



---

**REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD**  
**20 SEPTEMBER 2024**

---

**TITLE:** *Advanced Wireless – Outline Business Case*  
**AUTHOR:** Stuart Whitfield, Digital Programme Manager

---

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the Advanced Wireless Outline Business Case for consideration by the Board.

**2. DECISION SOUGHT**

- 2.1. That the Board approve the Outline Business Case for the Advanced Wireless project subject to Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process undertaken, subject to the Portfolio Management Office addressing the outstanding issues set out in Section 7 of the report, and request that a Full Business Case is prepared for the Board to consider.
- 2.2. That the Board delegate to the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair final approval of the procurement specification and social value criteria prior to commencing procurement.
- 2.3. That the Board authorises the Portfolio Director in consultation with the Host Authority Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to agree draft terms in accordance with this report for approval by the Economic Ambition Board as a basis for the final funding arrangements for the project which will form the basis of the Grant Offer Letter will be agreed by the Board at the Full Business Case stage.

**3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

- 3.1. To seek the Board's approval of the Outline Business Case for the Advanced Wireless Project.
- 3.2. As a project delivered by Ambition North Wales, approval is required by the Board to establish the frameworks that will deliver the project.

**4. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS**

- 4.1. The North Wales Growth Deal is an agreement between the UK Government, Welsh Government and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to deliver a transformational £1billion investment in the North Wales economy. The aim of the Growth Deal is to build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales, building on our strengths to

boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to delivering inclusive growth.

- 4.2. As per the Final Deal agreement, business cases are to be developed for each project within the Growth Deal in line with the 'Better Business Case' guidance developed by Welsh Government and HM Treasury. Each business case includes five cases which address key questions and should be supported by workshops.
- 4.3. The North Wales Economic Ambition Board acts as the decision-making body for the North Wales Growth Deal. The Welsh Government and UK Government are funders of the Growth Deal, retaining a role in approving the assurance process each project has undertaken. The assurance process undertaken by projects will be included in all reports for consideration.
- 4.4. The Advanced Wireless project Outline Business Case was developed by the Portfolio Management Office in line with the 'Better Business Case' guidance. The Outline Business Case covers the project planning phase. The purpose of this stage is to identify the option that optimises public value following detailed appraisal; and to set out the possible Deal while confirming affordability and putting in place the management arrangements for the successful delivery of the project.
- 4.5. Approval of the Outline Business Case by the Portfolio Board confers members support for delivery of the project as set out in the Business Case and will be considered as advisory by the Economic Ambition Board in its decision-making.
- 4.6. Approval of the Outline Business Case by the Economic Ambition Board would provide the necessary approval for the project to move to the next phase, which, subject to Welsh Government and UK Government approval of the assurance process, would see the procurement process completed and a Full Business Case (FBC) developed for a final investment decision by the Economic Ambition Board.
- 4.7. Should the Board decide not to approve the Outline Business Case, it may reject the business case outright or request further information to be included in a revised version of the business case for consideration.

## **5. INTRODUCTION TO THE ADVANCED WIRELESS PROJECT**

- 5.1. The Advanced Wireless project forms part of the Digital Connectivity Programme and is part of the Connected Campuses project, which also includes the LPWAN project (BJC approved July 2024).
- 5.2. The project aims to support both private sector and public sector organisations in the region adopt the latest advanced wireless technologies to deliver benefits associated with improved productivity, business efficiency, innovation, competitiveness and growth. The range of technologies in scope is consistent with the UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy (2023) and is diverse, ranging from 5G and the latest standards of wifi through to low power wide area network technologies such as LoRaWAN and NB-IoT. Welsh Government also recognises the importance of these technologies Digital Strategy for Wales (2021). The importance of

ensuring the UK is equipped with the most effective and high quality digital infrastructure is referenced throughout UK and Welsh strategies, including the UK Digital Strategy, National Infrastructure Strategy<sup>1</sup>, Future Wales the National Plan 20240 and the Innovation Strategy for Wales.

