

Public Document Pack

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To: Cllr Rosetta Dolphin (Chair)

Councillors: Sean Bibby, David Evans, George Hardcastle, Patrick Heesom,
Cindy Hinds, Andy Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Joe Johnson, Vicky Perfect,
Paul Shotton and Owen Thomas

30 June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF REMOTE MEETING
ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 6TH JULY, 2021 at 10.00 AM

Please note that Members of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee are invited to join the meeting for Agenda Item 5 - North Wales Economic Ambition Board Annual Report and Q4 Performance.

Yours faithfully

Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: This will be a remote meeting and 'attendance' will be restricted to Committee Members and those Members of Council who have asked the Head of Democratic Services for an invitation. Such attendees may only speak at the Chair's discretion.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 20)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 12 May and 8 June 2021

4 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING (ENV & E) (Pages 21 - 30)

Report of Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

5 NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD ANNUAL REPORT & Q4 PERFORMANCE (Pages 31 - 78)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection

Purpose: To present the Quarter 4 (Jan-March) Growth Deal report, updated Portfolio Risk Register and the Portfolio Management Office Annual Report for 2020-21 for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board

6 TOWN CENTRE MARKETS (Pages 79 - 82)

Report of Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) - Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Purpose: To receive a report as requested at Committee on 12 May, 2021

7 **UPDATE ON DEESIDE HYDROGEN HUB PROJECT** (Pages 83 - 90)

Report of Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) - Cabinet Member for Streetscene

Purpose: Following a request by the Committee in February 2021, this report provides an update on the work carried out to date by Jacobs to develop a Strategic Business Case (SBC) for a new hydrogen hub at Deeside and seeks comments from Members.

Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours

Procedural Note on the conduct of meetings

The Chair will open the meeting and introduce themselves.

The meeting will be attended by a number of Councillors. Officers will also be in attendance to present reports, with Democratic Services officers acting as hosts of the meeting.

All attendees are asked to ensure their mobile phones are switched off and that any background noise is kept to a minimum.

All microphones are to be kept muted during the meeting and should only be unmuted when invited to speak by the Chair. When invitees have finished speaking they should go back on mute.

To indicate to speak, Councillors will use the chat facility or use the electronic raise hand function. The chat function may also be used for questions, relevant comments and officer advice and updates.

The Chair will call the speakers, with elected Members addressed as 'Councillor' and officers addressed by their job title e.g. Chief Executive' or name. From time to time, the officer advising the Chair will explain procedural points or suggest alternative wording for proposals, to assist the Committee.

If and when a vote is taken, the Chair will explain that only those who oppose the proposal(s), or who wish to abstain will need to indicate, using the chat function. The officer advising the Chair will indicate whether the proposals are carried.

If a more formal vote is needed, this will be by roll call – where each Councillor will be asked in turn (alphabetically) how s/he wishes to vote

At County Council and Planning Committee meetings speaker's times are limited. A bell will be sounded to alert that the speaker has one minute remaining

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **12 MAY 2021**

Minutes of the remote meeting of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Wednesday, 12 May 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Rosetta Dolphin (Chair)

Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Dolphin, David Evans, Patrick Heesom, Cindy Hinds, Dennis Hutchinson, Joe Johnson, Vicky Perfect, Paul Shotton and Owen Thomas.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, and Councillor Carolyn Thomas, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Countryside

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Bob Connah for Councillor George Hardcastle

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors::Haydn Bateman, and Veronica Gay (as observers)

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Chris Bithell, Cabinet Member for Planning & Public Protection; Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy); Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation), Transport Manager, Enterprise and Regeneration Manager, Access and Natural Environment Manager, Highway Network Manager, and Team Leader – Access

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator, and Democratic Services Officers

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chair expressed congratulations to Councillor Carolyn Thomas on her election to the Senedd and requested that a letter be sent to Councillor Thomas congratulating her on behalf of the Committee

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

54. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING

The Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme.

She advised that an update on the Integrated Transport Plan and Climate Change would be scheduled on the agenda when appropriate and drew attention to the

further items which were listed for consideration at future meetings. The Facilitator asked Members to forward to her any suggestions for further items they wished to be included on the Programme.

Councillor Chris Dolphin requested that an item on Town Centre Markets be included on the FWP. He also requested that the item on Planning and Enforcement which was scheduled for consideration by the Committee at a meeting to be held in November 2021 be brought forward as a matter of urgency. It was agreed that the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) would discuss the scope and purpose of the item with Councillor Dolphin and any concerns following the meeting.

The Facilitator referred to the actions from previous meetings which had been completed and asked the Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) to provide an update on weekend missed collections. The Chief Officer said an email would be sent to update all Members on the contact details.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson commended the Chief Officer and his team on service provision which he said overall had been excellent.

Councillor Chris Bithell asked for an update on the Aggregates Levy Fund. The Facilitator advised that no response had been received yet to the letter sent to the Welsh Government on behalf of the Committee to seek reinstatement of the Fund.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be approved;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

55. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) provided background information and introduced a report to update Members on the current challenges facing town centres and the regional and local responses being put into place.

The Enterprise and Regeneration Manager presented the report and outlined the strategic context, the Flintshire town centre regeneration strategic approach and the funding currently available to support it, and the programmes of work underway in Flintshire. He explained that the report also proposed an increased emphasis on intervention to create more sustainable use of properties within town centres.

Councillor Paul Shotton commented on the issue of unused and unsightly properties in towns and on the resource implications for investment in Flintshire towns. Whilst welcoming the funding made available by the Welsh Government he commented that it either required repayment or match funding and asked if this would be a problem for the Council going forward. The Enterprise and Regeneration Manager advised that the enforcement programme would begin in June this year to set out a realistic and robust programme of work around empty properties. Regarding the concerns around funding expressed by Councillor Shotton the Enterprise and Regeneration Manager confirmed that where grant funding was available it required a minimum of 30% funding from another source and loan funding would need to be paid back. If match funding could not be found then the Council could not participate in projects.

Councillor Owen Thomas expressed concerns that the availability of shopping in town centres might not exist in the future.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson referred to the availability of funding for investment in Flintshire towns and asked if funding was available for Buckley Town Centre, citing the restoration of Buckley Public Baths as a project in need of urgent funding. The Chief Officer Planning Environment & Economy referred to the development of action plans for each town centre to show funders how the package of property (and other) interventions fitted together into a whole. He advised that in the first instance suggestions were needed from the local community to determine the projects to come forward. The Chief Officer and Enterprise and Regeneration Manager also responded to Councillor Hutchinson on his specific request for assistance with funding to restore Buckley Public Baths.

Councillor Chris Bithell expressed a number of concerns around the funding available for capital investment and asked if the funding would remain available for some time to allow assessments to be fully made for applications for the future.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Paul Shotton and seconded by Councillor Joe Johnson

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress in delivering the priorities for town centre regeneration as agreed at the March 2020 Cabinet meeting be noted;
- (b) That the resource implications of delivering the programme and consideration for their inclusion in the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme be noted; and
- (c) That the Committee supports giving delegated authority to the Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy) in consultation with the

Cabinet Member for Economic Development to bid for external funding as it becomes available to support the approaches to town centre regeneration set out in this report.

56. ACCESS TEAM PERFORMANCE 2019/20 AND 2020/21

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) introduced the report to inform the Committee of the progress of the Access Team over the last two years and highlight its performance in managing and maintaining the network and developing access opportunities for health, wellbeing and outdoor recreation.

The Access and Natural Environment Manager provided background information. He presented the report which detailed the measures of performance over 2019/20 and 2020/21, in particular looking at how the Access Team had responded during the Covid 19 pandemic and adapted to network needs during the lockdowns

Councillor David Evans referred to the closure of public footpaths, as outlined in section 1.05 of the report, and asked for an update on the current situation. The Team Leader - Access advised that all the footpaths had reopened. Officers also responded to the further questions raised by Councillor Evans concerning footpaths, bridleways, and inspection of footpaths. Councillor Evans suggested that Members be trained to voluntarily inspect footpaths in their Wards to assist the Service. The Access and Natural Environment Manager welcomed the suggestion that Members and volunteers highlight any issues with footpaths in their areas to enable problems to be resolved by the Access Team as they arise.

Councillor Chris Dolphin commended the Access and Natural Environment Manager and his team on their hard work and achievements.

Councillor Paul Shotton commended the work of the rangers on the coastal path and referred to the increase in public use of the coastal path due to the pandemic. He commented on the voluntary work of the Deeside litter picking group which he said had done sterling work in clearing the coastal path area. Councillor Vicky Perfect also spoke in praise of the voluntary work of the Flint litter picking group

Councillor Owen Thomas expressed concerns around the cost of maintaining footpaths which were not used at the expense of those in regular use and therefore required frequent maintenance. He asked if town and community councils were involved in the upkeep and decision making around footpaths/ rights of way.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson referred to matters relating to footpaths and landfill sites in the Buckley area and specifically the Standard landfill site. The Access and Natural Environment Manager responded to the concerns raised by Councillor Hutchinson and explained that work was in hand on the specific

footpaths/rights of way he had referred to in order to bring up to the required standard.

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) drew attention to a quotation in section 3.01 of the report from the Ramblers Association Flintshire which he said reflected the very positive relationship between Flintshire Ramblers Association and the County Council Rights of Way team, and expressed thanks and congratulations to the Access and Natural Environment Manager, Team Leader – Access, and their staff on their hard work and achievements.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor David Evans and seconded by Councillor Pal Shotton.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be noted; and
- (b) That the Committee support the good work of the Access Team in managing, maintaining and developing Flintshire's Right of Way network.

57. ASH DIEBACK SURVEYS UPDATE

The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) introduced the report to provide an update on the work to mitigate the risks associated with the disease following the survey and inspection of affected trees adjacent to highways over the Summer 2020.

The Access and Natural Environment Manager presented the report which detailed how Flintshire County Council had confronted ash dieback in 2020/21 in line with the 2019 Ash Dieback Action Plan. He provided background information and advised that to moderate and manage the risk associated to ash dieback a series of surveys had been undertaken to assess the distribution and disease classification of roadside ash trees for priority and secondary roads. A programme of tree removal had begun on Flintshire owned trees and landowners with infected trees had been contacted to highlight the presence of ash dieback with an expectation that they would manage their own trees to mitigate the risks. In conclusion the Access and Natural Environment Manager outlined the next steps as detailed in the report.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson asked if there had been any issues regarding landowners refusing to take responsibility for ash dieback on the trees situated on boundary hedgerows with highways and asked how ownership of the land and tree was confirmed. The Access and Natural Environment Manager explained that enquiries were made with the landowner, Land Registry, and locally to determine ownership. In some cases where there was a shared responsibility, or unregistered land regarding boundary trees, the level of risk would take priority in terms of managing a diseased tree.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Joe Johnson and seconded by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted; and
- (b) That the Committee support the officers in their ongoing work associated with Ash Dieback.

58. HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (HAMP)

The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) introduced the report to provide an update on the development of the Council's HAMP and provide an explanation of how the Council utilises the principles of the HAMP to guide the strategy for managing and maintaining the highway infrastructure. The report also provided an update on the trial use of recycled material in highway resurfacing material.

The Highway Network Manager provided background information and presented the key considerations as detailed in the report. He also reported on the Council Policy on Highway Safety Inspections, intervention levels and response times which was appended to the report.

Councillor Paul Shotton said he was pleased and encouraged to read in the report that the use of plastic waste had been successfully trialled and was being considered for use in resurfacing material for roadworks. In response to a question from Councillor Shotton the Chief Officer explained that some concerns had been expressed around the environmental impact of using recycled plastic in road surfacing material and the supplier had been asked to undertake research to conclude if the scheme was beneficial as a long term sustainable and economic solution for the use of plastic products.

The Chief Officer responded to the specific concerns raised by Councillor Bob Connah regarding the control/monitoring of the work schedules of the contractor's which were used by the Council.

In response to the concerns raised by Councillor Owen Thomas on the maintenance of cross-boundary road networks, the Chief Officer explained that each local authority had a duty to inspect and maintain its own roads. He agreed to take up the specific concerns raised by Councillor Thomas with the relevant Council on his behalf. The Highway Network Manager advised that the Council worked jointly with neighbouring local authorities when necessary. In response to a further question by Councillor Shotton regarding comparison with other local authorities the Highway Network Manager referred to the data which had been provided by the Welsh Government in 2018/19 which showed that the Council was first in A and B roads and sixth in C roads. He said that the

Council's own latest information provided by Welsh Government was that the Council had the least amount of poor condition roads in Wales.

In response to the concerns raised by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson regarding temporary repairs to road pot-holes, the Highway Network Manager explained that there may be no immediate intention to replace a repaired pot-hole, however, there was an awareness that the temporary measure may need further action going forward and explained the criteria to determine how a permanent repair was applied to the road network programme.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Joe Johnson and seconded by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the current arrangements and actions of the portfolio to maintain the highway network in accordance with the statutory requirement be noted; and
- (c) That the Committee recommend approval of the revised policy for Highway and Car Park Safety Inspections, Intervention Criteria and Response Times to include a revised approach to Highway Structures inspections.

59. FORTHCOMING ACTIVE TRAVEL CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Highway Strategy Manager presented the report to inform the Committee of the forthcoming 12 week Statutory Consultation on both the Council's Active Travel Existing Route Map (ERM) and Integrated Network Map (INM) which was scheduled to commence in August 2021. Members were asked to comment or make suggestions on the proposed consultation process. He provided background information and reported on the main considerations as detailed in the report.

The Chief Officer emphasised the importance of schemes being included on the INM to form the basis of the Council's grant submissions to the Welsh Government for the future. He encouraged Members to add their suggestions for local schemes to the INM to support future bids.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Chris Dolphin and seconded by Councillor Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the timescales associated with the forthcoming consultation exercise for the Council's ERM and INM be noted; and

- (b) That the Committee requests a further report detailing the outcome of the formal consultation on the Council's INM, prior to submission in December 2021.

60. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.22 pm)

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Chairman

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
8 JUNE 2021

Minutes of the remote attendance meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Tuesday, 8 June 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Rosetta Dolphin (Chair)

Councillors: Sean Bibby, David Evans, George Hardcastle, Patrick Heesom, Andy Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Joe Johnson, Vicky Perfect and Paul Shotton

SUBSTITUTE: Councillor: Ron Davies (for Cindy Hinds)

APOLOGY: Councillor Owen Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: The following attended as observers:

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Rob Davies and Christine Jones (Deputy Leader Partnerships and Cabinet Member for Social Services)

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Ian Roberts - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Councillor Chris Bithell (Cabinet Member for Planning & Public Protection), Councillor Glyn Banks (Cabinet Member for Streetscene), Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy), Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation), Regulatory Services Manager and Principal Accountant

For minute number 8

Access & Natural Environment Manager and Biodiversity Officer

For minute number 9

Strategic Policy Advisor and Benefits Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Overview & Scrutiny Facilitators and Democratic Services Officer

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

It had been confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the County Council that the Chair of the Committee should come from the Independent Alliance Group. The Committee was advised that Councillor Rosetta Dolphin had been appointed to this role for the municipal year.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Andy Hughes to his first meeting of the Committee, and congratulated Councillor Glyn Banks and Katie Wilby on their new appointments.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Councillor Rosetta Dolphin as Chair of the Committee be noted.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Sean Bibby nominated Councillor David Evans as Vice-Chair of the Committee and was seconded by Councillor Joe Johnson. There were no further nominations. On being put to the vote, this was carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor David Evans be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021 were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillors George Hardcastle and Paul Shotton.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

5. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING

The Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme and would liaise with the Chair and Chief Officers on items scheduled for July in order to accommodate the North Wales Economic Ambition Board Annual Report. Members' attention was drawn to the briefing session on recycling to be held later on the same date.

The Chief Executive said that in addition to Members submitting items for future meetings, the new Recovery Committee would assist Overview & Scrutiny Committees by identifying topics and risk areas for consideration, to help with the recovery phase.

The recommendations were moved and seconded by Councillors David Evans and Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Forward Work Programme be approved;

- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

6. LITTER AND FLY TIPPING

The Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) introduced a report on the impact of littering and fly tipping events during the emergency situation, as requested by the Committee. The report also included the agreed performance standards and enforcement responses.

In presenting the report, the Regulatory Services Manager referred to the impact of the emergency situation on the amount of waste collected from routine street cleansing and reported littering. Whilst the Council could investigate fly tipping, it was unable to remove waste from privately owned land. Information was also shared on enforcement and the focus on educating members of the public. Although less Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued due to the emergency situation, proactive enforcement work continued with a number of fly tipping cases currently being progressed and various initiatives underway including partnership working.

The Chief Officer provided information on the Caru Cymru initiative across Wales to encourage collective community action to minimise environmental waste. Fly tipping was a widespread issue with research analysis suggesting an increase of around 300% across the UK and was due to a range of factors.

The Chair suggested that a twice-yearly market stall could help to raise awareness of the team's activities.

Councillor Paul Shotton asked about the provision of additional public litter bins and was informed that sites were assessed against criteria and that Members were able to contact their area co-ordinators with suggested locations. The challenges in addressing fly tipping on private land would be raised at the next general enforcement all-Wales meeting to establish if any support was available from Welsh Government. A separate response would be provided to Councillor Shotton on parking provision outside Wepre Park.

As suggested by the Chief Executive, officers agreed to circulate the waste bin location criteria to Members and Town/Community Council Clerks and consider a forward plan of approved requests for bins with deadlines for incoming requests to help manage orders.

Councillor David Evans commented on the data which was generated by reported incidents being recorded on the system, which officers confirmed included those from litter-picking groups. Steps would be taken to ensure that cases referred directly to area coordinators by elected Members were also included. The Chief Officer responded to comments on the collection of

supermarket trolleys by cleansing teams and said that the team could consider ways of engaging with supermarkets to reduce such instances.

Councillor Evans asked about the potential for the Council to be given powers to enforce against littering from people drinking alcohol in public places which was a growing problem in some areas. The Chief Executive said that options could be explored, noting that legal advice would need to be sought on whether these powers currently with the Police could be extended to Councils. Councillor Evans proposed this as an additional recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Sean Bibby.

Following concerns raised by Councillor George Hardcastle about gully emptying, officers provided information on fleet provider arrangements and the teams responsible for waste collection and enforcement. The Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy) agreed to share details of costs incurred for dealing with stray dogs.

In response to comments from Councillor Andy Hughes, explanation was given on engagement with members of the public and school pupils to influence behaviour, and the reasons for changes in the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued since 2018-19.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson raised concerns about the impact of blocked gullies and grids in areas prone to flooding. The Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) said that frequency of gully emptying within the agreed standards was regularly reviewed and that hotspot areas were inspected more regularly. She would contact Councillor Hutchinson outside the meeting regarding ward issues.

The Chief Executive said that officer capacity to deal with flooding hotspots was under review and that any additional resources allocated would result in a further budget pressure for the Council.

In praising Streetscene teams for their work, Councillor Joe Johnson supported the suggestion for a market stall and said that additional waste bins along the coastal path would be useful.

Councillor Ian Roberts spoke in support of public education campaigns to highlight social responsibility and thanked the many litter-picking activities taking place across the County.

Councillor Glyn Banks thanked officers for the report and the education campaign, suggesting that a future increase in fines could be considered. He asked that Members refer any specific issues directly to the area supervisors.

The recommendations, as amended, were moved and seconded by Councillors David Evans and Sean Bibby.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the actions of Streetscene in dealing with littering and fly tipping events be noted; and
- (b) That officers explore whether the Council could be granted powers for enforcement of litter caused by alcohol consumption in public places.

7. END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officers presented the end of year monitoring report to review year-end progress against their respective priorities set out in the Council's Reporting Measures 2020/21 under the remit of the Committee. It was reported that 67% of performance indicators had met or exceeded their targets.

Within Streetscene & Transportation, there were two indicators with a red status for current performance against target. On the ongoing development of the Quality Bus Partnership, the results of a network review by Transport for Wales would be shared with the Committee when made available. On repairs by utility contractors, despite a decrease in post-completion inspections during the period, the number undertaken was above the statutory requirement.

For Planning, Economy & Environment, the impact from the emergency situation on performance was evident, however some outturns were only marginally below the target. The number of planning applications determined was improving as good progress was made on the backlog of work which had developed at the start of the emergency situation.

The recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Paul Shotton and Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

That the End of Year Performance Monitoring Report be noted.

8. BIODIVERSITY DUTY UPDATE

The Chief Officer (Planning, Economy & Environment) introduced an update report on progress in delivering the biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Council's second biodiversity duty plan entitled 'Supporting Nature in Flintshire' detailed ongoing good work in delivering these objectives during the period 2020-2023.

The Access & Natural Environment Manager reported that 85% of actions being taken to deliver the six objectives were either completed or on target. He spoke about the impact from the emergency situation on different work streams which required a change in the way of working.

The Committee was introduced to Sarah Slater, the Biodiversity Officer, who shared presentation slides covering:

- Investment in cut and collect machinery
- Non chemical weed control and cleaning
- Wildflower campaign

The Biodiversity Officer acknowledged the Chair's suggestion on the coastal path as a location for the wildflower campaign and said that sites were assessed against various criteria. She welcomed further suggestions from Members via email.

In response to comments from Councillor Glyn Banks, the Chief Officer (Planning, Economy & Environment) provided information on carbon storage projects including the appointment of Alex Ellis to explore options with Council owned assets. The Biodiversity Officer spoke about investment in Foamstream chemical-free weed control system which was also used by other services across the Council.

The recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Paul Shotton and Joe Johnson.

RESOLVED:

That progress with the biodiversity strategy be supported.

9. COMMENCEMENT OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC DUTY

The Strategic Policy Advisor introduced a report on the Council's preparations for the commencement of the socio-economic duty. This was a statutory requirement upon relevant public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcomes resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. The report was being shared with all Overview & Scrutiny Committees to raise awareness of the new obligations.

The Strategic Policy Advisor and Benefits Manager gave a joint presentation covering the following:

- What is the Socio-economic Duty and what does it do?
- Key terms
- Inequalities of outcomes
- Examples of poverty
- Demonstrating due regard - audit trail
- Meeting the duty - what we are doing
- Better outcomes
- Case study

The overall aim of the duty was to deliver better outcomes to people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage by listening to those individuals and demonstrating due regard. The legislation linked with various work streams to

tackle poverty which was identified as one of the priorities within the Council Plan. The Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be leading on the whole Council Plan poverty theme and would receive regular reports.

Councillor Vicky Perfect welcomed the initiatives to address food poverty, particularly those helping pupils during school holidays.

In response to a question from Councillor Paul Shotton, the Benefits Manager provided information on Welsh Government financial support to tackle food poverty and a joint initiative between the Council and NEWydd Catering & Cleaning Ltd on a referral scheme to provide support to families in need.

Councillor Patrick Heesom welcomed the work being undertaken to manage social changes in society.

The recommendations were moved and seconded by Councillors Joe Johnson and David Evans.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the requirements of the Socio-economic Duty be noted; and
- (b) That the Committee is assured of the Council's preparedness in meeting the new duty.

10. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 12.10pm)

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Chair

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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 6 th July 2021
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
Report Author	Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The report also shows actions arising from previous meetings of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will be continued to be reported to the Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.
3	That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None as a result of this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme Appendix 2 – Action Tracking for the Environment & Economy OSC.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee as identified in Appendix 2. Contact Officer: Margaret Parry-Jones Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator Telephone: 01352 702427 E-mail: Margaret.parry-jones@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Improvement Plan: the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.

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Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2020/21

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
9 Sept 2.00 pm	Planning & Enforcement	To receive a report as requested at Committee on 12 May, 2021	Assurance	Chief Officer Planning, Environment & Economy	
	Review of Winter Maintenance Policy	To review the policy prior to consideration at Cabinet	Pre-decision scrutiny	Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
12 October 10.00 am	Empty Homes	To provide an overview of the work undertaken by the Empty Homes Service, and outline the new approach Welsh Government is promoting in respect of this area.	Information sharing	Public Protection Manager – Community	
	Parc Adfer	To receive a virtual tour of Parc Adfer from Enfinium the operators of the facility, as a site visit is not feasible at the current time.	Assurance	Steffan Owen	
	Review of O Licences	Referred by Governance and Audit Committee	Assurance	Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
APPENDIX 1

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
9 Nov 2021 10.00 am	Integrated Network Maps	To receive the outcome of the formal consultation on the Council's Integrated Network maps		Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation	
7 Dec 2021 10.00 am	Mid-year Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures	To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring. Members are required to review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.	Performance monitoring/ Assurance	Chief Officers	
11 Jan 2022 10.00 am					
8 Feb 2022 10.00 am					
8 Mar 2022 10.00 am					
7 Jun 2022 10.00 am	Year-end Performance Indicators for Recovery, Portfolio and Public Accountability Measures	To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring. Members are required to review the levels of progress in the	Performance monitoring/ Assurance	Chief Officers	

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
 APPENDIX 1

Date of Meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report/Presentation	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible/Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
		achievement of activities, performance levels and current risk levels as identified in the Council Plan.			
5 Jul 2022 10.00 am					

Items to be added:

Integrated Transport Plan & Climate Change updates as appropriate

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Actions from Environment & Economy OSC 8 June 2020

Item	Discussion	Action	By whom	Status
Litter & Flytipping	Chief Executive it would be useful to circulate the waste bin location criteria to Members and Town & Community Council Clerks	Circulate to Members and Town & Community Council Clerks	Ruth Cartwright	Ongoing
Litter & Flytipping	Consideration to be given by officers to a forward plan of approved request for bins with deadlines for incoming requests.	Officers to consider the introduction of a forward plan	Katie Wilby/Ruth Cartwright	Ongoing
Litter & Flytipping	Councillor George Hardcastle raised concerns regarding the costs incurred for dealing with stray dogs.	The Chief Officer agreed to circulate the costs incurred dealing with stray dogs to Members of the Committee.	Andrew Farrow	Ongoing
Litter & Flytipping	Cllr Hutchinson raised concerns regarding blocked gullies and grids in areas at risk of flooding.	Ruth Cartwright agreed to contact Cllr Hutchinson outside the meeting to discuss issues within his ward.	Ruth Cartwright	Ongoing
Litter & Flytipping	Following discussions the Committee resolved that officers explore whether the Council could be granted powers for enforcement of litter caused by alcohol consumption in public places	That officers explore the suggestion	Katie Wilby / Ruth Cartwright	Ongoing
Litter & Flytipping	Consider additional waste bins along the coastal path	To be considered by Officers		Ongoing
Performance Report	The Chief Officer agreed to share results of the network review by Transport for Wales	Results to be shared when available.	Ruth Cartwright	Ongoing

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Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 6 July 2021
Report Subject	North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 4 and Annual Reports
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to present the Quarter 4 (Jan-March) Growth Deal report and the Portfolio Management Office Annual Report for 2020-21.

Quarterly and annual reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement. Following the consideration of the documents by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board it follows that the reports will be shared with Welsh Government, UK Government and each Local Authority Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members consider and note the Quarter 4 Performance Report and the Portfolio Management Office Annual Report for 2020-21.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	
1.01	In December 2020, the NWEAB and the Welsh and UK Governments agreed the Final Deal Agreement for the North Wales Growth Deal. Regular reporting on progress against the North Wales Growth Deal is a requirement of the Final Deal Agreement.
1.02	This report includes two appendices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> North Wales Growth Deal Quarter 4 Performance Report; <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio Management Office Annual Report 2020-21.

