



Partneriaeth Tyfu Canolbarth Cymru / Growing Mid Wales Partnership

**Dydd Iau 16 Medi 2021
Thursday 16 September 2021**

3.00 pm

Cyfarfod Rhith
Virtual Meeting

Attendance:-

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, Leader of Ceredigion County Council (Chair) **(EAG)**
Councillor Rosemarie Harris, Leader of Powys County Council (Vice-Chair) **(RH)**
Aggie Caesar-Homden, Regional Skills Partnership Manager **(ACH)**
Angharad Massow **(AM)**
Ann Elias, Ceredigion County Council **(AE)**
Ann Watkin, Welsh Government **(AW)**
Arwyn Davies, Ceredigion County Council **(AD)**
Arwyn Watkins OBE, Cambrian Training **(ArW)**
Carwyn Jones-Evans, Ceredigion County Council **(CJE)**
Cathy Martin, Portfolio Management Office **(CM)**
Claire Miles, Ceredigion County Council **(CM)**
Councillor Dafydd Edwards, Ceredigion County Council **(Cllr. DE)**
Councillor Iain McIntosh, Powys County Council **(Cllr.IM)**
Councillor Myfanwy Alexander, Powys County Council **(Cllr.MA)**
Councillor Rhodri Evans, Ceredigion County Council **(Cllr.RE)**
Diane Reynolds, Powys County Council **(DR)**
Dr. Caroline Turner, Chief Executive, Powys County Council **(CT)**
Dr. Rhodri Llwyd Morgan, Aberystwyth University **(RLIM)**
Eifion Evans, Ceredigion County Council **(EE)**
Emma Wilde, Mid Wales Chamber of Commerce **(EM)**
Fiona Stewart, Economic Strategy Group **(ES)**
Gareth Jones, Powys County Council **(GJ)**
Gabiella Tedaldi, Ceredigion County Council **(GT)**
Gavin Bown, NRW **(GB)**
Glenn Bowen, Wales Co-operative Centre **(GIB)**
Gwilym Jones, University of Wales Trinity St. David **(GJ)**
Kelly Fountain, NPTC Group of Colleges **(KF)**
Lowri Gwilym **(LG)**
Marie Evans, Ceredigion County Council **(ME)**
Nick Venti, PAVO **(NV)**
Nigel Brinn, Powys County Council **(NB)**
Peter James, Welsh Government **(PJ)**
Peter Skitt, Mid Wales Joint Health Committee **(PS)**

Rebecca Rees, Welsh Government (RR)
 Stella Owen, NFU (SO)
 Stacey-Jayne Oakham, Ceredigion County Council (SJO)
 Val Hawkins, Mid Wales Tourism (VH)
 Vanessa Cashmore, Coleg Sir Gar (VC)

1.	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from:- Mark Dacey, NPTC Group of Colleges Councillor Phyl Davies, Powys County Council Peter Howells, NFU Geraint Rees, Powys County Council Councillor Gareth Thomas, Gwynedd County Council Rhodri Griffiths, Welsh Government Steve Hughson, RWAS Steffan Roberts, Welsh Government</p>
2.	<p>To receive the Minutes from the previous meeting of the GMWP held on 24 May 2021 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 May 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.</p>
3.	<p>Mid Wales Growth Deal – Progress Update Carwyn Jones-Evans gave an update on the Mid Wales Growth Deal. The Portfolio Business Case would be considered by the Growing Mid Wales Board on 21st September with a recommendation that both Ceredigion and Powys Cabinets approve it for submission to the UK and Welsh Governments. The Portfolio currently consisted of a shortlisted set of 2 Programmes and 9 Projects that would be considered for further development. CJE advised that 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 Management Office (PoMO) headed by Cathy Martin would be managing the deal on behalf of the region. It was agreed to circulate a link to the Growing Mid Wales Board papers for 21st September to members of the Partnership.</p>
4.	<p>Regional Skills Partnership – Progress Update Aggie Caesar-Homden, who had been in post as RSP manager since 8 June, gave an update on the work of the Regional Skills Partnership. 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. The Board would be asked to confirm his appointment until May 2022. MA asked about vocational courses in the Welsh language and ACH confirmed that provision of Welsh language courses was a priority. It was suggested and agreed that a representative from Coleg Cymraeg should be asked to join the Board.</p>