- 5.3. The North Wales Growth Vision describes ‘A confident, cohesive region with sustainable economic growth, capitalising on the success of high value economic sectors and our connection to the economies of the Northern Powerhouse and Ireland.’ The Vision sets out the importance of developing effective digital infrastructure across the region to support economic growth, job creation and wider innovation across sectors.
- 5.4. The promotion of the adoption of Advanced Wireless technologies is a current UK Government objective, with successive programmes in recent years delivered to drive awareness and develop markets in this area. Most recently the 5G Innovation Regions Programme (Department for Science, Innovation and Technology) is supporting 10 areas of the UK promote adoptions across a wide range of applications and sectors. The Programme aims to drive innovative applications powered by 5G from proof of concept to widespread adoption. Innovation regions will demonstrate and adopt 5G and other advanced wireless use cases across key sectors of the economy.
- 5.5. The Growth Deal’s Advanced Wireless project aims to deliver a similar scope of investment to the current UK Programme with a focus on the Portfolio’s Spending Objectives of job creation, inward investment and economic growth. Several Combined Authorities, City and Growth Deals around the UK are supporting the adoption of advanced wireless technologies in their areas, including Swansea Bay, Tay Cities, West Midlands Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Glasgow City Region and Belfast City Region. These have common economic objectives and demonstrate a consistent regional approach to intervention.
- 5.6. Following development of an initial Strategic Outline Case, options appraisal and workshops the Connected Campuses project board identified a grant scheme as being the most appropriate mechanism for delivering Growth Deal investment across the region to support adoption of advanced wireless technologies. The scheme is intended to be accessible to a wide range of applicants who can demonstrate uses of the technologies which can deliver the Portfolio and Programme spending objectives and the benefits associated with improved productivity, innovation, sustainability and growth.
- 5.7. The relative low level of familiarity of the full range of technologies in scope amongst organisations nationally is recognised and why UK Government is investing in demand stimulation activities. In North Wales, HE and FE provide a range of training opportunities associated with upskilling on the use of the key technologies with organisations such as AMRC and Coleg Cambria providing specific support for business looking to innovate in an area of growing demand across many sectors particularly including manufacturing and logistics, for example.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-wireless-infrastructure-strategy/uk-wireless-infrastructure-strategy>

- 5.8. To promote the adoption of advanced wireless technologies more widely in the region the project will provide funding to reduce commercial risk to organisations in adopting new systems and processes. In 2024 Ambition North Wales has been delivering a UK Shared Prosperity Fund project across Flintshire, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd and the Isle of Anglesey to support small and medium sized business investigate their options for the adoption of advanced wireless technologies. This work is due to conclude at the end of December 2024 and targets 20 SMEs to provide them with recommendations following expert consultancy. The range of sectors which has engaged with the project is diverse and demonstrates the scope of industries which are expected to be beneficiaries of the Advanced Wireless project, including agriculture, tourism, health, manufacturing and retail.
- 5.9. The project will involve the initial design of a grant scheme which will be tailored to organisations in the region across the economy including the public sector and will be versatile enough to support SMEs through to larger organisations. It is expected that grant awards will range from relatively low value investment (ca. <£50k) through to larger more strategic investments of £1m+), with scheme eligibility criteria informed by previous and current similar schemes across the UK which are supporting similar objectives. While the project will prioritise strategic investment there is also a requirement for the benefits of the project to reach all parts of the region and the economy, particularly in rural areas where there may be relatively few larger organisations. The grant scheme will therefore be structured to be manageable while targeting impact and promoting innovation in organisations both large and small.
- 5.10. During Outline Business Case development three high value (£2m+) concepts have been discussed with stakeholders and suppliers in the region involving strategic investment which would benefit wider groups of businesses. It is therefore clear that there is demand in the short term for funding support to drive the adoption of advanced wireless technologies. Sustained activity to promote the scheme and the benefits of the investment will be required throughout the project to ensure that demand for the Growth Deal investment is maintained and benefits can be delivered. Examples of strategic projects which may be expected include site wide 5G private networks to support single corporate users, such as large organisations operating across an extensive site including multiple buildings and also networks serving multiple individual businesses located across a single site (e.g. business parks). Lower capital value applications may include investments within buildings to enhance connectivity for personnel or to improve the operation of machine to machine communications, such as the control and monitoring of production equipment. The range of use cases is demonstrated by the projects currently being supported in the UK Innovation Regions Programme<sup>2</sup>, including port operations, housing, agritech, tourism and health.
- 5.11. Following grant scheme design the project will be launched with project management, administration and demand stimulation capacity recruited by the Portfolio Management Office to work within the Digital Connectivity Programme for the duration of the project. To support revenue costs the grant scheme will include a requirement for successful applicants to contribute to scheme administration costs as a percentage of the overall grant being sought. This rate will be confirmed during scheme design and will be set to be affordable while

