

# Complete Agenda



north wales economic ambition board  
bwrdd uchelgais economaidd gogledd cymru

Meeting

**NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD**

Date and Time

**2.30 pm, FRIDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2021**

Location

**Virtual Meeting - Zoom**

*(For public access, please contact us)*

Contact Point

**Eirian Roberts**

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(DISTRIBUTED 10/09/21)

# **NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD**

## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE**

### **Voting Members**

#### **Councillors**

|                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Hugh Evans        | Denbighshire County Council     |
| Llinos Medi Huws  | Isle of Anglesey County Council |
| Mark Pritchard    | Wrexham County Borough Council  |
| Ian B. Roberts    | Flintshire County Council       |
| Dyfrig L. Siencyn | Gwynedd Council                 |
| Charlie McCoubrey | Conwy County Borough Council    |

### **Advisers - Non-voting**

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Dafydd Evans          | Grwp Llandrillo Menai   |
| Maria Hinfelaar       | Glyndwr University      |
| Yana Williams         | Coleg Cambria           |
| Askar Sheibani        | Business Delivery Board |
| Professor Iwan Davies | Bangor University       |

### **Chief Officers - Non-voting**

|                |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Annwen Morgan  | Isle of Anglesey County Council |
| Iwan Davies    | Conwy County Borough Council    |
| Colin Everett  | Flintshire County Council       |
| Dafydd Gibbard | Gwynedd Council                 |
| Ian Bancroft   | Wrexham County Borough Council  |
| Graham Boase   | Denbighshire County Council     |

### **Officers in Attendance**

|                     |                                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Dafydd L. Edwards   | Section 151 Officer                |
| Iwan G. Evans       | Monitoring Officer                 |
| Alwen Williams      | Portfolio Director                 |
| Hedd Vaughan Evans  | Operations Manager                 |
| Sheryl Le Bon Jones | Temporary Senior Executive Officer |

# **A G E N D A**

## **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of personal interest

## **3. URGENT BUSINESS**

To note any items that are urgent business in the view of the Chair for consideration.

## **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

5 - 11

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the meetings held on the following dates be signed as true records:-

- 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2021
- 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 (Special Meeting)

## **5. PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT REVIEW 2021**

12 - 31

Report by Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director.

## **6. LOGO UPDATE**

32 - 34

Report by Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director.

## **7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman shall propose that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion on the following items due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of 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).

There is an acknowledged public interest in openness in relation to the use of public resources and related financial issues. It is also acknowledged that there are occasions, in order to protect the financial and commercial interests that matters related to such information need to be discussed without being publicised. The report deals specifically with financial and business matter and related discussions. Publication of such commercially sensitive information could adversely affect the interests of the bodies and the Councils and undermine the confidence of other Growth Deal participants in sharing sensitive information for consideration. This would be contrary to the wider public interest of securing the best overall outcome.

## **8. PORTFOLIO BUSINESS CASE UPDATE 2021**

Report by Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director (report circulated to Board members only).

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## NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD 30/07/21

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Voting Members – Councillors:- Hugh Evans (Denbighshire Council), Llinos Medi Huws (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy County Borough Council) and Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd Council) (Chair).

Advisors – Dafydd Evans (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai), Maria Hinfelaar (Glyndŵr University), Askar Sheibani (Business Delivery Board), George Fisher (Coleg Cambria) and Professor Paul Spencer (Bangor University).

Chief Officers – Annwen Morgan (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Iwan Davies (Conwy County Borough Council), Colin Everett (Flintshire Council), Graham Boase (Denbighshire Council), Dafydd Gibbard (Gwynedd Council) and Ian Bancroft (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Officers in attendance – Dafydd L. Edwards (Statutory Finance Officer – Host Authority), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer – Host Authority), Alwen Williams (Portfolio Director), Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Operations Manager), Nia Medi Williams (Senior Operational Officer), Sian Pugh (Group Accountant – Corporate and Projects), Robyn Lovelock (Growth Deal Programme Manager) Henry Aron (Energy Programme Manager), David Mathews (Land and Property Programme Manager), Elgan Roberts (Energy Project Manager), Kirrie Moore (Digital Connectivity Project Manager), Sara Jones (Procurement and Social Value Manager), Catherine Evans (Digital Project Officer), Cath Morris-Roberts (Project Manager, Skills and Employment), Elin Angharad Evans (Skills and Employability Graduate Project Manager), Gerallt Llewelyn Jones (Menter Môn), John Jenkins (Menter Môn), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader – Host Authority) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer – Host Authority).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council), Cllr Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council), Professor Iwan Davies (Bangor University), Yana Williams (Coleg Cambria) and Jane Richardson.

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of Personal Interest was received from Dafydd Evans in item 8 – as it was an application involving Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and he therefore withdrew from the meeting for the discussion on the business case.

A declaration of Personal Interest was received from Professor Paul Spencer in item 9 – as it was an application involving Bangor University, and therefore he withdrew from the meeting for the discussion on the business case.

A declaration of Personal Interest was received from Askar Sheibani in item 9 – as he was involved in the application and therefore he withdrew from the meeting for the discussion on the business case.

### 3. URGENT BUSINESS

None to note.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of the NWEAB held on 18 June 2021 as a true record.

#### **5. NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL - QUARTER 1 REPORT**

The report was submitted by Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Operations Manager.

##### **RESOLVED**

To note and accept the Quarter 1 Performance Report and updated Portfolio Risk Register.

To approve the submission of the Quarter 1 Performance Report to the Welsh Government and UK Government as well as the local authority scrutiny committees.

##### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

In December 2020, the NWEAB and the Welsh and UK Governments agreed the Final Deal Agreement for the North Wales Growth Deal. Regular reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is one of the requirements of the Final Deal Agreement.

##### **DISCUSSION**

The report was presented noting that the format of the report was similar to the previous reports submitted to the NWEAB. An overview was given on the progress of the Growth Deal programmes and projects. It was explained that Morlais was the first Outline Business Case to be considered and approved by the Board and it was noted that the assurance process had been approved by Welsh Government. It was stated that another two Outline Business Cases had commenced the approval process and would be submitted to the Board later on in the meeting.

It was noted that the majority of programmes and projects reported as 'Amber' in the report following a review of the timeframes for developing business cases. Attention was drawn to the four issues that reported 'red' namely Full Fibre in key sites, Connected Campus, Bodelwyddan Strategic Site and Caergybi Port. It was explained that they reported as 'red' as a result of risks in the scope of the projects or significant delay in the timeframes.

