energy deployment through targeted resident engagement, aggregated demand and competitive procurement. The programme is expected to support the deployment of technologies such as solar PV systems, battery energy storage systems and other domestic renewable energy technologies.
- 4.1.2. It will deliver local and regional actions set out in the Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) for each of the North Wales Local Authorities which detail targets for heat pump, EV charger and solar PV installations, as well as local energy generation and decarbonisation goals. It also contributes to national decarbonisation targets including the 2050 net zero target set by Welsh Government.

- 4.1.3. In order to achieve the targets set out in the LAEPs, the 'lowest hanging fruit' should be prioritised where possible, allowing time for more complex, longer term actions to be planned and delivered. The programme therefore targets the able to pay demographic in a direct mailout as the primary users of the scheme, although the programme is open to anyone resident in participating authorities. Whilst the able-to-pay are the primary target demographic, the programme does not prevent the use of grants to pay for some or all of the installations.
- 4.1.4. Similar schemes which are, or have been, available include:
- Iterations of the ECO scheme, most recently ECO4, which was open to vulnerable and low-income households provide energy efficiency measures such as insulation, new heating systems and updated glazing.
 - Warm Homes Nest scheme which provides advice and free home energy improvements to vulnerable and low-income households.
 - The Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) grant which provides a grant to all eligible residents wanting to upgrade a gas or oil-powered boiler to an air source heat pump, ground source heat pump or biomass boiler (restrictions apply for the biomass boiler).
 - Optimised RetroFit Programme which provides support to registered social landlords to decarbonise social housing.
- 4.1.5. With the exception of the Boiler Upgrade Scheme grant (which has restrictions on heating type eligibility and technology), none of the schemes are available to the primary targets of the programme. The programme will not subsidise the cost of the installations directly but, through the reverse auction process, will offer competitive prices for all taking part in the scheme. In addition, households that meet relevant eligibility criteria may be able to access funding support through the schemes above. For example, Warm Wales enable some vulnerable and low-income residents to receive partial or fully funded energy efficiency and low carbon technology installations, helping to broaden access to the programme.
- 4.1.6. The initial phase is expected to include direct mailout to over 100,000 households across North Wales who fall into the 'able-to-pay' demographic (as described by data from Experian). Examples from other regions, such as Cardiff Capital Region, have confirmed that the use of physical mailouts is still an effective form of advertising such schemes. In addition, participating local authorities will market the scheme as they see fit, including via social media and to harder to reach areas and residents, including those in rural areas. Through aiming to advertise it to as many residents as possible the potential impact of the programme in North Wales will be maximised.
- 4.1.7. Whilst the primary focus of the programme is the domestic sector, the intention is that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and community centres will also be able to participate in the programme where appropriate. However, the initial resident engagement and marketing campaign will focus on households and therefore these organisations will not form part of the targeted regional mailout.
- 4.1.8. To cover the cost of the mailout, participating Local Authorities are asked to pay a small fee between £4,500 – £10,500 depending on the number of qualifying houses in the Local Authority (for further details see Annex A). The Local Authority will then receive approximately £82.50 back from the supplier for every house that signs up to and pays for an installation. From anecdotal evidence received from Cardiff Capital Region, the majority of Local Authorities in their region, when undertaking a similar scheme, broke even or made a small profit on this.

- 4.1.9. In order to encourage residents to sign up to the scheme, the programme proposes to offer them a reduced price for the installation as the result of buying as part of a group scheme relative to if they pursued an installation by themselves in the open market. To achieve this, the programme proposes to utilise a reverse auction model, enabling accredited suppliers to compete for aggregated installation opportunities across the region. This incentivises installers to offer lower prices per installation which is then passed on to the resident.
- 4.1.10. From Cardiff Capital Region's experience with their similar scheme, the installers which were successful in tendering in the reverse auction were all local to the South Wales region. Their close proximity to the work, as well as familiarity with the area, meant they were able to offer competitive rates relative to installers located outside Wales. In addition, the grouping of the work created an additional 40 new jobs in the region which we hope to replicate as part of the programme in North Wales. Through supporting the increase in installer jobs, the programme will also improve related supply resilience with each installer bringing their own supply chain to support the project, such as the provision of scaffolding.
- 4.1.11. The programme is a strategic Ambition North Wales project and does not form part of the North Wales Growth Deal. The officer time is funded and resourced through the Regional Strategic Energy Funding from Welsh Government to Ambition North Wales. A similar scheme has already been undertaken for the past two years in Cardiff Capital Region and work is progressing from the South West CJC and Growing Mid Wales. Ambition North Wales has been in contact with SPEN to advise them of the planned project. SPEN have raised no objections to the additional approximate 1.4MW generation which could be added to the grid across North Wales as a result of the project and are generally supportive of improving flexibility of supply in the region.
- 4.1.12. Participation in the programme was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding between Ambition North Wales and each local authority.

Local Authority	MoU
Isle of Anglesey Council	17/09/2026
Cyngor Gwynedd	26/08/2026
Conwy County Borough Council	18/09/2026
Denbighshire County Council	25/09/2026
Flintshire County Council	27/08/2026
Wrexham County Borough Council	28/08/2026

- 4.1.13 Welsh Government are supportive of the project and have stated 'Welsh Government supports the proposal as it is directly in line with the delivery of Local Area Energy Plans and recognises the role of local authorities as place-makers with a wider role in enabling others to deliver on these plans. The programme contributes to our policy on increasing renewables in local ownership, putting more control over energy into the hands of Welsh citizens. It also closely aligns with our policy on economic development, where delivery maximises the use of Welsh installers, creating good jobs with local companies.'

4.2. Programme Timelines

Activity	Target Dates
Local Authority Engagement	May - July
Local Authority Endorsement (MoUs)	August - September
Market engagement notice	September
Public Procurement Notice (PPN)	September - October
Tender process and supplier procurement (if required following PPN and market engagement)	October - November
Agreement of Service Level Agreement (SLA)	November
Project kick off	November/December

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The home adoption of renewables programme work stream is undertaken through the Strategic Energy work funded by Welsh Government. This funding supports officer time to develop and run the scheme. There is no financial commitment from Ambition North Wales.
- 5.2. Participating Local Authorities are asked to pay a fee between £4,500 – £10,500 depending on the number of qualifying houses in the Local Authority (for further details see Annex A).
- 5.3. The Local Authority will receive approximately £82.50 back from the supplier for every house that signs up to and pays for an installation.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. A MoU has been signed with all six local authorities.
- 6.2. A Service Level Agreement has been drafted and is ready to distribute if the scheme is approved.
- 6.3. Ambition North Wales will undertake the procurement for the scheme and manage the delivery through the successful supplier.

The principal legal effect of the decision is to authorise progression of the programme into procurement and the subsequent contractual arrangements required to deliver the programme. The procurement must be undertaken in accordance with the applicable procurement legislation and the CJC's Contract Procedure Rules. The contractual arrangements must appropriately reflect the parties' respective responsibilities and liabilities.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT (*Available upon request*) :

Home adoption of renewables programme Memorandum of Understanding

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

“I have no objection to the decisions sought. Appropriate procurement, contractual and data protection arrangements should be confirmed as part of implementation of the programme.”

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

“A financial contribution is not expected from Ambition North Wales towards this programme and I have no objections to the decision sought.”



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

2nd October, 2026

TITLE: North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) Annual Report 2025-26

AUTHOR: Cath Morris-Roberts, Interim Regional Skills Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the North Wales RSP Annual Report for 2025-26.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Sub-Committee consider and endorse the Annual Report for 2025–26, noting that it has already been endorsed by the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Board.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. As stated in the report.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. The Annual Report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership during 2025-26 to support skills development, workforce planning and employability across North Wales. The report highlights how the Partnership has worked with employers including SME's, training providers, education institutions, Welsh Government, Medr and regional partners to ensure that skills provision aligns with current and future labour market demand and regional economic priorities.

- 4.2. The report sets out progress against the Partnership's three strategic priorities: Enabling and Empowering Employers; Enabling and Empowering Individuals; and Improving How Support is Provided and Making Connections. Key achievements during the year include:

- Development of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone Skills Strategy and the development of the Investment Zone Skills Programme which led to the approval of £12 million of investment for skills projects at Coleg Cambria and Wrexham University.
- Providing labour market intelligence and workforce planning support for the North Wales Growth Deal projects and other major regional infrastructure developments.
- Enhanced engagement with employers, including SME's across North Wales through sector cluster groups, business events, workforce planning activity and the North Wales Skills Portal, helping to inform regional skills planning and future workforce development.
- Delivered the North Wales Net Zero Delivery Plan by contributing to the development of a regional Clean Energy Skills Action Plan, leading skills activity across renewable energy, offshore wind, hydrogen, carbon capture, green construction and nuclear sector, and

supporting regional engagement through the Renewable Growth Conference, Renewable Energy Roundtable and HyNet Supply Chain Summit.

- Further development of the North Wales Skills Portal, which attracted over 11,000 new users during the year and continued to provide access to careers information, training opportunities, apprenticeship vacancies and labour market intelligence.
- Developed Digital Skills Pathway Toolkits for employers and individuals to improve awareness of digital skills provision and progression routes.
- Supported inclusive employment initiatives through collaboration with HMP Berwyn, Connect to Work, Together North Wales and other employability programmes.
- Produced the Youth Insights Report to inform future communications, skills promotion and careers activity aimed at young people.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from approving the decision sought in this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The legal implications are limited. The Sub-Committee is being asked to consider and endorse the Regional Skills Partnership Annual Report for 2025–26. Endorsement of the Annual Report does not itself create any new financial, contractual or other legal commitment.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Annual Report 2025-26

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. **Monitoring Officer:**

“The recommendation is consistent with the Sub-Committee’s role in considering the work of the Regional Skills Partnership. I have no objection to the decision sought.”

ii. **Statutory Finance Officer:**

"No comments from the perspective of financial propriety."



Partneriaeth Sgiliau Rhanbarthol
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Regional Skills Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT

2025/26

rspnorth.wales

MAE'R DDOGFEN HON AR GAEL YN GYMRAEG HEFYD.
THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN WELSH.



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- 02. Who are the North Wales RSP?
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- 06. Priority 3: How Support is Provided and Making Connections
- 07. Campaigns. Communications and Raising Awareness
- 08. Employer Cluster Groups and Sub-groups
- 09. Looking Ahead: 2026-27
- 10. Contact the Team

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the 2025/26 Annual Report of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP).

This has been a significant year for North Wales. As a region, we continue to witness major investment opportunities that have the potential to transform our economy, create high-quality employment and strengthen the prosperity of our communities for generations to come. Key highlights this year have included important progress on the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, alongside the continued development of the North Wales Skills Portal as a central tool for connecting people, employers and providers with skills, training and employment opportunities across the region.

