

north wales economic ambition board

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Meeting:	North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (Venue: Bangor University)	Date:	06-09-2018
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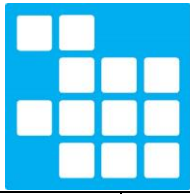
Present:
Horizon Nuclear Power – Sasha Davies (Chair) NWEAB – Iwan Trefor Jones, Iwan Thomas, Ffion Jones, Katie Edwards, Local Government – Niall Waller; Careers Wales – Nerys Bourne; DWP – Bev Lovatt; Grwp Llandrillo Menai – James Nelson; Coleg Cambria – Sue Price; CITB – Ceri Jones, Claire Williams; Bangor University – Bryn Jones; Wrexham Glyndwr University – Aulay Mackenzie; NTFW – Ruth Collinge; North Wales Social Care & Health Workforce Board – Charlotte Walton; Creative North Wales – Garfield Lewis; Open University in Wales – Lynnette Thomas; Airbus – Darren Collins; 14-19 – Christine Wynne

Apologies:
Local Government – Sioned Williams; GwE – Arwyn Thomas; FSB – Mike Learmond; North Wales & Mersey Dee Business Council – Ashley Rogers; West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber – Colin Brew;; WCVA – Catherine Miller; Welsh Government – Meurig Thomas, Jayne Roberts; EPC – Alice Williams; North Wales Tourism – Jim Jones

Item No.	1.
Title:	Welcome and Apologies
Comments:	The Chair, Sasha Davies, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received as noted above with noted alternates and substitutes being present at this meeting. The Chair also thanked our hosts at Bangor University for the use of the great venue at Reichel Hall, and noted the excellent attendance to support discussions and that this was to be the last meeting with Iwan Thomas present as our Regional Programme Manager after five years in this role, before he leaves for his new post as the Chief Executive of the organisation, 'PLANED' in Pembrokeshire.

Item No.	2.
Title:	Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2018
Comments:	<p>The minutes were accepted as accurate and the Programme Manager noted that many of the actions, particularly relating to the Skills Plan and North Wales Growth Deal would be addressed during the items listed within the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p>Noted that work on the Skills Statement had been delayed due to partners leave over the summer, and would be completed by early October for a draft version to be circulated to RSP partners in advance of the next RSP meeting.</p> <p>Noted that the sub-group of the RSP to support the work on the Growth Deal Employability & Gateway projects was scheduled for mid September.</p> <p>Work is ongoing by the RSP team working with Careers Wales on the analysis of the Career Check data presented at the last RSP meeting.</p> <p>Noted that all future meeting dates of the RSP and previous meeting notes are now publicly available on the NWEAB website within the dedicated RSP web page for full transparency and ease of access.</p>
Decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The minutes were accepted• Skills Statement draft to be shared early October• Sub-group to support North Wales Growth Deal on skills projects to meet mid-September, and outcomes fed back to the next RSP meeting in November.• Outcomes of analysis on the RSP & Careers Wales to Career Check data in North Wales to be presented to the next RSP meeting in November

Item No.	3.
Title:	Key Update & Discussion – Draft Regional Skills & Employment Annual Report
Comments:	<p>The Chair introduced this item as a follow-up to the earlier draft and discussion at the meeting held on July 29th. Sasha Davies further explained this had been submitted to WG prior to the deadline given, and thanked all of the RSP team and partners for their work and support on producing this document, on schedule and on time.</p> <p>The Programme Manager, Iwan Thomas took partners through the main headlines within the report, and further confirmed that this WG template only allowed 30 pages to respond to the 21 sections expected by WG, thereby not allowing a great deal of additional detail and context to be provided as</p>



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had been done within our own regional Skills Plans previously. He also thanked the RSP team and partners for their support in coordinating and completing this key piece of work on time.

It was also noted that within the report, there was a response to the recommendations from the WG Graystone Review of Regional Skills Partnerships which would be picked up in more detail later in the agenda of the meeting.

