

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BWRDD TYFU CANOLBARTH CYMRU /
GROWING MID WALES BOARD HELD BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 21 JUNE 2022**

PRESENT

Ceredigion County Council Cabinet Members:

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader (In the Chair)

Councillor Clive Davies, Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration

Councillor Keith Henson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services and Carbon Management

Councillor Matthew Vaux, Cabinet Member for Housing, Legal and Governance, People and Organisation and Public Protection

Powys County Council Cabinet Members:

Councillor James Gibson-Watt, Leader

Councillor Aled Davies

Councillor Matthew Dorrance, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for a Fairer Powys

Councillor David Selby, Cabinet Member for a More Prosperous Powys

Officers:

Aggie Caesar-Homden, Partnership Manager - Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership, Growing Mid Wales (**ACH**)

Arwyn Davies, Corporate Manager: Growth and Enterprise, Ceredigion County Council (**AD**)

Justin Davies, Corporate Manager Core Finance, Ceredigion County Council (**JD**)

Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services, Ceredigion County Council (**LE**)

Eifion Evans, Chief Executive, Ceredigion County Council (**EE**)

Paul Griffiths, Advisor, Powys County Council (**PG**)

Russell Hughes-Pickering, Corporate Lead Officer: Economy & Regeneration, Ceredigion County Council (**RHP**)

Carwyn Jones-Evans, Growth and Major Developments Service Manager, Ceredigion County Council (**CJE**)

Ffion Lloyd, Solicitor, Ceredigion County Council (**FL**)

Cathy Martin, Operations Manager, Growing Mid Wales (**CM**)

David Owen, Digital Programme Manager, Growing Mid Wales (**DO**)

Clive Pinney, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Powys County Council (**CP**)

Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer: Legal and Governance, Ceredigion County Council (**EP**)

Sarah Page, Programme Delivery Manager, Powys County Council (**SP**)

Dr Caroline Turner, Chief Executive, Powys County Council (**CT**)

Nicola Williams, Strategic Programme Manager, Corporate Joint Committee, Powys County Council (**JW**)

Angharad Massow, Communications Officer, Growing Mid Wales (**AM**)

Government Observers:

Gareth Ashman, Head of Regional and Local Growth, UK Government Wales

Susan Corcoran, Regional & Local Growth Team, UK Government Wales

Darnley Reid, Regional & Local Growth Team, UK Government Wales

Peter James, Senior Strategy & Operations Manager, Welsh Government

Ann Watkin, Head of Strategy, Operations Alignment and Planning, Welsh Government

1.	CROESO AC YMDDIHEURIADAU / WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
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The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Catrin MS Davies, Councillor Amanda Jenner, Nigel Brinn Executive Director Economy and Environment PCC and Diane Reynolds, Head of Economy and Digital Services PCC.

2.	DATGANIADAU O FUDDIANNAU PERSONOL / DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST
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There were no declarations of interest reported.

3.	COFNODION DRAFFT Y CYFARFOD DIWETHAF / DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 11/03/22
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The minutes of the last meeting held on 11th March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

4.	PORTFFOLIO BARGEN TWF CANOLBARTH CYMRU / MWGD PORTFOLIO
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The Board received an update report.

Economic Advisory Group

The Board noted that an introductory meeting of the Economic Advisory Group had been held in March and that a work plan was being developed on how they could input into the Growth Deal. It was noted that there were two vacancies on the group and that these ought to come from Ceredigion. PG agreed to share the CVs of the EAG members with the Board.

Portfolio Assurance Review (PAR/Gate 0)

CM advised that in March a portfolio assurance review had been undertaken by an external independent review team appointed by Government. A report had been received, giving an overall Amber rating, which was widely acknowledged to be a good for a Portfolio at this stage of development.

The report acknowledged that the Mid Wales Growth Deal was progressing well with its preparations for delivery and that there was already a well-established and functioning governance structure and a Portfolio Management Office. The Review Team had found that successful delivery appeared feasible at this stage but there were issues that required management attention in order to ensure that the Portfolio was in a good position to start the delivery phase once initial funding had been secured.

The key issues that require management attention are:

- Resolution of the Portfolio Lead role
- Development of a Private Sector Investment Strategy
- Refinement of the Governance Structure and reporting to facilitate faster decision making
- Capacity and skills planning for the delivery phase
- Clarification of the timescales to achieving the first funding offer letter.

An Action Plan has been developed for the SROs, to ensure that the recommendations are addressed. This will be monitored by the Management Group and SROs.

Recruitment (Portfolio Management Office)

Angharad Massow had been appointed as Communications Officer, Tom Yeo had taken on the Energy Lead role and a Programme Manager to take forward the Sites and Premises Programme was being recruited. Discussions are ongoing for an Energy Officer role which will be fully funded by Welsh Government.

Private Sector Investment Strategy

An early draft of the strategy was in development. Officers were seeking clarity from Governments as to their expectations, before consulting with the Economic Advisory Group and Members, and finalising the document.