The continued delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal, progress towards clean energy ambitions and emerging opportunities linked to tidal energy, nuclear energy and offshore renewables all demonstrate the scale of opportunity ahead.

Throughout the year, the Regional Skills Partnership has worked to ensure that skills and workforce development remain central to these opportunities. Through close collaboration with employers, education providers, Welsh Government, Medr and regional partners, we have continued to align skills provision with economic priorities and emerging workforce needs.

A particular focus during the year has been supporting the region's growing Net Zero ambitions. Following an enhanced remit from Welsh Government, the North Wales RSP has strengthened its work around renewable energy, green construction, clean energy workforce planning and emerging nuclear opportunities, helping to ensure North Wales is well positioned to respond to future demand.

David Roberts

Chair of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership



Who are the North Wales RSP?

About the North Wales RSP

The North Wales RSP brings employers, training providers, and local stakeholders together to understand and respond to the region's skills needs. The RSP's have been doing this for over 10 years with real impact, creating a workforce that's prepared for growth across priority sectors.

The North Wales RSP is one of four partnerships across Wales. The team operates within the structure of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (Ambition North Wales), placing the partnership in a strong position to deliver outcomes that reflect the needs of the regional economy. This structure enables collaborative working across sectors and local authorities, ensuring that skills development is integrated into major investment programmes, including the North Wales Growth Deal, the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, and the Anglesey Freeport.

Extensive employer networks give the RSP access to real-time insight, enabling them to promote training that reflects genuine business needs. Working closely with employers as trusted partners, the RSP helps shape post-16 provision using robust data and labour market intelligence. Supported by strong regional networks, the partnership also advises the Welsh Government, regional investment programmes, local decision-makers, and training providers to help ensure that provision reflects current and future workforce demand.

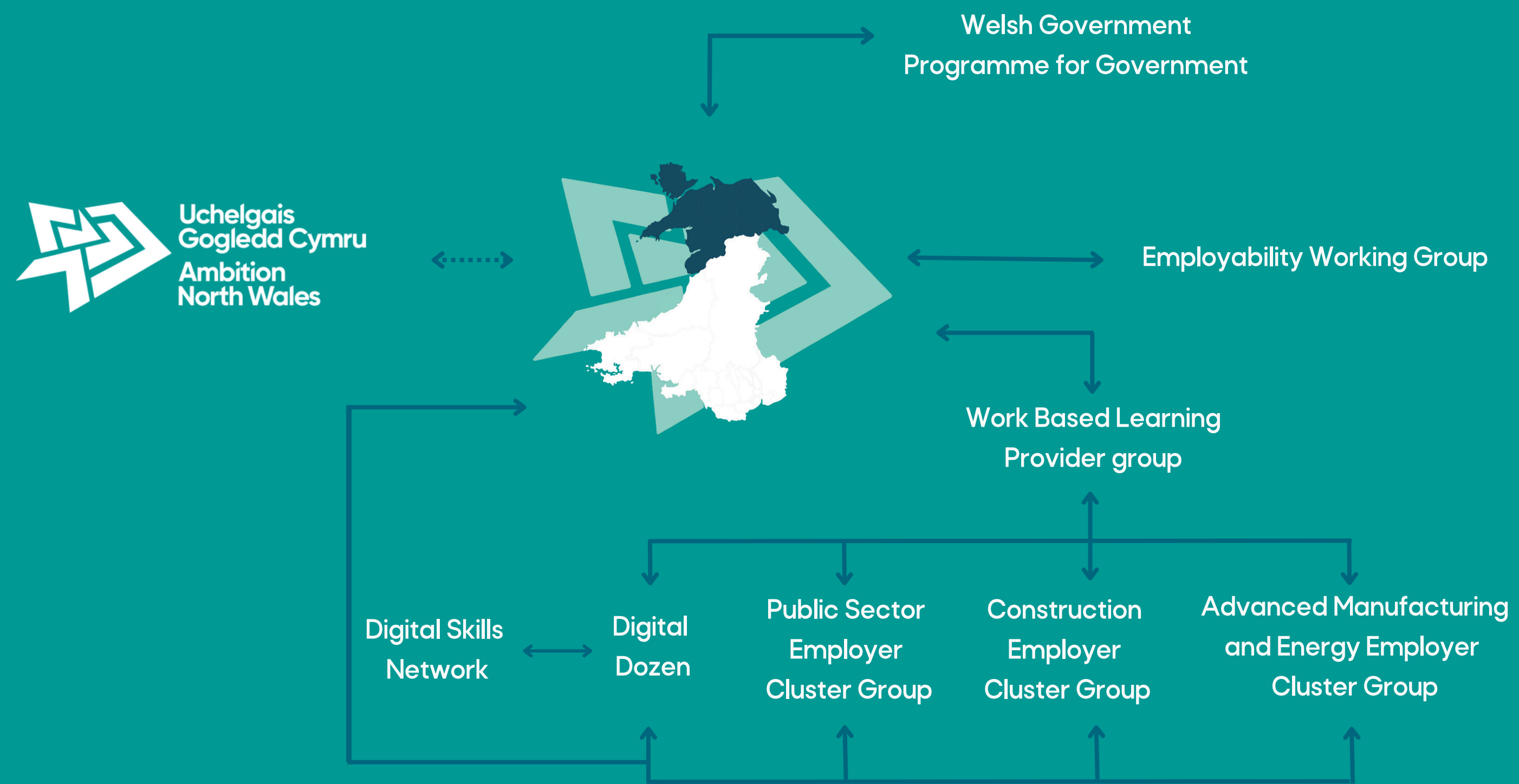
Governance and membership

Feeding into the RSP Board, there are six sub-group / clusters. These include:

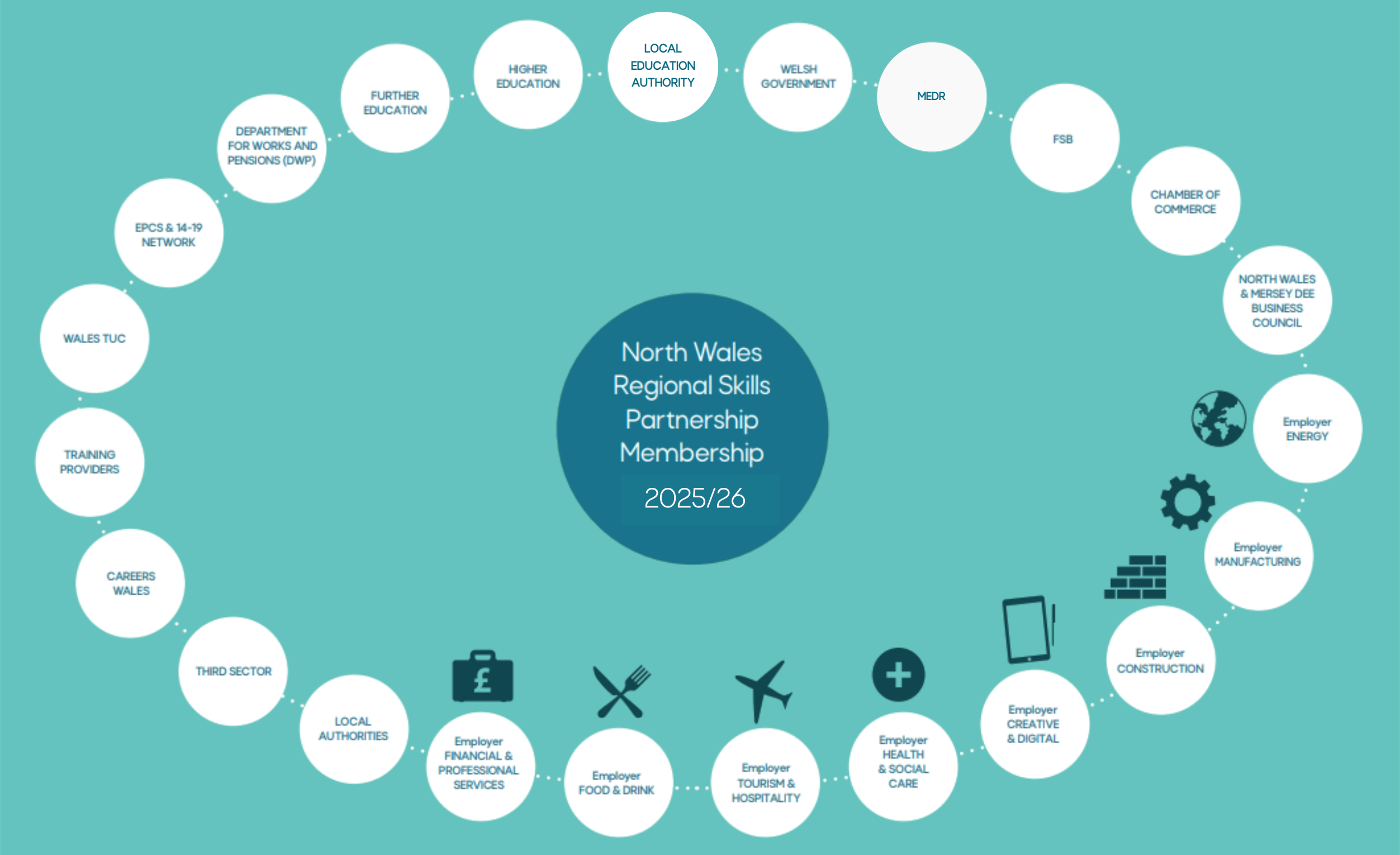
- 01 **Employability Working Group**
- 02 **Work-based Learning Provider Group**
- 03 **Digital Skills Network (and the Digital Dozen)**
- 04 **Construction Employer Cluster Group**
- 05 **Public Sector Employer Cluster Group**
- 06 **Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group**

These networks are made up of training providers, employability providers and employers, from SMEs to large enterprises. The purpose of these network is to bring people together to share their challenges and best practice, and to strengthen collaborations across the region.

North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Structure



North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Membership



Our Priorities

01

Priority 1: Enabling and Empowering Employers

This priority focuses on understanding employer needs and supporting businesses to access the skills, talent and workforce solutions required for regional growth.

02

Priority 2: Enabling and Empowering Individuals

This priority supports people across North Wales to understand opportunities, overcome barriers and develop the skills needed to progress into learning, work and future careers

03

Priority 3: How Support is Provided and Making Connections

This priority strengthens collaboration between partners, providers and employers so that support is easier to access, better connected and aligned to regional priorities.