It was stated that a number of Procurement activities had now been completed and these included a Study to support Connected Corridors. In terms of the portfolio risk register it was noted that the risk profile of the Plan was stable. It was highlighted that the risk on affordability had increased as a result of a significant increase in building costs over the last few months. It was explained that this had an impact on Growth Agreements and other Towns and was being monitored. In addition, it was highlighted that there were some significant risks involved with some individual projects as well as safeguarding the private sector investment in the Plan.

During the discussion, the following matters were raised:-

- It was noted that in terms of building costs increasing in the last few months there was a need to highlight this problem to the Governments before costs were confirmed. It was explained that the Governments were aware of this

and the plan had some advantage as there was plenty of planning time that gave an opportunity for the market to settle down.

- It was asked if the status of some plans were red, and did not move to amber or green, if there was a need to ask if such a plan was viable. It was explained that the plans were flexible and were being developed in accordance with their readiness and not priorities.

## **6. BRAND AND WEB SITE**

The report was submitted by Alwen Williams (Portfolio Director).

### **RESOLVED**

To endorse the proposed new brand for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board and the North Wales Growth Deal subject to adapting the logo following consultation with the members at the next meeting.

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The Economic Ambition Board's current brand and website were developed during the early days of the Board's establishment. With the Final Deal Agreement signed, and the Portfolio Management Office moving to the delivery phase of the Growth Deal projects, it was timely to refresh and relaunch the brand and website.

### **DISCUSSION**

The report was presented and it was noted that the Economic Ambition Board's current brand and website had been developed during the early days of the Board's establishment. It was noted that with the Final Deal Agreement signed, and the Portfolio Management Office moving to the delivery phase of the Growth Deal projects, it was timely to refresh and relaunch the brand and website. It was stated that the logo was dated and it did not reflect the ambitious nature of the Board in terms of transforming the economy of North Wales. It was added that the website was currently hosted by Business Wales and it was proving complex to use.

Tinint had been commissioned to re-brand and develop the new website following a successful tendering process. The brief given to them to highlight a fresh, innovative, ambitious and professional brand was noted together with a website that would be a platform to promote the region, the work of the Ambition Board and to share progress and information about the Growth Plan. The brand that Tinint had worked upon to develop with the Portfolio Management Office was submitted, it was explained that the brand name had been modified to 'Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru / Ambition North Wales' and this would be the general name for the Growth Vision and what the board is seeking to deliver for the region.

It was highlighted that market research had been conducted regarding the logo and the new brand with a sample of 160 individuals split into three groups – Public Sector, Young People and Businesses. It was stressed that Ambition North Wales was the brand that was favoured in the market research. The favoured Brand, colours and logo were also presented, requesting the Board's support.

During the discussion, the following matters were raised:-

- Support for the brand and the name were highlighted, however attention was drawn to an issue with the logo. It was noted that although it was an abstract logo it had 6 sections as the region's counties and that Conwy

appeared to be smaller than the others. It was explained that it did not represent this, however, it was suggested that there was a need to look again at the size.

- Support was expressed for the brand and website, and it was noted that it highlighted that the plan was much more than a Growth Deal.
- The brand and the colours were accepted in principle. The Portfolio Management Office was asked to go back to Tinint and perhaps adapt the logo a little for re-submission to the Board in September.

## **7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following item due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information about the financial or business transactions of any specific person (including the authority that retains that information).

There is an acknowledged public interest in openness in relation to the use of public resources and related financial issues. It is also acknowledged that there are occasions, in order to protect public financial and commercial interests, where matters related to such information need to be discussed without being publicised. The report is specifically regarding financial and business matters together with associated discussions. The publication of such commercially sensitive information could adversely affect the interests of the bodies and the Councils and undermine the confidence of other Growth Deal participants in sharing sensitive information for consideration. This would be contrary to the wider public interest of securing the best overall outcome.

## **8. GLYNLLIFON RURAL ECONOMY HUB OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

The report was submitted by Robyn Lovelock, Programme Manager.

### **DISCUSSION**

The presentations were accepted, however, no resolution was made as a result of being inquorate.

## **9. DIGITAL SIGNAL PROCESSING CENTRE OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

The report was presented by Stuart Whitfield, Digital Programme Manager.

### **DISCUSSION**

The presentations were accepted, however, no resolution was made as a result of being inquorate.

The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 3.50 pm

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**CHAIRMAN**



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## NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD 26/08/21

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Present:

Voting Members - Councillors:- Hugh Evans (Denbighshire Council), Llinos Medi Huws (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy County Borough Council), Mark Pritchard (Wrexham Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire Council) and Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd Council) (Chair).

Advisors - Askar Sheibani (Business Delivery Board) and Professor Iwan Davies (Bangor University).

Chief Officers - Iwan Davies (Conwy County Borough Council) and Colin Everett (Flintshire Council).

Officers in attendance - Dewi Morgan (Assistant Head of Finance - Revenue and Risk - Host Authority), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer - Host Authority), Alwen Williams (Portfolio Director), Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Operations Manager), Sheryl Le Bon Jones (Senior Operational Officer), Kirrie Moore (Digital Connectivity Project Manager), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader - Host Authority) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer - Host Authority).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Maria Hinfelaar (Glyndŵr University), Annwen Morgan (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Dafydd Gibbard (Gwynedd Council), Graham Boase (Denbighshire Council), Dafydd Evans (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai) and Ian Bancroft (Wrexham County Borough Council).

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of Personal Interest was received from Professor Iwan Davies for item 6 - as it was an application involving Bangor University, and therefore he withdrew from the meeting for the discussion on the business case.

A declaration of Personal Interest was received from Askar Sheibani for item 6 as he was part of the application and therefore he withdrew from the meeting for the discussion on the business case.

### 3. URGENT BUSINESS

None to note.

### 4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved 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 about the financial or

business transactions of any specific person (including the authority that retains that information).

There is an acknowledged public interest in openness in relation to the use of public resources and related financial issues. It is also acknowledged that there are occasions, in order to protect the financial and commercial interests that matters related to such information need to be discussed without being publicised. The report is specifically regarding financial and business matters together with associated discussions. The publication of such commercially sensitive information could adversely affect the interests of the bodies and the Councils and undermine the confidence of other Growth Deal participants in sharing sensitive information for consideration. This would be contrary to the wider public interest of securing the best overall outcome.