<p>5.</p>	<p>Business Updates</p> <p>i. <u>Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme</u></p> <p>Gareth Jones gave an update on the Transforming Towns Programme and on the strategic projects being delivered. He advised that a number of projects under the Town Centre Property Investment Fund had failed to complete in the previous financial year due to delays caused by Covid. Welsh Government had agreed to allow the funding to be drawn down as long as spend is completed in this financial year.</p> <p>ii. <u>Regional Engagement Team Report</u></p> <p>Claire Mills reported on future regional development funding and the risks associated with the ending of European Structural and Investment Funds. The UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) would begin in the 2022-23 financial year. There was little information about how the fund would operate, although it was anticipated that funding from the SPF would be delivered via Local Authorities at a local level. Correspondence had just been received from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government advising of the establishment of a new local government task force which Mid Wales would be represented on.</p> <p>The Team was working with officers from the WG Regional Investment Team to identify priorities for funding and understand what activity WG would focus their reduced budgets on and the potential impact on key services. The Team proposed a number of actions to help maintain the legacy of EU funding in the region and aid local authorities and partner organisations to continue strategic collaborative working in order to identify shared priorities in readiness for opportunities that will arise out of the UK SPF.</p> <p>Councillor Harris noted that Powys had not previously benefitted from European structural funds but would be benefitting from the new levelling up funding.</p> <p>Glenn Bowen of NRA welcomed discussion of the potential challenges as there was a risk of funding not being available and projects and continuity being lost.</p> <p>iii. <u>Connectivity and Infrastructure Working Group</u></p> <p>Ann Elias gave an update on strategic transport issues affecting the region and the work of the TraCC Board. The report included updates on transport policy and on the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects and highlighted the transport and infrastructure opportunities for the region.</p> <p>Nigel Brinn advised that he had been in discussions with Shropshire County Council about the potential Borders Growth Deal but that as yet there was no clarity on what it would mean for the Mid Wales Growth Deal.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Government(s) Update</p>

Welsh Government Regional Economic Frameworks and related regional matters

Ann Watkins gave an update on the Welsh Government's Regional Economic Frameworks which set out a shared set of priorities across public, private and third sectors and a shared framework for delivery. The approach was

- To co-produce a shared vision and common set of economic development priorities – high level priorities which all stakeholders can support and use to influence wider national strategies and Programmes.
- To co-design a shared set of principles and ways of working aligned to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act - recognising that how we deliver is as important as what we deliver.
- To establish the REF as a vehicle to promote collaborative regional economic development, with clarity on the needs and opportunities of the Mid Wales region irrespective of funding sources
- Aligning the REF with existing plans underpinning the Mid Wales Growth Deal – *A Vision for Growing Mid Wales (May 2020)* provides the foundations for the REF with an extensive body of work in place, supported by a broad range of stakeholders via the Growing Mid Wales Partnership
- Commissioned the Co-production Network for Wales to support engagement and participation activity
- Close working with the local authorities as key partners in the development of the REF document.

The final draft would be shared with the local authority partners in the autumn and published.

The Chair and Vice Chair were happy to see that the economic priorities of the REF matched the priorities of the Mid Wales Growth Deal. AW confirmed that Welsh Government was very mindful of cross border issues with Mid Wales bordering on so many areas.

7. Wider Regional Updates

Val Hawkins from Mid Wales Tourism gave a presentation. She explained that Mid Wales Tourism provided a link between public and private sector partners and had supported businesses through the pandemic. There had been a 64.52% decrease in the numbers of visitors between 2019 and 2020 because of the pandemic and a 59.6% drop in revenue.

MWT had been promoting Mid Wales as a “must visit” destination publishing over 2,000 pages of online content generating over 10.3 m page views to the end of August. They were aiming to promote Mid Wales as a year round destination and targeting a younger demographic. VH estimated that the market would not recover until 2025. She confirmed that MWT considered events an important part of tourism in the region.

8.	<p>Consultation – The economic and cultural impacts of trade and environmental policy on family farms in Wales</p> <p><u>Draft regional response for consideration</u></p> <p>CM had prepared a response for the Rural Affairs Committee. The response from Powys would be submitted in time for the deadline.</p>
9.	<p>Correspondence from Welsh Government</p> <p>An invitation had been received from Huw Irranca-Davies, Chair of the Strategic Forum for Rural Investment in Wales, for the Partnership to participate on the Forum. It was noted that both Leaders would attend.</p>
10.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>
11.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>15 November 2021</p>