



## REPORT TO THE GROWING MID WALES BOARD

10<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**REPORT TITLE:** Regional Learning & Skills Partnership for Mid Wales:  
Establishment, Governance & Management Report

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision / Discussion

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### 1. Purpose

This document sets out:

- What the Regional Learning & Skills Partnership for Mid Wales (the “RLSP”) is;
- How the RLSP will be established;
- How the RLSP will be governed and managed;
- The RLSP vision, mission and objectives;
- The RLSP Terms of Reference (ToR).

### 2. What is the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership for Mid Wales and why is it established?

The RLSP will be established by Ceredigion County Council (CCC) and Powys County Council (PCC) (“the Local Authorities”) to provide a focus for skills in Mid Wales, and to drive economic growth by ensuring investment in the right skills.

It will support the delivery of a Post-16 learning offer which is fit for purpose for the Mid Wales economic area and which responds to the needs of local and regional employers. Given the significance of choices made by learners at the age of 14, the RLSP will engage with schools and others to support effective alignment across the region of progression routes to support the early development of skills and appropriate qualifications.

### 3. Establishing the RLSP

The RLSP will be established in two stages:

1. There will be an interim period from 1st October 2020 (or as soon as is practicably possible) until 31st March 2021 during which time

the RLSP will have been established as an interim body. The interim body will make arrangements for establishment of the permanent body. During the initial period the RLSP will focus on the key areas of work required, in order to provide a clear programme for the permanent body to pursue, including the key areas of structure, needs identification, partnership building and future planning.

2. The permanent body will be established from 1st April 2021.

**4. Our vision** - as set out in the Mid Wales Growth Deal Inter-Authority Agreement (“the IAA”)

Our vision is to align the public and private sectors in order to address the supply and demand issues for an effective agile workforce, with the appropriate skill level to attract inward investment to Mid Wales and improve communication networks between sectors to understand and identify learning and career pathways into long term, appropriate employment for the citizens of Mid Wales.

**5. Our mission** – with slight variation from that set out in the IAA

The RLSP Board will act as a stakeholder group engaging and consulting with specific sectors, industries and regions:

- To identify and respond to the needs of employers and learners across Mid Wales.
- To engage with employers, sectors and stakeholders to identify current and future skills needs across the region, and plan accordingly
- To align activity to future demand and stimulate innovation through learning and employment, underpinned by a continuous focus on entrepreneurship.
- To enable an inclusive regional response to Welsh Government policy and initiatives
- To align activity with the skills requirements of the Growing Mid Wales Partnership,

**6. Our objectives** – with slight variation from that set out in the IAA

- To work with key stakeholders to identify skill requirements from the private sector in Mid Wales
- Establish methodologies to identify future employment opportunities across all sectors
- Establish a curriculum strategy group to align learning pathways and progression routes for all learners from KS4 / 5 into work-based learning training programmes / Further Education / Higher Education or a regional apprenticeship scheme or occupational schemes.

- Introduce Higher Education degree and masters courses aligned to the future skills agenda for employment opportunities in Mid Wales
- Establish a regional apprenticeship scheme (including shared apprenticeships) that bridges and aligns public and private sectors which recognizes the transferability of skills.
- Produce innovative career guidance for all learners in Mid Wales to link learning and career pathways
  - Develop the concept of ‘Centres of Excellence’ in Mid Wales
  - Work with a range of partners to ensure opportunities for career-long support for upskilling the current workforce, including those in short term employment
- All of the actions would be underpinned by a strong bilingual focus contributing, via the unique bilingual education system and workforce across Mid Wales, to the vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050

## 7. How will it be governed?

Mid Wales partners have worked together to set out governance and management arrangements for the Mid Wales Growth Deal. As part of this PCC and CCC have signed an Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA).

The IAA puts in place clear arrangements about how the two Local Authorities will work together, the terms of reference for key decision-making and advisory forums – and Host Authority functions.