Priority 1: Enabling and Empowering Employers

Employer Engagement and Labour Market Intelligence

Employer engagement remained at the heart of the RSP's work during 2025/26. Through employer consultations, sector engagement, cluster groups, workshops and stakeholder events, the RSP gathered direct insight from businesses on recruitment challenges, skills gaps, future workforce needs and barriers to accessing training. This engagement ensures that regional skills planning is shaped by real employer demand rather than assumptions, helping partners to better understand where provision is working well and where further action is needed.

The intelligence gathered through this activity strengthened the RSP's evidence base and helped inform discussions with Welsh Government, Medr, education providers and regional partners. It also supported the development of key priorities, enabled more targeted responses to sector needs, and helped ensure that employer voice continues to influence skills policy, investment decisions and the design of future workforce support across North Wales.

Anglesey Freeport

The RSP has supported the development of the Anglesey Freeport skills plans by providing labour market intelligence, regional skills data and sector insights. This has helped identify current and future workforce requirements, skills gaps and training needs, ensuring that skills planning is aligned with employer demand and supports the workforce needed to deliver the Freeport's long-term growth ambitions.

Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone

Supporting the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone was a major priority during 2025/26. The RSP led development of the [Investment Zone Skills Strategy](#), working with employers, education providers, Welsh Government and strategic partners to identify future workforce requirements and skills priorities.

A major milestone was achieved when projects within the Investment Zone Skills Programme secured approval, unlocking £12 million of investment for Coleg Cambria and Wrexham University. This funding will strengthen advanced manufacturing skills provision, develop specialist facilities and support future talent pipelines in Flintshire and Wrexham.

Find out more on the [North Wales Skills Portal](#)



National Occupational Standards Review

The four Regional Skills Partnerships worked collaboratively to submit 50 priority occupations for review under the National Occupational Standards (NOS) programme. Using labour market intelligence and employer engagement, the recommendations focused on occupations expected to experience significant change due to:

- Net Zero commitments
- Digital transformation
- Emerging technologies

This work helps ensure occupational standards, qualifications and training pathways remain aligned to current and future workforce needs. As regional convenors of employers, education and training providers, the RSPs are well placed to provide insight into evolving skills demands, ensuring national standards reflect the needs of employers and communities across all regions of Wales.

Influencing Skills Policy

The RSP contributed to Medr's consultation activity as development of the new apprenticeship programme progressed, helping to ensure that regional employer perspectives and sector intelligence informed discussions on the future direction of apprenticeship provision. This included emphasising the continued importance of apprenticeships in addressing workforce demand, supporting career progression pathways, and responding to evolving skills requirements across priority sectors.

In addition, the RSP supported construction demand analysis by providing regional insight into employer requirements, project pipelines, and anticipated workforce challenges. This intelligence helped strengthen understanding of future skills and labour market demand within the construction sector, enabling more informed discussions on training provision, capacity, and the skills needed to support major regional investment and infrastructure ambitions.

North Wales Growth Deal

The RSP continued to support delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal through workforce planning, labour market intelligence and project-specific engagement. Projects presenting to the RSP Board included Project Prince (Knauf), Society 5.0 (Wrexham University), Albert Gubay Business School (Bangor University) and the Egni Project (M-SParc).



"Skills are fundamental to the work we do at M-SParc and supporting job creation only one part of the picture; we also need to work to build the skills locally that are needed to fill those jobs which will support the growth of the economy. Working with the RSP on the Egni building project has been a really valuable opportunity to bring even more regional employer perspective into our planning and understand the skills demands and what we can do as a collective to start to tackle them."

Dr Debbie Jones, Low Carbon Innovation Manager, M-SParc



Delivering the North Wales Net Zero Delivery Plan

The RSP strengthened its focus on renewable energy, offshore wind, hydrogen, nuclear opportunities, energy storage and carbon capture.

Clean Energy Skills Action Plan

The RSP contributed to the development of a regional Clean Energy Skills Action Plan through the Regional Skills Pilot and wider partner network. The analysis identified North Wales as the fastest-growing sub-region for clean energy employment, highlighting significant opportunities across offshore wind, tidal energy, nuclear, hydrogen, carbon capture and energy storage. The work also examined where major projects are likely to require similar skills and occupations, helping to identify shared workforce demands, potential skills gaps and opportunities for collaboration across sectors. This evidence will support more coordinated workforce planning, skills development and investment, helping North Wales maximise the jobs and economic benefits associated with the transition to clean energy.



Renewable Energy Roundtable

The RSP facilitated a Renewable Energy Roundtable in collaboration with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, bringing together industry and education partners to discuss existing training, provision, future workforce demand, skills shortages and collaborative solutions.

Renewable Growth Conference

The RSP played a key role in the Renewable Growth Conference by bringing a skills and workforce perspective to discussions on renewable energy growth across North Wales. The activity helped strengthen engagement with employers and stakeholders, promote the importance of skills planning within the green economy, and reinforce the need for coordinated action to ensure local people can access future opportunities linked to renewable energy and supply chain development.

Working closely with the RSP to bring stakeholders together, we hosted a Renewable Energy Roundtable at the Coleg Llandrillo Engineering Centre in Rhyl. This event created a valuable opportunity to share knowledge, strengthen workforce development, and ensure local training providers deliver the green skills needed for future growth in Wales.

Damian Woodford, Coleg Llandrillo, Construction and Engineering

HyNet Supply Chain Summit

The RSP supported the HyNet Supply Chain Summit and contributed to a panel discussion on skills, helping to highlight workforce requirements and opportunities linked to the developing hydrogen and carbon capture supply chain in North Wales. As a flagship low-carbon energy programme, HyNet is expected to support significant job creation, attract investment, and generate supply chain opportunities across sectors including engineering, construction and manufacturing, reinforcing the importance of developing a skilled local workforce. The event also highlighted the importance of cross-border collaboration between North Wales and the North West of England to align skills provision, support workforce mobility, and maximise economic benefits across the region.



Offshore Wind

The RSP continued its role as skills lead for the Offshore Energy Alliance, and strengthened engagement with offshore wind stakeholders by attending Global Offshore Wind 2025. The conference provided an opportunity to showcase North Wales' growing renewable energy ecosystem and promote regional capabilities in supporting future offshore energy developments. Discussions focused on future workforce demand, supply chain opportunities and skills development requirements associated with projects across the Irish Sea.

Green Skills and the Built Environment

Working alongside Tŷ Gwyrddfai, Adra, Welsh Government and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, the RSP delivered a Green Skills and the Built Environment event focused on workforce development for the transition to Net Zero. The event enabled the RSP to gather intelligence from employers and feed this back to Welsh Government to support their ongoing work in this area. Another outcome of the event was to have a clearer understanding whether the education and training provision currently available is sufficient and appropriately aligned to meet employer needs and support the skills required for the transition to a greener economy.



Nuclear Skills and Wylfa SMR

The RSP continued to work with partners in preparation for future nuclear development opportunities in North Wales, helping to shape the foundations of the proposed Wales Nuclear Skills Hub. Activity focused on skills development, workforce planning, outreach and supply chain readiness to ensure the region is well placed to support future investment at the Wylfa site and across the wider nuclear sector. This included participation in discussions at the Senedd Cross-Party Group on Nuclear.

| Priority 2: Enabling and Empowering Individuals

Supporting Young People

Through SPF-funded activity, the RSP worked alongside Loud Speaker and regional colleges to deliver a number of sessions engaging more than 70 young people across North Wales. The workshops provided labour market intelligence, explored local career pathways and included insights and training around interpersonal skills, helping learners to better understand future opportunities and the skills employers value.



Thank you so much to NW Skills Portal [North Wales RSP] for hosting the feedback session with Loudspeaker Events at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai. It was a really valuable opportunity, and I particularly want to mention how amazing and engaging Rich was throughout. He did a fantastic job of encouraging the learners to take part, and it was brilliant to hear their insights and watch them become so involved. The session on interpersonal skills was incredibly impactful, and it was clear the learners gained so much from Rich's delivery and approach.

Shoned Owen, Enterprise Officer for Coleg Menai & Coleg Meirion Dwyfor



Inspire to Build: Measuring Impact

Following delivery of the Inspire to Build pilot programme in 2024, the RSP followed up with participants to assess its longer-term impact. Early findings show that 75% of respondents had applied for construction-related university courses, with the same proportion reporting that the programme influenced their career choices. The programme also facilitated valuable employer engagement, with participants securing work experience opportunities through connections made with employers involved in programme delivery. In addition, 100% of respondents said they would recommend Inspire to Build to others.

These early results demonstrate the effectiveness of employer-led engagement programmes in raising aspirations, influencing career pathways, and creating meaningful opportunities for young people to engage directly with employers and gain first-hand experience of the sector.

Hear how Inspire to Build help Freya gain more experience [here](#).



Green Horizons Event

The RSP supported the [Green Horizons event](#) with Morlais in September, attended by more than 100 learners from Anglesey and focused on future opportunities in renewable energy and the supply chain. To support young people at the event, the RSP also created a workbook to help learners better engage with employers, reflect on interests and skills, and consider how these align with next steps and opportunities in the sector.

View the workbook [here](#)



Green Horizons demonstrated the value of collaboration in helping young people understand opportunities in North Wales’ growing renewable energy sector. Working with the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership enabled us to broaden the event by bringing together employers from across the renewable energy industry and supply chain, giving learner valuable insight into a range of career opportunities. The RSP’s support, including the learner workbooks and engagement activities, helped students connect their interests and skills with future career pathways. Together, we are helping to inspire and prepare the next generation for opportunities emerging through projects such as Morlais and the wider low-carbon economy.

Fiona Parry, Project Officer: Skills and Training at Menter Môn Morlais



100+ learners



Focused on future opportunities



Workbook to support learner engagement

Youth Insights Report

Feedback gathered through workshops informed the Youth Insights Report, providing evidence around career aspirations, barriers to progression and awareness of local opportunities. These insights will be used to support and inform upcoming campaigns and communications aimed at young people, helping to promote opportunities in the region and raise awareness of green skills and future careers across North Wales.

The full report can be read [here](#)



Careers and Education

During 2025/26, the RSP delivered and supported a range of careers and education engagement activity to raise awareness of regional opportunities, strengthen understanding of labour market demand and help learners, graduates and advisers connect skills development with future career pathways. In addition to the engagement in collaboration with Loudspeaker, the RSP supported:

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Learner Conference

Supported learners to explore future skills needs, progression routes and opportunities across priority sectors in North Wales

“The Skills for Employability session delivered by the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership was a valuable addition to our Learner Conference, giving learners practical insight into the skills, behaviours and opportunities that will support their future careers. The session was engaging, informative and provided learners with a clearer understanding of the changing world of work and how they can prepare for it.”