Key headlines of note that the Programme Manager highlighted for partners to consider and note from the report (which supported the completed Excel spreadsheets issued by WG and also completed on time) included:

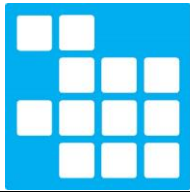
- Listing all of the key achievements and outcomes of the RSP since 2017 on page 5
- Illustrating the governance and reporting structure of the RSP and its collaboration with the NWEAB in supporting the Growth Deal, and also its direct reporting to WG as its primary source of funding on page 6
- The depth and continuity of Employer and Stakeholder Engagement to now be formalised by the development of a formal Stakeholder Engagement Strategy in early 2019 (page 7-10)
- Support and input into the work on the North Wales Growth Deal (page 11)
- Future Skills Survey of all Year 10 students across North Wales by Careers Wales highlighting an upturn in those indicating they would consider an apprenticeship in the region – from 329 young people in 2016, to 734 in 2018 (page 17)
- Both our FEI's continue to increase full time provision and expand in key and growth sectors to meet demands (pages 18-19)
- RSP input into directing funds to our priority areas as agreed with partners for both the newly created £2m Skills Development Fund available for North Wales (successfully applied and awarded coordinated by the RSP) and also the Skills Priorities Programme to promote higher level skills across North Wales working with employer and key sectors.(pages 20-21)
- The impact and contribution of Higher Education provided with key examples from Bangor, Wrexham Glyndwr, and the Open University provided in their support for regional skills and developments; particularly around innovation and new project proposals to support key employment projects and technical developments within the region. Also highlighted is the cross-border collaboration on the analysis of graduates in relation to our key & growth sectors from the Regional Skills Plan and trends generated from this work (pages 26-27)
- Work with key and growth sectors to support continued processing and analysis of demand requirements across the region, and cross-border, to inform the work of the RSP
- The conclusions and recommendations are not actions, as this is important to note that the aspirations listed are to form part of the ongoing work of the RSP in supporting partners, delivery projects, and the development of the North Wales Growth Deal, but also the longer term and higher level, North Wales Growth Vision – as the primary and only WG recognised skills and employment official forum for North Wales.

The Chair welcomed the comprehensive overview provided and signposting to key headlines throughout the document, and also reiterated the role of the RSP across North Wales as the primary and only officially recognised body to support, promote, and coordinate the skills agenda to support employment across North Wales.

It was noted by partners including Sue Price and Bryn Jones that the list of Key & Growth Sectors was not prominently included within the WG template report as we had done previously within our own Regional Skills Plans. It was noted this should be included somewhere as a reference and listed, as our priorities and the approach and support to key and growth sectors, differed in many respects to elsewhere in Wales due to our east west, and cross border axis of both our economy and labour market primarily.

James Nelson and Iwan Trefor Jones both noted that it would be useful to more clearly articulate the success of the region and the RSP and its partners within the report as had done in previous North Wales produced own Skills Plans. We should show clearly the outcomes and impacts made on young people by our delivery and projects collectively – the impact of what we do is a region is critical and should be highlighted further.

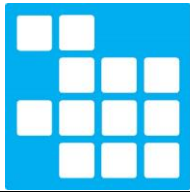
Partners also noted that this report whilst a WG document, would also be important for other audiences within our region, and further clarity on how we can use this to further inform policy and planning should be considered – particularly as previous Skills Plans we have produced regionally, have directly helped to inform areas such as Curriculum Planning, and project delivery methods and