1.03	<p><u>North Wales Growth Deal Quarter 4 Performance Report (Appendix 1)</u></p> <p>The Quarter 4 performance report provides an overview of progress on the Growth Deal programmes and projects. With the Deal signed, the focus this quarter has been on moving to the delivery phase. Work started in January 2021 with a baseline review of all projects to re-confirm timetables for business case development and delivery. Once this exercise was completed, the focus was on moving project business cases forward.</p>
1.04	<p>During Quarter 4, a significant number of workshops have taken place, in line with the Better Business Case guidance, to support the development of the project business cases. These workshops involved a number of stakeholders and allowed us and our project sponsors to test, challenge and re-confirm support for the projects.</p>
1.05	<p>Gateway Reviews are a key part of our assurance and approvals process, providing an independent checkpoint prior to key decision points. Quarter 4 saw our first two projects undertaking their Gateway Reviews. The Morlais project, led by Menter Môn and the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project, led by Wrexham Glyndwr University completed their reviews and are now working to address the recommendations made before submitting revised business cases for consideration.</p>
1.06	<p>Having signed the Grant Award Letter and submitted the required documentation we have received the first instalment of £16million from Governments in March 2021. This funding will enable project delivery to commence during the next financial year, when we expect to consider and make a decision on our first tranche of project business cases.</p>
1.07	<p>The majority of programmes and projects are currently reporting as Amber as a result of revised business case development timetables resulting in delay compared to the timetable outlined in the Portfolio Business Case. Two projects are currently reporting red due to risks that could impact on the scope of the projects.</p>
1.08	<p><u>Portfolio Management Office Annual Report 2020-21 (Appendix 2)</u></p> <p>The annual report looks back on the progress made over the last financial year. It includes both the Growth Deal and other activities supported by the Portfolio Management Office.</p>
1.09	<p>2020-21 was a challenging year, with Covid-19 changing our lives and the way we work. Despite these challenges, the final deal agreement on the North Wales Growth Deal was signed during a virtual ceremony on the 17th December, 2021.</p>
1.10	<p>The Final Deal is the contract between the UK Government, Welsh Government and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board for the delivery of the Growth Deal. It was secured on the basis of a Portfolio Business Case and five Programme Business Cases outlining plans for the total investment of £240m (£120m by UK Government and £120m by Welsh Government).</p>
1.11	<p>In addition to achieving the Final Deal, a number of other significant milestones were achieved including:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Securing £2.9million in ESF funding to expand the Portfolio Management Office; <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment to the new staffing structure with only 2 posts vacant as of April 2021; <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of Portfolio Assessment Review and first project Gateway Reviews; <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of Better Business Case training for team members; <input type="checkbox"/> Working closely with the six local authorities, UK and Welsh Governments and private sector representatives to co-ordinate the regional response to economic recovery.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.</p> <p>The quarterly performance report provides an overview of the expected capital expenditure profile of Growth Deal funding. At this stage, no project business cases have been approved and therefore there is no expenditure to report on. Future iterations of the report will include reporting on financial expenditure following project business case approval</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	None.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.1	<p>Appendix 1 North Wales Growth Deal – Quarter 4 Performance Report</p> <p>Appendix 2 Portfolio Management Office Annual Report 2020-21</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Andrew Farrow (Chief Officer, Planning, Environment and Economy)</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 703201</p> <p>E-mail: andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Bwrdd Uchelgais Economaidd Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Economic Ambition Board

North Wales Growth Deal

2020-21 Quarter 4
(January – March 2021)
Performance Report

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



UK Government Wales
Llywodraeth y DU Cymru

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1. Overview from Portfolio Director

The signing of the Final Deal Agreement December 2020 by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Welsh Government and UK Government was a significant milestone for the North Wales Growth Deal, at the end of a very challenging year for the economy as a result of Covid-19.

With the Deal signed, the focus this quarter has been on moving to the delivery phase. Work started in January 2021 with a baseline review of all projects to re-confirm timetables for business case development and delivery. Once this exercise was completed, the focus was on moving project business cases forward.

Over the past three months, a significant number of workshops have taken place, in line with the Better Business Case guidance, to support the development of the project business cases. These workshops involved a number of stakeholders and allowed us and our project sponsors to test, challenge and re-confirm support for the projects.

Gateway Reviews are a key part of our assurance and approvals process, providing an independent checkpoint prior to key decision points. The Growth Deal portfolio undertook its Gateway Review during August 2020 as part of the process to secure the Final Deal, and this quarter has seen our first two projects undertake their Gateway Reviews.

The Morlais project, led by Menter Môn and the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project, led by Wrexham Glyndwr University completed their reviews and are now working to address the recommendations made before submitting revised business cases for consideration.

The Portfolio Management Office has **continued to lay the groundwork for the successful delivery of the Deal** by refining and agreeing the commercial strategy, procurement principles and agreeing a position statement on climate and ecological change to enable us to work with project sponsors to deliver on the Board's ambition for the region.

Finally, having signed the Grant Award Letter and submitted the required documentation we have received the first instalment of £16million from Governments in March 2021. This funding will enable project delivery to commence during the next financial year, when we expect to consider and make a decision on our first tranche of project business cases.

Alwen Williams
Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director



2. Overall Portfolio Performance

Theme	RAG	Commentary
Portfolio Business Case	Green	The Portfolio Business Case was approved as part of the Final Deal Agreement in December 2020. The business case is to be updated annually, with the first update scheduled for August 2021.
Governance	Green	The Portfolio, Programme and Project Management Framework is now established with the Portfolio Board and five Programme Boards in operation. Governance Agreement 2 was approved by all partners in December 2020. The Conflicts of Interest process is now being rolled out, starting with the Business Delivery Board.
Assurance	Green	The agreed assurance process between the NWEAB, UK Government and Welsh Government is working well. Morlais the first Growth Deal project has completed its Gateway Review and is working to address the recommendations. The next two projects, the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub and the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre are on track for their Gateway Reviews in April and May respectively.
Resourcing	Yellow	Recruitment to the Portfolio Management Office continues, with five new starts joining the team between April and May 2021. Two posts remain unfilled: Lead Officer (Strategic Transport) and the Land & Property Project Manager with options for re-advertisement being considered at this time.
Finance	Green	The Grant Offer Letter has been received and signed and the first tranche of funding (£16million) was received in March 2021. The Portfolio Management Office is working with UK Government and Welsh Government to understand the implications of the announcement by UK Government Treasury that they are accelerating funding for the North Wales Growth Deal.
Risk	Yellow	The overall risk profile of the Growth Deal is stable with no new significant areas of concern. There remain some significant risks associated with a couple of individual projects and the post-Covid appetite and ability of the private sector to invest in the Growth Deal remains unclear at this stage.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Yellow	The Portfolio Management Office has worked with UK Government and Welsh Government officials on a revised draft of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and are awaiting feedback. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is expected to be refined over the next 12 months as the approach to Benefits Realisation matures.
Communications and Engagement	Yellow	Work has commenced on the new website and branding with a creative digital agency called Tinint, however the timetable is slightly behind schedule. The Portfolio Management Office has entered into a 12-month partnership with Business News Wales to provide additional communications and marketing support. In addition two small sponsorship deals with Wales Week in London and the Wales Start-up Awards 2021 will help to attract investment in and raise the Growth Deal and Economic Ambition Board's profile.

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

3. Digital Programme

Programme Status	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme board has prioritised three projects for development during 2021 – Digital Signal Processing Centre, Connecting the last few % and Connected Corridor. The Digital Signal Processing project is progressing steadily in developing the OBC. The Last Few % project has established a project board and appointed a Senior Responsible Officer; and has agreed a set of SMART spending objectives. The Connected Corridors project has established a project board and appointed a Senior Responsible Officer. A scoping study is to be commissioned to support the development of the project. Work has started on updating the regional Digital Connectivity Strategy, last reviewed in 2019, with a draft scheduled to be presented for NWEAB approval in the next quarter.

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Digital Signal Processing Centre (Sponsor: Bangor University)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic, Economic and Commercial case workshops completed First drafts of Strategic and Economic cases completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance review scheduled for 12 May Draft OBC to be ready in April 	
Connecting the last few % (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project board established and Senior Responsible Officer appointed Strategic case workshops completed and spending objectives defined Market engagement with project board meeting potential suppliers a series of presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic case workshops to be held and OBC to be drafted Project board membership to be reviewed Assurance review to be scheduled 	

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Connected Corridor (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project board established and Senior Responsible Officer appointed Initial strategic case workshops held Project board identified need for scoping study to improve strategic case Brief for scoping study drafted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping study to be delivered Remaining workshops to be held and OBC to be drafted Project board membership to be reviewed Assurance review to be scheduled 	
Full Fibre at Key Sites (Sponsor: NWEAB)	On Hold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Business Case Scheduled for development later in 2021 	
Connected Campus (Sponsor: NWEAB)	On Hold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Business Case Scheduled for development later in 2021 	

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- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

4. Low Carbon Energy Programme

Programme Status	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first draft of the Morlais OBC was received by the PMO for review and a gateway review was completed on the project in February 2021. Work is now underway by Menter Môn to address the recommendations and to develop the next draft of the OBC for consideration. Good progress made on the Transport Decarbonisation Project, with work progressing on both the Deeside and Holyhead Hydrogen Hubs. Jacobs successfully procured by Flintshire County Council to deliver both the SOC and OBC for the Deeside hub and the Transport Decarbonisation Project Manager has been recruited to lead on the project and will take up his post in April. There has been similar positive progress on the Smart Local Energy project with two strategic case workshops held, SMART spending objectives developed and Aquaterra procured to deliver Llyn Multi-vector study. A Project Board has been established for the Low Carbon Energy Centre of Excellence with plans in place to develop the Outline Business Case over the next quarter. The NWEAB approved the Draft Regional Energy Strategy at their meeting in March 2021.

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Morlais (Sponsor: Menter Môn) P80641	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft OBC submitted to Portfolio Management Office following business case workshops Gateway Review held to review readiness for delivery and the draft OBC Public Inquiry held for the main planning application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of principal contractor Completion of berth allocation process OBC consideration by NWEAB 	
Transport Decarbonisation (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding secured from Welsh Government for SOC and OBC development Jacobs procured to support SOC and OBC Development for the Deeside Hydrogen Hub UK Government announced funding for the Holyhead Hydrogen Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager to start in post SOC and OBC reports to be received 	

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

4. Low Carbon Energy Programme

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Low Carbon Energy Centre of Excellence (Sponsor: Bangor University)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project board established A series of internal workshops to review the strategic case and develop the proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Case workshops to be held Continue development of draft OBC 	
Smart Local Energy (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Case for Change' workshops held to identify spending objectives, business needs and potential scope of the project YnNi Llyn multi-vector energy system feasibility study has been awarded to Aquaterra -who have carried out similar work in the Orkney Islands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the business case development workshops Continue development of the draft SOC YnNi Llyn report due to be received 	
Trawsfynydd Power Station (Sponsor: Cwmni Eginio)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of Cwmni Eginio announced by Welsh Government on the 1st October 2020 Welsh Government working with Arup to assess the economic impact of a Small or Advanced Modular Reactor at Trawsfynydd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with Cwmni Eginio, Government and key partners regarding project development plans 	

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- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

Programme Status	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Project Board has been established for the Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh project led by developer Jones Bros who are progressing with the development of the business case. • A potential developer has expressed interest in the Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor site. • Outline planning permission on the Key Strategic Site, Bodelwyddan has lapsed and the project will need to be reviewed once the revised planning policy for the site is determined. • Warren Hall, Broughton remains on track and subject to the Local Development Plan adoption. • There are a number of dependencies and constraints that will impact the timetable for the Wrexham Gateway site. • There remains a funding risk in relation to the Holyhead Port project due to increased costs.

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Western Gateway, Wrexham (Sponsor: NWEAB) Page 43	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government have issued a planning directive to the Local Planning Authority not to grant consent to any development that will lead to increased traffic flows on A483 Junction 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress business case development 	
Warren Hall, Broughton (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Common Grounds completed between Welsh Government, Flintshire County Council and the NWEAB in support of draft Local Development Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate Collaboration Agreement with Welsh Government 	
Key Strategic Site, Bodelwyddan (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project Review – scope of project being reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline planning permission on site expired on 21 March, 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project will need to be reviewed once the revised planning policy for the site is determined 	

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project board established Planning application submitted by Jones Bros to Denbighshire County Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision expected on planning application in April/May 2021 Progress business case development 	
Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor (Sponsor: NWEAB)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential developer with a track record of delivery has expressed an interest in the site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress discussions with potential developer Progress business case development 	
Holyhead Gateway (Sponsor: StenaLine)	Project Review – scope of project being reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh Government have established a Steering Group to provide guidance on the delivery of the activities that fall within the Holyhead Gateway Revised project costs indicate costs will be in a range that is substantially in excess of original estimates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consenting process for breakwater works to begin 	

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

6. Agrifood and Tourism Programme

Programme Status	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timetable for business case development remains tight. The Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub projects remains on track with all workshops completed. The timetable for the Llysfasi Net Zero Farm workshops has been revised to align with the start of the new project manager in post, however, the WBRID business innovation competition with Coleg Cambria Llysfasi has provided a solid foundation for the project. Progress is being made on the Hub element of the Tourism Talent Network.