Aaron Beacher, Student Enrichment Officer, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

Student adviser training

Delivered a session for student advisers on regional skills intelligence, using insights from Loudspeaker sessions and learner feedback to help tailor support. The session also strengthened understanding of labour market intelligence (LMI) and the North Wales Skills Portal, enabling advisers to better signpost learners to local careers, progression pathways and support services.

Maelor School Careers Insight Session

Delivered at the request of Careers Wales, this session used insight from the North Wales Skills Portal to raise awareness of local career pathways and help pupils consider how their interests and skills could connect to future opportunities.

“The session made a significant impact and tied perfectly with their curriculum themes on Business Careers and Employment and Exploring Job Market Trends in Wales, the UK, and the Wider World. The pupils gained valuable insight into the future skills gaps across Wales, especially here in North Wales - it was great that you were able to show them the North Wales Skills Portal that you have developed and they could see for themselves the opportunities available to young people. Your clear explanations, up-to-date knowledge, and real-world examples really helped bring these concepts to life.”

Lesley Lloyd, Business Engagement Advisor, Careers Wales

Bangor University's My Graduate Careers Week

Provided graduates with insight into regional employment opportunities and the skills valued by employers across the North Wales economy.



Priority 3: How support is provided and making connections

North Wales Skills Portal

The North Wales Skills Portal continued to strengthen its role as a key resource for careers information, labour market intelligence and skills development across the region. During the year, more than 11,000 new users accessing the platform, exploring hundreds of job opportunities, apprenticeships, training programmes, careers events and support services available across North Wales.

A significant focus during the year was understanding how individuals access careers information and what helps them make informed decisions. Insights gathered through Loudspeaker workshops and the Youth Insights Report directly informed the development of Portal content, helping ensure the opportunities, resources and information promoted reflected the needs, interests and aspirations of learners.

The Portal has also become an important resource for schools, colleges, careers advisers and teaching staff. Through adviser training, engagement sessions and the sharing of labour market intelligence, educators and careers professionals have been better equipped to understand regional opportunities, emerging sectors and progression pathways, enabling them to provide more informed guidance and support to learners.

Alongside continued promotion through employer networks, careers events and partner engagement activity, the Portal has helped strengthen connections between employers, educators and careers professionals. The first year focused on building strong foundations, developing resources and refining the platform. Building on this progress, the next phase will focus on increasing employer engagement, expanding the range of opportunities showcased and further enhancing the Portal's role in supporting informed career choices and workforce development across North Wales.



Flintshire County Council regularly recruits apprentices, and this year we listed all our vacancies on the North Wales Skills Portal. The results were outstanding - applications increased by 120%! Thank you to the RSP for creating such an effective platform that truly connects employers with local talent.

**Heather Johnson, Learning and Development Manager,
Flintshire County Council**

Digital Skills

The RSP developed Digital Skills Pathway Toolkits for both employers and individuals, providing practical guidance on developing digital capabilities, accessing training opportunities and navigating career pathways. Alongside this, the RSP supported wider digital skills promotion and engagement activities, helping raise awareness of the growing importance of digital skills and supporting employers and individuals to adapt to an increasingly digital and technology-driven economy.

Toolkit for employers

Toolkit for individuals

Skills Summit

The RSP participated in discussions with Jack Sargeant, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership at a regional Skills Summit organised by Welsh Government with a focus on:

- Wylfa Small Modular Reactors
- Renewable energy opportunities
- Regional growth programmes
- Future workforce planning

‘Sgwrs a Sgiliau’

The RSP, in collaboration with Business Wales, hosted a successful event at M-SParc, attended by more than 50 business support officers and employability providers. The event provided an opportunity to strengthen understanding of the regional skills landscape and the support available to help businesses and individuals access training, upskilling and recruitment opportunities across North Wales.

North Wales Construction Partnership Conference

The RSP presented to employers at the North Wales Construction Partnership Conference to showcase the North Wales Skills Portal and highlight opportunities to engage with skills development, recruitment support and workforce planning across the region. This helped raise awareness of how the Skills Portal can connect employers with information, partners and opportunities that support current and future skills needs in North Wales.

Employability Practitioner Workshops

The Employability Working Group introduced a programme of short, monthly online workshops for frontline practitioners across employability providers operating in North Wales. The sessions were designed to strengthen practitioners’ understanding of the region’s priority sectors and provide them with current, practical labour market intelligence to help inform conversations with participants around career options, skills development and employment opportunities.

Each workshop focused on a different priority sector and included input from employers and sector representatives, providing practitioners with first-hand insight into current and future skills demand, recruitment challenges, skills gaps, salary levels, career opportunities and apprenticeship routes.

The workshops were well received and provided a regular mechanism for sharing sector-specific LMI and strengthening connections between employers, the RSP and the employability network.



NTfW Conference Workshop Delivery

The RSP delivered a workshop at the NTfW Conference, sharing regional labour market intelligence, employer insight and workforce priorities with training providers and wider stakeholders. This supported provider engagement with the North Wales skills agenda, helped strengthen understanding of current and future demand, and created space for discussion on how provision can respond to regional priorities and employer needs.

Supporting Inclusive Employment

Supporting Prison Leavers into Employment

The RSP strengthened its partnership with HMP Berwyn through employer engagement activities designed to improve awareness of the value prison leavers can bring to the workforce.

Highlights included:

- An employer engagement event
- A podcast collaboration

Listen to Cath Morris-Roberts' participation in a Business News Wales podcast [here](#).



North Wales Real Living Wage event

The RSP played an active role in the North Wales Real Living Wage and Well-being Economy event, hosted by Cynnal Cymru, Ambition North Wales and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. Through participation in panel discussions, the RSP highlighted the links between fair pay, inclusive employment, workforce wellbeing and skills development. The event provided an opportunity to demonstrate how positive employment practices can support recruitment, retention and workforce progression, while also reinforcing the importance of fair work principles in addressing skills challenges and supporting sustainable economic growth across the region.

Prevention, Wellbeing and Anchor Framework

The RSP supported the development of the Prevention, Wellbeing and Anchor Framework through its Employability Working Group, bringing together partners to provide feedback, share good practice and help shape the framework's development. This collaborative approach ensured regional employability perspectives and workforce insights were reflected within the emerging framework and its priorities.

Connect to Work and Together North Wales

The RSP continued to work with partners across Connect to Work, Together North Wales and other employability programmes to promote successful outcomes, gather employer feedback and challenge common misconceptions around inclusive recruitment. Through this collaboration, intelligence has been collected to inform the development of a new bitesize employer-facing resource, due to launch in 2026/27, which will help employers navigate the growing range of support available across North Wales. The aim is to increase employer engagement with programmes such as Connect to Work, Together North Wales and RCS Go Gwyrdd, making it easier for businesses to access inclusive recruitment, retention and workforce development support.

Campaigns, Communications and Raising Awareness

During 2025/26, the RSP delivered and supported a wide range of campaigns and events to raise awareness of regional opportunities, strengthen employer engagement and help individuals access information, support and skills provision.



Apprenticeship week

Promoted apprenticeships as a key pathway into employment, progression and skills development.



Digital Skills Campaign

Raised awareness of digital skills needs and available support for individuals and employers utilising the newly developed toolkits.



Adult Learner's Week

Highlighted lifelong learning opportunities and encouraged adults to explore routes to upskill or retrain.



Flexible Skills Programme

Promoted funding support to help employers invest in priority workforce skills, using local case studies. Learn more [here](#).



Results Day Campaign

Shared timely support and guidance for learners considering their next steps after receiving results.



Business Wales Expo

Strengthened employer engagement and promoted regional skills support to businesses.



National Eisteddfod

Supported regional visibility and bilingual engagement with communities, partners and stakeholders.



Finance and Innovation Conference

Engaged with businesses on skills needs linked to innovation, productivity and growth.

Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group meetings

During 2025–26, the Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group was established to strengthen collaboration between employers, skills providers and regional partners across two of North Wales’ priority sectors. The group focused on identifying workforce and skills challenges, sharing labour market intelligence, and connecting employers with emerging programmes and initiatives to support recruitment, workforce development and future skills planning. To do this, the group:



Informed the Skills Plan through solution-focused workforce discussions: Engaged employers in practical discussions on workforce challenges, recruitment pressures and future skills demand, identifying potential solutions and collaborative actions to address skills shortages. The insights gathered helped inform the development of the new North Wales Skills and Employment Plan.



Supported access to skilled talent: Facilitated a session with Talent Beyond Boundaries, introducing employers to a programme that connects skilled refugees with vacancies in sectors experiencing critical skills shortages, including advanced manufacturing and energy, and exploring opportunities to widen access to skilled talent.



Shared sector intelligence and investment opportunities: Kept members informed of key developments across the advanced manufacturing and energy sectors, including the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, major investment projects and emerging workforce opportunities, ensuring employers were aware of developments that could impact future recruitment, skills demand and collaboration across the region.



Strengthened employer collaboration: Created opportunities for employers to connect with one another, share good practice and identify opportunities for collaboration on recruitment, workforce development and future skills planning across North Wales.

Digital Skill Network

During 2025–26, the Digital Dozen group continued to strengthen collaboration between employers, education providers and support organisations to address digital skills challenges across North Wales. Focus remained on delivering on the actions identified as part of the Digital Skills research that was commissioned in 2024 with the group working to raise awareness of digital career opportunities, promoting skills development pathways, and ensuring employers could access relevant support and funding. To do this, the group:



Contributed to the development of five career-focused videos showcasing opportunities within the digital sector. Four videos highlighted careers in cyber security, software engineering, virtual reality/augmented reality, and computer science, while an additional video promoted digital degree apprenticeships through both apprentice and employer perspectives. All videos can be viewed [here](#).



Supported talent attraction and retention, by delivering a targeted social media campaign promoting digital careers, training opportunities and education pathways available in North Wales. The campaign aimed to encourage individuals to remain in, or return to, the region to pursue careers within the growing digital sector.



Welcomed guest speakers to meetings to understand more about accessing support for workforce development through programmes such as the Flexible Skills Programme or learn more about initiatives such as Connect to Work. These sessions increased employer awareness of available funding, recruitment support and workforce development initiatives.



Contributed to the development of the new Digital Skills Employer Toolkit, which was created in response to identified employer confusion around available digital skills provision and support. While not a direct Digital Dozen output, the toolkit supports delivery of Recommendations 1, 4 and 7 of the RSP's Digital Skills Research Report by improving access to information, signposting available support, and helping employers navigate the skills landscape more effectively.