The IAA contains the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the RLSP. The ToR as at September 2020 are provided at the end of this document for ease of reference (see **Appendix 1**), however the current version of the IAA (or updated as applicable) master document should be referred to for accuracy.

A secondary IAA will be developed as we near Heads of Terms to ensure we continue to evolve and develop these arrangements to meet the needs of the Growth Deal for the delivery phase.

The RLSP Board is one of three advisory boards which feed into the Growing Mid Wales Joint Committee which is a decision-making board. This structure is underpinned by the operational Management Group and Regional Working Groups (see **figure 1**).

Internally, the interim RLSP governance framework will be as per **figure 2**.

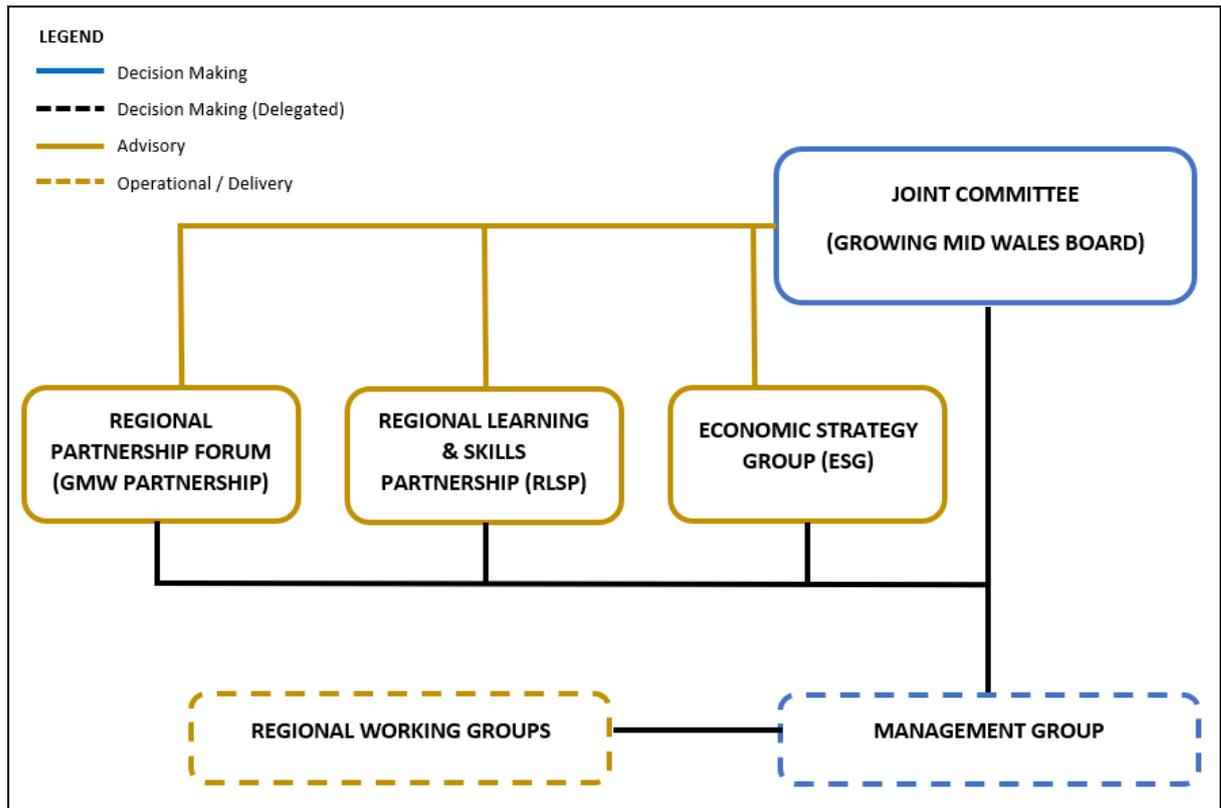


Figure 1 Mid Wales Growth Deal Governance Framework

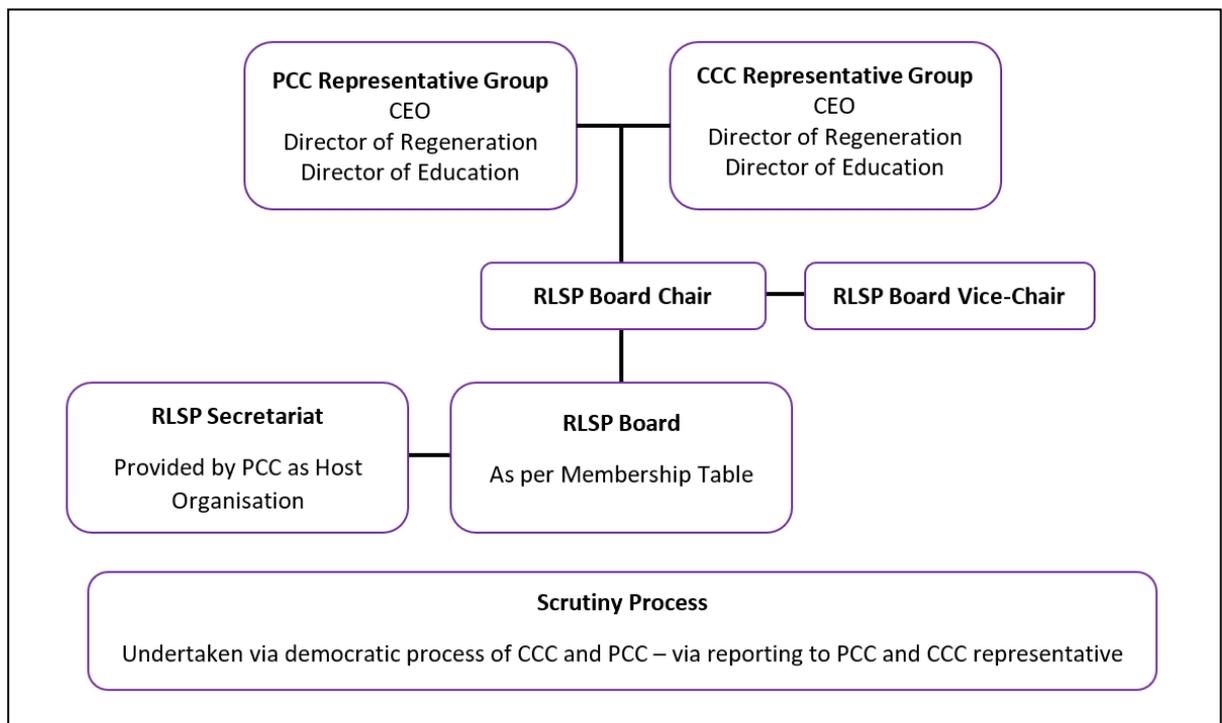


Figure 2 Interim Governance Structure for RLSP

## 8. Electing the Chair

Recommendations will be made to the Joint Committee for a decision, and will be in keeping with guidance from Welsh Government, which requires the chair to be a representative from the private sector.

## 9. Membership

The interim IAA holds the Interim ToR for the RLSP but working towards a permanent board for the RLSP from March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, new membership needs to be established.

The ToR set out a proposed membership table for the RLSP. The Local Authorities agree that the table below will replace the originally proposed table:

<b>Membership of the RLSP</b>	
2 x Higher Education Representatives	One representative from each of the Universities (Aberystwyth and UWTSD)
2 x Further Education Representatives	One representative from each of the colleges (NPTC and Coleg Sir Gâr)
2 x Education & Skills Representatives	One officer from each Local Authority
2 x Strategic Workforce Planning leads	One officer from each Local Authority
2 x Regeneration Representatives	One officer from each Local Authority
2 x Health Representatives	One representative from each of the Health Boards (Powys Teaching Health Board and Hywel Dda Health Board)
Training providers	National Training Federation for Wales + WBL providers from each LA
<b>Industry / Employers</b>  The Strategic Growth Priorities for Growing Mid Wales are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture, Food &amp; Drink</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Supporting Enterprise</li> <li>• Skills &amp; Employment</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Strengthened Tourism Offer</li> <li>• Applied Research &amp; Innovation</li> <li>• Digital</li> </ul>	A representative each from the sectors derived from the regional vision, with a focus on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tourism – to include hospitality and catering</li> <li>2. Manufacturing</li> <li>3. Agriculture and the land-based economy</li> <li>4. Public Services – which might include local and national government, emergency services &amp; defence</li> <li>5. Foundation sectors *</li> <li>6. Digital Services</li> </ol> <p>*This “sector” is particularly significant in its relative scale in Mid Wales and includes infrastructure, utilities, food processing, retailing and distribution, and health, education and welfare. This would merit further breakdown, with particular merit in prioritizing considering representation from health and social care (education is represented in other segments)</p>

These areas should all be covered by the representation that is proposed for the RLSP.	
Economic Strategy Group Mid Wales	Representative to be nominated
Growing Mid Wales Partnership	Representative to be nominated
Careers Wales	
Job Centre Plus	
RLP Manager	
Other	Other industry, employer groups, higher education institutions or third sector partners to be invited as required. These could include local voluntary associations and education or training partners from outside the two authorities who might wish to work within the two authorities, or who can offer routes into education or training for the people of the Mid Wales region.

## 10. Meeting Frequency

In accordance with the RLSP ToR “meetings of the RLSP Board are to be scheduled on a bi-monthly basis will be reviewed as necessary; however, it shall be a requirement for the RLSP Board to meet at least once every quarter.” In addition, it is agreed that the RLSP will meet two weeks prior to Joint Committee in order to provide timely feedback.

## 11. Management of the RLSP

The RLSP will work closely with the Management Group and the Programme Management Office (PMO) of the Mid Wales Growth Deal in order to ensure close alignment.

The Administration Team will be the same as for the Mid Wales Growth Deal.

## 12. Programme Management Office (PMO)

Alongside regional governance, the development of a Programme Management Office (PMO) to support the development of the Mid Wales Growth Deal that sits underneath the GMW Management Group is currently underway.

To date the PMO has remained flexible in its design and operation – as requirements evolve over time. Proposals for further development and expansion will be considered utilising officers from both Local Authorities and relevant regional partners working together as one team.

The PMO will play a key role in:

- Governance Support: Co-ordinating and servicing the business needs of regional committees.
- Operational Management: People, Budget, Risk & Issues, Strategic Planning & Activity Reporting
- Programme Development: Organising and co-ordination of workstreams, project engagement, and project development/sponsor support.
- Communication & Stakeholder Engagement: Co-ordinating key messages and communications activity.
- Co-ordination across wider regional activity: EU funding (RET), Transport (TRaCC) & Regeneration Funding.

Establishing the right capacity and capability to deliver our business needs as part of developing and delivering the Growth Deal has been deemed essential by the Board. Initial funding from the Local Authorities alongside Welsh Government will help further develop this capacity, with active proposals being developed through the Welsh European Funding Office.

The staffing structure of the office will continue to be developed in tandem with the evolving needs of the Growth Deal – and to align with the expectations of both authorities.

## **Appendix 1: Terms of Reference**

A copy of our Terms of Reference (ToR) is provided below. The ToR are held within the Inter Authority Agreement for the Mid Wales Growth Deal. The ToR are correct as at September 2020 but the master IAA should be referred to for updates and accuracy.

### **1. Name**

- 1.1 The name and current working title of the board shall be the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (“the RLSP Board”) for Mid Wales, Partneriaeth Dysgu a Sgiliau Rhanbarthol Canolbarth Cymru

### **2. Vision**

- 2.1 To align the public and private sectors in order to address the supply and demand issues for an effective agile workforce, with the appropriate skill level to attract inward investment to Mid Wales and improve communication networks between sectors to understand and identify learning and career pathways into appropriate long term employment for the citizens of Mid Wales.