---

<sup>2</sup> [5G Innovation Regions: successful regions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/5g-innovation-regions)

providing sufficient project income to sustain activities for the three year period of the project. During the first year of delivery it is expected that revenue costs will need to be met by Portfolio Management Office resources prior to income being received from applications however this would be returned as the scheme progresses. The scheme is expected to run in tranches across each year with applications approved at the end of each. Scheme criteria will be reviewed periodically to ensure appropriate expressions of interest are attracted and the project's spending objectives continue to be met.

- 5.12. At Outline Business Case stage the project is aiming to secure an average of rate of 50% of levered funding from applicants, however this is expected to vary with applications with lower intervention rates potentially applied to higher capital value applications and higher intervention rates for lower value capital awards/ smaller organisations and/or those which provide wider social benefit, for example where grants support public sector organisations. The total amount of additional capital investment secured from applicants at this stage is modelled to be similar to the Growth Deal investment at ca £19.25m over the three-year period. Of the three strategic concepts discussed during OBC development there is evidence to suggest that at least one large supplier is prepared to invest capital alongside the potential beneficiary.
- 5.13. The grant scheme will be funded with £19.54m of Growth Deal capital investment over a four year delivery period with grant expenditure expected to peak by year three following demand stimulation work to start in year 1. Project costs are shown in the table below.



	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total	
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>						
1	Grant awards	£ -	£ 4,620,053	£ 9,754,264	£ 4,877,132	£ 19,251,448
2	Grant scheme design	£ 57,750	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 57,750
3	Capitalised Staff costs (ANW, project mgt.)	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 182,000
4	Contingency	£ 20,650	£ 9,100	£ 9,100	£ 9,100	£ 47,950
5	<b>Total Capital costs (CAPEX)</b>	<b>£ 123,900</b>	<b>£ 4,674,653</b>	<b>£ 9,808,864</b>	<b>£ 4,931,732</b>	<b>£ 19,539,148</b>
<b>Operating Expenditure</b>						
6	Subsidy Control resource	£ 6,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 6,250
7	Grant operation	£ -	£ 22,750	£ 22,750	£ 22,750	£ 68,250
8	Application assessment	£ -	£ 27,576	£ 27,576	£ 27,576	£ 82,727
9	Demand stimulation	£ -	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 45,500	£ 136,500
10	Programme management	£ -	£ 8,367	£ 8,367	£ 8,367	£ 25,102
11	<b>Subtotal OPEX</b>	<b>£ 6,250</b>	<b>£ 104,193</b>	<b>£ 104,193</b>	<b>£ 104,193</b>	<b>£ 318,829</b>
12	Contingency	£ 1,250	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 63,766
13	<b>Total Operating costs (OPEX)</b>	<b>£ 7,500</b>	<b>£ 125,032</b>	<b>£ 125,032</b>	<b>£ 125,032</b>	<b>£ 382,595</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>						
14	<b>Total Project Costs (CAPEX + OPEX)</b>	<b>£ 131,400</b>	<b>£ 4,799,684</b>	<b>£ 9,933,895</b>	<b>£ 5,056,763</b>	<b>£ 19,921,743</b>
<b>Funding</b>						
15	CAPEX funding (Growth Deal)	£ 123,900	£ 4,674,653	£ 9,808,864	£ 4,931,732	£ 19,539,148
16	OPEX (Subsidy Control resource, Ambition North Wales PMO)	£ 6,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 6,250
17	OPEX (Administration charge to applicants)	£ -	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 104,193	£ 312,579
18	OPEX contingency (Ambition North Wales PMO)	£ 1,250	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 20,839	£ 63,766
19	<b>Total funding</b>	<b>£ 131,400</b>	<b>£ 4,799,684</b>	<b>£ 9,933,895</b>	<b>£ 5,056,763</b>	<b>£ 19,921,743</b>

### Project Spending Objectives and Benefits

- 5.14. The project spending objectives are set out in the table below alongside programme spending objectives, and are in line with those set out in the Portfolio Business Case.