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub (Sponsor: Grwp Llandrillo Menai)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hatch Regeneris appointed to support workshops All five project workshops completed to support OBC development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit draft OBC to Portfolio Management Office for review Undertake Gateway 2 review 	
Llysfasi Net Zero Farm (Sponsor: Coleg Cambria)	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and increased awareness of low carbon and precision farming methods Engagement with local businesses to determine skills needs Project Manager appointed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager to start in post Business case workshops to commence Planning for Gateway 2 review 	
Tourism Talent Network (Sponsor: Grwp Llandrillo Menai)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hub element continues to be planned in preparation for 21st Century Schools bid (to align with Growth Deal timetable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop timetable being drafted with 1st workshop scheduled for May 2021 COVID-related review of 'spoke' element with view to expanding partners 	

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
■ Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
■ Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

7. Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme

Programme Status	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Glyndwr University led Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre completed a Project Assessment Review (PAR) in March as part of the business case development process and the team are now working on the recommendations ahead of OBC submission to the Portfolio Management Office and a Gateway 2 review. The Bangor University led Centre for Environmental Biotechnology project is at an earlier stage of development, with resources focused on refining the scope of the project at present.

Project	Project Stage	Quarter Achievements	Next Quarter Key Milestones	RAG Status
Enterprise Engineering Optics Centre (Sponsor: Glyndwr University) Page 46	Project is developing the Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting documentation prepared for Gateway Review Gateway Review undertaken Business Case workshops held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Business case workshops Address Gateway Review recommendations Submit draft OBC to Portfolio Management Office Undertake Gateway 2 Review 	
Centre for Environmental Biotechnology (Sponsor: Bangor University)	Project is developing the Strategic Outline Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal workshop held to review the strategic narrative of the project and to better understand the scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further workshops to help refine the project. Following these, engagement with stakeholders will begin 	

- Delivering to plan with no issues to address. No action required
- Delivery slightly behind schedule and/or minor/moderate issues to address. Management action in place
- Delivery behind scheduled (+3 months) and/ or significant issues to address. Urgent action required

Programme Delivery Plan March 2021 Update



Note: Delivery timescales are provisional pending project business case approval

9. Growth Deal Projects - Capital Funding Profile March 2021

Programme	Project	Project Sponsor	2021/22 (£m)	2022/23 (£m)	2023/24 (£m)	2024/25 (£m)	2025/26 (£m)	Total (£m)
Digital	Digital Signal Processing Centre (DSP)	Bangor University	1.72	0.99	0.25	0.00	0.00	2.96
Digital	Full Fibre at Key Sites	NWEAB	0.00	3.45	3.25	0.00	0.00	6.70
Digital	Connected Corridor	NWEAB	0.99	1.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.17
Digital	Connected Campus	NWEAB	0.00	3.94	5.90	5.91	4.93	20.68
Digital	Connecting the last few %	NWEAB	0.99	2.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.94
Low Carbon Energy	Morlais	Menter Môn	2.46	4.93	1.48	0.00	0.00	8.87
Low Carbon Energy	Low Carbon Energy Centre of Excellence	Bangor University	0.00	4.74	6.71	5.23	4.00	20.68
Low Carbon Energy	Trasfynydd Power Station	Cwmni Eginio	0.00	4.92	9.85	4.93	0.00	19.70
Low Carbon Energy	Transport Decarbonisation	NWEAB	1.97	3.94	3.94	1.38	0.00	11.23
Low Carbon Energy	Smart Local Energy	NWEAB	0.00	3.94	7.88	7.88	4.93	24.63
Land and Property	Holyhead Gateway	Stena Line	0.00	11.33	13.78	9.36	0.00	34.47
Land and Property	Warren Hall, Broughton	NWEAB	0.00	0.49	0.99	5.91	7.38	14.77
Land and Property	Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh	NWEAB	0.99	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.00	3.94
Land and Property	Key Strategic Site, Bodelwyddan	NWEAB	0.49	0.99	5.41	2.96	0.00	9.85
Land and Property	Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor	NWEAB	0.25	2.70	2.96	0.00	0.00	5.91
Land and Property	Western Gateway, Wrexham	NWEAB	0.00	4.03	4.93	0.00	0.00	8.96
Agrifood and Tourism	Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub Project	Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai	0.49	4.68	4.68	0.00	0.00	9.85
Agrifood and Tourism	The Llysfasi Net Zero Farm	Coleg Cambira	0.00	4.92	4.93	0.00	0.00	9.85
Agri-food and Tourism	Tourism Talent Network	Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai	0.00	1.48	1.48	1.47	0.00	4.43
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Centre for Environmental Biotechnology	Bangor University	0.00	1.48	1.48	0.00	0.00	2.96
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre	Glyndwr University	8.28	1.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.85
Portfolio Management Office Costs (1.5%)								3.60
Total								240.0

10. Appendix A – Project Glossary

Programme	Project	Sponsor	Summary
Digital	Full Fibre at key sites	NWEAB	This project will deliver full fibre connectivity (gigabit capable) to 28 key business sites across North Wales.
	Connected Campus	NWEAB	The project will accelerate the development of infrastructure for 19 key regional economic sites.
	Connected Corridors	NWEAB	In total, 156km of road and rail corridor will be connected to 5G/Low Power Wireless Access Networks, along the A55 corridor and adjacent mainline rail route.
	Connecting the last few %	NWEAB	This project targets universal superfast coverage across North Wales, which have yet to be served by other means and cannot obtain speeds of at least 30Mbps (download).
	Digital Signal Processing Centre Project (DSP)	Bangor University	The project will allow the DSP Centre to expand its presence and remit, integrating fully with the National Strategy Project (NSP) and enable the scaling of key assets including a 5G testbed, research capacity and state-of-the-art equipment.
Low Carbon Energy	Morlais	Menter Môn	Investing in the infrastructure that connects the Morlais Zone with the electricity grid system, and preparing the site for private sector developers who will lease parts of the zone for deploying their tidal energy technologies.
	Trawsfynydd Power Station	Cwmni Eginio	The site is uniquely placed for a 'First of A Kind' deployment of a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) or Advanced Modular Reactor (AMR). Alongside the public and private sector the Growth Deal will contribute funding towards enabling infrastructure for this development.
	Low Carbon Energy Centre of Excellence	Bangor University	Investing in the development of facilities at Bangor University and Menai Science Park, enhancing the North Wales and UK capabilities for innovation in low carbon energy and related areas, helping to create the conditions for new inward investment and business growth in the low carbon energy supply chain in North Wales.
	Smart Local Energy	NWEAB	To help achieve renewable energy, decarbonisation and local ownership targets, the project will support innovative enabling projects and demonstrators that overcome market failures and unlock private and community sector investments in smart local energy solutions.
	Transport Decarbonisation	NWEAB	Support delivery of a demonstrator project involving the production of green hydrogen from low carbon energy sources and its use within regional transport networks.
Land and Property	Holyhead Gateway	Stena Line	Future proof the Holyhead Port by providing new deep-water heavy loading and cruise facilities, improved vehicular access, guaranteeing the future of the breakwater and providing for the demands of regional energy projects.
	Wrexham Gateway	NWEAB	Delivery of primary services to enable the site to be brought to the market for sale and development.
	Warren Hall Strategic Site	NWEAB	Delivery of primary services to enable the 65-hectare mixed use site to be bought to the market for sale and then development by the private sector.
	Bodelwyddan Strategic Site	NWEAB	Delivery of primary services to enable the mixed-use commercial and residential development site to be brought to the market for development.
	Former North Wales Hospital Site	NWEAB	The Growth Deal funding will assist in the delivery of a cleared and remediated site with primary services to bring forward a mixed-use commercial and residential development
	Parc Bryn Cegin Strategic Site	NWEAB	Provide industrial floor space to meet known demand for units.

Agrifood and Tourism	Tourism TALENT Network	Grwp Llandrillo Menai	Future-proofing the pipeline of skills provision and increase commercial benefits from one of the most established sectors in the region. The talent network will stimulate public-private collaboration to coordinate action on skills and product development to transform and accelerate the growth of the tourism and hospitality sector in the region.
	Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub	Grwp Llandrillo Menai	The vision is to create a distinctive, world-class Rural Economy Hub at Glynllifon, offering a range of facilities and services to strengthen and enhance the regional economy, specifically through growing the food and drink sector.
	The Lllysfasi Net Zero Farm	Coleg Cambria	Llysfasi Carbon Neutral Centre aims to lead North Wales to a resilient future where carbon neutral land management is at the centre of a developing renewable energy sector supporting a sustainable, thriving and healthy community covering the rural/urban mix of the region.
Innovation in High Value Manufacturing	Centre for Environmental Biotechnology (CEB)	Bangor University	The Centre for Engineering Biotechnology will be a world-leading centre in the discovery and characterisation of novel extremophilic enzymes of industrial relevance. The Centre for Engineering Biotechnology will provide a strong foundation for attracting world-leading researchers, significant public and commercial research funding, and inward investment to Wales.
	Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre	Glyndwr University	The Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre will provide facilities targeted to boost high-level skills development for the region and enable SME's and large businesses to work in partnership with Wrexham Glyndwr University on commercially driven research and development in optics, composites and hydrogen fuel cells.



Bwrdd Uchelgais Economaidd Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Economic Ambition Board

North Wales Economic Ambition Board

Portfolio Management Office

2020–2021 Annual Report



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



UK Government Wales
Llywodraeth y DU Cymru

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Foreword

The current economic position is unprecedented with the UK's exit from the European Union and the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to disrupt and impact the wellbeing of our economy and importantly, our people.

However, delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal is on the horizon and this investment will inject much needed vitality into our economy to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth needed over the next 15 years.

The **Growth Deal** has been developed through close collaboration and commitment from partners across all sectors, including the UK and Welsh Governments, to deliver long-lasting positive investment and change that will enable economic and employment growth for the long-term.

The deal is a unique opportunity to invest in our future and is a key enabler to building a more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive economy for North Wales.

We will be **smart** with our investment - building on our strengths to boost productivity, foster innovation and be competitive in the markets we serve. We already have well-established research and innovation hubs, helping to push the boundaries in high value manufacturing. Further investment will enhance our reputation and enable growth in this important industry.

We aim to make North Wales more investable by tackling known areas where long-term market failure has been a barrier to attracting commercial investment. This unlocks the potential to create highly skilled job opportunities, ensuring that our young people and future generations can thrive and contribute to the local economy. We are also addressing the shortage of suitable land and property

to facilitate business growth, and investing in commercial employment and housing sites to meet the region's needs.

Being connected as a region is one of our strengths. Our partnership across the six local authorities, universities, colleges and the private sector is well-established and growing in strength. We are driving a step change in connectivity through addressing those areas most in need of faster and more reliable broadband connections, and exploiting the potential of 5G and new innovation.

We are developing relationships across our borders, because we know that by working together, we can be stronger.

It's important to us that we keep building on our reputation as a cohesive region; fostering and leveraging partnerships to promote scalable, sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Our investment in low-carbon energy enables us to contribute directly to the climate change emergency, not only helping to make North Wales a cleaner, greener environment, but also positioning ourselves as one of the leading UK locations within the low carbon energy sector. Not forgetting our valued economies in agriculture and tourism, where we will focus on enabling and encouraging diversification to improve the long-term future of these key industries, ensuring they have the opportunity to develop sustainably and flourish.

We will invest in a way that promotes social value and builds wealth in our communities. We recognise and value our obligation to deliver the Growth Deal in a way that improves and enhances our social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being.

By investing now, we build our **resilience** for the future.

We are privileged to lead this important investment in North Wales - our home and our region.



Alwen Williams
Portfolio Director



Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn
Chair of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board



Councillor Mark Pritchard
Vice-Chair of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board

Alwen Williams

M



The Last 12 Months

Alwen Williams
Portfolio Director

The last 12 months have been unlike any other, with Covid-19 changing and challenging our lives and the way we work potentially forever.

The Portfolio Management Office was established in January 2020, with members including two Programme Managers, our Operations Manager and myself. We had a challenging remit to secure the Growth Deal funding for North Wales by December 2020. The pandemic meant we only had two and half months together in the office before everything changed.

In April, we were adjusting to the new normal of running a virtual office, engaging with our partners to map out the process to agreeing the final deal with the UK and Welsh Governments. We also focused on learning all about HM Treasury's Better Business Case methodology which provides the framework for construction of all our investment business cases.

In May, we secured £2.9 million in funding from the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) to expand the team to support the delivery of the Growth Deal. Growing and developing a new team virtually over the past 12 months has been both challenging and rewarding. We are a close knit, dynamic and collaborative team and I'm immensely proud of what we have achieved together, considering the majority of us have never met in person. Following our latest recruitment campaign in February 2021, at 18 members, we are close to completing the team, with only a couple of remaining vacancies to fill.

From June onwards our focus as a team was split between supporting the regional recovery work led by local authority partners and on preparing the business cases required to secure the Growth Deal. During June and July, we agreed our approach to programme and project management and began to put in place the structures we would need to deliver the deal. Our work to develop the portfolio and programme business cases continued through a series of workshops, with support provided from Joe Flanagan, co-author of the guidance document for HM Treasury's Better Business Case methodology. June also saw the first of many virtual meetings of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

In August, we commissioned a Gateway Review on the Growth Deal. This independent review, organised by Welsh Government's Assurance Hub, provided useful challenge and recommendations, in addition to endorsing the progress the team had made during the first half of the year.

By September, we had finalised our business cases and associated governance documents ready for the approval process - internally and with both Welsh and UK Governments. During November, our Economic Ambition Board partners approved the documents required for a final deal agreement and our governance arrangements to deliver the Growth Deal.

