

The North Wales Growth Deal

*North Wales, the economy of the future: **Smart, Resilient, Connected**, where economic growth is powered by innovation in high value economic sectors*

Status Report for County Councils on the North Wales Growth Bid arising from the North Wales Leaders and Chief Executive Group Meeting on the 17th November 2017

The Leaders and Chief Executives Group met on the 17th November 2017.

The meeting received a presentation on the detail of the projects within the Bid Themes: Smart, Resilient and Connected.

The Leaders reported that the presentation made them enthusiastic and eager to take the bid forward. A confident resolution was passed:

“The Regional Economic Growth Deal Bid narrative paper (the strategic outline) and the projects list (the specific strategic interventions) are approved as a statement of intent for opening negotiations with the two Governments. At this first stage the projects are presented equally, without priority, and without any formal commitment to investment within the region.”

It was agreed to submit the papers to the two governments with a covering letter signed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Group, Cllr. Shotton (Flintshire) and Cllr. Siencyn (Cyngor Gwynedd) respectively.

The UK and Welsh Governments officially received the North Wales Growth Bid prior to the Budget Statement on the 22nd November 2017 and responded positively. (see attached press notice). There was also a positive reference to the North Wales growth Bid in the Budget Statement on the 22nd November 2017.

The meeting agreed management arrangements for the continuing development phase of the bid and the upcoming formal negotiations of the Growth Bid: -

- The secondment of Iwan Trefor Jones (Deputy Chief Executive of Gwynedd Council) to the role of Director (Development) for a period of up to 3 months. Negotiations have commenced with Gwynedd Council to release Iwan to give priority to working on the Bid.
- The recruitment of a Bid Development Team comprising of up to three Programme Development Managers (one each for Smart, Resilient and Connected). These posts will work on the preparation of full business cases for the Bid Projects and report to Iwan Trefor Jones as Bid Director (Development).
- The confirmation of Colin Everett as Lead Chief Executive for the Economy, conferring the role of principal adviser to the Shadow Joint Committee including

advice on the Growth Bid. Colin will also be the principal adviser to the Chair and Vice Chair in the negotiations with the UK and Welsh Governments to agree a Deal. He will also give advice and support to the Director (Development) in developing the Bid.

- Negotiations will be led by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Shadow Joint Committee who will report to the Shadow Joint Committee.

The next steps for the Growth Bid are: -

- The completion of outline business cases for each project by the Project Leads, Ashley Rogers, Jane Richardson, Steve Bayley, Dylan Williams, Iwan Prys Jones, Clare Budden and Sioned Williams, who are all members of the Programme Management Group. They will work with partners in HE, FE and the Business Community.
- The Publication of the Growth Bid in a booklet format
- The Appointment of the Bid Development Team
- Prioritisation of Projects, using the business case preparation work to evaluate which projects will have the best impact
- The Commencement of Formal Negotiations in the New Year (2018)
- The preparation of proposals for the establishment of a Programme Office/Hub. This will manage a capital programme of over £250m for a period of several years and potentially a range of other projects such as the establishment of a regional transport body, the formation of an asset backed vehicle and a Regional Development Plan. The proposal for a Programme Office/Hub will be made in the New Year to the Shadow Joint Committee

The next meeting of the Leaders and Chief Executives will be on the 15th December 2017 when they will be joined by partners from Higher and Further Education and the North Wales and Mersey Dee Business Council. They will meet as the Shadow Joint Committee.

The Shadow Joint Committee will consider: -

- The progress of the bid
- A Communications Plan
- A Project Plan and Risk Register
- Governance issues, such as the future role of the current North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

Councils are asked to share the North Wales Growth Bid (as submitted to the UK and Welsh Governments) with their wider membership in the December 2017 to January 2018 period either informally in workshops or formally by reporting to Council Committees depending on the culture and practice of each Council.

The Chair and Vice Chair Elect of the Shadow Joint Committee held a Briefing Meeting for Cabinet Members for Economic Development on the 27th November 2017, which was attended by the UK Government Minister for Wales, Guto Bebb MP. The meeting also received a message of support from the Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport, Ken Skates AM.