Project Spending Objective	Corresponding Programme Spending Objective
To create between 130-200 new jobs in North Wales through the project by 2036	To create between 315-380 new jobs in North Wales through the programme by 2036
To create net additional GVA of £41m - £62m through the project by 2036	To create net additional GVA of £130m - £158m through the programme by 2036
To deliver a total investment of between £13m and £20m through the programme by 2036	To deliver a total investment of between £37m and £46m through the programme by 2036
To enable 100-200 business and public sector users in each of the counties of North Wales to take advantage of advanced wireless connectivity by 2030	

- 5.15. The impact of the project at the Wales level is estimated at **£61.9m additional GVA (undiscounted), and a discounted NPSV of approximately £23.7m** and a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 3.1 (Total public sector funding).
- 5.16. Over the 15-year Growth Deal term, other measurable benefits the project will deliver include
- Improved efficiency for organisations
  - Increased competitiveness of businesses
- A logic map produced by UK Government demonstrating the path for impact from the adoption of 5G is provided in the Executive Summary.
- 5.17. The Outline Business Case explains how the project aligns with the Economic Ambition Board's adopted Procurement Principles. To ensure alignment with the above, the project has undertaken a mapping exercise to show how project procurement will deliver against these principles.
- 5.18. The Outline Business Case indicates the extent to which the project will deliver to the Economic Ambition Board's Emissions and Biodiversity targets, summarised below subject to further assessment by Full Business Case.

Emissions	RAG	Extract from Carbon Assessment 2
Embodied emissions – 40% reduction		Where new equipment replaces existing equipment there will be a target to reduce embodied greenhouse emissions. Where additional equipment is introduced there will be a target to minimise any subsequent embodied emissions using the lowest impact technology options.
Operational emissions – net zero		Where new equipment replaces existing equipment there will be a target to reduce energy related greenhouse emissions through more energy efficient technologies. Where additional equipment is introduced there will be a target to minimise any subsequent energy related emissions using the most energy efficient technology options.
<b>Biodiversity</b>		
10% biodiversity net gain		The potential for biodiversity net gain for the project as a whole cannot be confirmed at OBC stage however given the scope of investment being mainly associated with the installation of equipment within existing premises or mounted on developed land the opportunities for direct biodiversity net gain are expected to be limited.



- 5.19. Social Value will be delivered through the procurement of goods purchased by grant applicants as a condition of funding, in accordance with Ambition North Wales' Procurement Principles

## 6. ASSURANCE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

- 6.1. In accordance with the arrangements set out within the Final Deal Agreement, the Outline Business Case has been subject to the following assurance activity:

Assurance Activity	Date	Outcome
Business Case Workshops	26 <sup>th</sup> January 2023 – October 2023	Draft Outline Business Case submitted for board and gateway review
Gateway Review	20 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2024	Stage Gate Assessment Amber - Recommendations provided
PMO OBC review	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Recommendations provided
Project Board	22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2024	Project Board approval
Programme Board Endorsement	5 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Programme Board approval
Business Delivery Board Endorsement	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Business Deliver Board approval
Portfolio Board Endorsement	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Portfolio Board approval
Ambition Board Approval	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	<i>Pending</i>

## 7. PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT OFFICE OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS CASE

- 7.1. The following table provides a summary of the main recommendations resulting from the Portfolio Management Office assessment of the updated Outline Business Case (OBC) and the key recommendations that will need to be addressed before it is submitted to the Ambition Board.

	Summary of PMO Assessment	Outstanding issues
<b>Strategic Case</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify spending objectives, review SMART requirements</li> <li>Clarify project scope, ensure consistency between existing arrangements, business needs and scope.</li> <li>Provide more details on policy alignment</li> <li>Define and categorise benefits more clearly</li> <li>Review constraints, including subsidy control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Strategic Alignment with National policies/strategies is updated by Full Business Case</li> <li>Review Spending Objectives by Full Business Case – proportionate, SMART</li> <li>Confirm constraints</li> <li>Update assessment of benefits by Full Business Case</li> </ul>