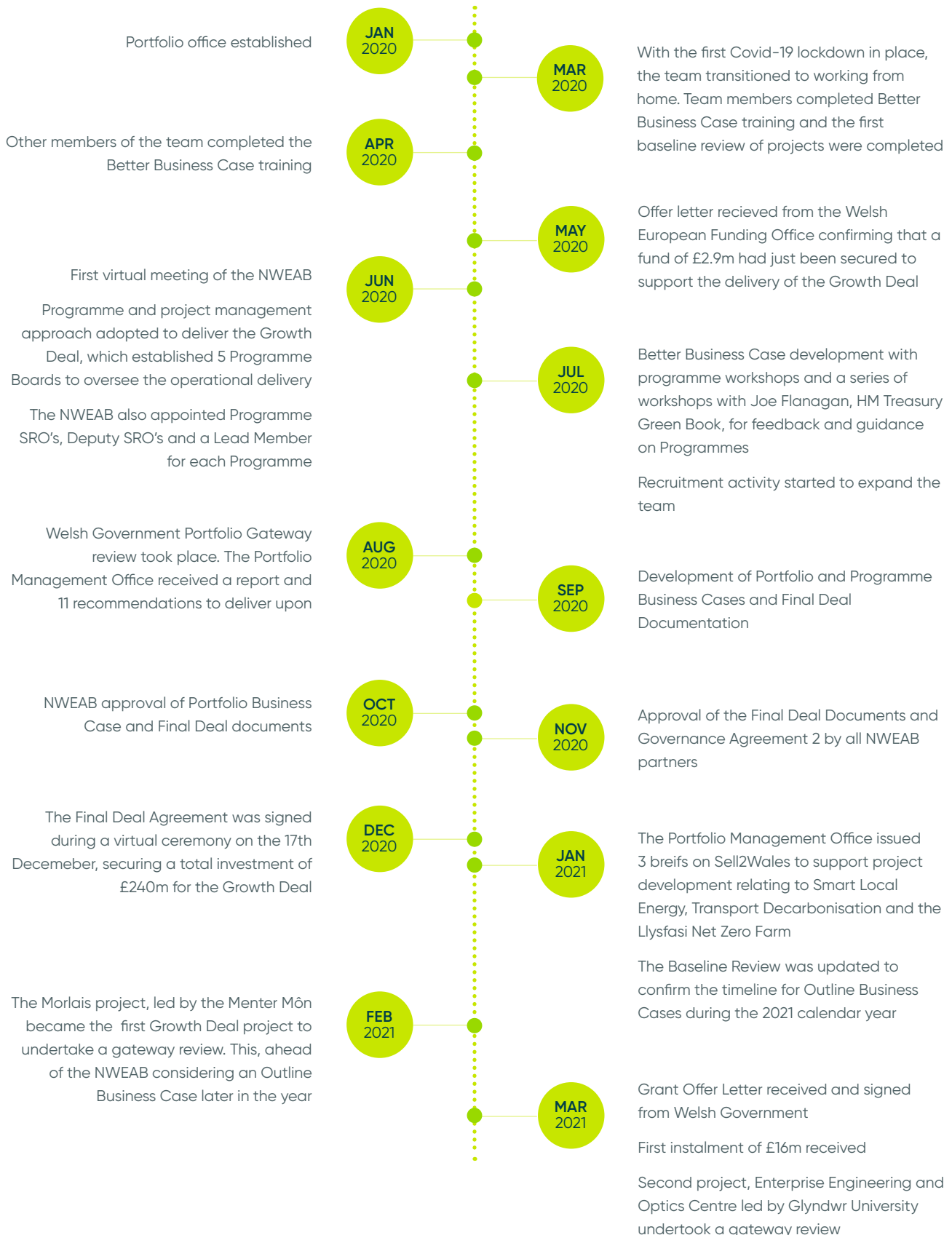
The final deal agreement was signed during a virtual ceremony on the 17th of December 2021. The Final Deal is the contract between the UK Government, Welsh Government and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board for the delivery of the Growth Deal and was secured on the basis of a Portfolio Business Case and five Programme Business Cases securing the total investment of £240m (£120m by UK Government and £120m by Welsh Government).

The first three months of 2020 have been focused on delivery and working with our project sponsors to progress the project business cases. In February, the Morlais project, led by Menter Môn became the first Growth Deal project to undertake a gateway review ahead of the Outline Business Case being considered by the Economic Ambition Board later in the year.

In March 2021, having signed the Grant Award Letter and submitted the required documentation we received the first instalment of £16million from Welsh and UK Governments. This funding will enable project delivery to commence during the next financial year, when we expect to consider and make a decision on our first tranche of project business cases.

Looking back at the last 12 months, I am proud of the team and the significant progress made. Securing the Final Deal within our original timetable despite the challenges posed by Covid-19 was unquestionably down to the grit and determination by everyone involved. I'm now looking forward to delivering the deal, with the team and our partners over the next 12 months.

Snapshot Of The Last 12 Months





The Growth Deal

Aims

To build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales.

To build on our strengths, to boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to deliver inclusive growth.

The approach is to promote growth in a scalable, inclusive and sustainable way, in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Investment

Growth Deal investment:
£240m

Private sector investment:
£722.1m

Public sector investment:
£184.3m

Total investment:
£1.1bn

Spending objectives

To create between 3,400 - 4,200 net additional jobs

Generate £2.0 - £2.5 billion net additional GVA

Programmes



Low Carbon Energy



Digital



Agrifood & Tourism



Innovation in High Value manufacturing



Land & Property

Working with the Private Sector

The North Wales Growth Deal is a partnership between the public and the private sectors and our progress over the past 12 months would not have been possible without the support of key stakeholders from the private sector.

Askar Sheibani, Comtek Network Systems and Chair of the Business Delivery Board, quotes

"North Wales has a unique and powerful coalition of private and public sector leaders who, through the North Wales Economic Ambition Board and the Business Delivery Board have been working as united partners to make sure that the Growth Deal leverages a substantial return on investment.

Board members are predominately entrepreneurs, have an independent voice with well-established track records within their sectors and industries which is recognised internationally. They have influential and extensive business networks in Wales, UK and beyond and, very importantly, they have a real passion for North Wales, which is where the majority call home.

To the East we're fortunate to be situated close to two major cities; Liverpool and Manchester, home to two international airports connecting us to the global market, whilst London is just a couple of hours away by train. To the West, the port of Holyhead facilitates our trade via sea-freight and opens up the path to international tourism and Ireland. Every inch of North Wales has a great history, rich culture, fantastic castles and beaches, unique tourist attractions, amazing wildlife and, irrefutably, the most breath-taking natural landscapes on planet Earth.

The Growth Deal programmes are concentrated on areas of the economy in which we have long-established experience and strong expertise; such as Advanced Manufacturing, Renewable Energy and Tourism. As an example, Morlais, the tidal power project on Anglesey has the potential to make North Wales one of the world leaders in tidal energy. There are very few places in the world that are suitable and the investment could put North Wales in the top three biggest tidal power generators in the world.

The Growth Deal also invests in the regions digital infrastructure. This is essential and underpins economic growth. Accessible and reliable high-speed fibre broadband and 5G capability across the whole of North Wales is essential.

Throughout history, North Wales has demonstrated its resilience to combat all past economic shocks and come out battle-hardened and stronger. This recent pandemic has created a devastating social and economic earthquake.

I firmly believe that, North Wales, with a credible economic plan, investment in skills and education, and with determined, well-resourced local leadership, has a great opportunity and the potential to re-establish itself as a powerful economy in Wales, which will be greatly supported by the Growth Deal investment over the next 15 years and beyond".

Jim Jones, Managing Director of North Wales Tourism and Chair of the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council and Ashley Rogers, Commercial Director, North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council quotes

"The North Wales Growth Deal is a crucial package of capital investments for our region and will bring a substantial boost to the North Wales economy at a time when major market changes such as Brexit and global events including the Covid-19 pandemic, continue to impact our Communities and Economy. The North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council as the regional umbrella body for the private sector in North Wales has from the inception of the developing Growth Deal in partnership with the Economic Ambition Board, worked exceptionally hard to ensure that the investments proposed in the Deal are distributed across the region and our sectors to provide the maximum benefit to our businesses.

A Growth Deal that delivers on supporting business and productivity growth for both our home grown SME's and the International businesses based in North Wales in our key sectors e.g. Manufacturing, Tourism & Hospitality, Agriculture and Energy, has the potential to make a once in a lifetime positive impact for us all. It is imperative though that the proposed projects and programmes not only provide the catalyst for growth but with the fundamental tenet that they do so whilst contributing to the region's journey towards a Net Zero Carbon and Circular economy. We look forward to continuing meaningful engagement with the Economic Ambition Board on this key investment package."



Askar Sheibani
Chair, Business
Delivery Board



Ashley Rogers
Commercial Director,
North Wales Mersey
Dee Business Council



Jim Jones
Chair, North Wales
Mersey Dee Business
Council





Responding to Covid-19

Covid-19 has had an immense economic impact on North Wales as in other parts of the UK and globally. The Economic Ambition Board is working closely with the six local authorities, UK and Welsh Governments and private sector representatives to co-ordinate the regional response to economic recovery. The long-term effects of Covid-19 on the region's economy is still emerging but it is clear that some of our most significant and established economies have already been severely impacted, for example businesses in tourism, hospitality and leisure and those who rely on the visitor economy for trade.

The Growth Deal is designed to address structural, long-term barriers to economic growth. However, the Economic Ambition Board is fully aware that, in the short-term, a range of actions will be required to facilitate economic recovery and an approach that aligns these short to medium term recovery interventions with the longer term aims and measures to be delivered by the Growth Deal.

The Growth Deal on its own will not address all the challenges facing the North Wales economy, particularly in light of Covid-19. However, such a significant injection of capital investment into the local economy will be a significant boost to the construction and related sectors at a time when there is likely to be spare capacity in the economy.

In March 2020 a regional tactical response group was established in response to Covid-19. Their remit was to assess the emerging impact of the pandemic on businesses and agree the key actions needed to address these. The group met weekly and included representatives from the Local Authorities, WLGA, Welsh Government, UK Government and the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council. This enabled the coordination and compilation of regular insight briefings which were shared directly with Government Ministers to influence the decisions being made on fiscal recovery packages for the business community. Key themes started to emerge including, support for businesses, the visitor economy, town centres and regeneration, supply chains, people, skills and employment and public procurement.

During early May 2020 a joint press release was issued to highlight the collaboration across North Wales and between the Economic Ambition Board, the Regional Skills Partnership, Welsh Government, and the DWP to help broker the connection between job seekers and available vacancies in the region.

Also during May, in collaboration with UK and Welsh Government, the Economic Ambition Board hosted a webinar for businesses which attracted over a hundred and fifty participants and gave the opportunity for businesses impacted by the pandemic to ask their questions directly to Government Ministers.

Early in summer 2020 a Regional Economy Recovery Group was established to work collaboratively on economic recovery on behalf of the region. The group commissioned a business impact survey, conducted over the summer, to which over 1,800 businesses responded. The data delivered valuable insights about the direct impact of Covid in different industries and sectors and allowed for breakdown view by local authority.

The Economic Ambition Board and Welsh Government also jointly commissioned research on the impact of Covid-19 on the economy in North Wales. This research, conducted by Hatch Regeneris, includes a proposed plan for recovery looking at immediate interventions, considerations for the Growth Deal and long term considerations, all of which are designed to foster the environment for resilience and Growth post Covid-19.

In addition, and cognisant of the impact to the tourism, hospitality and leisure industry, the Economic Ambition Board commissioned an independent piece of work led by Professors Nigel Morgan and Annette Pritchard, looking at the impact of Covid was having on the industry. The paper, presented to the board, sets out the situation and sets out considerations needed to reset, reignite and reimagine a sustainable and resilient visitor economy for North Wales.

The insights collated throughout the year validated the key priority themes emerging. The later part of the year has been focused on using existing regional structures and fora to develop recovery plans in response to each of the key themes emerging. For example, the Regional Skills Partnership has developed a proposed recovery plan focusing on people, skills and employment and the Regional Tourism Forum has aligned with the visitor economy theme. Work is underway to agree a comprehensive regional recovery plan to address each of these themes and with the aim of rebuilding a resilient and sustainable economy for North Wales.



The Portfolio Office Team

The portfolio management office, led by Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director was established in January 2020 and consisted of Hedd Vaughn-Evans, Operations Manager; Henry Aron, Low Carbon Energy Programme Manager and Stuart Whitfield, Digital Programme Manager. During the team's first few months in post, the team set up the Portfolio Office and associated working processes at the Conwy Business Centre, Llandudno Junction. From March 2020 onwards the team have been working virtually from home. In April, David Mathews joined the team, as Land and Property Programme Manager, followed by Nia Medi Williams as Senior Operations Officer in August, having previously supported the team from Gwynedd Council.

