

# GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



## Report to the Cabinet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>15 December 2020</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Gareth Thomas</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Sioned E Williams, Head of Economy and Communities</b>
<b>Contact Number:</b>	<b>32547</b>
<b>Item Title:</b>	<b>Establishment of Sport North Wales Partnership</b>

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### DECISION SOUGHT

Cabinet approval to establish the Sport North Wales Partnership, with Conwy Council being the host authority and Gwynedd Council commit to the arrangements as one of the regional partners.

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### REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

To be able to move forward to establish the partnership by April 2021, including the recruitment process.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Sport Wales is the national organisation responsible for increasing participation and improving performance in sport in Wales, and historically has provided annual funding to each Local Authority and other partners to undertake a number of sporting programmes and interventions across North Wales; including '*Active Young People*' and the '*Free Swimming Initiative*', which are delivered by Conwy's Leisure Development Team and Active Young People Team. In 2020/21, Gwynedd Council received a grant of £356,862 from Sport Wales, and this money was used to employ a team of officers to stimulate children and young people's interest in active, outdoor activities and to subsidize swimming sessions.
- 1.2 The Vision for Sport in Wales is to transform Wales into an 'Active Nation', supported by the Sport Wales Strategy, which envisages a Wales where everyone is Active, and was the starting point to establish a Sport Wales Partner Investment Strategy.

- 1.3 In response to this Strategy, a collaborative partnership was established in 2018, tasked with developing a shared vision and business case, leading to the formation of Sport North Wales (SNW) with thirteen partners.
- 1.4 It is proposed that there will be five regional organisations across Wales in the future, SNW will be the pilot region.
- 1.5 The Business Case has been submitted to Sport Wales for their consideration and decision at their Board on the 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2020. All 13 partners are currently seeking formal approval from their respective organisations to support the establishment of Sport North Wales by a local authority 'host model' in accordance with section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 and section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972. Conwy County Borough Council will be the host authority.

### **CONTEXT**

- 1.6 The context behind the formation of Sport North Wales (SNW) is the national Vision for Sport in Wales which seeks to transform Wales into an Active Nation (<https://visionforsport.wales/>) and also the Sport Wales Strategy which envisages a Wales where everyone is Active (<https://www.sport.wales/sport-wales-strategy/>). This is the starting point for the Sport Wales Partner Investment Strategy, and the rationale for SNW.
- 1.7 The Vision for SNW has been developed through our new and exciting collaborative partnership. This is made up of a number of well-established organisations who operate across the region – organisations that share a collective ambition to work together and to make a significant change and impact which will benefit the people of North Wales.

### **‘To empower our communities in North Wales to be more active, leading healthier and happier lives’**

- 1.8 Our collaborative approach reflects the fact that no one organisation can achieve this ambition on its own and it is vital that we work in partnership with communities and other public sector organisations, private sector and third sector to make the improvements happen.
- 1.9 In responding to the new vision for regional working, SNW has been through a number of important developmental stages since the summer of 2018. In summary it has:
  - i) Obtained formal Local Authority permission to proceed with an Expression of Interest and subsequent Business Case.
  - ii) Undertaken an Options Appraisal of the best governance models
  - iii) Developed consensus of the governance framework i.e. a host authority for an initial term of 5 years
  - iv) Developed insight piece to identify key regional issues aligned to the outcomes and identify the delivery partners / projects who are able to provide the solutions and innovation.

## **TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 1.10 Following partner engagement workshops to create the Strategic Outcomes Framework, the first North Wales Regional Plan was developed. This plan was developed and informed by the submission of six individual Local Authority based plans for 2020/21, detailing local commitment and approach to implementing the emerging Sport North Wales Strategic Framework.
- 1.11 The following key principles underpin the Strategic Outcomes Framework, the Regional Plan and LA plans:
- Partners will commit to working with Sport North Wales (SNW) on the ongoing development of a shared understanding of what collaborative regional leadership, planning and delivery will look like going forward; in considering regional collaboration it will be fundamental to ensure that this happens at all levels and in all possible directions so that priorities, the thinking about how best to address these and the sharing of learning is embedded in and around the SNW Partnership
  - Partners recognise that future decisions will be based on collective insight and learning, building on the successful aspects of the current delivery system across North Wales, as well as meeting their local needs;
  - 2021-22 will be a transition year where all partners will need to be proactively and collectively contributing during this period, to ensure we have truly collaborative and coordinated approach to North Wales; and
  - Partners to continue to consider their Free Swim Plans, within the context of Sport North Wales, and will continue to commit to working with the Sport North Wales and Project Team, Sport Wales and Swim Wales.
- 1.12 The Key Principles for funding North Wales LA's 2021/2022 as part of the transition phase will be:
- LA Partners will commit to working with Sport North Wales (SNW) on the ongoing development of a shared understanding of what collaborative regional leadership, planning and delivery will look like going forward;
  - LA Partners recognise that future decisions will be based on collective insight and learning, building on the successful aspects of the current delivery system across North Wales, as well as meeting their local needs; and
  - 2021-22 will be a transition into a new way of working. All LA partners will need to be proactively and collectively contributing during this period, to ensure we have truly collaborative and coordinated approach to North Wales.
- 1.13 As SNW gathers momentum future editions of the Regional Plan will be informed by the wider collaborative and commissioned partners who collectively will support the implementation of the regional vision.