## **5. GLYNLLIFON RURAL ECONOMY HUB OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

The report was submitted by Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Operations Manager.

### **RESOLVED**

To approve the Outline Business Case for the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub project and, subject to Welsh and UK Government approval of the assurance process undertaken, and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai addressing the matters set out in the report, request that a Full Business Case is prepared for the Board to consider following the completion of the procurement process and the consenting process.

To delegate final approval of the procurement specification and social value criteria to the Portfolio Director prior to the project sponsor starting procurement.

To agree the final funding plans for the project which will form the basis of the Grant Offer Letter at the Full Business Case stage and authorise the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer of the Host Authority, to agree draft terms for approval by the Board.

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

As per the Final Deal agreement, business cases will be developed for each project within the Growth Deal, in line with the 'Better Business Case' guidance developed by Welsh Government and HM Treasury.

Securing the approval of the NWEAB to the Outline Business Case provides the necessary approval which will allow the project to move forward to the next stage which, subject to Welsh and UK Government approval of the assurance process, will mean that a Full Business Case is developed for a final investment decision by the NWEAB.

### **DISCUSSION**

The report was discussed.

## **6. DIGITAL SIGNAL PROCESSING CENTRE OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

The report was submitted by Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Operations Manager.

### **RESOLVED**

To approve the Outline Business Case for the Digital Signal Processing Centre project and, subject to Welsh and UK Government approval of the assurance process undertaken, and Bangor University addressing the matters set out in the report, request that a Full Business Case is prepared for the Board to consider following the completion of the procurement process.

To delegate final approval of the procurement specification and social value criteria to the Portfolio Director prior to the project sponsor starting procurement.

To agree the final funding plans for the project which will form the basis of the Grant Offer Letter at the Full Business Case stage and authorise the Portfolio Director, in consultation with the Chair, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer of the Host Authority, to agree draft terms for approval by the Board.

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

As per the Final Deal agreement, business cases will be developed for each project within the Growth Deal, in line with the 'Better Business Case' guidance developed by Welsh Government and HM Treasury.

Securing the approval of the NWEAB to the Outline Business Case provides the necessary approval which will allow the project to move forward to the next stage which, subject to Welsh and UK Government approval of the assurance process, will mean that a Full Business Case is developed for a final investment decision by the NWEAB.

### **DISCUSSION**

The report was discussed.

The meeting commenced at 9am and concluded at 9:35am

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**CHAIRMAN**



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## REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD 17 SEPTEMBER 2021

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**TITLE:** Programme Assessment Review 2021

**AUTHOR:** Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director

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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the findings of the 2021 Programme Assessment Review (PAR).
- 1.2. It is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement that the North Wales Growth Deal undertakes an annual external gateway review.

### 2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Board note the findings of the 2021 Programme Assessment Review.
- 2.2. That the Board notes that the report will form part of the 2021-22 annual funding award submission.
- 2.3. That the Board note that the Portfolio Management Office will be developing an action plan to deliver against the recommendations.

### 3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. As stated in the report.

### 4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. In December 2020, the NWEAB and the Welsh and UK Governments agreed the Final Deal Agreement for the North Wales Growth Deal.
- 4.2. It is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement that the North Wales Growth Deal undertakes an annual external gateway review of the portfolio and five programmes.
- 4.3. The OGC Gateway Process examines programmes and projects at key decision points in their lifecycle. It looks ahead to provide assurance that they can progress successfully to the next stage; the Process is regarded as best practice in central civil government throughout the UK.
- 4.4. OGC Gateway Reviews deliver a 'peer review', in which independent practitioners from outside the programme/project use their experience and expertise to examine the progress and likelihood of successful delivery of the programme or project. They are used to provide a valuable additional perspective on the issues facing the internal team, and an external challenge to the robustness of plans and processes.

- 4.5. It has been agreed with the Welsh Government Integrated Assurance Hub that there will be an annual Portfolio and Programme Project Assessment Review (PAR) focusing on the delivery of the Growth Deal.

Findings of the review

- 4.6. The review team have given the North Wales Growth Deal a delivery confidence assessment of ‘Amber/Green’. This is the second highest rating available and an improvement on the ‘Amber’ rating received in 2020. The rationale behind the rating is summarised in the table below:

| <b>Delivery Confidence Assessment:</b>  | <b>Amber/Green</b> |
|---|--------------------|
| <p>The Review Team finds that successful delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD) appears probable at this stage. However, constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery:</p> <p>Our confidence is based on the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strength of leadership</li> <li>• The professionalism of the PMO and its sufficiency of suitably qualified and experienced personnel</li> <li>• The impressive cohesion and support of stakeholders and partners</li> <li>• The current strong regional focus and ethos</li> <li>• The robust PPM processes and controls in place</li> </ul> <p>Our concerns focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current uncertainty around private sector investment and lack of a cohesive Portfolio level strategy to identify and attract</li> <li>• Risk of adverse impact of local authority elections, CJCS and change of senior members/officials</li> <li>• The need for an agreed approach to identify and manage projects that may become unviable</li> </ul> |                    |

- 4.7. The report includes five recommendations as set out in the table below:

| Ref. No. | Recommendation   | Urgency      | Target date for completion |
|----------|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1.       | The Portfolio should institute a regime of horizon scanning to identify potential new projects if current ones become unviable and to give early consideration to any changes that will be required to existing projects from policy changes. Criteria should be developed by which a project will be deemed to be no longer viable. | E- Essential | By end of December 21      |
| 2.       | The Portfolio should re-baseline its key milestones and programme plans as early as possible and seek approval.  | E- Essential | End October 2021           |
| 3.       | In order to maintain quorate for key decisions and achieving agreed milestones   | E- Essential | Before next EAB meeting    |

| Ref. No. | Recommendation   | Urgency         | Target date for completion |
|----------|--|-----------------|----------------------------|
|          | voting members should ensure the appointment of deputies. In addition, an “out of committee” mechanism for urgent approvals should be agreed for the delivery phase. |                 |                            |
| 4.       | A Portfolio level strategy for attracting and securing private and other sector investment should be developed and adopted.  | E- Essential    | By end December 2021       |
| 5.       | The Portfolio should review the risks and consequences of the lack of revenue funding and consider how the impacts can be mitigated.                                 | R - Recommended |                            |

4.8. None of the recommendations were labelled as “C-Critical” which would have required immediate action. The recommendations are considered helpful and reasonable by the Portfolio Management Office who will be developing an action plan to deliver against these recommendations.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. While there are no direct financial implications associated with this report, the completion of the Programme Assessment Review is a key milestone as the report forms part of the submission to Welsh Government and UK Government to secure the next tranche of funding.

