



Powys Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Observations to the Lead Officer and Chair of Powys PSB regarding progress on Step 10:

The Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee met on the 18th July 2019 and considered the following documents:

- PSB Scrutiny Mid Wales Growth Deal
- Mid Wales Growth Deal – Ambition Workshops update

The Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee thank Nigel Brinn, Corporate Director Economy and Environment for attending scrutiny.

Scrutiny make the following observations:

Step 10 of the Powys Well-Being Plan is defined as ‘Develop a strong brand to promote and attract inward investment into Powys’. This is a narrow aim and it will be necessary to be far more ambitious than simply ‘developing a strong brand’ to promote and attract inward investment. It is understood that the Well-being Steps are effectively set, and it would not be possible to amend them without repeating the original process by which they were agreed. Therefore, scrutiny welcome the use of the Mid Wales Growth Deal as the vehicle to deliver Step 10 given that this widens the scope for economic growth considerably, however, would make the following cautionary remarks:

1. That the Mid Wales Growth Deal is not Powys specific but necessarily covers a region that extends beyond the county boundary. PSB scrutiny are interested specifically in the actions that are taken in respect of Powys and will wish to see specifically the impacts the Mid Wales Growth Deal is having on the local economy.
2. It is understood that the reason for the existence of the Public Service Board with its long term vision and partnership working is to enable steps to be taken for the benefit of the community by closer working which goes beyond what is currently taking place. The delegation of Step 10 to the Mid Wales Growth Deal whilst welcomed in the widening of the remit of Step 10 as outlined above does raise concerns that existing joint working is being utilised rather than the PSB being a lever to facilitate new joint working. This is not to say that scrutiny believe that in relation to Step 10 it would be inappropriate to use the Mid Wales Growth Deal. However, scrutiny are mindful that, if for some reason the Mid Wales Growth Deal does not proceed as expected it will be necessary for there to be alternative arrangements to achieve Step 10. Scrutiny will also be attentive to the extent that existing joint working is being used to fulfil some or any of the other Well-being Steps.

The work to date on the Mid Wales Growth Deal was noted together with the forward plan including with reference to the progress of the other City/Growth Deals in Wales.

The Mid Wales Growth Deal links to:

- Step 3 of the Well-being Plan 'Work with and influence others to improve our transport infrastructure, our existing transport links and develop a sustainable and integrated approach for planning and delivery', and
- Step 6 of the Well-being Plan 'Develop a holistic approach to skills and lifelong learning, which offers a range of formal and informal opportunities, including apprenticeships and traineeships'
-

And the Mid Wales Growth Deal has a not dissimilar time frame to that which the PSB are working to:

- 15 years for the Mid Wales Growth Deal and Towards 2040 for the Well-being Plan

These links are noted and scrutiny urge that appropriate links are made between the Mid Wales Growth Deal and the work undertaken for the Powys PSB Steps to ensure that any duplication and potentially conflicting work is avoided.

Scrutiny expressed concern regarding the forecasts for a declining working age population due to outmigration and the expressed target of 23,000 skilled full-time jobs to increase GVA. There is an urgent need to progress the learning and skills proposals for both the Mid Wales Growth Deal and Step 6 of the Well-being Plan to both help retain working age people in Powys and to help raise the GVA of the region.

It is imperative that the Mid Wales Growth Deal work with the private sector to ensure a degree of realism within the programme. The role of the public sector is to enable the private sector to flourish. The proposals to support a foundation economy are welcomed without which there will be no opportunity to grow.

Recommended that:

- **The Step 10 Lead has regard to the observations outlined above**
- **That PSB Scrutiny request an update on Step 10 Spring/Summer 2020 including comments on the observations outlined above**

Membership of the Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee on 18th July 2019:

Neil Evans (Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service) (Chair), Angela Davies (Powys County Council), Trish Buchan (Powys Teaching Health Board), Owen James (Powys Teaching Health Board), Ann Webb (Brecon Beacons National Park), County Councillor A Williams (Powys County Council) and Ruth Parry-Wright (PAVO).