Supported the review and updating of evidence on current digital skills challenges to inform the development of the forthcoming 2026–29 Skills and Employment Plan.

Construction Employer Cluster Group discussions

During 2025-26, the Construction Employer Cluster Group continued to provide a solution-focused forum for employers, skills providers and regional partners to work together to address workforce and skills challenges across the sector. The group focused on identifying practical solutions to recruitment and skills challenges, influencing skills provision and creating stronger links between employers, education and training providers. To do this, the group:



Informed development of new Skills and Employment Plan: Engaged employers in identifying workforce and skills challenges, including recruitment, apprenticeships, work experience, training provision and future skills needs. This intelligence helped inform the development of the new North Wales Skills and Employment Plan and wider regional workforce planning.



Influenced apprenticeship and training provision: Worked with Medr to provide employer insight into the review of construction apprenticeship provision, including the Level 2 framework and developments across key trades.



Strengthened education-to-employment pathways: Supported initiatives including the Coleg Cambria work experience pilot and See Your Site, creating more opportunities for learners to gain practical construction experience and strengthening links between employers, colleges and future talent.



Connected employers to regional programmes and opportunities: Kept members informed and engaged in developments including Connect to Work and the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, helping employers understand potential workforce, skills and supply chain opportunities.



Promoted construction careers and employer engagement: Shared opportunities for employers to engage with initiatives such as Careers in 360, helping to raise awareness of construction careers and showcase North Wales employers and opportunities to young people.

Public Sector Employer Cluster Group

During 2025-26, the Public Sector Employer Cluster Group continued to strengthen collaboration between public sector employers, skills providers and partner organisations to address workforce and skills challenges across North Wales. The group focused on sharing labour market intelligence, informing the development of the new North Wales Skills and Employment Plan, and providing opportunities for employers to engage with emerging programmes, training provision and workforce initiatives. To do this, the group:



Informed development of new Skills and Employment Plan: Held a dedicated session with employers to identify workforce challenges, recruitment pressures and future skills demand, with the findings helping to inform the development of the new North Wales Skills and Employment Plan.



Supported workforce development: Facilitated a training session on multigenerational management in response to a common challenge identified across the sector. Members were able to experience the training and explore opportunities to roll it out more widely within their own organisations.



Shared future workforce intelligence: Hosted Careers Wales to present the Future Jobs Wales data, providing employers with insight into emerging labour market trends and future workforce opportunities.



Strengthened talent pathways: Welcomed Reaching Wider to present its mentoring programme and explore opportunities for employers to support and engage with learners across North Wales.



Promoted skills and training opportunities: Provided a platform for ALS Training to showcase its training offer in digital skills, green skills, leadership and management, and the new Level 4 Regulatory Compliance Apprenticeship.



Engaged with new employment initiatives: Supported the development of the Connect to Work programme by facilitating engagement with public sector employers, raising awareness and gathering employer insight to support future participation and employment opportunities for participants.

Work Based Learning Provider Group

During 2025–26, the Work-Based Learning Provider Group continued to strengthen collaboration across the training provider network, providing a forum to share employer intelligence, identify gaps and opportunities in provision, and ensure training responds to the region’s changing skills needs. The group also supported providers to engage with key regional initiatives, resources and policy developments, while sharing good practice and opportunities for collaboration. To do this, the group:



Strengthened alignment between provision and employer need: Shared regional employer skills intelligence with providers, creating opportunities to identify gaps, prioritise areas for action and consider how provision could respond to emerging workforce needs.



Developed digital skills pathway Toolkits: Worked with providers to inform the development of Digital Skills Pathway Toolkits for employers and individuals, bringing together apprenticeships, micro-credentials, short courses and progression routes. The toolkits provide a clear overview of available provision and support employers and individuals to navigate digital skills pathways.



Supported leadership and management provision: Shared intelligence on employer demand for leadership and management skills and worked with providers to map and better understand the provision available across North Wales. This will help to promote existing opportunities and strengthen the regional response to leadership and management skills gaps identified by employers across all priority sectors.



Welsh and bilingual apprenticeship provision: Discussed with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol opportunities and challenges around increasing Welsh and bilingual apprenticeship provision, including how employer and provider feedback could help inform future activity. The group also highlighted the North Wales Skills Portal as a platform to promote available Welsh language resources and support. In response, enhancements have been implemented on the Portal to improve access to and visibility of available Welsh and bilingual provision.



Connected providers with regional opportunities: Kept members informed and engaged in key developments including the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, Net Zero skills activity and emerging regional skills programmes, creating opportunities for providers to align their provision with future demand.



Strengthened progression and partnership opportunities: Connected providers with initiatives including Reaching Wider’s mentoring programme, creating opportunities for providers and their employer networks to support young people into apprenticeships and further learning, while encouraging greater collaboration across the WBL network.

Employability Working Group

During 2025-26, the Employability Working Group continued to strengthen collaboration between employability providers, employers and regional partners to support individuals into sustainable employment across North Wales. The group provided a forum for sharing intelligence, strengthening connections and keeping providers informed of key regional developments, while creating opportunities to shape and contribute to wider employability and workforce initiatives. To do this, the group:



Programme and Policy Updates: Kept the Group informed of key regional employability, skills and economic developments, including Connect to Work, Trailblazer, the RCS Green Careers Programme, the Flinshire and Wrexham Investment Zone Skills Programme and Sharred Prosperity Fund and the Local Growth Fund. This provided opportunities for providers to understand emerging opportunities, share insight and consider how developments could support participants and complement existing provision.



HMP Berwyn: Strengthened links between HMP Berwyn and employability providers, supporting more joined-up pathways for prison leavers and increasing opportunities for employer engagement. HMP Berwyn is now a member of the Group.



Prime Cymru: Connected Prime Cymru with the employability network through a presentation to the Working Group, creating opportunities for collaboration around support for people aged 50+. Prime Cymru is now a member of the Group.



Practitioner Webinars: Introduced monthly online webinars for practitioners, focused on priority sectors and emerging labour market opportunities. The well-received sessions helped practitioners use up-to-date labour market intelligence to better support participants with career and employment decisions.



Regional Partnership and Engagement: Facilitated opportunities for the sector to contribute to wider regional initiatives, including the Employment Mission within the North Wales Regional Prevention, Wellbeing and Anchor Framework, and discussions with North Wales Together on employer engagement challenges and learning from their first year.

Looking Ahead 2026 - 2027

During 2026/27, the RSP will move from strategy development into delivery across a number of key regional priorities. A major focus will be supporting implementation of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone Skills Programme, working with project leads, employers, SMEs and providers to ensure investment translates into enhanced training provision, stronger employer engagement, clearer progression pathways and sustainable talent pipelines for advanced manufacturing and other priority sectors.

The RSP will also continue to advance the Net Zero and green skills agenda, with a focus on renewable energy, offshore wind, green construction, hydrogen, carbon capture and nuclear. Particular attention will be given to supporting preparations for future opportunities linked to Wylfa and ensuring the region is well positioned to meet the workforce and supply chain requirements of major clean energy developments.

Alongside this, the RSP will continue to support North Wales Growth Deal projects, strengthen employer engagement, promote digital transformation and AI adoption, and launch the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2029.

Through its networks of employers, SMEs, education and training providers, sector clusters, board members and strategic partners, the RSP will play a key role in coordinating activity and driving delivery against the Plan's priorities, ensuring skills provision remains responsive to economic change and aligned to future workforce needs.



1. Delivering the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone Skills Programme

Supporting the delivery and monitoring of approved projects, strengthening employer engagement and ensuring investment delivers sustainable skills and workforce outcomes for the region.



2. Supporting Wylfa SMR and wider nuclear opportunities

Working with regional and national partners to prepare for future workforce demand, strengthen skills pathways and support the development of arrangements that will help maximise the benefits of future nuclear investment.



3. Developing clean energy skills pathways

Building on existing work across renewable energy, offshore wind, hydrogen, carbon capture and green construction to ensure individuals and businesses can access the skills needed to support the transition to net zero.



5. Strengthening employer engagement

Expanding engagement with employers, SMEs, sector clusters and representative bodies to ensure workforce challenges, opportunities and skills requirements continue to inform regional planning, investment decisions and skills provision.



7. Expanding pathways for young people and underrepresented groups

Building on successful employer engagement initiatives and careers activities to improve awareness of opportunities, strengthen progression routes and support greater participation across priority sectors.



4. Growing the North Wales Skills Portal

Expanding content, improving user experience and strengthening engagement with employers, learners, educators and providers to establish the Portal as the region's go-to platform for careers, skills, training and employment opportunities. Building on youth insights and employer engagement, the Portal will continue to connect people with emerging opportunities in North Wales, with an increased focus on priority growth areas including green skills, digital skills and major regional investments such as the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.



6. Supporting digital transformation and AI adoption

Working with employers and providers to identify emerging skills needs and promote digital and AI capabilities that improve productivity, innovation and workforce resilience.



8. Aligning skills provision with major infrastructure and growth projects

Continuing to work with employers, providers and project sponsors to ensure workforce planning and skills investment support the delivery of key regional developments including the North Wales Growth Deal Portfolio or projects and the Anglesey Freeport.

Developing the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2029

A key priority for the next year is the development of the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2029, which will provide the strategic framework for skills, workforce development and employability activity across the region for the next three years. The Plan will be informed by labour market intelligence, employer engagement and extensive partner collaboration, ensuring regional priorities are aligned to both current workforce challenges and future economic opportunities. Particular emphasis will be placed on supporting sectors expected to experience significant growth, including advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, construction, digital, health and social care, and emerging clean energy technologies.

The Plan will also identify actions to strengthen workforce resilience, support inclusion, improve progression pathways and help employers access the skills needed for future growth. As major regional investments continue to develop, the Plan will provide a shared framework for partners to coordinate activity, maximise opportunities and address workforce challenges collectively.

The Partnership aims to launch the North Wales Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2029 in Autumn 2026, providing a refreshed evidence base, clear priorities and a shared vision for workforce development across the region. Delivery of the Plan will be supported through the RSP's extensive networks, including employers, SMEs, sector clusters, board members, education and training providers, local authorities, Medr, Welsh Government and other strategic partners. By harnessing these partnerships and strengthening collaboration across the region, the RSP will drive coordinated action against shared priorities and help ensure North Wales has the skills, talent pipelines and workforce capacity needed to support sustainable economic growth and investment over the next three years.



