
NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD 24/06/22

Present:

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

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

Chief Officers - Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Iwan Davies (Conwy County Borough Council), Andrew Farrow (Flintshire Council), Richard Weight (Wrexham County Borough Council), Graham Boase (Denbighshire Council) and Sioned Williams (Gwynedd Council).

Officers in attendance - Dewi Morgan (Statutory Finance Officer - Host Authority), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer - Host Authority), Alwen Williams (Portfolio Director), Hedd Vaughan Evans (Operations Manager), Stuart Whitfield (Digital Programme Manager), Henry Aron (Energy Programme Manager), Robyn Lovelock (Growth Deal Programme Manager), David Matthews (Land and Property Programme Manager) and Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader - Host Authority).

1. ELECT A CHAIR

To elect Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn as Chair for 2022/23.

2. ELECT A VICE CHAIR 2022/23

To elect Councillor Mark Pritchard as Vice-chair for 2022/23.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Charlie McCoubrey, but it was noted that Cllr Emily Owen was delegating on his behalf, Cllr Ian Roberts, Professor Iwan Davies, but it was noted that Paul Spencer was delegating on his behalf, Yana Williams, Coleg Cambria, Neal Cockerton, Ian Bancroft and Dafydd Gibbard, and it was noted that officers were delegating on their behalf.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received

5. URGENT BUSINESS

None to note

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2022, as a true record.

7. ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The report was submitted by Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director.

RESOLVED

To consider and note the Annual Report for 2021-22.

To approve the submission of the Annual Report for 2021-22 to Welsh Government and UK Government as well as the local authority scrutiny committees.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Quarterly and annual reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is one of the requirements of the Final Deal Agreement. Following the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's consideration, the reports would be shared with Welsh Government, UK Government as well as the local authority scrutiny committees.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and the Councillors were congratulated for being elected following the election. It was noted that the report highlighted the successes of the Growth Deal over the past year. Attention was drawn to the delivery tracker which noted where each project had reached by 31 March 2022. It was explained that there had been some low points and challenges over the year, such as the Morlais project which was now operational, but it was funded via WEFO funding rather than through the Growth Deal. Attention was also drawn to the fact that some projects were behind their initial schedule.

The year's highlights were outlined, which included receiving a grant of £200,000 to develop low carbon technologies for homes, a grant of £500,000 to innovate to assist farmers to decarbonise, and £387,000 to undertake feasibility studies for the Smart Local Energy Systems. It was noted that visits had been held with Welsh Government and UK Government Ministers, and it was explained that further visits would be made over the next year in order to highlight the projects and benefits that can be seen across the area. It was noted that an Energy Strategy had been published with Welsh Government, and it was explained that further work needed to be carried out by implementing the Local Energy Action Plans.

It was explained in December that the first Full Business Case had been approved, namely the Digital Signalling Processing Centre in Bangor University. Some specific projects were explained in more detail. It was noted that much work had been done over the past twelve months, and that creating the report had been an opportunity to reflect on this work. In moving forward, it was explained that there would be an opportunity to be more visible across the counties and to build on the relations which had developed over the past two years.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Thanks were given for the report and it was asked who would present the annual report to the relevant scrutiny committees in the authorities. It was noted that the report could be presented by the Portfolio Director and the Operations Manager.
- The need to sell the projects and disseminate the good work undertaken was stressed.

8. LEAD MEMBER ROLES

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

DECISION

To confirm the Lead Member Roles for the NWEAB as follows:

Programme	Lead Member
Digital	Councillor Mark Pritchard
Energy	Councillor Llinos Medi
Land and Property	Councillor Jason McLellan
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn
Agri-Food and Tourism	Councillor Charlie McCoubrey
Transport	Councillor Ian Roberts

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In June 2020, the Board adopted a portfolio, programme and project management governance structure for the delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal, including the establishment of five Programme Boards to oversee operational delivery.

The governance structure included the appointment of a Lead Member to each of the five Programme Boards in addition to the existing Lead Member role for Transport. Following the local elections in May 2022 there is a need to re-confirm these roles.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that the Board had adopted a project, programme and portfolio government structure in order to deliver the Growth Deal. It was explained that the governance structure included the appointment of a Lead Member to each of the five Programme Boards in addition to the existing Lead Member role for Transport.

In order to ensure succession for the programmes, it was noted that there would only be one change to the roles, namely that Cllr Jason McLellan would be appointed Lead Member for Land and Property, taking on the role of the former leader of Denbighshire Council.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Support was expressed to adhering to the fields, and the importance of the Lead roles was noted when pressing ahead with the projects and to assist with any political problems arising.

The meeting commenced at 2:30pm and concluded at 3:15pm

CHAIRMAN