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	<p>outcomes across partners within North Wales, and cross-border. Iwan Thomas agreed that these suggestions should be passed back in terms of a formal response to WG on their provided template, and Ffion Jones pointed out that partners were correct in that we should be seen to be celebrating success more, as well as using the evidence as a planning tool. Aulay Mackenzie added that in the production of this key document, it further highlighted the need to make sure as partners we all lined up, and further supported and input directly into the RSP due to its key role and recognition by WG. The Chair thanked all for their input into a useful and detailed discussion, and supported further dialogue to be held with WG on possibly providing a more formal response to this reporting structure, acknowledging that for 2019, we will be delivering our own 3 year Skills Plan working with partners.</p>
Decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTION 3.1 – The Draft Skills Report signed off by the RSP with caveats • ACTION 3.2 – Response provided to WG on feedback to further information that would likely be included around achievements, impact, and outcomes in summary headline form • ACTION 3.3 – Amendments noted by partners e.g. reference to individual FEI’s corrected and adopted within further updated version • ACTION 3.4 – Feedback from RSP and WG discussion on the Report and Excel spreadsheets to be shared and provided at the next RSP meeting in November

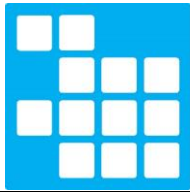
Item No.	4.
Title:	North Wales Growth Deal
Comments:	<p>The Chair welcomed Iwan Trefor Jones who as the Regional Executive Director for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, is working with key leaders and partners on driving the work for the completion of the North Wales Growth Deal. Also, it was noted the role of the RSP in taking on the role of the Skills & Employment Workstream within the newly configured NWEAB, and that a formal response on the Chair of the RSP becoming an observer member of the NWEAB to further support the common skills agenda for North Wales, was still outstanding. Iwan Trefor Jones provided a detailed and comprehensive overview of the current state of play of the considerable work which was been undertaken across the region by partners on the development of the Growth Deal and its projects. Key headlines from the detail kindly provided during the presentation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 15 projects being negotiated and discussed with UK and Welsh Governments alongside the NWEAB on behalf of regional partners. • Outline Business Cases for the projects shortly to be completed in readiness for a meeting of the NWEAB on 21st September to sign off proposals in readiness for work on formal submission of the Deal • Aim is for the Growth Deal to be announced as part of the UK Government Annual Budget which as a date, is yet to be confirmed, but expected around the end of October to early November depending on other timetabled legislation. • Projects include those in digital, business, skills, infrastructure – one of note being around Sites and Premises to bring back currently dormant and stalled sites, back into effective operation. • Projects supporting the energy and manufacturing sectors are also key to the Deal, as we look to support the region becoming a beacon for smart energy and world leading in STEM for productivity and production. • Acknowledged that updates on the Centres of Excellence for Tourism amongst others, have been shared previously at earlier RSP meetings. • The Deal is about helping to make North Wales attractive to further inward investment and development – showcasing the innovation that supports higher level skills promoted already by our education providers at all levels. • The Brokerage & Gateway project is an important skill project that impacts and cuts across many areas of the Growth Deal and although not a capital project, is being looked at in innovative ways to be included within the Deal, and continue our work in development with WG and their existing move towards the creation of the ‘Working Wales’ project in 2019. • The Proposition Document will be shared with the RSP shortly • The Growth Deal it should be remembered is only a part of the wider North Wales Growth Vision, which is wider and larger aspirational document that will also support many projects