### **3. Mission**

- 3.1 The RLSP Board will act as a stakeholder group engaging and consulting with specific sectors, industries and regions:
  - To identify and respond to the needs of employers and learners across Mid Wales.
  - To engage with employers, sectors and stakeholders to identify current and future skills needs across the region and plan accordingly
  - To align activity to future demand and stimulate innovation through learning and employment
  - To enable an inclusive regional response to Welsh Government policy and initiatives
  - To align activity with the skills requirements of the Growing Mid Wales Partnership

### **4. Our Objectives – as set out in the IAA**

- 4.1 To work with the Economic Strategy Group (ESG) to identify skill requirements from the private sector in Mid Wales
- 4.2 Establish methodologies to identify future employment opportunities across all sectors

- 4.3 Establish a curriculum strategy group to align learning pathways and progression routes for all learners from KS4/5 into work-based learning training programmes / Further Education / Higher Education or a regional apprenticeship scheme or occupational schemes.
- 4.4 Introduce Higher Education degree and masters courses aligned to the future skills agenda for employment opportunities in Mid Wales
- 4.5 Establish a regional apprenticeship scheme (including shared apprenticeships) that bridges and aligns public and private sectors and which recognizes the transferability of skills.
- 4.6 Produce innovative career guidance for all learners in Mid Wales to link learning and career pathways.
- 4.7 Develop the concept of 'Centres of Excellence' in Mid Wales.
- 4.8 Work with a range of partners to ensure opportunities for career-long support for upskilling the current workforce, including those in short term employment.
- 4.9 All of the actions would be underpinned by a strong bilingual focus contributing, via the unique bilingual education system and workforce across Mid Wales, to the vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050

## 5. Membership

- 5.1 The **interim membership** of the RLSP board agreed in the IAA of was to be determined by nomination from each of the following stakeholder groups, with each invited to submit a representative for one seat.

Higher Education	Agreement between Vice Chancellors
Further Education Training providers	Agreement between Principals National Training Federation for Wales
Local Government Regeneration	Regeneration and Lifelong Learning Corporate Lead Officer / Head of Service
Third Sector	Nomination for CVC's in Mid Wales
Industry / Employers	Economic Strategy Group Mid Wales
	Growing Mid Wales Partnership
	Cluster Group Chair Tourism and Events
	Cluster Group Chair Business Growth
	Cluster Group Chair Infrastructure
	Cluster Group Chair Agricultural and Bio-Security
	Cluster Group Chair Low Carbon Energy
	Cluster Group Chair Food & Farming
Training Providers	Provider Cluster Group Chair
Careers Wales	Careers Wales
DWP / Job Centre Plus	Job Centre Plus
RLSP Manager	RLSP

Other Industry / Employers	Various industry and employer groups to be invited according to need
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It is proposed that the membership is amended and should now consist of those in the table below:

<b>Membership of the RLSP</b>	
2 x Higher Education Representatives	One representative from each of the Universities (Aberystwyth and UWTSD)
2 x Further Education Representatives	One representative from each of the colleges (NPTC and Coleg Sir Gâr)
2 x Education & Skills Representatives	One officer from each Local Authority
2 x Strategic Workforce Planning leads	One officer from each Local Authority
2 x Regeneration Representatives	One officer from each Local Authority
2 x Health Representatives	One representative from each of the Health Boards (Powys Teaching Health Board and Hywel Dda Health Board)
Training providers	National Training Federation for Wales + WBL providers from each LA
<p><b>Industry / Employers</b></p> <p>The Strategic Growth Priorities for Growing Mid Wales are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture, Food &amp; Drink</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Supporting Enterprise</li> <li>• Skills &amp; Employment</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Strengthened Tourism Offer</li> <li>• Applied Research &amp; Innovation</li> <li>• Digital</li> </ul> <p>These areas should all be covered by the representation that is proposed for the RLSP.</p>	<p>A representative each from the sectors derived from the regional vision, with a focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Tourism – to include hospitality and catering</li> <li>8. Manufacturing</li> <li>9. Agriculture and the land-based economy</li> <li>10. Public Services – which might include local and national government, emergency services &amp; defence</li> <li>11. Foundation sectors *</li> <li>12. Digital Services</li> </ol> <p>*This “sector” is particularly significant in its relative scale in Mid Wales and includes infrastructure, utilities, food processing, retailing and distribution, and health, education and welfare. This would merit further breakdown, with particular merit in prioritizing considering representation from health and social care (education is represented in other segments)</p>
Economic Strategy Group Mid Wales	Representative to be nominated
Growing Mid Wales Partnership	Representative to be nominated
Careers Wales	
Job Centre Plus	
RLP Manager	