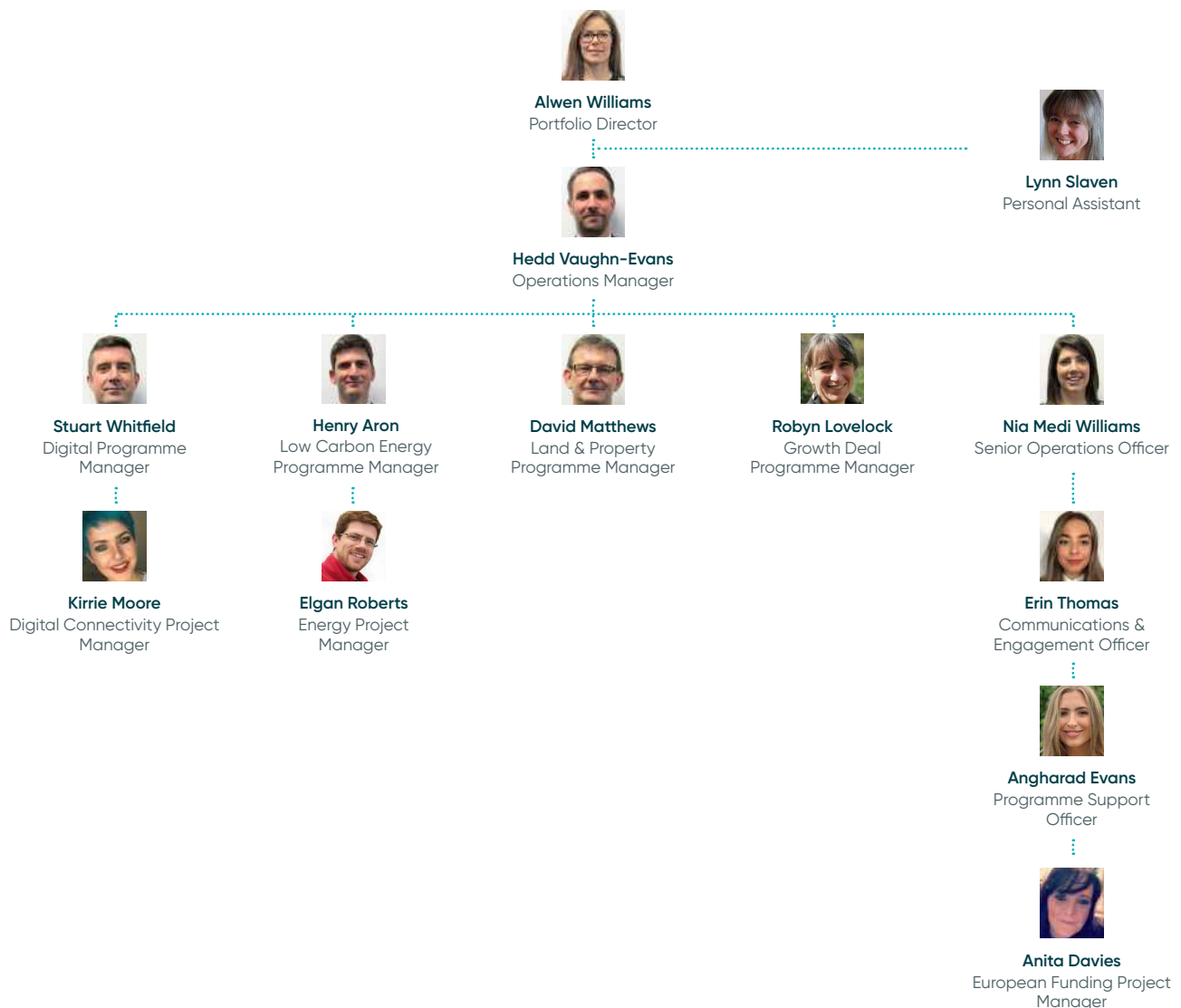
Growth Deal Programme Manager, responsible for leading on the Agri-food and Tourism Programme and the Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme. Erin Thomas joined as the Communications and Engagement Officer and Angharad Evans as Programme Support Officer. Shortly after Elgan Roberts, joined as Energy Project Manager.

In January 2021, Kirrie Moore joined the team as our Digital Project Manager, followed in March 2021 by Anita Davies as European Funding Project Manager. During March, Lynn Slaven formally joined the team as Alwen's PA having previously provided this support from Gwynedd Council.

Following a successful recruitment campaign in October, three new members joined the team including Robyn Lovelock as

Six new members are joining the team during April and May 2021, with two further vacancies left to fill.

Portfolio Management Office



Digital

Strategic Aim

To deliver the step change in digital connectivity needed to ensure North Wales is able to satisfy user demand, maintain pace with the rest of the UK, unlock the growth potential of priority sectors and sites and underpin a flourishing innovation ecosystem. Plays an enabling role for other programmes to deliver maximum benefit.

Investment

Growth Deal investment:

£37m

Private sector investment:

£1.6m

Public sector investment:

£3.1m

Total investment:

£41.7m

Spending objectives

Job creation

To create between 315 and 380 jobs.

Robust & competitive connectivity market at key sites

Robust and competitive connectivity market at 28 strategic key sites in step with or in advance of UK Government 2025 target for gigabit capability coverage.

High bandwidth mobile coverage transport networks

High bandwidth mobile coverage on transport networks (A55, A483, A5) with deployment in step with or in advance of UK Government 2027 target for 5G coverage.

Digital infrastructure innovation

Innovate and commercialise new digital infrastructure technology and embed the region in this strategically important industry for the long term.

Investment

Investment of between £37 - £46m.

GVA

Create net additional GVA of £130 - £158m.

Superfast digital connectivity everywhere

Ensure all premises have Superfast broadband connectivity by 2023 with Gigabit upgrade capability where possible.

The projects

Digital Signal Processing Centre (DSP)

The project brings together Bangor University researchers to work alongside high-profile international companies and Welsh SMEs enabling them to work together to explore disruptive solutions for 5G. The project will allow the DSP Centre to expand its presence and remit, integrating fully with the National Strategy Project (NSP) and enable the scaling of key assets including a 5G testbed, research capacity and state-of-the-art equipment. The project is expected to create 160 jobs in total.

Total investment of £7.3m | Growth Deal £3m

Connected Campuses

By campuses we mean key sites of economic activity. The project will accelerate the development of infrastructure for 19 key regional economic sites. It is estimated some 2,600 business premises will have access to high bandwidth 5G and low power Wi-Fi services and therefore better connectivity once complete.

Total investment of £21m | Growth Deal £21m

Connecting the last few %

This project targets universal superfast coverage across North Wales, which have yet to be served by other means and cannot obtain speeds of at least 30Mbps (download). A lack of reliable and in some cases basic broadband (Ofcom defines as 10Mbps download) is an established and growing challenge facing rural businesses and communities. A widely acknowledged 'digital divide' is affecting residents' access to online services and preventing SMEs from developing and sustaining trade. The growing trend of working from home is also restricted by poor connectivity. Up to 10,100 residential and 4,300 business premises will have access to superfast broadband once complete.

Total investment of £4m | Growth Deal £4m

Connected Corridor

This responds to industry demand and technology drivers by supporting the more efficient operation of supply chains, and major transport operations (such as ports). In total, 156km of road and rail corridor will be connected to 5G/Low Power Wireless Access Networks, along the A55 corridor and adjacent mainline rail route. It is estimated that up to 1.57 million rail journeys and 1.3 million road journeys will benefit from enhanced 5G connectivity once complete.

Total investment of £2.2m | Growth Deal £2.2m

Full Fibre at key sites

This project will deliver full fibre connectivity (gigabit capable). That's fibre all the way from the exchange to the premises to 28 key business sites across North Wales.

Total investment of £7.2m | Growth Deal £6.8m



Last 12 Months

Stuart Whitfield
Digital Programme Manager

Significant progress has been made on the Digital Programme over the past 12 months, with the development of the programme business case and the establishment of programme governance structures to support delivery.

The Digital Programme is unique within the Portfolio Management Office as the programme oversees the delivery of a non-Growth Deal project. The programme is currently delivering the UK DCMS funded North Wales Local Full Fibre Network Project and by the end of March 2021 this is expected to have delivered around 100 new full fibre broadband upgrades to a range of public sector sites around the region, bringing gigabit capable connectivity to support service delivery for the first time. A further 250 connections are due to be made before the end of 2021.

Benefits are already starting to be realised, associated with improved productivity and efficiency of service delivery and supporting new ways of working, particularly with GP surgeries affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

In November, the programme board selected the Digital Signal Processing Centre, the Last Few % and the Connected Corridors projects as priorities for business case development during 2021. All three projects now have established project boards and senior responsible owners in place to support delivery.

Much of the past 12 months have focused on developing the necessary partnerships to support the delivery of the programme, with a total of thirteen organisations now involved at either programme or project board level; Wrexham County Borough Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd Council, Flintshire County Council, Denbighshire County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Welsh Government, Transport

for Wales, Network Rail, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, NHS Wales Informatics Service, Bangor University and Menter Môn. Market engagement has also taken place with the private sector during 2020-21 with interest from potential delivery partners building as the project business cases take shape.

The programme is pursuing further activities to enhance digital connectivity in the region through improving the conditions for network operators to invest. Areas being investigated include development of common 'access agreements' for adoption by the wider public sector to facilitate the hosting of digital infrastructure at public sector premises. A common register of these assets is also being considered to streamline the process of site identification by network operators, rather than having to consult multiple sources. Both approaches will be informed by examples from across the UK and the UK Government's approach to so called 'barrier busting'.

With a Digital Connectivity Project Manager in post from January 2021 and a new Digital Project Officer starting in post in May 2021, the programme is well positioned to deliver.



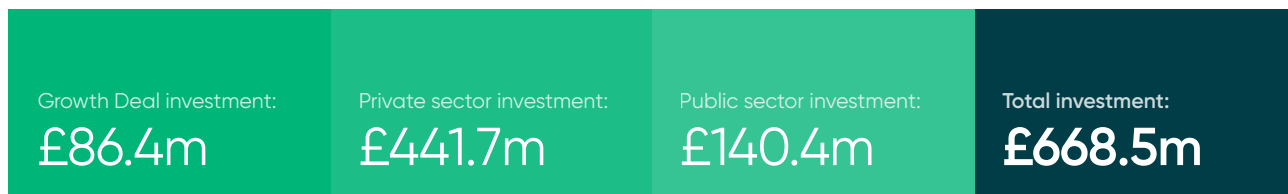


Low Carbon Energy

Strategic Aim

To unlock the economic benefits of transformational low carbon energy projects and position North Wales as a leading UK location for low carbon energy generation, innovation and supply chain investment.

Investment



Spending objectives

Job Creation

To create between 800 and 980 new jobs.

Low carbon energy generation

Enable the deployment of at least 314MW of new installed low carbon energy generation capacity.

Carbon savings

To enable carbon savings of at least 2723 tonnes of CO₂e.

Investment

Total investment of between £602m - £735m.

GVA

Create net additional GVA of £433m - £530m.

The projects

Morlais

Investing in the infrastructure that connects the Morlais Zone with the electricity grid system, and preparing the site for private sector developers who will lease parts of the zone for deploying their tidal energy technologies. This would position the zone as the first consented, expandable and technology-agnostic site in the world with up to 240 MW of power generating potential.

Total Investment £36m | Growth Deal £9m

Low Carbon Centre of Excellence

Investing in the development of facilities at Bangor University and Menai Science Park, enhancing the North Wales and UK capabilities for innovation in low carbon energy and related areas, helping to create the conditions for new inward investment and business growth in the low carbon energy supply chain in North Wales.

Total Investment £97.7m | Growth Deal £21m

Transport Decarbonisation

Support delivery of a demonstrator project involving the production of green hydrogen from low carbon energy sources and its use within regional transport networks.

Total Investment £28.6m | Growth Deal £11.4m

Smart Local Energy

To help achieve renewable energy, decarbonisation and local ownership targets, the project will support innovative enabling projects and demonstrators that overcome market failures and unlock private and community sector investments in smart local energy solutions.

Total Investment £106.2m | Growth Deal £25m

Trawsfynydd Power Station

The Trawsfynydd site is uniquely placed for a 'First of a kind' deployment of a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) or Advanced Modular Reactor (AMR) due to its status as a publicly owned asset, its highly skilled workforce and the supportive community. In combination with public and private sector investment, the Growth Deal will contribute funding towards enabling infrastructure, helping to secure jobs as well as position North Wales at the cutting edge of innovation and R&D in a technology that has significant potential for deployment across the UK.

Total Investment £400m | Growth Deal £20m





Last 12 Months

Henry Aron
Low Carbon Energy Programme Manager

Over the past 12 months, the Low Carbon Energy Programme has matured into a cohesive programme aimed at unlocking the economic benefits of transformational low carbon energy projects in North Wales.

The first half of the year was focused on the development of the programme business case, establishing programme delivery structures, training and recruitment. With these structures in place, the focus over the last six months has been to progress the project business cases. This included supporting Menter Môn to develop the Outline Business Case for Morlais, a transformational marine energy project in Anglesey. The Morlais project is scheduled to be the first project business case considered by the Economic Ambition Board in 2021.

The Low Carbon Energy Programme represents an opportunity for North Wales to establish itself as a leading UK location for low carbon energy generation, innovation and supply chain investment. Over the last year, we have taken part in a number of engagement events to promote the Growth Deal and the opportunities around the low carbon energy sector in North Wales. This has included presenting at the EGNI 2021 North Wales Energy Event (January 2021) and taking part in the Wales Week in London event in March 2021.

The programme has been successful in attracting additional funding from Welsh Government to support the development of projects business cases. £25k was secured from the Welsh Government Smart Living Programme to deliver a feasibility study into multi-vector energy systems on the Llyn Peninsula and £140k of grant funding secured to progress the business case for the Transport Decarbonisation Project.

Another significant milestone over the past 12 months has been working with Welsh Government and regional partners to develop the Regional Energy Strategy for North Wales, which received endorsement from the Economic Ambition Board in March 2021. The overall aim of the strategy is to illustrate a potential pathway for decarbonising the energy system whilst ensuring that the region maximises the economic benefits from the transition to a low carbon economy.

Two new project managers have been appointed with Elgan Roberts joining the team in November 2020 to lead on the Smart Local Energy project and Graham Williams will be joining the team in April to lead on the Transport Decarbonisation project. Over the next 12 months, we expect to see considerable progress as the programme moves into the delivery phase.





Agrifood & Tourism

Strategic Aim

To build a more sustainable, vibrant and resilient foundation economy within the region, optimising opportunities for employment and prosperity through our environment and landscape.

Investment



Spending objectives

Job creation

To create between 310 and 380 new jobs.

Innovation & productivity

Provide 4,000 – 6,000m2 of incubator, R&D and training floor space to encourage innovation, promote upskilling and support business growth in the sector.

Decarbonisation and sustainable business models

Educating businesses on the benefits of decarbonisation, diversification and sustainable business models. 300-400 businesses diversifying from traditional core operation to adapting new practices in the first 5 years of programme.

Investment

Total investment of between £37m – £45m.

GVA

Create net additional GVA of £230m – £281m.

The projects

Llysfasi Net Zero Farm

Llysfasi Net Zero Farm aims to lead North Wales to a resilient future where carbon neutral land management is at the centre of a developing renewable energy sector supporting a sustainable, thriving and healthy community covering the rural/urban mix of the region.