<p><b>Economic Case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant amount of good quality data is shown in the appendices. A clear summary of some of this data around costs and benefits would improve the economic case.</li> <li>• The calculation of Benefit to Cost Ratios is less than clear. Key assumptions need to be set out and empirical evidence should be referenced.</li> <li>• Clear longlist provided, provide detail on discounting of options</li> <li>• Provide further details on business as usual option</li> <li>• Provide further detail in the Benefits Realisation Plan</li> <li>• Reasonable use of Critical Success Factors</li> <li>• Thorough long list of options provided</li> <li>• Provide details of assumptions used in economic appraisal</li> <li>• Consider referencing similar projects to provide empirical evidence for benefits in the economic case</li> <li>• Further work on sensitivity analysis and optimism bias required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review assumptions in Economic Case by Full Business Case using feedback from UK 5G Innovation Programme evaluation, provide details of key assumptions</li> <li>• Update Benefits Realisation Plan</li> <li>• Provide further details on accounting for Emissions and Biodiversity costs/benefits by Full Business Case subject to Grant Scheme design</li> <li>• Update sensitivity analysis and optimism bias, reference more details of other more mature schemes which may provide empirical evidence to improve modelling</li> </ul>
<p><b>Commercial Case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make clearer reference to Procurement Principles</li> <li>• Provide further detail on proposed procurement timescales</li> <li>• Clarify application of social value</li> <li>• Provide further detail on risks and mitigation</li> <li>• Subsidy Control options set out, to confirm by Full Business Case</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm cost of grant scheme design following procurement before Full Business Case</li> <li>• Confirm subsidy control arrangements for the grant scheme</li> <li>• By Full Business Case identifying the most suitable operating model and the Accountable Body for the grant scheme, currently assumed to be the future North Wales Joint Committee / Ambition North Wales.</li> <li>• By Full Business Case ensure market testing of the potential supplier base and scope of services proposed for running a fund; identification of suitable and capable providers based in North Wales.</li> <li>• By Full Business Case explore potential partnership arrangements with Development Bank of Wales for Ambition North Wales to deliver grant in conjunction with</li> </ul>



		<p>Development Bank of Wales' SME loans offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By Full Business Case finalise the most suitable contractual arrangements for procured resources.</li> <li>• By Full Business Case secure legal advice on fiduciary duties and subsidy control considerations relating to the grant scheme</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Case</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify funding sources</li> <li>• Amend tables to clarify cost categories</li> <li>• Provide further details on cost assumptions</li> <li>• Clarify VAT position</li> <li>• Provide further details on risks and constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm costs of grant scheme design by Full Business Case</li> <li>• Provide further detail on cost assumptions associated with Grant Scheme award expenditure using latest information from UK 5G IR programme and other schemes (see Economic Case requirements)</li> <li>• Review financial risks by Full Business Case</li> </ul>
<b>Management Case</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify requirements for stakeholder engagement and requirements for demand stimulation</li> <li>• Clarify implications for skills and training requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Management Case by Full Business Case to confirm Grant Scheme delivery costs</li> <li>• Work with the Regional Skills Partnership to clarify requirements and opportunities for collaboration with regional skills providers and demand stimulation activities</li> <li>• Clarify scope of demand stimulation activities pre and during scheme delivery</li> </ul>



## 8. Key Risks

8.1. The Portfolio Management Office considers the following as key risks which will need to be carefully managed to ensure the delivery of the benefits:

Risk Headline	Risk Mitigation Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If revenue funding not available for project implementation delivery and exploitation, so that options are eliminated or benefits are not realised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant scheme design will consider similar approach to the model proposed for Smart Local Energy with promotion and demand stimulation part of the scheme delivery</li> <li>Additional sources of revenue funding will be sought where available to support demand stimulation activities following initial SPF funded activity in 2024</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If demand for funding is limited the benefits of the project will not be realised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial consultation suggests clear demand from three potential anchor users in the region. Ongoing liaison with UK government regarding its 5G Innovation Regions programme will inform how to direct demand stimulation activities and target sectors</li> <li>Design and scope of the grant scheme will need to account for organisations' requirements and capabilities and its terms will be reviewed periodically to ensure it is fit for purpose</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the administration charge applied to successful applicants deters applicants there may be reduced delivery of the capital grant fund risking delivery of spending objectives and benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult a range of potential applicants to ensure administration charges are proportionate and affordable across a range of project values (high to low)</li> <li>Review administration charges throughout the project lifecycle and revise these where necessary ensuring the project remains affordable.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is insufficient demand for the grants at the minimum values prescribed in the scheme the costs associated with delivery and administration may become unaffordable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thorough consultation with potential applicants will need to be undertaken during the design of the scheme and a high level of engagement, promotion and demand stimulation activity planned to ensure a sufficient volume of quality expressions of interest are achieved.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the scheme attracts a large volume of unsuccessful applications the cost of administering these may exceed the income secured from successful applications, risking the affordability of the scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The grant scheme's design will need to consider effective means of efficiently processing expressions of interest so that only those which have a high probability of success are accepted to full application. Scheme criteria will need to be appropriately balanced to both encourage applications and set proportionate eligibility requirements which reduce risk of failed delivery of the project's spending objectives and benefits.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is a lack of procurement, commercial and implementation resource, projects will be delayed or less successful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Portfolio Management Office is procuring a support framework to ensure capacity across functions is available</li> </ul>



