



# north wales economic ambition board

## bwrdd uchelgais economaidd gogledd cymru

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

### Status Report on the North Wales Growth Deal, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018

#### Business before the Board

The (Shadow) North Wales Growth Board met for the fifth time on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

Meetings are now regularly attended by representatives of all the partner organisations: Bangor and Wrexham Glyndwr Universities, Grwp Llandrillo Menai, Coleg Cambria and the Chair and Vice Chair of the North Wales and Mersey Dee Business Council.

The Board considered reports on: -

- A Communications Strategy and “Brand” for the Board
- The finalisation of the Inter Authority Agreement for the Development and Planning Phase of the Growth Deal (IAA 1)
- The Prioritisation of Projects

#### Decisions

##### Communications

The Board has engaged Martin Williams of Radar PR to promote the work of the Board, particularly the Growth Bid. Martin will be deployed to communicate with: -

- The Public
- The wider Business Community
- Council Members and Officers

This will be achieved via: -

- Mainstream media channels (Newspapers, Radio and TV including their websites)
- Specialist publications
- Council and Partners Communications Teams



Martin has arranged a partnership with the Daily Post to “Back the Bid”. This campaign and other activity will promote the Bid and explain what a Growth Deal is, what it is trying to achieve and who is promoting it.

Work with Council and Partner Communications Teams will enable localised messages to be conveyed in the local media as well as at regional level.

The Board agreed to adopt the name and logo of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board at the request of the former NWEAB. The former membership of the NWEAB will be reconstituted into a stakeholder body which will have a new name and role.

The Board adopted the brand of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board because it is well-established and recognised by both governments. With an existing logo, letterhead, web site and marketing collateral the adoption of the Ambition Board identity will save time and money by avoiding the “set up” costs for a new brand.

### **Inter Authority Agreement**

The meeting finalised the principles that will govern the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) to support decision-making on the Development and Planning Phase of the Growth Bid.

It was agreed to seek a new name for the IAA to take account of partners in Higher and Further Education being members of the Board. In addition, the Partners in HE and FE have agreed to propose to their governing bodies that they each contribute £25k to the work of the Board in 2018/19. In exchange for financial contributions each partner body will be represented on the Board and be signatories to the IAA 1.

The renamed Inter-Authority Agreement for the development and planning phase of the Bid (IAA 1) will be put to each Council Cabinet for agreement in June/July 2018. The IAA will accompany a report on the bid and its business plan for discussion within each Council.

Once agreed the IAA 1 cannot be varied by the Ambition Board unless it seeks the agreement of each Council and Partner to do so.

A second IAA will be required for the delivery phase of the Bid. This is likely to be developed in the autumn of 2018 to be put to Councils by March 2019.

Gwynedd Council is the lead authority for the Development and Planning Phase of the Bid and will remain so until a host authority is agreed for the Delivery Phase.

### **Project Prioritisation**

The Board received a report from officers that ranked all the Board’s 26 projects according to objective criteria such as job creation, leverage of resources from private sector and other partners, contribution to innovation in the regional economy, readiness for delivery, future financial sustainability, regional impact and flagship status.

The exercise was carried out at the request of the Board and prompting from both UK and Welsh Governments. The criteria are similar to those which the government's will use to evaluate the projects in the negotiation process.

The Board's Project Portfolio of 26 Projects currently amounts to an ask of £371m capital and £30m revenue. The total capital investment in the region if all schemes go ahead would amount to over £929m, two and half times the potential £371m investment by governments.

The current Project List exceeds the likely amount of capital available from the Growth Bid. The Board therefore recognises that not all the 26 projects identified can be funded by the Growth Bid. However, the project portfolio and pipeline developed means that those projects not funded via the growth deal may be matched to other UK and Welsh Government funding streams in the future, in particular the proposed shared prosperity fund to replace EU Structural Funding.

The Board agreed the criteria for project appraisal.

Projects that scored well on the criteria included: investing in digital connectivity, the sustainable energy catapult, Holyhead Port, enabling development at Bodelwyddan and Warren Hall, enabling the Trawsfynydd Small Modular Reactor development, Morlais Tidal Energy Grid Connectivity, A Renewable Energy Centre and an Enterprise Engineering Centre.

The Local Authorities agreed that Transport, Housing and an Investment Vehicle for developing employment land and premises should be part of the funding package negotiated by the Board with Governments.

It was not agreed which projects might make way for the Local Authority proposal to give greater priority to the three "enabling" projects. It was recognised that in order not to damage the priority order of the whole programme the funding ask for the three enabler projects (Transport, Housing and Sites and Premises) may have to be scaled back.

The Project List and its priority order will be negotiated with Governments in the next stage of work. At present all projects remain in play and will go forward for the development of Outline Business Cases.

## Next Meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018

The Board will receive: -

- A report on the role of the host authority prior to considering which Council may host the work of the Board.
- A pack of proposed Terms of Reference for the agreed delivery board structure (transport, sites and premises, digital, business innovation and growth and skills)
- A Programme Update Report including a budget report