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. It is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement that the North Wales Growth Deal undertakes an annual external gateway review.

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### APPENDICES:

**Appendix 1** North Wales Growth Deal – 2021 PAR Report

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**STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:**

- i. Monitoring Officer – Host Authority:**  
Any comments will be made at the meeting.
- ii. Statutory Finance Officer (the Host Authority’s Section 151 Officer):**  
“Regarding ‘Funding’, we are aware, as noted in Recommendation 5 under part 4.7 of the covering report, and in section 10.6 of the Welsh Government’s Programme Assessment Review, that the WEFO ESF funding will cease in 2023. Hence, the Economic Ambition Board must plan to ensure that the portfolio management costs are affordable, either by reducing future revenue commitments, or by securing an additional alternative funding source post-2023. To date, the focus has been on establishing the Portfolio Office operationally and budgeting accordingly, but during 2022 I will be working with the Portfolio Director to produce plan for the medium term.”



## Programme Assessment Review (PAR)

|                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Programme Title:</b> | <b>North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD)</b> |
| <b>IAH ID number:</b>   | <b>AH/21/29</b>                       |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Version number:</b>                          | FINAL   |
| <b>Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)</b>           | Alwen Williams  |
| <b>Date of issue to SRO:</b>                    | 11/08/2021  |
| <b>Department/Organisation of the programme</b> |   |
| <b>Programme Director (Operations Manager)</b>  | Hedd Vaughan-Evans  |
| <b>Business Case stage reached:</b>             | Portfolio Business Case with individual programmes/projects at Outline Business Case (OBC), Strategic Outline Case, or Concept stages |
| <b>Review dates:</b>                            | 02/08/2021 to 05/08/2021  |
| <b>Review Team Leader:</b>                      | Chris Shoukry   |
| <b>Review Team Member(s):</b>                   | Richard Farmer<br>Jonathan Davies   |
| <b>Departmental Representative:</b>             | N/A   |
| <b>Previous Review:</b>                         | PAR Review September 2021<br>DCA Amber  |
| <b>Security Classification</b>                  | Official  |



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### About this report

This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the portfolio status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over the review period, and is delivered to the SRO immediately at the conclusion of the review.

**This assurance review was arranged and managed by:**

**Welsh Government Integrated Assurance Hub (IAH)  
Cathays Park 2  
Cathays  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ**

IAH helpdesk: [Assurance@gov.wales](mailto:Assurance@gov.wales)

# 1. Executive Summary

The Portfolio has made significant and impressive progress since the last Portfolio Assurance Review (PAR) review, in challenging circumstances. It should be commended for the strength of its now fully established Programme Management Office (PMO) and for the robust PPM systems and structures now in place.

The governance is well established and has the confidence of stakeholders. Cohesion amongst the local authorities is strong as is the current regional focus.

The Portfolio has experienced some challenges in developing business cases for the projects at pace against the 5-case model but has a learning ethos and is applying lessons in real time to improve the process. To-date 3 Outline Business Cases (OBCs) have been approved with an established timeline for others, together with subsequent Final Business Cases (FBCs).

It is now on the cusp of entering the main delivery phase which is recognised as requiring a significant shift in focus and in the demands on the resources of both PMO and partners.

## 2. Delivery Confidence Assessment (DCA)

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b><u>Delivery Confidence Assessment:</u></b>   | <b>Amber/Green</b> |
| <p>The Review Team finds that successful delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD) appears probable at this stage. However, constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery:</p> <p>Our confidence is based on the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strength of leadership</li> <li>• The professionalism of the PMO and its sufficiency of suitably qualified and experienced personnel</li> <li>• The impressive cohesion and support of stakeholders and partners</li> <li>• The current strong regional focus and ethos</li> <li>• The robust PPM processes and controls in place</li> </ul> <p>Our concerns focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current uncertainty around private sector investment and lack of a cohesive Portfolio level strategy to identify and attract</li> <li>• Risk of adverse impact of local authority elections, CJCS and change of senior members/officials</li> <li>• The need for an agreed approach to identify and manage projects that may become unviable</li> </ul> |                    |

The Delivery Confidence assessment RAG status should use the definitions below:

| <b><u>RAG</u></b>  | <b><u>Criteria Description</u></b>  |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Green</b>       | Successful delivery of the project/programme to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery.                                  |
| <b>Amber/Green</b> | Successful delivery appears probable. However, constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery.   |
| <b>Amber</b>       | Successful delivery appears feasible but significant issues already exist requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and, if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun. |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Amber/Red</b> | Successful delivery of the project/programme is in doubt with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent action is needed to ensure these are addressed and establish whether resolution is feasible.                             |
| <b>Red</b>       | Successful delivery of the project/programme appears to be unachievable. There are major issues which, at this stage, do not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The project/programme may need re-baselining and/or overall viability re-assessed. |

### **3. Summary of report recommendations**

The Review Team makes the following recommendations which are prioritised using the definitions below:

| <b>Ref. No.</b> | <b>Recommendation</b>   | <b>Urgency (C/E/R)</b> | <b>Target date for completion</b> | <b>Classification (Please enter the categorisation number from the list provided here)</b> |
|-----------------|---|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1.              | <b>The Portfolio should institute a regime of horizon scanning to identify potential new projects if current ones become unviable and to give early consideration to any changes that will be required to existing projects from policy changes. Criteria should be developed by which a project will be deemed to be no longer viable.</b> | E- Essential           | By end of December 21             | Programme and Project Management<br>3.1 Planning   |
| 2.              | <b>The Portfolio should re-baseline its key milestones and programme plans as early as possible and seek approval.</b>  | E- Essential           | End October 2021                  | Programme and Project Management<br>3.1 Planning   |
| 3.              | <b>In order to maintain quorate for key decisions and achieving agreed milestones, the EAB voting members should ensure the appointment of deputies. In addition, an “out of committee” mechanism for urgent approvals should be agreed for the delivery phase.</b>   | E- Essential           | Before next EAB meeting           | Governance<br>1.3 Approvals  |

| Ref. No. | Recommendation  | Urgency (C/E/R) | Target date for completion | Classification (Please enter the categorisation number from the list provided here) |
|----------|---|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| 4.       | <b>A Portfolio level strategy for attracting and securing private and other sector investment should be developed and adopted.</b>          | E- Essential    | By end December 2021       | Financial Management and Planning   |
| 5.       | <b>The Portfolio should review the risks and consequences of the lack of revenue funding and consider how the impacts can be mitigated.</b> | R - Recommended |                            | Financial Management and Planning   |

**Critical (Do Now)** – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of the greatest importance that the programme/project should take action immediately

**Essential (Do By)** – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome the programme/project should take action in the near future.