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	<p>outside of the Growth Deal, and discussions will continue with UK & Welsh Governments to see how this can be supported.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Iwan Trefor Jones for bringing this update to the RSP and that partners would welcome sight of the Position Statement once completed.</p> <p>The Chair also noted that the Private Sector Forum to be held in a couple of weeks' time to discuss and support the Growth Deal was important, as a strong and visible support from the private sector was critical for the Deal overall – but particularly in regards in the context of the RSP, to the current and future labour market in North Wales.</p> <p>ITJ agreed and confirmed that the Business Leadership Forum as it is formally known, is there to challenge and advise the NWEAB, and will be a useful forum in providing scrutiny on the OBC's.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this work does tie in with the regional agenda promoted by WG, and hoped that Gwenllian Roberts would be able to attend the next RSP in November, to discuss this further with partners.</p> <p>Garffild Lewis asked about our timeline in relation to other City Deals in Swansea and Cardiff, to which ITJ responded on their current positions – Cardiff already in receipt of funding, and Swansea still being challenged on their business cases – hence why we in North Wales are actively working on completing our OBC's prior to submission to UK Govt. We do not want to miss out on this opportunity and particularly with the skills agenda, make sure our best practice enables delivery of clear outcomes.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the discussion and input of partners, and reaffirmed the support of the Regional Skills Partnership for the Growth Deal, and our role as the Skills & Employment workstream for the NWEAB, and our unique position as the funded official body for Skills in North Wales by Welsh Government, and our strong working relationship with the NWEAB.</p>
Decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTION 4.1 – The RSP to receive a copy of the 'Proposition Document' to share with partners about the Growth Deal • ACTION 4.2 – Gwenllian Roberts from WG to attend the November RSP meeting to discuss the development of the Regional Economic Plan previously noted, and its correlation to the work on the Growth Deal, RSP Skills Report, and wider North Wales Growth Vision

Item No.	5.
Title:	Wylfa Newydd Construction Skills Report
Comments:	<p>The Chair, Sasha Davies introduced the report, and explained its origins through both the Horizon Construction Skills Sub Group, and the RSP – with the former being a recognised sub-group of the latter.</p> <p>Recent developments include the announcement of BECTEL as a delivery partner for the Wylfa Newydd project.</p> <p>The report is the work of the RSP Team in consultation and partnership with CITB primarily, and has recently been presented to, and discussed by the sub-group. Comments from the partners at the sub-group have recently been received and welcomed, and coupled with comments to be obtained from RSP partners, the current draft report will be updated as necessary.</p> <p>Iwan Thomas who has led and coordinated the work on this report with partners, took colleagues through the development and headlines within the document.</p> <p>The report was commissioned to only look at the construction sector in North Wales in response to the MACE predictions regarding employment on the site during the construction phase.</p> <p>The report therefore was split into identifying data and further context regarding the “Workforce in Waiting” and also the current construction workforce in North Wales, with additional all-Wales and other regional comparative data where available and feasible.</p> <p>A broad overview of the region in terms of its current labour market, demographics, and earnings were also included.</p> <p>The Workforce in Waiting section on direction from the sub-group, focused on the numbers of those young people currently studying STEM based subjects which could be promoted into employment skills and training within the industry. Subjects of focus in addition to Maths and Sciences, included Design & Technology, as well as ICT.</p> <p>Comprehensive and clear breakdowns for all six counties are provided within the report which highlights the variances between counties, but also the strengths of some in key subject areas compared to others which can be used as evidence to further inform targeted delivery and support.</p> <p>A key element within the report is the use of the Career Check national survey by Careers Wales, for</p>



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which in North Wales, there was an 85% response rate.

One of the key headlines resulting from this was that the communication and promotion of apprenticeship pathways within the region by partners, seems to be having an impact. The number of young people now indicating their consideration of an apprenticeship between 2016 and 2018 has increased considerably.

Detailed breakdowns are provided on the provision of Construction and Built Environment courses at our Further Education providers, and highlighting their recent investments in facilities to prepare for the opportunities, and training this will require.

The section on the current workforce uses the majority of data kindly worked on and shared by CITB colleagues, with additional data provided by the RSP through the use of the Economic Observatory.

An analysis of the current workforce compared to the MACE predictions shows that whilst there could be a need for 462 scaffolders at peak on site, we currently only have 200 in the region.

Similarly, whilst we may see the need for 518 steel fixers at peak on the site according to MACE, current data shows there are only 310 in the region.

However, whilst the MACE report indicated a need potentially for 929 electricians on site at peak during the construction phase, we already have 1,370 in North Wales; and similarly for the expected 750 wood trades needed, we already have 3,040 currently in North Wales.