1.14 In future regional planning exercises the process of developing the Regional Plan will be wider than just local authorities.

#### **Host authority**

1.15 It was recognised early on that the transition phase and the early years of SNW will require support from a hosting organisation. This is for three main reasons:

- It will enable SNW, through the SNW Regional Director to focus on establishing the partnership and the outcomes to be delivered, as opposed to recruiting staff to deliver back office support
- It will enable SNW as a partnership to develop internal learning about the nature and extent of resources it needs internally, and which it can source externally
- It will enable understanding from the outset about the budget for organisational operation as distinct from that which will be focussed on the collaborative working to deliver identified outcomes.

1.16 The initial hosting of SNW will be the responsibility of Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC); this was agreed through a competitive process whereby interested parties were invited to bid to be the host organisation.

1.17 The SNW Members agreed that CCBC will be the lead authority for the initial 5 years of the Partnership. The specific role of CCBC is to:

- Be the lead and host authority and accountable body for the Sport North Wales Collaboration;
- Be responsible for the appointment and employment of the Regional Director;
- As lead and host authority, be allocated an agreed proportion of the Sport Wales Funding to contribute towards the Regional Director role and CCBC's role as the lead and host authority;
- As the host authority of the Collaboration, be the principal contact for engagement with Sport Wales in relation to the Sport Wales Funding and adherence to the Sport Wales governance requirements on behalf of the Collaboration;
- Manage the SNW Account and be responsible for the allocation of funding from the SNW Account as determined by the Governance Board;
- Engage employees to roles related to the management and operation of the Collaboration;
- Ensure that Partnership Board and Governance Board meetings are undertaken in accordance with the provisions for the board set out in Appendix 1 of the full business case.

1.18 In addition to the above, CCBC will provide administrative support to SNW.

### **Finance**

1.19 Currently, Sport Wales provides separate funding directly to the six local authorities, which are then responsible for spending in their respective regions. However, if SNW is approved, it will receive cumulative funding from Sport Wales (estimated at c. £2.7m million per annum for the region) directed through SNW and decisions on priority investment will be undertaken by the Partnership Board with over-sight by the Governance Board.

1.20 The indicative total 5 year funding for SNW from 2021/22 to 2025/26 is £13,529,494. This is for community sport; free swimming; Lottery local grant scheme; an Innovation fund; and strategic operating support. (The Lottery and Innovation Funds will be held and administered by Sport Wales but will be available for SNW to draw against).

1.21 There is no financial risk to Gwynedd Council - if CCBC are not the hosting authority, our Leisure and Active and Young People Sections will still be able to apply for the funding to deliver regionally significant projects.

### **Governance and Legal Framework**

1.22 The draft Heads of Terms (HOT) for the SNW Partnership is set out in full in Appendix 1 of the full business case.

1.23 Pursuant to section 2 Local Government Act 2000 and section 111 Local Government Act 1972 the SNW Members will enter into the Inter-Authority Governing Agreement to set out clearly their roles and responsibilities in relation to the governance and structure of SNW.

1.24 SNW Partners will sign up to the Partnership and the Head of Terms for an initial term of five years from the date on which the Agreement is validly executed by the SNW Members.

## **2 NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE**

2.1 On approval of the plan, it is intended to submit it for adoption on the 1st April 2021.

## **3 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION**

3.1 Engagement has taken place with the following partners/stakeholders:

- Isle of Anglesey County Council
- Conwy County Borough Council
- Denbighshire County Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Wrexham Borough Council
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- GWe (Regional Education Consortium)
- Disability Sport Wales
- Public Health Wales
- Bangor University
- Wrexham Glyndwr University
- Adra
- Cartrefi Conwy

- Wales and West Housing
- Clwyd Alun Housing Association
- Grwp Cynefin Housing Association
- North Wales Housing.

### **3.2 Views of the Statutory Officers:**

#### **i. Monitoring Officer:**

The report which has been prepared with legal input by Conwy Council in their lead role explains the governance context. I can respond to any questions in the meeting.

#### **ii. Head of Finance:**

I believe that the budget contained in 2.26 of the supplementary Business Case is a fair estimate as a starting point for the transition / establishment of 'Sport North Wales' and the proposed co-ordination.

The author of the report has confirmed that Gwynedd Council will not be required to contribute more than the current departmental budget, as the cost of the new Regional Director, etc., will be funded from an additional grant (from Sports Wales) in the first instance, and partly from additional commercial income after the first year.

### **Appendix**

A: Full Business Case