

The North Wales Growth Board

*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, 19th January 2018

Business before the Board

The North Wales Growth Board met for the second time on the 19th January 2018. The Board discussed: -

- The progress of the bid and the scheduling of key activities to develop the proposals making up the bid submission to the UK and Welsh Governments
- The principles of the Inter Authority Agreement that will detail the functions and powers that the Growth Board will exercise on behalf the six Councils and the decision-making process each Council will follow to agree the functions and powers of the Growth Board.
- Improving Communications between what happens at the Growth Board and the wider membership of Councils and partner organisations
- Giving priority to improving engagement between the Board, Welsh Government Ministers and Members of the National Assembly for Wales representing the region.

Key Decisions

Bid Development and Resourcing

The Board commissioned an exercise to review 12 Project Definition Documents (PDD) describing what each intervention is seeking to achieve, its relationship to the strategic context (UK, Wales and Regional) and the outline costs and benefits of each intervention. There will be an additional PDD which will take an overview of the Growth Bid's objectives.

The Review will take place at the next Board meeting on the 16th February 2018 and will seek to establish which PDDs are fit to take forward, which ones may require further work and whether any should be referred from the Growth Bid to seek other means of implementation/funding (a green, amber and red status review).

The Board heard that a Bid Development Team of three independent contractors will be appointed week commencing 22nd January 2018, potentially starting work the week after. These people will work on the Project Description Documents to mid-February and then move on to preparing Outline Business Cases (OBCs) in March 2018.

The OBCs will form the basis of prioritising projects and negotiations with Governments and the preparation of a Draft Heads of Terms between the Board and the two Governments. by the end of May 2018.

Work will then begin on detailed business cases for the implementation of agreed projects while the Draft Heads of Terms are submitted to each Council for approval in June and July 2018 to enable formal sign-off of the Heads of Terms in September 2018.

Governance

The Board discussed the principles that will underlie an Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) to empower the North Wales Growth Board with the powers and functions necessary to deliver the Growth Bid. Each Authority's Full Council must agree the Inter Authority Agreement and any delegation of local authority functions to the Growth Board either in the IAA or subsequently, using procedures defined in the IAA.

It was agreed to discuss the principles at a senior level in each council and to report back views and advice from the Councils to a future Board meeting.

There was a discussion of ensuring the transparency and visibility of investments of benefit to private sector, HE and FE partners. A report on how the private sector is being represented was also commissioned.

The Board asked for the development of a code of conduct governing the management and declaration of pecuniary and other interests for submission to a future meeting.

Communications

The Board agreed to: -

- Seek to improve communications from the Board to the wider membership of councils. Leaders and Chief Executives should make arrangements in each Council to circulate Growth Board press releases and materials from Board meetings, particularly the status report and minutes, to their membership to achieve a position where members feel they learn more from the Growth Board about the Growth Bid than they do from the press.
- Arrange meetings with Welsh Government Ministers, starting with Ken Skates, to discuss the Growth Bid, and to engage with Assembly Members to balance the activity with UKG Ministers and Members of Parliament in Westminster.
- Engage communications support to place growth bid information in specialist media
- Receive a future report on branding for the Growth Board and the Growth Bid

Next Steps

The meeting commissioned: -

Bid Development and Resourcing

- A review of Project Description Documents (February 2018)
- A report on Financial Commitments made against the provisions made by Councils for the revenue costs of making a growth Bid (February 2018)
- A report with proposals to establish a programme office (March 2018)

Governance

- Feedback from senior teams on the IAA principles (February 2016)

- Further work on the Inter Authority Agreement (March 2018),
- Development of a Code of Conduct (March 2018)
- Support for the establishment of a Transport Sub-committee to ensure consistency with the Inter Authority Agreement for the Growth Board including terms of reference and reporting arrangements to the Growth Board (21st February 2018 – Transport Portfolio Members Meeting)

Communications

- Councils to report back on their internal communications arrangements (Feb 2018)
- A meeting with Ken Skates to commence engagement with WG Ministers and officials.
- A meeting with the Assembly Cross Party Group for North Wales or a Board event with Assembly Members representing North Wales to promote the Growth Bid, depending on which can be most easily organised. (Meetings prior to end of February)
- Reports on additional communications support and branding (March 2018)