**Recommended** – The programme/project should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation.

## **4. Areas of good practice and lessons learnt**

PMO identified as exemplar of transparency, openness and engagement

Benefits realisation work to support complex business cases

Exemplary leadership

Positive and robust response to the previous PAR recommendations

## **5. Areas of concern**

Current lack of committed private sector funding

Potential for disruption caused by external factors

## **6. Acknowledgement**

The Review Team would like to thank the SRO, the NWGD PMO and all those interviewed for their support and openness, which contributed to the Review Team's understanding of the portfolio and the outcome of this review. Our thanks also to Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Lyn Slaven and Nia Medi-Williams for their excellent administrative and logistical support throughout the process.

## **7. Comments from the SRO**

As SRO, I'm encouraged with the Portfolio Review's delivery confidence assessment as Aber/Green.

The report and the panel's findings present a fair and balanced reflection of the current position and responds well to the points noted in the agreed terms of reference.

The five prioritised actions give clear recommendations, to be delivered in 2021, on areas of focus that will enhance the likelihood of delivering successful outcomes for the Growth Deal's portfolio.

Despite the challenges and unforeseen distractions as a result of Covid-19 the commitment and determination of North Wales as a cohesive region to present the Portfolio and Programme Business Cases and achieve a final deal agreement by December 2020 is recognised within the report's narrative. I have no doubt that establishing the PMO, with the associated processes, coordination and leadership has significantly supported the region to achieve this.

Beyond the recommendations, the report's narrative presents a much deeper analysis and reflection associated with some areas of risk that need attention. This interpretation and insight through 'fresh eyes' give me and the PMO leadership team a valuable perspective that would be difficult to obtain without the Portfolio Assurance Review process.

As well as navigating through a new process and establishing a new PMO team during the last twelve months, I feel we have been mindful of recognising and sharing our lessons learned along the way, with a view to supporting other regional projects to be successful but also our colleagues in Mid-Wales to continue to raise the bar on standards in Wales.

Finally, my thanks to Chris and the review panel for their excellent stewardship throughout and for their pragmatic and careful thought given to the report presented and its recommendations.

## **8. Summary of the Programme/Project**

### **Background and context:**

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (hereafter referred to as NWEAB or the Board) was established in 2012 and covers the six Local Authority administrative areas of the region of North Wales comprising the Councils of Gwynedd, Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Wrexham and Flintshire. The Board also includes the University of Bangor, Glyndwr University, Coleg Cambria and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai.

In 2016 the Board adopted A Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales (the Growth Vision). The adopted Vision is to develop “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 & Ireland.”.

The Growth Vision was founded on three key principles:

**Smart North Wales** – with a focus on innovation and high value economic sectors to advance economic performance.

**Resilient North Wales** – with a focus on retaining young people, increasing employment levels and skills to achieve inclusive growth.

**Connected North Wales** – with a focus on improving transport and digital infrastructure to enhance strategic connectivity to and within the region.

During 2017-2019, the Board working collaboratively with Welsh Government, UK Government and representatives of the private sector developed the North Wales Growth Deal based on 14 transformational projects, securing Heads of Terms with both governments in November 2019.

The Heads of Terms committed all parties to complete a Final Deal Agreement (FDA) within 12-15 months. A Final Deal Agreement (2) was signed in December 2020 enabling the NWGD to move to full delivery phase.

### **Aims and objectives:**

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) identified Strategic Programmes within the North Wales Vision to address some of the challenges facing the regional economy, as well as exploiting the opportunities. These programmes are a group of inter-related and co-dependant projects to be managed in a co-ordinated way and have been defined in the context of the Growth Vision for North Wales.

By delivering these programmes collectively, NWGD aims to achieve a greater impact in terms of ambition and use of resources rather than delivering them in isolation. Six of these programmes are to be delivered through the Growth Deal. This now includes the Skills and Employment programme, albeit this programme has alternative funding sources. The Strategic Transport programme continues to sit outside the Growth Deal and is progressed through alternative funding sources.

## Key Milestones:

(provided by PMO)

| Milestone   | Date (dd/mm/yy)           |
|---|---------------------------|
| PAR Assurance Review  | 2-5 August 2021           |
| Finalise update of Portfolio and Programme Business Cases                         | August 2021               |
| Portfolio Board – Approval of updated Portfolio Business Case                     | 3 September 2021          |
| NWEAB – Approval of updated Portfolio Business Case                               | 17 September 2021         |
| Submission of updated documentation to UK/WG for approval funding release 2021-22 | September 2021            |
| Second tranche of project OBCs considered by NWEAB                                | September – December 2021 |
| Morlais and DSP FBCs considered by the NWEAB                                      | October – December 2021   |
| Receipts of funding for 2021-22 from UK/WG  | December 2021             |
| Third tranche of project OBCs considered by NWEAB                                 | Jan-April 2022            |

## 9. Scope/Terms of Reference of the Review

### Areas of Focus

The SRO asks that the PAR review focus on the following points in addition to the standard terms of reference:

- Have the previous PAR recommendations been suitably addressed?
- Has the need for the Growth Deal intervention been impacted by the significant changes (Brexit, Covid etc.) seen over the past 12 months?
- Does the Portfolio Management Office have the right resources in place to deliver?
- Are the governance arrangements fit for purpose for the delivery phase of the Growth Deal?
- Will the benefits realisation arrangements being developed support the Growth Deal to achieve its intended outcomes?

### Standard Programme Gateway 0 Terms of Reference

- Review the outcomes and objectives for the programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to overall strategy of the organisation and its senior management.
- Ensure that the programme is supported by key stakeholders.
- Confirm that the programme's potential to succeed has been considered in the wider context of Government policy and procurement objectives, the organisation's delivery plans and change programmes, and any interdependencies with other programmes or projects in the organisation's portfolio and, where relevant, those of other organisations.