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PSR Gogledd Cymru - North Wales RSP



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

02 October, 2026

TITLE: Local Growth Fund in North Wales – proposed next steps and evidence gathering

AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Chief Executive, Ambition North Wales
Iain Taylor, Programme Manager, Ambition North Wales

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To update the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee on the Local Growth Fund (LGF), and to seek the Sub-Committee's support to progress the work required to secure c.£80 million funding for North Wales, for the next two years, from the Welsh Government.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Sub-Committee note the requirement from Welsh Government for a 10 Year Regional Growth Plan and a Local Growth Fund Delivery Plan for Years 2 and 3 to be submitted by January 2027 - for Welsh Government approval to release funding from April 2027.
- 2.2. That the Sub-Committee request each partner organisation to consult internally, identify and submit by 30th October 2026 their strategic priorities in line with Welsh Government guidance and framework for Local Growth Fund, working with CJC officers who will co-ordinate the process.
- 2.3. That the Sub-Committee approve the proposed programme of work as set out in sections 4.5 and 4.6 of this report and request that the Chief Executive working alongside officers from partner organisations and Welsh Government prepare an interim Regional Growth Plan and seek confirmation that this approach will meet the Welsh Government requirements.
- 2.4. That the Sub-Committee note that further reports on the Regional Growth Plan and Local Growth Fund Delivery Plan for Years 2 and 3 will be presented in November and December to secure input and direction from the Sub-Committee, alongside Welsh Governance guidance, before a final proposal is presented for approval in January 2027.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. There is c.£80 million of funding (c.£40 million per annum) available for North Wales for years 2 and 3 Local Growth Fund, conditional on Welsh Government approval. The work outlined in recommendation 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 is required in order to secure the Welsh Government approvals to release funding from April 2027.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. The Government's Local Growth Fund (LGF) replaces the Shared Prosperity Fund. In Wales it is administered by Welsh Government through [its LGF Investment Plan](#). Any funding after that depends on future Spending Reviews.

- 4.2. Financial Year 2026–27 is a transition year. Cyngor Gwynedd continues as lead local authority for North Wales under the former SPF model, operating under a transition plan agreed with Welsh Government. North Wales receives £33.98m this year. This includes £200,000 of revenue for CJC capacity building, provided specifically so the CJC can prepare a regional plan.
- 4.3. From 2027–28, Welsh Government will award funding directly to the four Corporate Joint Committees through annual grant offer letters. Each CJC will then lead regional planning and portfolio selection. The indicative North Wales allocation is £41.44m in 2027–28 and £39.92m in 2028–29. Each year includes a pan-Wales capital ringfence of £5.37m for North Wales. This gives the region around 21.5% of the Wales total.
- 4.4. These allocations are indicative. They are conditional on Welsh Government agreeing a regional plan for North Wales. Welsh Government expects that plan to set out a long-term, 10-year vision for the region. It describes this approach as reflecting OECD best practice and as broadly similar to the Local Growth Plans being prepared in England.

4.5 Local Growth Delivery Plan

- 4.5.1. LGF investment for years 2 and 3 must align with Welsh Government's three priorities: more productive and competitive businesses; increasing skills and supporting people into work; and improving regional infrastructure. There are also 8 objectives within these priorities (see full list at Annex A). The LGF plan must explain how interventions address different needs across the region, including the areas facing the greatest challenges. It must also show that LGF funding will leverage additional private investment. Welsh Government accepts that a direct, measurable impact on productivity is unrealistic. However, it expects a clear "golden thread" from regional activity to its priorities for productivity growth and for lagging areas catching up.
- 4.5.2. During October we are proposing a 4 week 'call for evidence' from partner organisations, asking each partner to set out their strategic priorities for reducing productivity gaps, tackling inequalities in areas of deprivation and rurality across the region, and how their proposals for intervention fit within the Welsh Government's framework. The CJC will co-ordinate this process and bring the outputs to the Sub Committee for initial review in November. We anticipate further engagement work will then be needed to refine and develop proposals further.
- 4.5.3. The Welsh Government has set expectations for partnership working and transparency. Any plans produced must also be developed with business representative bodies, social partners and the third sector, higher and further education, and funders and finance institutions. Alongside identifying strategic priorities with partners, we will need to agree a programme of engagement with stakeholders in North Wales. For example, one option could be to ask the Regional Skills Partnership to co-ordinate a pan-regional skills package of interventions, working on behalf of partners. Similarly, business support packages could be co-ordinated regionally or sub-regionally to ensure consistency of offer, with delivery retained locally. These options will be explored with Local Authorities and partners during October.

4.6. Regional Growth Plan

- 4.6.1. The Welsh Government requires CJs to set out a plan that analyses long-term strengths, opportunities and needs, and set out a 10-year vision for growth. That vision should cover all significant growth opportunities, not only LGF funds. For North Wales, these include the

Growth Deal, the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, Anglesey Freeport, the Gwyndod nuclear development proposals, AI Growth Zone and offshore wind. It must then show how LGF investment will address the gaps and add value within that wider picture. It must also demonstrate that the LGF complements Welsh Government and UK Government entities and programmes such as the Development Bank of Wales, Business Wales, Medr, UKRI, the National Wealth Fund and the British Business Bank.

- 4.6.2. Given the compressed timetable we propose developing an interim Regional Growth Plan titled 'Towards a 10 Year Growth Strategy' to be prepared in November following engagement with Local Authorities and regional partners, and further developed with Sub Committee input in November and December. This will aim to set the key foundations for the 10 Year Growth Plan. Should the Sub-Committee endorse this approach, the CJC would seek confirmation from Welsh Government that this approach meets their requirement to secure Local Growth Funding for Years 2 and 3. The approach would allow for the formal 10 Year Growth Plan to be developed, democratically consulted on and approved in detail after the Local Government elections in May 2027.

5. KEY MILESTONES & TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The Sub-Committee is asked to note the requirements and to endorse the proposed timetable. In particular, it is asked to note two points:
- First, the 10-year Growth Plan and the LGF Delivery Plan are being developed together, so that LGF investment clearly contributes to the wider regional vision.
 - Second, the January approval point is critical to securing the 2027–28 allocation.

Date	Milestone
October 2026	Engagement with the six local authorities, and strategic partners, to identify strategic priorities and agree approach for year 2/3
November – December 2026	Draft RGP and LGF Delivery Plan prepared and revised
January 2027	CJC approval of the RGP and Delivery Plan
February – March 2027	Welsh Government review and agreement of the plan; 2027–28 grant offer
April 2027	CJC-led LGF delivery begins
2027–28 onwards	Six-monthly Welsh Government reviews; the 10-year plan is kept under review and refreshed alongside future UK Spending Reviews

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The CJC has received a Welsh Government grant award of £200,000 in 2026/27 to produce the Regional Growth Plan and support the capacity building and partnership arrangements needed to prepare for implementation from April 2027

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The legal implications at this stage are limited. The report seeks approval to progress preparatory work on the Regional Growth Plan and Local Growth Fund Delivery Plan and does not approve the final plans, individual projects or funding awards. Any future acceptance of Welsh Government funding, approval of plans and subsequent project or funding decisions will require the appropriate decision-making authority and further legal and financial advice.

STATUTORY OFFICERS' RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The recommendations provide an appropriate basis for progressing the preparatory work required to develop the Regional Growth Plan and Local Growth Fund Delivery Plan. No binding decision is being taken at this stage in relation to the final plans, individual projects or funding awards. I have no objection to the decisions sought."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"The grant provided by Welsh Government has been included in budgetary considerations for 2026/27. From a financial perspective I have no objections to the decisions sought; this report is one of a number of steps to be taken in the development of the Local Growth Fund and the regional growth plan."

Annex A – Welsh Government LGF Priorities & Objectives
[Local Growth Investment Plan – Published by Welsh Government](#)

Priority 1: More productive and competitive businesses

Objective 1.1: Creation and growth of high-potential start-ups, spinouts, and social enterprises – including from under-represented groups.

Objective 1.2: Increasing capital investment in high growth potential businesses to support productivity growth

Objective 1.3: Increase levels of investment in RD&I capacity, exploitation and diffusion in businesses and research organisations

Priority 2: Increasing skills and supporting people into work

Objective 2.1: Reduce levels of economic inactivity, notably among young people, disabled people, women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds

Objective 2.2: Enhance workforce skills through flexible, demand-led education and training aligned with needs of high-growth and regionally important sectors

Priority 3: Improving regional infrastructure

Objective 3.1: Unlock investment in strategic sites and premises

Objective 3.2: Capital investment aligned to Regional Transport Plans

Objective 3.3: Capital investment aligned to regional energy plans / strategies



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

2 October, 2026

TITLE: Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone - Project and Allocation Approvals

Alwen Williams, Chief Executive

AUTHOR: Iain Taylor, Investment Zone Programme Manager

Milly Cross, Programme Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. This report updates the CJC EWSC on the delivery of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.
- 1.2. This report seeks approval to the following projects and partnership arrangements:
 - SME Grants Programme in Flintshire, £2.5m
 - SME Grants Programme in Wrexham, £2.6m
 - Bus Transformation Programme across Flintshire and Wrexham, £17m
 - Transport for Wales Project Development Costs, £0.05m
 - Deeside Gateway Infrastructure Project, £3.5m
 - HyLine Gogledd, £0.5m
 - MASS Spectrometry Limited, £0.25m
- 1.3. The SME Grant Programmes are requested at a level to cover expenditure in Year 2 (the current financial year) and Year 3. Other allocations listed above are included in the Year 2 Annual Delivery Plan submitted to UK Government and Welsh Government. £14.3m was received in March 2026 for costs in Year 1 and Year 2. Some adjustments to Year 2 capital and revenue allocations are necessary to support these allocations but all are within tolerances and agreed in principle with Flintshire and Wrexham Councils. The Year 3 ADP review and approval process will pick up on any changes.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. Subject to a Subsidy Control Assessment, approve the allocation to Flintshire County Council of £2.5m (capital and revenue) for an SME Grants Programme and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Flintshire County Council.
- 2.2. Subject to a Subsidy Control Assessment, approve the allocation to Wrexham County Borough Council of £2.6m (capital and revenue) for an SME Grants Programme and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council.
- 2.3. Approve the proposal by Transport for Wales to invest £10m of IZ revenue funds in Flintshire and £7m IZ revenue funds in Wrexham to transform bus services to key employment and skills locations.

