

MEETING	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
DATE	12th February 2026
TITLE	Benefit of the Growth Deal for Gwynedd
REASON TO SCRUTINISE	Matter arising from performance scrutiny
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1. Why it needs scrutiny?

- 1.1 At the Committee's meeting on 16th June 2025, when scrutinising the Cabinet Member for Economy and Community's performance report, concern was noted that Gwynedd is not receiving the expected benefit from the Growth Deal being implemented by Ambition North Wales.
- 1.2. Reference was made to specific plans for Gwynedd which had now been adapted with particular emphasis on an alternative scheme being developed for the Trawsfynydd site.

2. What exactly needs scrutiny?

- What benefit has Gwynedd received as a result of the Growth Deal?
- What are the arrangements for prioritising projects?
- What factors are considered when prioritising projects?
- What is the intention in terms of an alternative scheme to the Trawsfynydd site?
- What is the vision for the long term?

3. Summary and key issues

- 3.1. This is the performance Cover Report for the North Wales Growth Deal.
- 3.2. 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 are shared with Welsh Government, UK Government and the local authority scrutiny committees.
- 3.3. The report summarises the main highlights from quarter 2 (June to September 2025).

4. Background / Context

- 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 2 Performance Report
- Portfolio Risk Register – September 2025

4.4. North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 2 Performance Report

4.4.1. The Quarter 2 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 two business cases. The Business Justification Case for the Sheep Milk Wales project (Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub) and the Full Business Case for the Advanced Wireless project.

4.4.3. The Economic Well-being Sub-Committee also approved two change request, one for additional Growth Deal investment for the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project, and the other for a change in project scope for Responsible Adventure.

4.4.4. The Clean Energy Fund launched on the 10th of July with an event at the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's Engineering Centre in Rhyl.

4.4.5. The first loan drawdown for the Cydnerth project was processed.

4.4.6. The Joint Venture Agreement with Welsh Government for the Parc Bryn Cegin project was completed and the procurement launched to appoint a main contractor.

4.4.7. The Ecological Mitigation Works contract between Denbighshire County Council and Jones Bros was signed and the initial site clearance works for the construction of two bat barns commenced.

4.4.8. The Quarter 2 performance report includes information on projects reporting against the portfolio delivery profile. Four projects are reporting as red at the end of the quarter and are subject to the portfolio review. The projects reporting red currently are:

- Holyhead Hydrogen Hub – Project under review whilst key outstanding matters and risks are discussed/resolved.
- Western Gateway – Project under review, pending the assessment of the WELTaG Lite report.
- Warren Hall – Project under review, pending the airfield safety case being fully assessed and agreed.
- Holyhead Gateway – Project under review, pending the outcome of Stena Line's commercial negotiations with end user of new port areas.

4.5. Portfolio Risk Register – September 2025

- 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 was one change to the residual risks this quarter with the residual risk on 'Affordability' decreasing slightly.
- 4.5.4. While the risk profile has remained stable overall during the past quarter, the risk overall risk profile remains high with four red residual risks including private sector investment, spending objectives, planning and statutory consents and economic context.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. The Quarterly Performance and Risk Report has been presented to the Ambition North Wales Portfolio Board, and then approved by the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee.
- 5.2. Statutory Officer Comments were received by the Monitoring Officer and Statutory Finance Officer on the report.
- 5.3. The Quarterly Performance and Risk Report has been presented to Welsh Government, UK Government and the North Wales Local authorities Scrutiny Committees.

6. Well-being of Future Generation Act (Wales) 2015

- 6.1. An Assessment against the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is completed for each project as part of the development of their Business Cases.
- 6.2. Ambition North Wales, through its programmes and projects together with the processes put in place ensures that the Growth Deal achieves a positive impact against the 7 well-being goals.

7. Impact on Characteristics of Equality, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty

- 7.1. An Integrated Impact Assessment is completed for each project as part of the development of their Business Case.

- 7.2. The Growth Deal will have a neutral effect on equality against the 11 protected characteristics. All programmes and projects are co-produced through partnerships involving the public and private sectors, research bodies and the regional skills partnership, and focus on engaging with people who are disadvantaged because of gender, disability, ethnicity or age.
- 7.3. The delivery of the Growth Deal programmes and projects will have a positive impact on the Welsh language, proactively seeking opportunities to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language in the region.

8. Next Steps

The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Group will continue to work collaboratively with partners in the region and both Governments to implement the portfolio of projects that will lead to job creation and inclusive growth. A quarterly performance report will be prepared for the committee to consider if they wish.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Quarter 2 Performance Report

Appendix 2: Portfolio Risk Register – September 2025