- Review the arrangements for leading, managing and monitoring the programme as a whole and the links to individual parts of it (e.g., to any existing projects in the programme's portfolio).
- Review the arrangements for identifying and managing the main programme risks (and the individual project risks), including external risks such as changing business priorities.
- Check that provision for financial and other resources has been made for the programme (initially identified at programme initiation and committed later) and that plans for the work to be done through to the next stage are realistic, properly resourced with sufficient people of appropriate experience, and authorised.
- After the initial review, check progress against plans and the expected achievement of outcomes.
- Check that there is engagement with the market as appropriate on the feasibility of achieving the required outcome.
- Where relevant, check that the programme takes account of joining up with other programmes, internal and external.
- Evaluation of actions to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

## **10. Detailed Review Team findings**

### **10.1 Previous Recommendations**

10.1.1 Overall the RT finds that the recommendations from the previous PAR review have been suitably and thoroughly addressed, with the possible exception of the Number 11 in respect of a method for project prioritisation. We note that recommendation 10 for readiness for the delivery phase focus of the PMO remains highly relevant as the current round of OBCs continues and the Portfolio approaches the full delivery phase.

### **10.2 Operational Context and the need for the Growth Deal**

10.2.1 The North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD) has been operating in a difficult and challenging environment over the past 12 months during which time they have successfully recruited and developed a highly effective PMO team. Many interviewees commented on the excellence of the PMO and there is clearly a high regard for the expertise and skills of the staff. PMO staff interviewed were enthusiastic, skilled and committed and were comfortable in their roles. It is clear that the leadership of the Portfolio and the PMO continues to be valued and appreciated at all levels, both externally and internally.

10.2.2 There have been unprecedented shifts in operational context over the last year, with Brexit and the demands of responding to the COVID pandemic. The leadership of the Portfolio has successfully navigated the challenges of remote working and maintained momentum during this time. We heard that impacts on the Portfolio from Brexit have yet to be fully understood and calibrated. The effects of COVID have been mixed, with a positive impact on the need for some of the Programmes, such as Digital, whereas Land and Property and some of the other Programmes will be impacted by the current instability in construction costs. The Portfolio is alive to these challenges and is actively considering mitigation measures. At this stage there is nothing to indicate that the need for the NWGD is diminished.

10.2.3 There are a number of policy changes coming through from Welsh Government and UK Government with the potential to affect the Portfolio. We heard that these are being actively monitored and the PMO is developing policy and procedures (position



statements) for consistency of application across the Portfolio, such as the Climate and Ecological Change Position Statement).

10.2.4 The current focus of the leadership and PMO is, understandably, on reaching the milestones for approval of OBCs to allow delivery to commence. The RT is concerned about the potential impact of any policy changes on the viability of some of the projects (such as Bodelwyddan). We recommend that the Portfolio leadership institutes a regime of horizon scanning to identify potential new projects should any of the current ones become unviable and to give early consideration to any changes that will be required to existing projects. Criteria should be developed by which a project will be deemed to be no longer viable.

**Recommendation 1: The Portfolio should institute a regime of horizon scanning to identify potential new projects if current ones become unviable and to give early consideration to any changes that will be required to existing projects from policy changes. Criteria should be developed by which a project will be deemed to be no longer viable.**

### **10.3 Current Stage**

10.3.1 The RT commends the PMO for the progress it has made in developing its key processes and procedures, such as putting the Programme Management Framework and software in place and developing its Benefits Realisation approach. It is clear that all in the PMO are aware of and using these processes. The benefits realisation work in particular has been critical to the development of robust business cases. We note that lessons have been learnt from developing the early business cases. Application of these lessons should mean that the process will become more streamlined as time goes on without losing its effectiveness. We are pleased to note that the PMO now has embedded professional procurement expertise to advise the projects and which is currently being used to inform the business cases.

10.3.2 We were impressed by the degree of confidence that has been established amongst stakeholders with regard to the expertise and capability of the PMO. The communication and engagement from the PMO and leadership is regarded as exemplary despite the intense pressure of work in this establishment phase. We are content that influence is being focused where it is needed at multiple levels. We note however the risks to continuity posed by the upcoming Welsh local authority elections in 2022 and the turnover in EAB and local authority senior positions. In addition, concerns were expressed at the potential impact of the establishment of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) on the landscape of this Portfolio. Close management of this risk will need to become a focus for the Portfolio in the medium term to ensure that current positive influence in key areas is not lost or diminished. The risk should be considered for inclusion in the Portfolio Risk Register.

10.3.3 In this context, the RT note the criticality of maintaining a Regional approach to the success of the NWGD, with the ability to deliver as a region that would not be possible at an individual local authority level. Some concerns were expressed about the potential for loss of this regional focus and the impact this would have on the ability of NWGD to deliver. Every opportunity should be taken, particularly through the articulation of business case benefits, to emphasise the critical need to take and maintain the Regional approach.

10.3.4 Although the Portfolio is reporting several months slippage against its original timeline in some areas, the RT consider that the reasons for the delays are entirely understandable and appreciate that there has been an acknowledged degree of over-optimism at the outset. Now that the timescales needed to develop business cases are better understood, we recommend that the Portfolio timelines are re-baselined and put forward for approval in order that future reporting is on a more realistic basis and to avoid an unnecessary risk of loss of confidence from stakeholders.

10.3.5 The RT heard from a number of interviewees about the pressure on resources as a result of the work required to develop the 5 case models for the OBCs. It was universally agreed that more resource is not needed, rather, robust resource planning is essential, together with realistic scheduling of when the OBCs and FBCS will be coming forward for approval.

**Recommendation 2: The Portfolio should re-baseline its key milestones and programme plans as early as possible and seek approval.**

**10.4 Governance effectiveness for delivery phase**

10.4.1 The extant governance arrangements appear to be effective in the main for the current business case approval stage. However an issue with loss of quoracy during a recent Economic Ambition Board (EAB) meeting has highlighted the need for a robust mechanism to cover circumstances where approvals/agreement cannot be achieved in a formal board meeting. We understand that the current arrangements allow for the appointment of an empowered deputy for each of the 6 voting members of the EAB but that this has not always been put in place. EAB voting members should be requested to be more rigorous in applying this facility. In addition, an “out of committee” mechanism for urgent approvals should be agreed. The latter will be particularly important during the main delivery phase when decision may need to be made speedily.