- 2.4. Subject to Subsidy Control Assessment, authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Flintshire County Council for £10m of IZ Revenue to support the Bus Transformation Project.
- 2.5. Subject to Subsidy Control Assessment, authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council for £7m of IZ Revenue to support the Bus Transformation Project.
- 2.6. Subject to Subsidy Control Assessment, authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Transport for Wales for £50,007 of IZ Revenue to support the Bus Infrastructure Project.
- 2.7. Subject to Subsidy Control Assessment and completion of the Business Case Assurance Review by 31st, approve the allocation to Pochin Goodman Northern Gateway Limited of £3.5m (capital) in support of an infrastructure project to unlock development land within the Deeside Gateway Investment Zone Tax Site and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Pochin Goodman Northern Gateway Limited.
- 2.8. Subject to Subsidy Control Assessment, approve the allocation to Wales and West Utilities of £0.5m (revenue) in support of the pre-development work to unlock future investment in the HyLine Gogledd project and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with Wales and West Utilities Limited.
- 2.9. Subject to Subsidy Control Assessment, approve the allocation to MAAS Spectrometry Limited of £0.25m (capital) in support of an R&D project, forming part of the IZ Innovation Programme, to create a new mass spectrometry machine to demonstrate the application of new technology to support manufacturing growth and export opportunity and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with MAAS Spectrometry Limited.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. SME Grant Programme Background

The Investment Zone operates through an Inter Authority Agreement between the CJC, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council and an MOU with Welsh Government and UK Government. These agreements allow for the preparation and approval of Annual Delivery Plans (ADP). The Annual Delivery Plans are prepared by a IZ Working Group (the two IZ local authority Leaders), approved by the CJC and then approved by WG and UKG.

The Year 2 ADP will be determined by a review process managed by WG and UKG in October 2026 and will confirm the value of the IZ grant for Year 2 (the current financial year). The approval of the ADP is for "allocations" of funding and does not provide a "project approval". It is therefore necessary to seek CJC approval (as delegated to EWSC) to project business cases and secure the authority from the CJC to complete the assurance process and enter into funding agreements.

The IAA describes the intention for the IZ local authority partners to deliver the SME Grants Programme but it does not indicate how this programme should be managed in terms of delivery. The purpose of this report is to secure the authority to enter in Grant Funding Agreements with Flintshire and Wrexham Councils that enables them to manage the delivery of the SME programmes managed by them as accountable bodies for those programmes. It allows for each Council to claim the full value of the SME project award at the point the grant is offered to the beneficiary. The GFA therefore allows for claims based on incurred and expected expenditure.

DWF has been appointed to undertake a Subsidy Control Assessment for these allocations to Flintshire and Wrexham Councils.

3.2. Bus Transformation Background

The development of a bus transport project with the IZ Infrastructure theme has been led by Transport for Wales in close partnership with the two local authority transport teams and members and the CJC. It is considered essential that in response to the IZ investment to grow key employment sites in Flintshire and Wrexham and expand the skills provision at key sites, public access should be improved. The improvements in terms of routes, timetable (alignment with shifts) and quality of buses will drive usage and allow more people to access manufacturing skills and employment, supported by the IZ programme.

Transport for Wales appointed WSP to prepare a Business Case to justify £17m of IZ Investment in bus services across Flintshire and Wrexham. The specific routes and services have been designed and approved by each Local Authority Transport Lead Member and team. It was agreed that a single business case, prepared by TfW would be the basis for securing the IZ investment, but each local authority would be responsible for procuring the services locally. We therefore have an approval to the Business Case and two further approvals for the authority to enter two Grant Funding Agreements to allow Flintshire and Wrexham to extend the scope of existing arrangements or procure new services. In both areas, the new services will support the wider transition to a 'Franchise Network'.

The Business Case Executive Summary is available at Appendix 1. The Business Case was assured by an external consultancy, 31ten, who have provided confirmation following an extensive review (including feedback and a re-submitted document), that the project can be approved.

DWF have been appointed to undertake the Subsidy Control Assessment for this project.

3.3. Project Development Funding for Transport for Wales

The Investment Zone has allocations for "Feasibility Studies" intended to support the development of key projects to be supported by the IZ programme or by other funds.

The development of the Bus Transformation Business Case, summarised in Appendix 1 took longer than was budgeted to agree and secure. Transport for Wales are requesting £4,452 to support the additional costs associated with preparing an agreed business case.

Transport for Wales are also leading on the development of an Outline Business Case in capital investment in the bus network. To support this work, Transport for Wales is requesting £45,555.

The total revenue requested is £50,007. This will be drawn from the investment zone studies budget and the revenue component of the bus capital allocation. DWF will be asked to confirm if a Subsidy Control Assessment is required and undertake if necessary.

3.4. Deeside Gateway Infrastructure Project

Pochin Goodman Northern Gateway Limited own land within the Deeside Gateway Site which is to the rear of the site behind ITC and Leftfield Deeside. The land has the potential to support over 1,100 jobs and £2.4m of net additional GVA but requires grant support to fund up front infrastructure costs.

The project has a capital allocation with the Investment Zone Annual Delivery Plan of £3.5m, sufficient to support the requested sum of £3.5m.

A Business Case has been prepared by Aspinall Verdi and Assured by 31ten. The assurance process has confirmed an acceptable business case with a single remaining issue within the Economic Case that is being resolved by a third-party economics consultancy.

The project requires a conditional approval on this aspect of the business case. The applicant has secured an Subsidy Control Assessment from DWF LLP. The CJC will seek reliance on this Assessment or undertake its own Subsidy Assessment.

To allow the project to make swift progress on site later this year, an approval is requested at this time, conditional upon resolving the Assurance process and a Subsidy Control Assessment the CJC can rely on.

3.5. HyLine Gogledd Project

Wales and West Utilities, presented the HyLine Gogledd project to the Investment Zone, following a series of engagements supported by the NEWID decarbonisation cluster programme and our interest in exploring how net zero could be a positive driver for economic development and advanced manufacturing investment in NW Wales. The project was presented in a bespoke IZ Template for Research and Development projects and shared with the North Wales Innovation Board for discussion and input. The project was supported by the Innovation Board and there was consensus that it should be considered for approval by the EWSC.

The project would make a material contribution to the IZ net zero objectives and support NEWID, Deeside Decarbonisation Forum objectives as well as support the IZ Decarbonisation Programme led by Net Zero Industry Wales.

The project has an allocation in the agreed Annual Delivery Plan and is subject to a Subsidy Control Assessment.

3.6. MAAS Spectrometry Limited

MAAS Spectrometry Limited is a Wrexham based advanced manufacturing business creating state of the art Mass Spectrometry devices for international applications. The value of grant requested and focus on R&D exceed the scope of what the existing SME Grant Programme allowed Wrexham to allocate, so the request has been processed by Ambition North Wales, in line with the provisions in the Inter Authority Agreement.

The Project is set out in a R&D Project Application Form and was presented to the North Wales Innovation Board for review and comment. There was support from the Innovation Board for the project to be presented to EWSC for funding decision. The project is ready to start once a Grant Funding Agreement and Subsidy Control Assessment have been prepared.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. Project Overviews

4.1.1. SME Grant Programmes

Flintshire and Wrexham have been promoting SME Grants since the start of 2026. Overall the response has been excellent. The Grant Funding Agreements will allow payments to the two Council's for awards to date and to allow future funding rounds to be resourced. Grants are currently limited to projects that support accreditation and manufacturing investment.

4.1.2. The Wrexham SME Grants Programme

The Wrexham SME Manufacturing Grants Scheme is part of the Business Support theme of the Flintshire & Wrexham Investment Zone. It will be the first element of the Investment Zone programme to be launched in Wrexham and will comprise grants to support business growth in the Advanced Manufacturing Sector, to a maximum of £100,000 per award.

The SME Manufacturing Grants Scheme has been developed through collaboration between the Business & Investment Teams and Investment Zone Programme Managers from both Wrexham County Borough Council and Flintshire County Council. Due to the nature of the economic area and the cross-border supply chain, it is important to have a similar grant programme operating in both areas.

The process has been informed by engagement with businesses throughout the development of the 5 Investment Zone Gateways, which has taken place over the last 18 months. The grants will support the key needs of SMEs within the manufacturing sector and promote growth and productivity within the advanced manufacturing businesses, whilst complying with the Investment Zone UK Government Technical guidance.

The SME Manufacturing Grants are designed to support each applying business to accelerate manufacturing growth, through capital equipment purchases, specialist support, green site modifications and Research & Development of new processes. The grants are aligned to core objectives of the Flintshire & Wrexham Investment Zone: £1bn in private sector investment and creation of 6000 high value jobs over 10 years in the advanced manufacturing sector for both regions.

The Wrexham SME Manufacturing Grants Scheme will be open to businesses located and operating within Wrexham County Borough. Applications will be assessed against criteria that support the delivery of the UK and Welsh Governments' Investment Zone policy intervention. In order to maximise flexibility, a Wrexham County Borough Council internal funding panel will make recommendations for funding awards, for approval under delegated authority. The details of successful awards will be provided to the Executive Board as period information reports.

4.1.3. Flintshire SME Grants Programme

The SME Manufacturing Grants form part of the Flexible Funding element of the Investment Zone and have been developed collaboratively by the teams of Flintshire County Council and

Wrexham County Borough Council, working alongside Programme Managers from both authorities. The scheme is shaped by robust business engagement and long-standing relationships with local manufacturers, ensuring the grants directly address the priority needs of SMEs in the sector and help drive growth across the region.

The SME Manufacturing Grants aim to accelerate the growth of eligible manufacturing businesses. Support will be available for:

1. Capital equipment for the purchase of equipment to support or enhance the manufacturing capability of an SME.
2. Accreditation and certification for the purchase of training and/or consultancy support for an SME to achieve an accreditation or certification in order to enhance access to new supply chain opportunities with larger manufacturers and enhance business turn over and growth.
3. Property adaptation and decarbonisation for the purchase of services and building modifications for an SME to transition to more sustainable operations.

These grants will be up to the value of £100,000 per application with the business expected to contribute a minimum of 30% of the total project or purchase cost. An allocation of £3m has been made from the Investment Zone programme for this grant programme with the same sum allocated for the Wrexham programme.

It is proposed that the SME Manufacturing Grants are run for a period of three years and then reviewed and evaluated based on the evidence gathered of their impact on the businesses taking part.

4.1.4. Bus Transformation and Infrastructure

The Full Business Case Executive Summary is provided in Appendix 1.

This business case requests £19.6m in revenue funding over nine years to improve bus services connecting Flintshire and Wrexham residents to major employment sites, particularly Deeside Industrial Park (DIP) and Wrexham Industrial Estate (WIE).

Of this, £16.96m would come from Investment Zone (IZ) funding, with the remaining £2.64m from Non-Domestic Rate Relief monies in Flintshire. It forms one strand of a wider £160m, 10-year IZ programme supporting advanced manufacturing, alongside skills, business support, and R&D investment.

