



REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD
14th June 2024

TITLE: Annual Report 2023-24
AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the Annual Report for 2023-24.
- 1.2. Quarterly and annual reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement. Following consideration by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, the reports will be shared with Welsh Government, UK Government and the local authority scrutiny committees.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Board consider and note the Annual Report for 2023-24.
- 2.2. That the Board approves the submission of the Annual Report for 2023-24 to Welsh Government and UK Government as well as the local authority scrutiny committees.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. As stated in the report.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. The Annual Report looks back on the progress made over the last year by Ambition North Wales. It covers the Growth Deal and other supported activities.
- 4.2. The report provides an overview of the Growth Deal and the progress made in delivering the projects as well as other key milestones achieved during the year, including:
 - Five Outline Business Cases being approved namely the Tourism Talent Network, Egni, Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant, 4G+ and the Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh.
 - The Full Business Case for the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project was approved, with the project moving into delivery and construction starting on the site.
 - Five new projects were invited to join the Growth Deal, namely Kinmel Studios, Responsible Adventure, Wrexham Gateway, Holyhead Hydrogen Hub and the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant.
 - The launch of the Hydrogen Sponsor Challenge, and a sponsor appointed to lead on the delivery subject to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) being agreed between the parties.

- Recognition of Ambition North Wales carbon emissions and biodiversity methodology as a Leadership Case Study in the UK national carbon in infrastructure guidelines.
- Ministerial approval for the Harbour Revision Order for the Holyhead port project.
- Securing over £1million in additional funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund to further enhance the impact of the Growth Deal. The workstreams include Skills and Employability, Energy and Net Zero, Benefits and Social Value and Digital Connectivity.
- Delivery of the Welsh Government Local Broadband Fund providing gigabit-capable fibreoptic broadband at seventeen public buildings including GP surgeries, libraries and village halls across North Wales.

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. There are no direct legal implications arising from the report. Regular reporting on Growth Deal performance is part of the agreed governance framework and a key requirement of the Final Deal agreement.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Annual Report 2023-24

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer – Host Authority:

“No observations to add in relation to propriety.”

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

“The decision sought will not create a new spending commitment. I am satisfied that the Annual Report is a true and fair reflection of all the work and progress of Ambition North Wales during 2023/24.”