The report shows a breakdown of the numbers in all trades associated with construction for North Wales, in comparison to the other two regions, combining to an all-Wales figure. This will assist with predictions on the movement of labour potentially within the sector across Wales once the project starts construction in earnest.

It also serves as evidence to support the issue of displacement, and which areas will need greater support than others in terms of skills and training.

Comments and amendments were invited by Iwan Thomas from partners to be received shortly, in order that an updated draft could be completed and circulated to partners initially within the sub-group prior to his departure from the post; in order that the sub-group can make any final revisions, before it is then shared for information as a signed off report, with RSP colleagues and partners.

Questions and discussions followed from partners including suggested amendments from both Sue Price and James Nelson to include more details on the current and future provision at both Coleg Cambria and GLLM.

Aulay Mackenzie and Bryn Jones both questioned the lack of HE data or reference within the document, whilst acknowledging that provision in construction or the built environment is not a primary focus for their current offers – although WGU does do Civil Engineering.

Agreed the offer of HE and their contribution would be included within an updated version.

FE colleagues both highlighted the current challenges to fill the provision on offer, but also noted that a common communications strategy to support promotion into the sector would be useful within north Wales – with clear complementarity to existing national initiatives.

Partners also raised concerns that once people were upskilled, trained and qualified in the roles needed for Wylfa, once the project was complete, would there be the work for them in the region to retain this talent?

However, Sasha Davies responded that whilst this was a concern, it had to be noted and appreciated that as a result of Wylfa Newydd and the opportunities, we will have a higher level skilled workforce within the region, and their mobility can be a positive. This type of mobility of skills should also be part of the increased and coordinated communication campaign that is needed with schools.

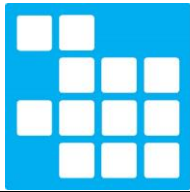
The communication to schools was agreed as a key point by Garffild Lewis in his other capacity as a Councillor responsible for the Education Portfolio in Conwy. The information needed also needed to be aimed at parents as a key influencer, in addition to teachers.

Iwan Thomas pointed out the excellent case studies already promoted by both Airbus and Horizon at opposite ends of the region, and if something could be done using these examples as templates to help inform having “Ambassadors” from those recently joining the industry in North Wales, to be used with schools and colleges.

Ruth Collinge noted how we need to look also at higher level skills and capturing information on those who leave the area to go to University in higher level qualifications associated with the industry such as quantity surveying; design; engineering etc.

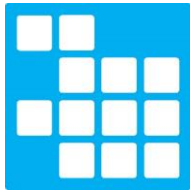
Bev Lovatt from DWP raised the point that we are facing the challenge of an aging workforce within the sector, so a coordinated regional programme to attract new entrants was key.

Colleagues acknowledged the impact of displacement, and potential inward migration of skills, but



	agreed this could be monitored and mitigated with clear evidence as such within the report, whilst also being mindful of the other projects requiring skilled labour within the region, which may overlap in terms of time and demand which is an additional concern.
Decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTION 5.1 – Updates to the report to include further information from FE partners to be included • ACTION 5.2 – Updates to the report to include reference to, and examples from HE partners to be included • ACTION 5.3 – Future piece of work potentially on the impact on related sectors such as Agriculture, Transport and Hospitality from the Construction Phase of Wylfa Newydd to be considered for completion using this current report as a template. • ACTION 5.4 – CITB to lead with partners to draft a timeline of projects requiring large volumes of skilled labour within the region during the next 5 years to embellish the current map of projects visually highlighted within the report (page 20)