**Recommendation 3: In order to maintain quorate for key decisions and achieving agreed milestones, the EAB voting members should ensure the appointment of deputies. In addition, an “out of committee” mechanism for urgent approvals should be agreed for the delivery phase.**

10.4.2 The RT noted that the scrutiny of business cases was described as not always having the enough challenge from all key stakeholders present. This was particularly so in respect of benefits, with interviewees looking for more direction from board members to avoid abortive work and provide confidence. We note that there is also an onus on the programme managers and board chairs to be rigorous in asking for challenge and direction from the board members.

10.4.3 In respect to programme boards, several interviewees commented on the mix of skills and experience and felt that more experience of economic development was needed. For the delivery phase, consideration should be given to ensuring that all boards have sufficient representation from the economic and development perspective.

**10.5 Private Sector Investment**

10.5.1 The RT note that sufficiency of committed private sector investment is a crucial component for delivery and success of the programmes in the NWGD. We found a mix of external projects with committed funding, other projects that were reported as having a

number of very interested private sector potential funders (e.g. some of the Digital Programme projects) and a third cohort of projects for which the private sector interest has not been identified and, possibly, not yet explored. The approach to attracting private sector interest appears to be piecemeal and unco-ordinated. We note that the Portfolio Director and Operations Manager have been active in talking to potential investors but the extent of commitment arising from these discussions is not yet evident.

10.5.2 We recommend that a Portfolio level strategy for attracting and securing private and other sector investment is developed and adopted.

**Recommendation 4: A Portfolio level strategy for attracting and securing private and other sector investment should be developed and adopted.**

## **10.6 Funding**

10.6.1 The Portfolio has received its annual funding allocation for 2021/22. There is an underspend currently, due to already noted project business case delays. The RT understand that some of this revenue underspend has now been transferred to reserves.

10.6.2 The RT note that HMT recent decision to bring forward funding to a 10 year period rather than the current 15 year period is viewed as positive for NWGD. The shorter period will enable local authorities to reduce their borrowing and associated interest payments and the Portfolio delivery is already based on an 8 – 10 year profile.

10.6.3 The RT note that the PMO is part funded by WEFO funding, together with part funding for some of the projects, e.g. Morlais. The WEFO funding is due to cease in 2023. This will self evidently create a funding gap which could pose a significant risk to delivery if not covered through other sources. The PMO has done some work to identify possible alternative funding although, at this stage, a fully developed strategy is not in place. It therefore remains a risk which does not appear in the Portfolio risk register.

10.6.4 The Portfolio application for revenue funding as part of the Final Deal Agreement was unsuccessful. This lack of revenue funding is beginning to have an impact on the ability of NWGD to deliver, notably in areas such as Skills, Training and Apprenticeships and the ability to engage at scale with the business community so essential for attracting private sector interest and investment. The RT consider this could be a significant risk for the Portfolio but were unable to identify it in the Portfolio Risk Register. The Portfolio should review the risks and consequences of the lack of revenue funding and consider how the impacts can be mitigated.

**Recommendation 5: The Portfolio should review the risks and consequences of the lack of revenue funding and consider how the impacts can be mitigated.**

## **10.7 Resource**

10.7.1 The PMO is reporting itself as almost fully resourced, with 2 more posts currently being recruited into. The RT were impressed by the calibre and experience of those PMO staff we interviewed. Some comments were received that more experience of construction projects was needed however the RT noted good expertise in this area in the Land and Property Programme which could be utilised, if needed to support other projects and programmes.

10.7.2 The RT view is that the PMO is sufficiently and suitably resourced with the skills needed for delivery against the current Portfolio pipeline. The position will need to be re-assessed in the light of any changes to that pipeline or nature of projects.

10.7.3 The RT note that the Portfolio is now on the cusp of entering the main delivery phase which is recognised as requiring both a significant shift in focus and in the demands on the resources of both PMO and partners.

### **10.8 Opportunities**

10.8.1 The RT commend the NWGD for already being viewed as an exemplar amongst Growth Deal programmes. We encourage the Portfolio to build on this and take up the opportunity to set itself the challenge of also becoming an exemplar in the areas of Climate Change and Carbon Reduction which are becoming increasingly urgent topics in policy agenda at both Welsh and UK levels.

10.8.2 The recommendation made earlier in this report regarding the need for horizon scanning could help to identify further opportunities. With a portfolio of this size and scale and the time horizon from conception to delivery, the RT note that it is inevitable that adjustments will need to be made to maintain viability and the delivery of benefits as the delivery environment and regional needs develop. The PMO change management process should be viewed as a vehicle to identify and promote the opportunities arising from necessary adjustments.

## **11. Next assurance review**

The RT suggest a repeat PAR review within 12 months to review progress of the programmes in the initial delivery phase.

## ANNEX A - List of Interviewees

The following stakeholders were interviewed during the review:

| Name                                | Organisation and role  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Alwen Williams                      | Portfolio Director   |
| Cllr. Dyfrig Siencyn                | Chair of North Wales Economic Ambition Board   |
| Hedd Vaughan-Evans                  | PMO Operations Manager   |
| Sian Lloyd Roberts                  | Regional Skills Partnership  |
| Sara Jones and Carol Greeves        | PMO Procurement Manager and Procurement Consultant   |
| Robyn Lovelock                      | PMO Benefits Realisation Lead and Programme Manager for Agri-food and Tourism and Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programmes  |
| Askar Sherbani                      | Chair of Business Delivery Board   |
| Steve Bayley / Dylan Rhys Griffiths | Digital Programme SRO / Deputy Programme SRO   |
| Stuart Whitfield                    | Digital Programme Manager  |
| Kirrie Moore                        | Digital Connectivity Project Manager   |
| Elen Williams                       | Digital Programme - Project SRO (Last Few % project)   |
| Gareth Ashman                       | UK Wales Office  |
| Dewi Williams                       | Welsh Government Regional Team   |
| Dylan Williams                      | Low Carbon Energy Programme SRO  |
| Elgan Roberts                       | Low Carbon Energy Programme, Smart Local Energy Project Manager  |
| Cllr. Llinos Medi Huws              | Low Carbon Energy Programme Lead Member  |
| Andrew Farrow                       | Land and Property Programme SRO  |
| David Mathews                       | Land and Property Programme Manager  |
| Cllr. Hugh Evans                    | Land and Property Lead Member for Programme  |
| Cllr. Charlie McCoubrey             | Agri-Food & Tourism Programme Lead Member  |
| Paul Bevan                          | Agri-Food & Tourism Programme - Project SRO (Rural Economy Hub),<br>Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme - Programme SRO |
| Steve Jackson                       | Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme - Project SRO Llysfasi Carbon Neutral Farm  |
| Laura Gough                         | Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme - Project Representative Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre (EEOC)            |
| Morag McDonald                      | Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme - Project SRO Centre for Environmental Biotechnology (CEB)                          |
| Lee Robinson                        | Transport for Wales - Project SRO (Connected Corridor Project)   |

