
EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING - 15/10/18

Present: Councillor Beth Lawton (Chair).
Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Vice-chairman)

Councillors: Menna Baines, Steve Collings, Aled Evans, E Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Elwyn Jones, Huw G Wyn Jones, Cai Larsen, Dewi Owen, Edgar W Owen, Elfed P Roberts, Cemlyn Williams

Co-opted Members: Dylan Davies (Meirionnydd Parent / Governors Representative)

Officers present: Vera Jones (Members' Manager - Democratic Services) and Eimir Davies (Member Support Officer).

Present for item 4 below:
Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn (Council Leader)
Iwan T Jones (Corporate Director)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Freya H Bentham, Judith Humphreys, Keith Jones, Mair Rowlands and Gareth Williams. Anest Gray Frazer (Church in Wales). Dilwyn Ellis Hughes (UCAC)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. GROWTH DEAL FOR THE ECONOMY OF NORTH WALES: THE PROPOSITION DOCUMENT

The Leader and the Corporate Director presented the Proposition Document: Growth Deal for the Economy of North Wales, prior to consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting on 16 October 2018 and then at the extraordinary meeting of the Full Council on 25 October 2018.

The Leader and the Corporate Director expanded on the content of the report, and also responded to questions / observations from the members.

The main conclusions of the discussion, including additional observations and risks identified were noted as follows:

Financial Risks

- It was crucial to continue to hold discussions with the UK Government and Welsh Government in order to reduce the financial risks - particularly the risks in relation to the cash-flow and the risk of losing grants if firm financial controls were not in place
- It was recommended that discussions should continue with Welsh Government to seek to retain the non-domestic taxes (or at least an element of which) as a means of reducing the costs to local authorities
- However, there was a need to be awake to the fact that financial risks could fall on Local Authorities and prepare for this by considering the projects and expenditure profile

Governance Risks

- The risk should one of the Deal Partners withdraw was noted, but it was confirmed that this would be managed by the Partnership Agreement which was currently being developed
- It was noted that clarity was needed regarding the future Governance Framework, with the Governance Framework ensuring Leaders' clear accountability procedure to the individual Councils

Political Risks

- The risk to the Welsh National entity from the development of the Deal was noted

Project Risks

- There will be a need to seek to ensure that small businesses and farming benefit from the Deal as well as the large companies

RESOLVED

- (a) To send confirmation to the Cabinet that the Scrutiny Committee is supportive of the strategic direction and shows its support to proceeding with the Proposition Document.**

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.30am