Other	Other industry, employer groups, higher education institutions or third sector partners to be invited as required. These could include local voluntary associations and education or training partners from outside the two authorities who might wish to work within the two authorities, or who can offer routes into education or training for the people of the Mid Wales region.
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- 5.2 Observer members and co-opted experts may be invited as needs arise
- 5.3 The RLSP Board shall exist for 1 year and then be re-nominated. Members shall be eligible for re-nomination
- 5.4 The RLSP Board shall appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair at its first meeting bi-annually. If it is necessary for the RLSP Board to appoint an Interim Chair, the appointment will be reviewed every 3 months.
- 5.5 Failure to attend three consecutive RLSP Board meetings will result in a new nomination being sought to represent the sector / stakeholder group
- 5.6 The secretariat function will be fulfilled by the officers employed to undertake the work of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership
- 5.7 Members may appoint substitutes to represent their sector when necessary, all names of nominated substitutes to be sent to the Secretariat in advance of the meetings

## **6. Core Principles and Responsibilities**

- 6.1 Members of the RLSP Board shall be expected to work on the basis of mutual support, shared values and a culture of joint working and collaboration
- 6.2 Members of the RLSP Board commit to the Nolan Principles
  - 6.2.1 Integrity – members should avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work
  - 6.2.2 Objectivity – Members should act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit and for the widest benefit of others
  - 6.2.3 Accountability – Every Member will act on behalf of the stakeholders or groups they represent, and it is expected that every member will ensure that reasonable arrangements are in place to report back on their work

- 6.2.4 Openness – Members should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner
- 6.2.5 Confidentiality – Every Member should respect confidentiality, and where relevant ensure that confidential material is protected and that it is not use without permission from the RLSP Board (as a collective) or for private purposes
- 6.2.6 Accountability – every member is accountable to the public for their decisions and must submit themselves to scrutiny if necessary
- 6.2.7 Honesty – every member should be truthful
- 6.2.8 Declarations – Every member should declare any interest that could influence discussions or decisions taken by the RLSP Board, and they will be recorded by the secretariat
- 6.2.9 Promoting equality and respect for others – Every member should undertake their responsibilities with due regard to the need to promote equal opportunity for all and demonstrate respect and consideration towards others

### **6.3 Members of the RLSP Board are expected:**

- 6.3.1 To co-operate strategically on behalf of stakeholders across Mid Wales
- 6.3.2 To attend regular meetings of the RLSP Board
- 6.3.3 To prepare thoroughly for all meetings by reading the minutes and accompanying papers as well as to contact and discuss any matter that is relevant to the work of the RLSP Board with others they represent as required
- 6.3.4 To be prepared to contribute to meaningful discussions at RLSP Board meetings and to listen, give due consideration to and respect the opinions and views of others
- 6.3.5 To communicate information about any work or development relevant to their sector
- 6.3.6 To convey and promote the decisions of the RLSP Board within their sector and repost, on a regular basis, the work of the RLSP Board
- 6.3.7 To recognise and respect the worth and contribution of each member
- 6.3.8 To represent the RLSP Board effectively on other groups, forums and partnerships as required and to ensure that the