Total Investment £15.4m | Growth Deal £10m

Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub

The vision is to create a distinctive, world-class Rural Economy Hub at Glynllifon, offering a range of facilities and services to strengthen and enhance the regional economy, specifically through growing the food and drink sector.

Total Investment £13m | Growth Deal £10m

Tourism TALENT Network

This is all about future-proofing the pipeline of skills provision and increase commercial benefits from one of the most established sectors in the region. The sector is of course under huge pressure currently by Covid-19 so this must be monitored and evaluated as we move forward. The talent network will stimulate public-private collaboration to coordinate action on skills and product development to transform and accelerate the growth of the tourism and hospitality sector in the region.

Total Investment £12.9m | Growth Deal £4.5m





Last 12 Months

Robyn Lovelock
Growth Deal Programme Manager

With no Programme Manager in place at the start of the year, there was a significant collaborative effort across the partnership to develop the Agrifood and Tourism Programme and to build a clear, cohesive narrative for the programme. This collaborative approach enabled the programme business case to be developed with a clear aim to build a more sustainable, vibrant and resilient foundation economy in the region by focusing on agriculture, food and drink and tourism.

In October, Robyn Lovelock joined the team as the Growth Deal Programme Manager with responsibility for this programme, providing much needed capacity to drive the programme forward.

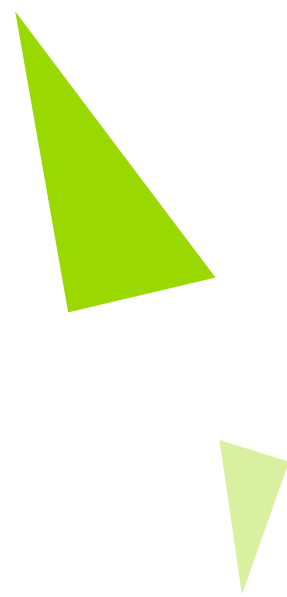
The informal steering group supporting the programme transitioned into a programme board with focus on the development of projects in line with the Better Business Case guidance, benefits realisation and discussions about how the Growth Deal can best support knowledge transfer, innovation and business support to realise the planned benefits.

In December, the programme secured £100k from Welsh Government through the Whole System Business Research Innovation for Decarbonisation Scheme (WBRID). Four businesses have been working with Coleg Cambria as the project sponsors for the Llysfasi Net Zero farm project and the Economic Ambition Board to explore the feasibility of pioneering innovations that could help North Wales farms reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. This work will help shape the development of the business case for the Net Zero farm during 2021.

The Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub project is on track to be the first business case from the programme considered by the Economic Ambition Board. All business case development workshops have now been completed and the project will be undertaking an external assurance review (Gateway Review) in April 2021.

The Tourism Talent Network project was paused in early 2020 as a result of Covid-19 and the specific impact on the tourism sector in North Wales to allow the impacts on the project to be considered. The project was reviewed in early 2021 and now continues with an immediate focus on the initial Hub element to be delivered by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai through other funding sources, with further exploration of the Spoke elements to be picked up again in late 2021, subject to continued progress managing Covid-19.

The programme and its three projects are well placed to deliver and make a significant contribution to the agrifood and tourism sectors in North Wales over the coming years.





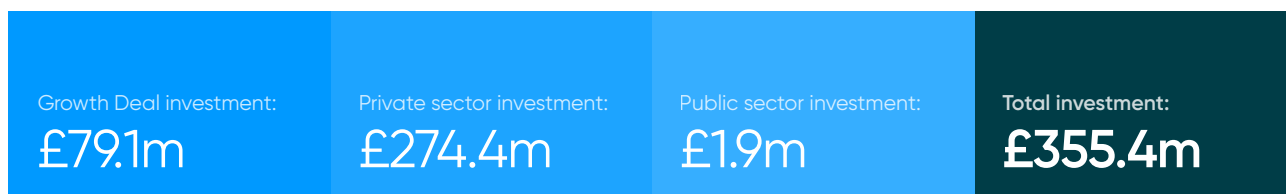
Land & Property

Strategic Aim

To address the shortage of suitable land and properties for business growth and to bring forward sites for housing development.

To deliver improvements that stimulate investment in sites and premises in the port of Holyhead and the wider region. To enable other programmes by ensuring the right land and property infrastructure is available.

Investment



Spending objectives

Job creation

To create between 1,870 and 2,280 jobs.

Employment sites and premises

Deliver 30ha land and 20,000 square metres of employment premises between 2021 and 2026.

Residential sites

Deliver 1,000 plus residential development plots between 2021 and 2026.

Investment

Investment of between £320m - £390m.

GVA

Create net additional GVA of £1.06bn - £1.29bn.

Holyhead Gateway

Land reclamation, safeguarding and life extension works to the breakwater, access improvements and port capacity enhancements.

The projects

Warren Hall Strategic Site

Growth Deal funding will provide the necessary statutory consents and deliver primary services to enable the 65-hectare mixed use site to be bought to the market for sale and then development by the private sector.

Total Investment £70m | Growth Deal £15m

Key Strategic Site, Bodelwyddan

A mixed use commercial and residential development site of 137 hectares. The Growth Deal funding will provide the primary services to enable the site to be bought to the market for development

Total Investment £82m | Growth Deal £10m

Holyhead Gateway

Future proof the Holyhead Port by providing new deep-water heavy loading and cruise facilities, improved vehicular access, guaranteeing the future of the breakwater and providing for the demands of regional energy projects.

Total Investment £80m | Growth Deal £35m

Wrexham Gateway

Growth Deal funding will provide the necessary statutory consents and deliver primary services to enable the site to be bought to the market for sale and development.

Total Investment £43.4m | Growth Deal £9.1m

Former North Wales Hospital, Denbigh

A planning application has been submitted to bring forward a mixed use commercial and residential development. The Growth Deal funding will assist in the delivery of a cleared and remediated site with primary services.

Total Investment £74m | Growth Deal £4m

Parc Bryn Cegin Strategic Site, Bangor

Provide industrial floor space to meet known demand for units.

Total Investment £6m | Growth Deal £6m



Last 12 Months

David Matthews
Land & Property Programme Manager

David Matthews joined as the Land and Property Programme Manager in April 2020 and led the development of the programme business case that was approved by the Economic Ambition Board in October 2020. The programme is a package of strategic investments in key sites across the region to address the shortage of land and properties for business growth in the region and to bring forward sites for housing development.

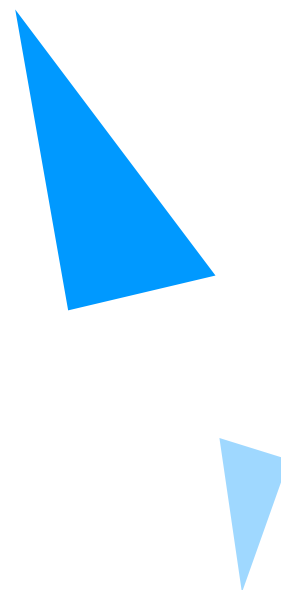
Over the past 12 month, we have developed a robust governance model including the establishment of a programme board and developed key relationships to support the programme and its ambitions. This includes regular bi-monthly meetings with the Housing Accelerator Group of North Wales Registered Social Landlords.

The five strategic development sites within the programme have been focused primarily on progressing planning matters over the past 12 months, with key achievements including the submission of a statement of common ground with Flintshire County Council and Welsh Government in support of the Warren Hall, Broughton development in the Flintshire Local Development Plan. A planning application has been submitted by Jones Bros to develop the Former North Wales Hospital site in Denbigh, with a decision expected during 2021 to inform the business case development. Progress continues to be made on the Western Gateway, Wrexham and the Parc Bryn Cegin, Bangor projects. Outline planning permission on the Key Strategic Site in Bodelwyddan has lapsed and Denbighshire County Council are currently reviewing the planning policy for the site as part of the new Local Development Plan to be adopted in 2023.

The Holyhead Gateway project remains a key strategic project for the region, however the scope of the project is currently being reviewed in light of escalating costs. Notwithstanding this, good progress continues to be made on obtaining statutory

consents for both the land reclamation and breakwater refurbishment with a good working relationship with Stena Line, their consultants and officers from Welsh Government and Anglesey County Council. Alternative drivers for additional port investment including offshore wind, cruise ships and a freeport continue to be explored.

Following a challenging 2020, the programme continues to review the demand for sites and premises and while it remains to be seen what the long-term implications and changing working patterns may have on the nature of development sites required, the programme is well placed to adapt to these changes and deliver for North Wales. With a new project manager starting in May 2021 and one further vacancy to fill, the programme will have the resources required to deliver.



Innovation in High Value Manufacturing

Strategic Aim

To consolidate North Wales' position as a powerful and innovative high value manufacturing cluster, building on existing specialisms and leading expertise to create a higher value, more diverse economic base that supports the transition to a lower carbon economy.

Investment

Growth Deal investment:

£13m

Public sector investment:

£26.5m

Total investment:

£39.5m

Spending objectives

Job Creation

To create between 145 and 180 new jobs.

Research & innovation

Work with 55 UK and International industry partners or SME's to develop new low carbon technologies and waste reduction.

Expand economic integration to facilitate technology adaption

Reinforce collaboration between regional Universities and businesses to facilitate technology adaption. Support three collaborative R&D projects per annum to develop new technologies.

Investment

Total investment of between £36m - £43m.

GVA

Create net additional GVA of £94m - £114m.

Skills development

Provide training and upskilling to 100 people / businesses in the targeted technologies over first 5 years.

The projects

Centre for Environmental Biotechnology (CEB)

The Centre for Engineering Biotechnology will be a world-leading centre in the discovery and characterisation of novel extremophilic enzymes of industrial relevance. The Centre for Engineering Biotechnology will provide a strong foundation for attracting world-leading researchers, significant public and commercial research funding, and inward investment to Wales, building on an initial £5m ERDF investment into research capacity. The project also aims to draw companies in the biocatalysis sector to North Wales to take advantage of clustering and agglomeration benefits the regions offers due to its well-established specialism in bioengineering.

Total Investment £9.6m | Growth Deal £3m

Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre

The Enterprise Engineering & Optics Centre will provide facilities (in Wrexham and St. Asaph) targeted to boost high level skills development for the region and enable SME's and large businesses to work in partnership with Wrexham Glyndwr University on commercially driven research and development.

Total Investment £299m | Growth Deal £10m



Last 12 Months

Robyn Lovelock
Growth Deal Programme Manager

The Innovation in High Value Manufacturing programme was initially developed by the founding Portfolio Management Office team with support from project sponsors Wrexham Glyndwr and Bangor Universities. The programme aims to consolidate North Wales position as a powerful and innovative high value manufacturing sector.

To do this we will build on existing specialisms and expertise in the region through targeted investment in research and development supporting long-standing and emerging business needs.

In October, Robyn Lovelock joined the team as the Growth Deal Programme Manager providing much needed capacity to drive the programme forward.

Programme progress and project development in line with the Better Business Case guidance has been overseen by the programme board, which evolved from an initial programme steering group. The board has been proactively exploring how the Growth Deal can best support knowledge transfer, innovation and business support to realise the overall programme aim, spending objectives and planned benefits.

The last quarter of the year has been focused on supporting project development, primarily the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project with Wrexham Glyndwr University. This project is currently developing the Outline Business Case for consideration by the Economic Ambition Board and has recently completed an external assurance (Gateway) review. The Bangor University led Centre for Environmental Biotechnology project is at an earlier stage of development, with resources focused on refining the scope of the project at present, with further engagement of stakeholders planned later in 2021.

The programme and the two research and development projects are well placed to make a significant contribution to the North Wales economy through research, development and commercialisation in the fields of biotechnology, hydrogen fuel cells, composites and optics.

The Skills and Employment programme and Strategic Transport programmes sit outside the Growth Deal. The programmes are key to delivering the wider vision for North Wales, and the Economic Ambition Board are working with the Regional Skills Partnership and through its Transport Sub-Board to deliver these programmes

Skills & Employment Programme

Over the last 12 months, the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership have made progress in laying the foundations of the skills and employment programme. As we recover from the immediate economic challenges of Covid-19 and look ahead to develop a world-class talent base, we need to develop a more dynamic and agile skills ecosystem in the region, that closes the skills gaps and better matches skills demand with supply through closer collaboration with employers and industry.

We have worked closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, Job Centre Plus and Working Wales to provide a brokerage and rapid response to help employers during this challenging year. Employers have received support with matching individuals to jobs, we have trialled this approach with the Betsi Cadwaladr Heath Board with their recruitment needs around Track and Trace posts and with Ysbytu Enfys. During this next year, our intention is to build on the brokerage project by focusing on 'hard to reach' SMEs that often lack the time, capacity and awareness to engage with skills providers but invariably share common concerns and workforce requirements.

Work has also been ongoing to develop our skills pipeline for our capital investments in the region, including the North Wales Growth Deal. The need for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and digital skills has been highlighted as key challenge for employers, especially as jobs and sectors evolve in our economy. We need to develop a STEM workforce, and to do that we need a sufficient flow of secondary school students who are interested in STEM and digital skills. If we are to respond regionally with a future workforce that is qualified and skills to meet the future STEM based opportunities across the region, we need a great co-ordinated approach and careers advice and guidance to help steer individuals towards these opportunities. Work has been ongoing in the region to develop a STEM statement and explore the series of STEM hubs which would inspire and enthuse individuals about future careers in STEM industries. We have set up a digital skills industry cluster group to help inform our understanding on the challenges that face employers.

Transport Programme

Having effective and reliable transport networks that link North Wales with key markets and destinations, is essential to support a thriving economy. The NWEAB established a Transport Sub-Board to support and prioritise investment in our transport networks and to work across the region to deliver improvements. The growing focus on safeguarding our environment has increased the need to provide genuine alternatives to road-based transport, including better passenger transport networks that properly integrate.