Item No.	6.
Title:	Regional Skills & Employment Update
Comments:	<p>Iwan Thomas provided an update on four key elements of the work within the RSP team working with partners:</p> <p>GRAYSTONE REVIEW A detailed draft response document was shared with partners in response to the WG Graystone review, highlighting areas where North Wales had already delivered on suggested actions around transparency and engagement, with timelines and targets clarified for other suggested actions around issues of governance and accountability. Comments from discussion following with partners included Bryn Jones, Aulay Mackenzie, and Garffild Lewis supporting the strength of the RSP as a forum in North Wales compared to other regions in Wales, and acknowledgement from Iwan Trefor Jones that further clarity on the role of the RSP working with the NWEAB needed to be agreed formally.</p> <p>WELSH LANGUAGE REPORT This report was included to follow up to the launch event of the document in April this year, and provides a detailed initial response to all the recommendations made, and suggested next steps. Partners welcomed the report and agreed with its recommendations with further work to be reported back to the RSP at a future date.</p> <p>SHARED APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME Ffion Jones introduced the item following her recent discussion with applicable WG colleagues, and the subsequent information shared with RSP partners prior to the meeting. Explaining the rationale and opportunity this presented for the region, Ffion confirmed that we could see an additional £250k come to the RSP to influence the areas and sectors in which this spent in North Wales – as it could support upto 50 new apprentices in areas and sectors identified and targeted by the RSP following agreement. The issue of Shared Apprenticeships was supported by partners including Sue Price who noted that shared apprenticeships work well in some sectors, but key to the success of this offer, is how we work with, and promote this opportunity to SME's.</p> <p>STEM ANALYSIS It was acknowledged that previous requests for members of a STEM Skills sub-group had not seen a group meeting coming together as yet. However, with the wider developments now within the region, the timing was right and appropriate to bring this group together. This would tie-in and support the revisions and updating of the 2015 RSP STEM Audit across North Wales, and support the delivery of a number of STEM related activities currently in development by partners across North Wales.</p>
Decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTION 6.1 – Further clarity needed on the formalisation of the relationship between the NWEAB and RSP, with the Chair of the RSP to be confirmed as an observer member • ACTION 6.2 – Work to be undertaken as an analysis of apprenticeships currently in North Wales by employer, sector, and location – to help inform where we then target the new opportunity around Shared Apprenticeships. • ACTION 6.3 – STEM Sub-group of the RSP to arrange to meet for first time during the autumn alongside work updating the 2015 RSP STEM Regional Audit.



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Item No.	7.
Title:	Welsh Government Update
Comments:	Due to urgent commitments elsewhere, WG colleagues had to sadly provide their apologies to attend this meeting at the last minute.
Decision:	

Item No.	8.
Title:	Any Other Business
Comments:	<p>The Chair paid tribute to Iwan Thomas, who after five years in the role as Regional Programme Manager for Skills & Employment, who was now leaving to take up a new role as Chief Executive of a Community Regeneration organisation based in Pembrokeshire.</p> <p>The Chair was joined by the Lead Director for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Iwan Trefor Jones, who recalled his experience of working with Iwan Thomas.</p> <p>Both the Chair and Lead Director complemented Iwan Thomas on his dedication to the role and the considerable achievements made during the last five years, putting the RSP on the map within the region, and also with key officers and politicians in Cardiff Bay and Westminster.</p> <p>Whilst they notes it was a big role now to fill with his departure, they and all partners wished him well in his new role.</p> <p>Iwan Thomas articulated his gratitude and appreciation for all the kind words and good wishes, and noted how it was a tough decision to leave a role he enjoyed, and working with partners whom he valued and appreciated, but after five years dedicated to regional working, it was time to change.</p> <p>He paid particular thanks to all three Chairs during his time here in North Wales, Sasha Davies, Sioned Williams, and Iwan Trefor Jones for all their guidance, advice and support; to partners for their input and collaboration; and to the RSP team, Ffion Jones, and Katie Edwards for all their hard work and dedication in supporting his work and delivering on tasks, above and beyond expectations.</p> <p>Iwan thanked everyone, and wished all the RSP partners and NWEAB continued success building on the foundations of strong regional working that is clearly now established, and to keep #TeamNorthWales very much moving forward from strength to strength leading the agenda on skills across Wales.</p>
Decision:	

Next Meeting:	10:00am, 6 November 2018 Venue TBC
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