views of the RLSP Board are conveyed clearly and firmly on all occasions

6.3.9 To participate in meetings, events and other activities organised by the RLSP Board from time to time.

## **7. Operational Procedures of the Board**

- 7.1 The Regional Learning and Skills Partnership host organisation (....) will fulfil the administrative and financial functions of the RLSP Board and shall be responsible for providing secretariat functions to the RLSP Board
- 7.2 Meetings of the RLSP Board are to be scheduled on a bi-monthly basis will be reviewed as necessary; however, it shall be a requirement for the RLSP Board to meet at least once every quarter
- 7.3 The Chair of the RLSP Board shall be responsible for calling meetings of the RLSP Board with the support of the secretariat
- 7.4 The secretariat shall provide written notice of the time, date and location of the RLSP Board meeting to all members at least 10 working days before the date fixed for the meeting
- 7.5 If a member of the RLSP Board wishes to include an item on the agenda of the RLSP Board meeting, they should notify the secretariat at least 5 working days prior to the date of the meeting. The Chair of the RLSP Board and secretariat shall agree the final content of the agenda for the RLSP Board meeting
- 7.6 If a member of the RLSP Board wishes to present a written report to the RLSP Board, they should ensure that the secretariat receives an electronic version of the report at least 7 working days before the date of the meeting. The Chair of the RLSP Board has the discretion to take any items that are of an urgent or informative nature that would benefit the discussion at the meeting
- 7.7 The secretariat shall distribute the final agenda and reports for the RLSP Board meeting electronically at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting
- 7.8 For RLSP Board meetings, 6 members (including the Chair or the Vice-Chair in their absence) shall comprise a quorum
- 7.9 The RLSP Board shall conduct its business in an open and transparent way and in a spirit of consensus and mutual respect. Therefore, the RLSP Board shall endeavour to arrive at a decision on matters by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the Chair of the RLSP Board shall ask for a vote and a simple majority shall carry the vote. If necessary, the Chair of the RLSP Board shall ask for a second vote or shall use their casting vote

- 7.10 It shall be expected that decisions of the RLSP Board will be implemented. However, where executive authority is required, decisions shall be referred to the decision-making bodies of individual authorities / stakeholders for consideration and the outcomes of these considerations shall be reported back to the RLSP Board.
- 7.11 The secretariat shall be responsible for keeping minutes of the RLSP Board and distributing them to members of the RLSP Board
- 7.12 Copies of these minutes shall be made available by the secretariat on request
- 7.13 The Welsh and English languages have equal status and the RLSP Board will work to Ceredigion's Welsh Language Standards

## **8. Accountability and Resources**

- 8.1 ..... as host will monitor and be accountable for the financial management of the RLSP Board to ensure that the funder's and financial guidelines of the Authority are followed
- 8.2 Scrutiny of the RLSP Board will be undertaken through the democratic process of Ceredigion and Powys and through regular updates to the Local Authority representative groups (Chief Executives; Regeneration and Education Directors)
- 8.3 **Finance:** Welsh Government currently supports the existing Regional Skills Partnerships, each at a cost of circa £150k per year. Discussions with Welsh Government confirm that the Mid Wales Regional Learning and Skills Partnership would be funded in the same way, and to the same level as the other partnerships. Additionally, a commitment to a half-year funding from October 2020 has been made to facilitate the establishing of the new partnership, and previously a sum of £30k was committed to support the work leading to the setting up of the partnership.

## **9. Amending the Constitution**

- 9.1 The RLSP Board shall undertake an annual self-assessment to assess the effectiveness of the RLSP Board, including its future consideration
- 9.2 The RLSP Board shall review the terms of reference on an annual basis and amend it as necessary

## **10. Commitment**

- 10.1 Each member shall sign a copy of the RLSP Board's terms of reference on behalf of the organisation they represent, as a sign of their support and commitment to the vision, mission and objectives of the Regional Learning & Skills Partnership for Mid Wales, Partneriaeth Dysgu a Sgiliau Rhanbarthol Canolbarth Cymru.

**Signed:**  
**On behalf of:**  
**Date:**