## ANNEX B - Progress against previous assurance review (24 – 27 August 2020) recommendations

| Recommendation  | Progress/status (PMO tracker)   |
|---|---|
| The SRO should ensure that the NWGD portfolio sets up a regular review cycle (annually with a deep dive every 5 years for example) to test the relevance and applicability of its programmes and projects and direction of travel).   | An annual Portfolio/Programme PAR cycle has been agreed with the Welsh Government Integrated Assurance Hub.   |
| The SRO should ensure that there are consistent and robust governance arrangements in place for all the Portfolio programmes and projects, with clear and robust governance for 3rd party delivered projects.   | A new PMF framework has been developed and is being shared with partners. All project sponsors are required to have Project Boards and SROs in place with reporting arrangements to NWEAB set out in Terms of Reference.  |
| The SRO should ensure that guidance and procedures for delivery management of all projects are developed and in place before contracts for delivery are entered into.   | A new PMF framework has been developed and is being shared with partners. The PMO identified and procured Celoxis, a project management software, to be used consistently across the portfolio.   |
| The SRO should ensure that there is robust benefits mapping across all programmes tested against the Growth Deal Vision and the Wellbeing of Future Generations and that the approach to delivery is benefits driven.   | The PMO has completely reviewed the approach to benefits realisation for the Growth Deal with a new Benefits Realisation Plan being finalised. A template for project sponsors is also now available.   |
| The SRO should ensure that there is greater focus within the Growth Deal delivery culture on the retention of young people in the region and appropriately communicating and engaging with younger people at the earliest possible stage to raise aspirations.                    | The structure of the team now includes two Skills Project Managers (inc. one graduate). Regional Skills Partnership colleagues are now part of the PMO team, ensuring a greater working alignment day to day and an ability to focus on skills, particularly for young people. A new brand and website are in development that will help with engagement of young people. |
| The SRO should seek clarity from the Welsh and UK Governments as to the level of flexibility of funds allocation within the Portfolio to facilitate changes in projects over time as the Portfolio progresses as this will be important to allow maximum realisation of benefits. | The Final Deal Agreement has been secured on the basis of the whole portfolio (not funding for individual projects) providing the flexibility for the Board to make changes to the spending profile so long as overall targets are met.   |
| The SRO should ensure that a Growth Deal Monitoring Pack is developed for delivery partners, including guidance and templates. In addition, PIDs for all levels of Portfolio delivery should be developed.  | All projects current report via monthly highlight reports. A new report template has been devised as part of the PMF and is being built into Celoxis (new PM software portal) for partners to use.  |
| The SRO should ensure assignment of specific responsibility for being “lead officer” for risks, issues and dependency management and benefits management to nominated individuals in the Portfolio Office, formalising any informal allocations where appropriate                 | Lead Officers have been assigned for assurance, risk management, change management, benefits realisation and monitoring and evaluation.   |
| The SRO should ensure that the Portfolio has access to specific high level complex project/programme procurement skills to develop and drive the Portfolio procurement approach and   | The structure of the team has been revised to include a Procurement and Social Value Manager (now in post) and an external procurement consultant has been appointed to provide additional support.   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| provide guidance, mentoring and support to individual programme and project procurements.  |   |
| The SRO should ensure that the Programme Office increases its focus on readiness for the delivery phase of the Growth Deal to ensure that all necessary processes and controls are in place. | The PMO is fully focused on the delivery of the Growth Deal with 3 OBCs having been considered by the NWEAB to date and the first FBCs scheduled for late 2021. |
| The SRO should ensure that the Programme Office develops Programme and individual Project Risk Profiles and a method of Project Prioritisation to inform and support Portfolio management.   | Portfolio and Programme Risk Registers are in place.  |



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## REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD

17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

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**TITLE:** *Logo Update*

**AUTHOR:** *Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director*

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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. To update the Economic Ambition Board on the development of the new brand logo.

### 2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. To approve the revised logo for the Economic Ambition Board and the North Wales Growth Deal.

### 3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

3.1. As outlined in the report.

### 4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The Economic Ambition Board's current brand and website was developed during the early days of the Board's establishment. With the Final Deal Agreement signed, and the Portfolio Management Office moving to the delivery phase of the Growth Deal projects, it was considered timely to refresh and relaunch the brand and website.

4.2. At the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021 meeting of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, the Board endorsed the overall Brand (style, colours etc.) and requested that further work was undertaken to revise the logo taking account of the feedback received at the meeting.

4.3. The proposed logo presented during the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021 was as follows:



4.4. The Portfolio Management Office worked with Tinint (the company commissioned by the Portfolio Management Office to rebrand and develop the new website) to develop alternative iterations of the logo, taking account of the Board's feedback in relation to the number and size of the original components comprised in the logo.



4.5. Various iterations of the logo with 5 and 7 components were considered by the Portfolio Management Office, with the preferred option presented to the Portfolio Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021.

4.6 The preferred option, which was endorsed by the Portfolio Board is as follows:



4.7. The logo is an abstract representation of North Wales with the arrows representing inward and outward investment, collaboration and energy in the region.

4.8. Once the brand is endorsed, branding guidelines will be developed and shared to protect the application of the brand.

4.9. Work on developing the new website has continued despite the delay in endorsing the brand logo. The Portfolio Management Office now aim to launch the new website in the early autumn.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1. None.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. The protocols for the use and application of the brand need to be clearly set out and managed.

## **7. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. None.

## **8. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES**

8.1. The website will be accessible and will comply with the latest EU accessibility requirements.

8.2. The brand guidelines also take into consideration accessibility.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN**

9.1. Following the original presentation to the Board on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the revised logo was considered and endorsed by the Portfolio Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021.

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

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

Any comments will be made at the meeting.

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

“Nothing to add from a financial propriety perspective.”