## 9. PROJECT TIMETABLE AND NEXT STEPS

Activity	Target Dates
Economic Ambition Board Outline Business Case approval decision	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Complete Procurement Process	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Draft Full Business Case to Portfolio Management Office	29 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
Gateway 3 Review	3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2025
Programme/Portfolio Board Full Business Case Approval	February 2025
Economic Ambition Board Full Business Case Approval	March 2025
Start on Site	April 2025
Final evaluation	December 2028

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The Advanced Wireless project is one of two projects within the Connected Campuses project for which an overall budget of £20.68m is allocated in the Portfolio. The project represents a total capital cost to the Growth Deal budget of £19.54m.
- 10.2. There is a requirement for Portfolio Management Office resources to support the initial phase of revenue costs for the delivery of the project with this to be confirmed by Full Business case stage. The Outline Business Case proposes to secure income from successful grant beneficiaries to fund the schemes' administration with this income expected to start within year 1 as applications are approved. The OBC represents a significant milestone for the project and should the Board approve the business case further work will be required to update the business case post procurement to provide clarity on the costs, risks and benefits associated with the project before a final investment decision by the Board.
- 10.3. Revenue costs associated with completing the procurement process and developing the Full Business Case are to be funded through the existing Portfolio Management Office budget.

## 11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. The business case development and the assurance processes have been undertaken in line with the requirements of the Final Deal agreement.
- 11.2. External legal advice has been sought on the project to confirm the ability of the Board to invest in the project in a subsidy control (state aid) compliant manner. The advice received will inform the work leading up to the submission of the Full Business Case. Further legal advice may need to be commissioned following receipt of the Full Business Case before the Board makes a final investment decision.
- 11.3. Should the Board approve the Outline Business Case, the relevant documents will be submitted to Welsh Government and UK Government to approve the assurance process before the project can proceed to the next stage.



## 12. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 12.1. An integrated impact assessment (Appendix 2) has been undertaken 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.

---

### APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1**      Advanced Wireless Outline Business Case  
**Appendix 2**      Integrated Impact Assessment

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS (some documents contain exempt information):

- Outline Business Case Appendices – Advanced Wireless (*available on request*)
- OBC\_PMO Review Tracker
- NWGD Gateway 2 Review

---

### STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

#### i. **Monitoring Officer – Host Authority:**

“The submission of the OBC for consideration and approval by the Board is a key step in the implementation of the Growth Deal. This is an interim step towards the preparation of the Final Business Case. The report properly highlights the risks and elements which will need to be addressed or confirmed prior to the submission of a Final Business Case. Finalising the legal position on Subsidy Control will form part of this work. There are a range of identified interventions supported by this project and there will need to be further legal support into supporting these activities and the contract and procurement documents.”

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

“The documents submitted show that detailed work has been undertaken in the delivery of this Outline Business Plan. I believe that the relevant financial and non-financial risks have been properly addressed, and appropriate mitigation arrangements are in place, or have been outlined.

I am satisfied with the financial accuracy of the information that has been submitted, in particular Part 4 of the Outline Business Case which is the Financial Case. Work on these aspects will continue during the development of the Final Business Plan. I can confirm that the Growth Deal funding package is capital only.

Therefore, on the basis of the evidence I have seen, I have no objection to the decisions sought.”