

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BWRDD TYFU CANOLBARTH CYMRU / GROWING
MID WALES BOARD HELD BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2021**

PRESENT

Ceredigion County Council Cabinet Members:

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, Leader of Ceredigion County and Cabinet Member for Policy Performance, Partnerships and Democratic Services **(EAG) (Chair)**

Councillor Dafydd Edwards: Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services together with Housing **(DE)**

Councillor Catrin Miles: Cabinet Member for Learning Services and Lifelong Learning **(CM)**

Councillor Rhodri Evans: Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration **(RE)**

Councillor Gareth Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement Services and Public Protection Services **(GL)**

Powys County Council Cabinet Members:

Councillor Rosemarie Harris Leader of Powys County Council **(RH)**

Councillor Aled Davies, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transportation **(AD)**

Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for Education and Property **(PD)**

Councillor Heulwen Hulme, Portfolio Holder for Environment **(HH)**

Councillor Iain McIntosh, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing **(IM)**

Economic Strategy Group:

Fiona Stewart, Chair of the Economic Strategy Group **(FS)**

Steve Hughson, Vice Chair of the Economic Strategy Group **(SH)**

Officers:

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

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

Carwyn Jones-Evans, Strategic Manager Mid Wales Growth Deal **(CJE)**

Clive Pinney, Solicitor to the Council, Powys County Council **(CP)**

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

Nigel Brinn, Corporate Director Economy & Environment, Powys County Council **(NB)**

Paul Griffiths, Advisor **(PG)**

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

Arwyn Davies, Corporate Manager Ceredigion County Council **(AD)**

Elin Prysor, Ceredigion County Council **(EP)**

Ffion Lloyd, Ceredigion County Council **(PA)**

Aggie Caesar-Homden, MWRSP Manager **(ACH)**

Stephen Johnson, Corporate Lead Officer: Finance & Procurement, Ceredigion County Council **(SJ)**

Cathy Martin, Ceredigion County Council **(CM)**

1. CROESO AC YMDDIHEURIADAU / WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
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There were no apologies for absence.

2.	DATGANIADAU O FUDDIANT PERSONOL / DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST
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Fiona Stewart and Steve Hughson declared interests in item 5 Economic Strategy Group and Fiona Stewart also declared an interest in item 7 the Mid Wales Growth Deal Portfolio Business Case.

3.	COFNODION DRAFFT Y CYFARFOD DIWETHAF 11/06/21 / DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 11/06/21
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The minutes of the last meeting held on 11th June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

4.	PARTNERIAETH SGILIAU RHANBARTHOL / REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP
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The RSP Manager gave a progress report. The RSP Board's inaugural meeting had been held on 12th May 2021 and Adrian Watson, Head of School, Centre for Alternative Technology, was appointed as the Interim RSP Board Chair. Aggie Caesar-Homden had commenced in role as the MWRSP Manager on 8th June 2021. The RSP Employer Engagement Officer had been appointed and would commence in post on 4th October 2021. Recruitment of an RSP Data Development Officer had been unsuccessful.

FS referred to the issue of communications with businesses. She wanted a database of businesses in Mid Wales to be created so they all could have information at the same time. ACH advised that this would be looked at once the Employer Engagement Officer was in post. FS also noted the need for an audit of the skills needed by businesses and the Chair noted that this was one of the reasons why the RSP had been established.

The Board noted the proposed membership of the RSP Board. RH stressed the need to have business representatives on the Board and it was noted that the two Councils had the right to agree the composition of the RSP Board.

The Board's approval was sought to appoint the current interim Chair as the substantive Chair until the annual RSP Board meeting in May 2022. It was confirmed that the RSP Board would appoint a Deputy Chair for the same period.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the current interim RSP Board Chair is confirmed as the substantive RSP Board Chair until May 2022.**
- 2. To give delegated authority to the RSP Chair in conjunction with the RSP Manager, to review current membership and establish a number of Cluster Groups. An update report will be presented to the next GMW Board meeting to approve.**

5. GRWP STRATEGAETH ECONOMAIDD / ECONOMIC STRATEGY GROUP

The Board received the report on the role of the Economic Strategy Group. As the Growth Deal moved from strategy and policy towards the more detailed development of projects it was important to consider the current remit of the ESG and the way the group was constituted. It was particularly important as several ESG members would have an interest in Growth Deal projects as they were developed over the coming months. Independent external advice had been commissioned to examine the process to date, compliance with best practice and options for the future involvement of the ESG and business leaders. The consultant's report had found that declarations of interest had been correctly managed and recorded to date but that as the projects were developed there was a risk of conflicts of interest.

The consultant's recommendation was to take the opportunity now to fundamentally review the approach to private sector engagement in the Growth Deal, and therefore the role/existence of the ESG. This would be the safest option in terms of protecting the ESG Members and the councils against criticism of governance arrangements and accusations of conflict or bias.

It was proposed to conclude the Strategic and Policy phase of the Growth Deal in the lead up to the Final Deal Agreement with the ESG.

A further report would be brought back to the GMW Board on detailed proposals for future Business Leader engagement.

RESOLVED that Option 1 as described within the consultant's report is adopted.

The Chair and RH thanked the members of the ESG for their work in the strategy phase of the Growth Deal.

6. LLYWODRAETHIANT / GOVERNANCE

A third Interim Authority Agreement was being drafted with the help of external solicitors. A meeting would be arranged at the end of October or start of November to consider it.

7. BARGEN TWF CANOLBARTH CYMRU / MID WALES GROWTH DEAL

The Board considered the Portfolio Business Case for the Mid Wales Growth Deal for submission to UK and Welsh Governments. The Portfolio Business Case had been developed by the Portfolio Management Office (PoMO) with support from Hatch Ltd and officers from both Powys and Ceredigion County Councils. The purpose of the Portfolio Business Case was to provide an overview of the scope, function and arrangements for the Mid Wales Growth Deal Portfolio, on the basis of an initial set of Programme and Project proposals.

The Portfolio currently consisted of a shortlisted set of 2 Programmes and 9 Projects that would be considered for further development. The GMW Board would consider the detail of these initial business cases in due course and would be managing the Growth Deal as a Portfolio. Approval by the Board at this stage did not guarantee funding for these initial set of programmes/projects, but signified that these options were to be developed further at the cost/risk of the proposers and that the GMW Board would review the detail of the proposals as part of their business case development.

The Portfolio Business Case was a live, and iterative document that would need regular review. It was anticipated the Portfolio Business Case would need to be updated after the Accounting Officer Review, to implement or plan for the realisation of its recommendations to coincide with the Final Deal Agreement. It would be updated on an annual basis to coincide with the annual reporting and funding arrangements set out by the UK and Welsh Governments, but the Board would be able to determine whether it should be reviewed more frequently. Cathy Martin would map out an assurance plan for the meeting in December.

RESOLVED

- 1. to recommend the Portfolio Business Case to the Cabinets of Ceredigion and Powys County Councils for approval.**
- 2. To mandate the Portfolio Management Office to undertake further development work.**

8. UNRHYW FATER ARALL / ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed to issue a press release acknowledging the support given by the ESG.

9. DYDDIADAU CYFARFODYDD NESAF / DATE OF NEXT MEETING
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The next scheduled meeting was on 10 December and a further meeting would be arranged for the end of October or start of November to consider the third iteration of the Inter Authority Agreement.

**County Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn
Chair**