Programme Development – Digital

DO gave an update on the establishment of the Digital Programme Board and further development of the Programme Business Case. The Board had met twice and would continue to meet monthly to ensure the progression of this process. Programme Board members would determine which projects should be brought to fruition to meet the digital infrastructure investment objectives and contribute to the achievement of the Portfolio investment objectives.

Programme Development - Sites and Premises

Following successful completion of the 3 stage review of sites and premises, there now needed to be detailed site-specific work at each identified site. The programme manager position had been offered and it was hoped that the post would be filled by September. Discussions were ongoing with Government regarding potential funding to support the further development work to take the programme forward.

Project Development

Officers had met to discuss the current status of the projects particularly in terms of Strategic Outline Case (SOC) development and had identified a number of issues:

- Escalating construction costs making it difficult for projects to accurately forecast which could impact the position regarding Growth Deal ask and match funding.
- Some projects have not yet identified other sources of funding.

Although at SOC stage it is not essential to have match confirmed, we are expecting projects to be looking at options.

- Phosphates – there are concerns that the zones in Powys and Ceredigion will inhibit/hinder development proposals.

Business Case Appraisals

Project Sponsors are due to submit their SOC's (the first phase of Business Case development) by end of June. The Portfolio Management Office would lead on the appraisal process independently of both Local Authorities. External support from Hatch Ltd would provide technical support and input. This process would lead to a refresh of the Portfolio Business Case over the summer as required by Government.

An appraisal template was shared with the Board which will be completed by the GMW review team. A RAG rating was proposed for each section with an overall rating agreed. Subsequently a Business Case Appraisal summary would be presented, initially to the Management Group for review along with the Business Cases and recommendations then presented to the next available meeting of the GMW Board. An appraisal timeline was also shared with the Board.

Risk & Issue Register

An updated Risk & Issue Register was shared with the Board. Risks regarding resourcing to ensure projects and programmes move forward adequately, and escalating construction costs were highlighted.

5.	CYLLID / FINANCE
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The Board considered the report on the revenue outturn position of the Growing Mid Wales Board for 2021/22 and the 2022/23 revenue budget.

The Board agreed that the risk register needed to be updated to reflect the fact that neither government was financially supporting delivery of the Growth Deal.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Board notes the outturn position for 2021/2022**
- 2. That the Board approves the Annual Budget for the year 2022/2023 of £200,000 to be funded equally by Ceredigion and Powys County Councils as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.**

6.	PARTNERIAETH SGILIAU RHANBARTHOL CANOLBARTH CYMRU / MID WALES REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP
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ACH gave an update report on progress of the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership.

RSP Board Membership

RESOLVED that County Councillor Wyn Thomas be nominated from Ceredigion County Council and County Councillor David Selby from Powys County Council to serve on the RSP Board.

Green Skills Report

Launched on 23 March 2022 and shared with Welsh Government.

RSP Grant Award Report Submission

Submitted to Welsh Government and funding approved.

Young Persons Guarantee

Hatch Associates had been commissioned to provide technical support for a desktop report to be submitted to Welsh Government. They would conduct workshops with partners to understand barriers to provision and progression as part of the desktop research report and Action Plan.

Board Membership and Establishment of Cluster Groups

As previously agreed by the GMW Board, the RSP Chair and RSP Manager had reviewed current RSP Board membership and the establishment of a number of cluster groups. Following this review, initial cluster groups had been established:

- Training Providers.
- Businesses
- Public Services

ACH confirmed that National Training Federation Wales was represented on the Training Providers cluster group. She also advised that the group had been looking into recruitment into the Social Care sector and would be reporting back. The RSP was working closely with both Health Boards in the region. She was asked about apprenticeships and advised that there was little appetite amongst employers to take on apprentices. She was asked about opportunities for developing leadership skills for SMEs and she said that providers were keen to assist.

In addition to these cluster groups, Policy Task and Finish Groups would also be established for specific areas of Welsh Government policy work.

The RSP Board Annual Meeting would be held on 11th July 2022 with quarterly meetings thereafter in line with Welsh government requirements.

Forward Work Programme

Initial discussions had been undertaken with RSP Managers and WG in relation to key deliverables for the next twelve months and beyond contained in the draft Guidance Note. The content would be refreshed on a six-monthly basis and reissued to RSPs to reflect any changes to policy direction and progress against key milestones.

Key deliverables would be required for each of the following areas:

- Employment and Skills plans 2022-25
- Digital skills
- Net Zero skills

- National Occupational Standards (NOS)
- Further Education and Apprenticeships
- Welsh Language.

7.	UNRHYW FATER ARALL / ANY OTHER BUSINESS
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None.

8.	DYDDIADAU CYFARFODYDD Y DYFODOL / DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS
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26 September 2022
12 December 2022

**County Councillor Bryan Davies
Chair**