The case argues that poor public transport access limits residents' job opportunities, narrows the labour pool available to employers, and drives car dependency with associated congestion and emissions. The proposed package covers 27 bus services and corridors, involving new routes, increased frequencies, retiming, and extended hours — representing roughly a 10% uplift in public bus funding across North Wales.

Deprivation and car-ownership data show that many of the targeted improvements serve lower-income, higher-density communities with limited access to cars — concentrated in Wrexham city (including Caia Park) and more dispersed along the Dee in Flintshire. Enhanced services are projected to expand the population within a 60-minute commute of DIP by up to 38% and WIE by up to 26%.

Demand modelling forecasts bus trips to these two sites will rise 17% by 2035 versus a "do minimum" baseline — a 12% increase at DIP and 19% at WIE — with about 90% of new trips

representing mode shift from cars rather than pure employment growth. Per-capita investment is higher in Wrexham (£99.86) than Flintshire (£79.90), reflecting Flintshire's longer, more dispersed routes and correspondingly higher costs and lower mode-shift potential.

Economic appraisal produces a benefit-cost ratio of 1.0 on core transport impacts alone, rising to 1.3 once wider non-transport impacts are included — alongside unquantified benefits such as productivity, GVA growth, and quality-of-life improvements, which together are said to represent high value for money. A separate capital business case covering bus infrastructure (priority measures, passenger facilities) is expected later in 2026.

Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council will jointly manage delivery in partnership with Transport for Wales, letting initial contracts in 2026/27 before the services transition into the North Wales bus franchise from 2028/29. Given both councils' long track record managing supported bus contracts, the case is presented as low-risk. A single-stage business case format was agreed by ANW as a proportionate approval route.

4.1.5. Deeside Infrastructure

The Business Case Executive Summary is provided at Appendix 2.

Pochin Goodman Northern Gateway Ltd (PGNGL) is seeking £3.5 million from the Investment Zone to deliver Essential Enabling Works at Gateway Deeside, a 57-acre strategic employment site with strong utilities capacity. The works aim to make the site "oven ready," capable of delivering advanced manufacturing units within 12–18 months. This Outline Business Case builds on a March 2025 Strategic Outline Case, which requested £3.25m as part of a £6.5m total works package; the request has risen to £3.5m due to inflation, with costs supported by tendered prices.

Gateway Deeside is positioned as a nationally significant advanced manufacturing site, referenced in the Rolls-Royce SMR–MEP factory prospectus. Despite sustained market interest, development has stalled because regional commercial values can't offset the high upfront cost of bespoke manufacturing facilities. Public funding for early infrastructure — roads, drainage, utilities, earthworks — would resolve this viability gap and allow delivery of Unit 01, catalysing wider site development.

The OBC sets four objectives: addressing the shortage of Grade A manufacturing space (1.15 million sq ft of floorspace), generating high-value employment (1,100 permanent jobs plus 110 construction jobs), delivering environmental sustainability (low-carbon construction, net-zero operation), and maximising social value (Sell2Wales principles, 15% local spend, apprenticeships, real living wage). The proposal aligns with the North Wales Growth Deal, Welsh Government priorities on net zero and advanced manufacturing, UK Industrial Strategy sectors (aerospace, nuclear, semiconductors), and the Flintshire Local Development Plan.

Without intervention, the site would remain undeveloped due to what the OBC calls "persistent market failure." Enabling works are expected to unlock £43m of private investment in Phase 1 (rising to £110m+ across later phases), 1,100 long-term jobs, and £2.4m net additional GVA in Year 1.

A Green Book economic appraisal identifies enabling works for Unit 01 as the preferred option, with a Benefit Cost Ratio of 1.79 (high value for money) and Net Present Social Value of £6.64m,

alongside non-monetised benefits like cluster growth and biodiversity gain. Delivery would use the Sell2Wales framework and an NEC4 Option C contract with Early Contractor Involvement.

Financially, the £3.5m request represents 10% of total enabling costs, matched by £3.5m of private funding in Phase 1. Without grant support, developer profit sits at 2.77% — below the viability threshold — but rises to 10% with the grant, unlocking bank finance and board approval.

The project is considered low-risk and deliverable: full planning permission was secured in November 2024, delivery involves an experienced Goodman/NPL joint venture, and enabling works are programmed for completion by October 2027, backed by governance and benefit-tracking arrangements.

4.1.6. HyLine Gogledd

HyLine Gogledd is a hydrogen pipeline which connects to major energy-intensive industrial sites in Deeside and Wrexham along with additional sites along the route corridor, which collectively account for over 55% of the region's energy demand.

Nearly all of these sites are manufacturing facilities which cover a range of industries from paper manufacturing to food production. By providing a cost-effective route to site-level decarbonisation, these facilities can not only remain within Flintshire and Wrexham for the long-term but also focus their investment on developing world-leading advanced manufacturing facilities, techniques and processes.

Not only will this infrastructure ensure that industry can be retained in the region, but it will also attract new industries to currently vacant brownfield sites, providing a new proposition for regional investment into North East Wales from UK and overseas investors. This initial £0.5m of support will allow WWU to advance the project through Phase 2.1 (FEED-Ready) and give WWU the confidence to prepare for a co-investment proposition for the delivery of Phase 2.2 (FEED), currently estimated at a further £13m, depending on the further development of market enabling policy (notably Hydrogen Transport Business Models) by UK government.

In addition to this, it is likely that advanced manufacturing sites anchored by Deeside and Wrexham Industrial Estate, which employ approximately 19,000 people, will be able to unlock additional co-investment through a connection to HyLine Gogledd (e.g. through fuel-switching trials).

As a core delivery partner of the North East Wales Industrial Decarbonisation (NEWID) Cluster, WWU has demonstrated that the delivery of a regional hydrogen transport network such as HyLine Gogledd will:

- Save up to 27m tonnes of cumulative CO2 emissions by 2058
- Support the creation of up to 6,000 local jobs
- Generate £17b of economic value
- Unlock social value of up to £3.3b

4.1.7. MAAS Spectrometry Limited

MAAS Spectrometry Limited is a Wrexham Business situated in the Wrexham Technology Park. For 4 years they were a pure Deep Tech R&D Company. Last June they located in Wrexham and commenced operations with employees. MAAS Spectrometry Limited create disruptive and, in some instances, unique scientific instrumentation (In-organic Mass Spectrometers),

only two other companies have the ability to produce this technology, both are American. One of them, Alan McCall founded and sold to Ametek. The MAAS Spectrometry Limited mission is to make and develop this technology as a Welsh Company. Having a number of decades in this technology both Alan McCall and Andrew Burrows have produced an instrument with all the lessons learned and experience gained over decades. They now want to take this technology into another area of instrumentation not undertaken by the competition. This would result in a unique technology only made in Wales. In addition, we have formed links with institutions such as Wrexham University and many suppliers who we intend to work with to get as much of the technology manufactured in Wales, in turn limiting supply chain risks.

The project aims to integrate a “Microwave Inductively Coupled Atmospheric Plasma” (MICAP) ion source onto a MAAS Multi-Collector Mass Spectrometer. Traditionally these mass spectrometers have an “Inductively Coupled Plasma” (ICP) ion source which uses Argon gas and a high power RF Generator to produce a “flame” of around 6000-8000 degrees C which ionizes the sample. The MICAP ion source uses Nitrogen gas and a high power microwave generator to produce a flame of the same temperature. The first advantage of this ion source is running costs, the cost of pure Argon is roughly three times the cost of pure Nitrogen, this alone would save users ~£50-£100K per annum in running costs. The second and more exciting advantage is the potential to analyse elements that traditionally suffer from Argon based interferences in the mass spectrometer. Elements such as Calcium or Selenium for example which are currently analysed on very expensive, very complicated collision cell systems, could be analysed easily, interference free, on a MICAP source mass spectrometer. Other key areas of design are a Laminated Electro Magnet and a framework/bench that provides RF shielding and fiberglass covers.

The project will be delivered by Alan McCall CEO. It is anticipated the project will run for 12-15 Months, with a further three months in reserve should it become necessary. This project seeks to create a new generation instrument which technologically does not exist anywhere else in the world. It is at the heart of ‘Deep Tech’ and so by definition is at the pinnacle of innovation, with a very strong emphasis on Advanced Manufacturing in areas such as Ion Optics, Precision Machining, Vacuum Technology and Surface Mount Technology. This project will produce ‘Technical Knowledge and understanding and provide Highly Skilled jobs, including a MC ICPMs Development Scientist and a Development/Test and Installation Engineer. It is also hoped that we can start training and developing our own Technicians to manufacture future instruments.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The projects set out in this paper are contained in the agreed Annual Delivery Plan. All are capable of securing allocated resource within the programme. Once detailed cashflows for spend are agreed with each project, the in year capital and revenue allocations can be updated with updates to the ADP for Year 3.
- 5.2. The SME Grant programmes are expected to deliver close to the allocations in Year 2 and the funding set out in this paper will cover expected costs in Year 3. The bus transformation project is expected to claim funds from Year 3 onwards, but if delivery can be secured in Year 2, then allocations can be updated in ADP 3. The Deeside Gateway project has an allocation in Year 2, but part of this may slip into Year 3. The timing of MAAS Spectrometry and HyLine Gogledd will be confirmed in the Grant Funding Agreements, they are allocated funds in Year 3 of the ADP.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The recommendations constitute approval of the specified Investment Zone project funding allocations and, where applicable, delegate authority to the Chief Executive to enter into the associated Grant Funding Agreements following the stated consultations. Completion of those agreements will create binding funding obligations and should only take place once the relevant subsidy control and business case assurance conditions identified in the recommendations have been satisfactorily completed. The proposed decisions are stated to be within the approved Investment Zone Annual Delivery Plan, MOU and Inter Authority Agreement framework.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1	Bus Transformation Business Case Executive Summary
Appendix 2	Deeside Gateway Business Case Executive Summary
Appendix 3	HyLine Gogledd Application Form
Appendix 4	MAAS Spectrometry Application Form

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS *(available on request due to confidentiality)*

1. Flintshire Council Report re: SME Grants
 2. Wrexham Council Report re: SME Grants
 3. Bus Transformation Full Business Case
 4. Deeside Gateway Full Business Case
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STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. **Monitoring Officer:**

“Subject to satisfactory completion of the subsidy control and assurance requirements identified in the recommendations, and completion of the Grant Funding Agreements through the proposed delegated approval process, I have no objection to the decisions sought.”

ii. **Statutory Finance Officer:**

“I have no objection to the decisions sought and the allocations quoted for the individual projects are within the Investment Zone funding amounts that were included in the Annual Delivery Plan that was presented to this sub-committee in July.”