The NWEAB has supported Welsh Government and Transport for Wales with developing an integrated transport package branded as the North Wales Metro. There are some exciting projects currently under development that will see transformational improvement to the regions rail and bus networks over the years ahead. These include new rail stations and more capacity on our rail network, proposals to integrate bus and rail along with active travel are under development, along with quality programmes to achieve better branding, information, and ticketing arrangements. The aim is to ensure that viable alternatives to car-based travel are available for all residents and visitors.

Alongside improvements to transport networks, the decarbonisation of transport networks is an increasing priority. Preparing the region for accelerated roll-out of zero emission electric vehicles, with adequate charging infrastructure is a priority. The NWEAB has also led on the development of a hydrogen hub at Deeside, to complement another being developed at Holyhead, that aims to put the region at the forefront of the roll out of hydrogen fuelling and fuel cell vehicle technologies. Business cases for implementation will be completed over the next year.

The publication of Llwybr Newydd – the updated Wales Transport Strategy, sets an ambitious programme of improvements to transport networks, decarbonisation proposals and a challenging agenda for change. Over the next year, work will commence on updating the North Wales Regional Transport Plan, in response to the agenda set by Llwybr Newydd.

Added value

Regional Response to Covid-19

The Portfolio Management Office played a key role in co-ordinating and supporting the region during the Covid-19 pandemic leading the development of regional structures to share information and learning.

Supporting transition to a low carbon, ecologically resilient economy

The Economic Ambition Board declared its commitment to sustainable development, net zero emissions and biodiversity in March 2021.

Jobs

During 2020-21, the Economic Ambition Board have made 15 appointments while growing the portfolio management office, providing new employment and career development opportunities in the region.

Funding

The team have secured an additional £265k from Welsh Government to support the development of projects within the region.

Collaboration

The team have developed formal and informal collaboration structures across the partnership including regular participation in governance boards, project development workshops and regular engagement events with business, strengthening networks and collaboration opportunities across the region.

Promotion

The team have promoted North Wales and the North Wales Growth Deal at a number of events during the year, including at Wales Week in London.

Expertise

We are developing a regional centre of excellence for project delivery. Having developed expertise in Better Business Case development, the team have recently been acting as a critical friend to the Theatre Clwyd re-development project.

Governance

Governance Agreement 2

The Economic Ambition Board was established by local authority partners as a joint committee in 2019 and is the decision making body for the North Wales Growth Deal, as well as leading on regional economic collaboration. Having secured the Final Deal, the partners agreed to enter into a second Governance Agreement ("GA2") which will support the partnership into the next phase of implementation of the Growth Deal and further develop of the Growth Vision.

The agreement, which is a legally binding document, defines the role and function of the Economic Ambition Board and its use of delegated powers. It also outlines the decision-making structures and democratic accountability. Provision is also made for the commitments of partners to the projects and how these are managed and apportioned.

Growth Deal Governance

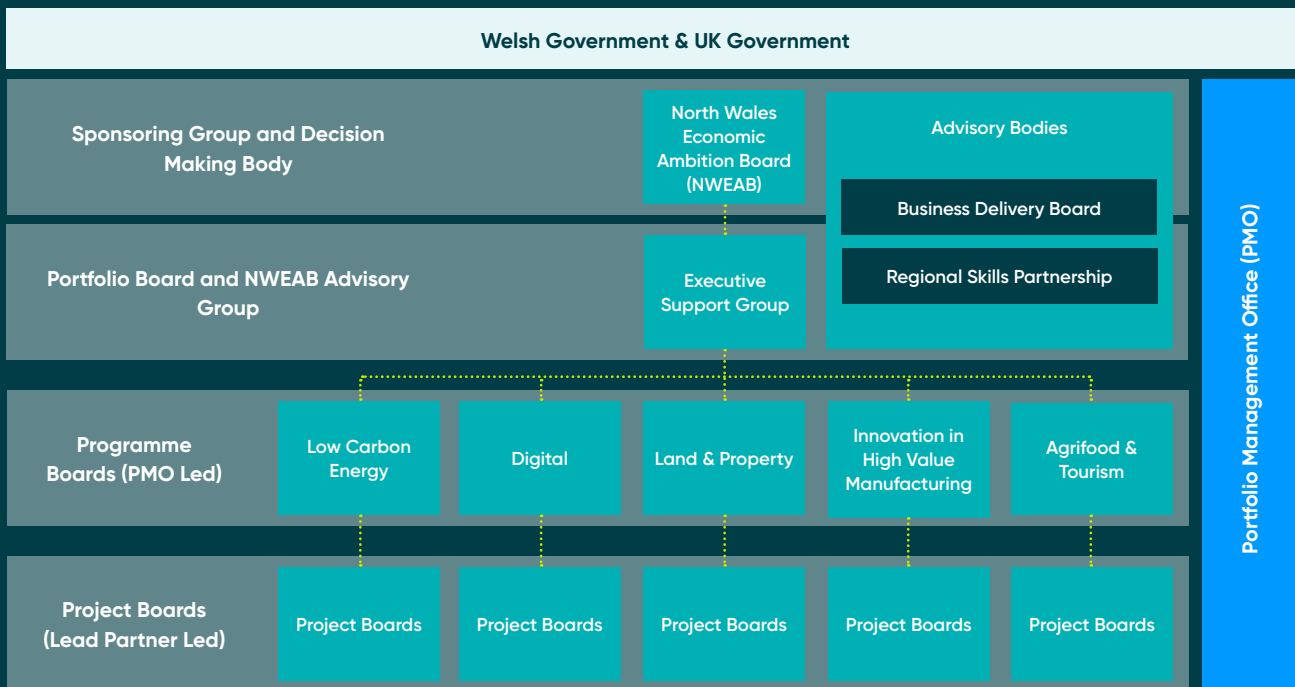
The Growth Deal's governance arrangements enable decisions to be made in an open and transparent way for the benefit of the whole of the region. While the Economic Ambition Board acts as the decision making body for the Growth Deal, there are strong links both formal and informal to the Welsh and UK Governments as funders of the Deal. The Welsh Government, UK Government and the Economic Ambition Board have agreed to adopt the City & Growth Deal Governance & Assurance Framework. The approach is based on the appropriate and proportionate application of best practice Governance, Assurance and Programme & Project Management, underpinned by an Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan in order to balance both Government oversight and regional delivery partner requirements.

Portfolio, Programme and Project Management Arrangements

The Economic Ambition Board has adopted a delivery model based on a best practice approach to portfolio, programme and project management as set out in 'Government Functional Standard GovS 002: Project Delivery'. Portfolio, programme and project management is an integrated way of meeting an organisation's ambition, driving better decisions and increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes.

The diagram below sets the Economic Ambition Board's project delivery structure for the Growth Deal:

Growth Deal Project Delivery Structure



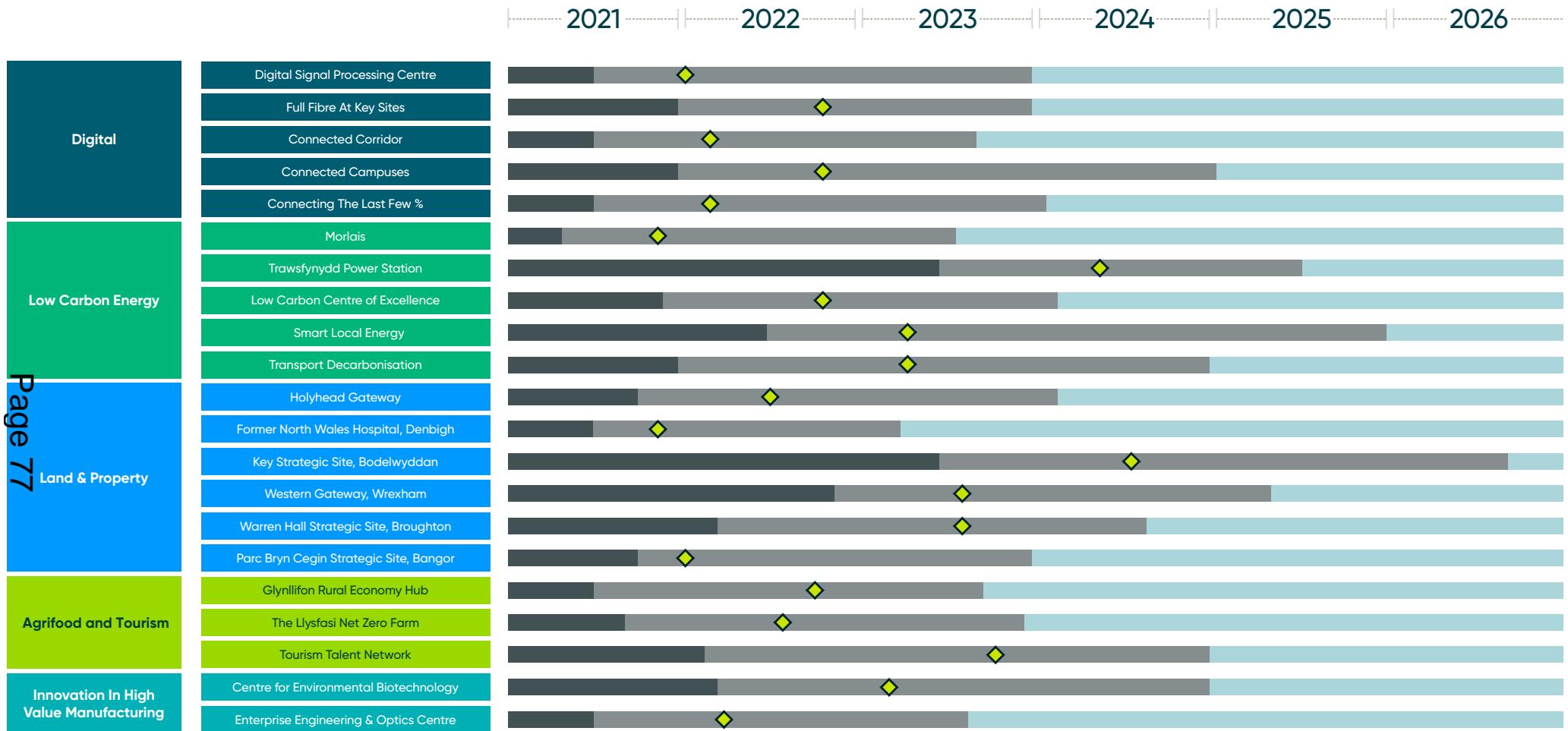
Reporting

The Portfolio Management Office will produce quarterly progress reports and an annual report on the Growth Deal which will be shared with Welsh Government, UK Government, the Economic Ambition Board and its partners. These reports will be publicly available on our website.

Scrutiny Arrangements

Scrutiny of the North Wales Growth Deal is provided by the six local authorities through their existing Scrutiny Committee arrangements. The Scrutiny Committees will consider the quarterly and annual reports produced by the Portfolio Management Office.

Growth Deal Project Delivery Pipeline – March 2021



Business Case Development & Approval Phase *

* Approval of OBC pre procurement

Procurement and Project Delivery Phase **

** Includes approval of FBC post procurement

Operational & Benefits Realisation Phase

Anticipated start on site date



The Next 12 Months

Alwen Williams
Portfolio Director

While the last 12 months has seen significant progress made and a historic milestone achieved with the signing of the North Wales Growth Deal, the next year ahead promises to be even more exciting.

All of the careful planning and preparation with partners will lead to investments being made, new tangible assets for the region being created and new and exciting opportunities become real over the next year.

As a team that has developed virtually during 2020, we look forward to enhancing the team further and completing the recruitment. With only two further vacancies to fill during 2021, it will be good to have the whole team together and we look forward to a time when we can all work safely together in the office.

The next 12 month will see us embark on an ambitious programme of business case development with a number of Outline Business Cases scheduled to be considered by the Economic Ambition Board. We are also anticipating making our first final investment decisions on projects before the end of the year, which would see project delivery commence and investment flowing into the region.

As we progress with the delivery of the Growth Deal, our image and the information we share with the public becomes ever more important. We have already embarked on the development of a new brand and a new website and look forward to launching these over the coming months.

I hope you have found this annual report useful and informative and that you will continue to follow our progress during the next year.

Contact Details



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[BUE Gogledd Cymru | North Wales EAB](https://www.linkedin.com/company/BUEGogleddCymru)



Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 6 July 2021
Report Subject	Town Centre Markets
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, markets across the UK had struggled to sustain themselves in the face of changing customer behaviours. The pandemic has had a severe, and still evolving, impact on street market businesses by reducing their ability to trade for extended periods.

The Council has supported the market businesses during the pandemic with either deferred rent periods or free street market rents and has been promoting the importance of local businesses to residents throughout the last nine months.

With the pandemic underway and restrictions still in place the markets remain under severe pressure and the ability of the Council to respond through promotion remains limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the current status of the markets in Flintshire is reviewed and the work which the Council have undertaken to support them is noted.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	
1.01	Across the UK, street and indoor markets have declined in scale and vitality in parallel with the town centres that host them. Customer behaviour has shifted over time to increasingly favour larger retail centres, supermarkets and internet shopping. Only markets in larger retail centres

	have thrived. In consequence, there are relatively few entrants into the industry which threatens its sustainability.
1.02	Flintshire County Council operates an indoor market in Mold and street markets in both Mold and Holywell. The Council also licences market trading activities in the County by other operators. A very small street market in Connah's Quay was transferred to the Town Council to operate in 2018. The Flint street market also closed in 2018.
1.03	The majority of the costs of operating the street markets are staffing costs. The current markets service team comprises a full time Senior Markets Officer, one full time and two part time Markets Officers. The Council also incurs costs in terms of additional street cleansing.
1.04	<p>There are numerous benefits to operating street markets. For the shopper there is the advantage of value for money; increased choice; the charm of exploring and social interaction within a vibrant town centre.</p> <p>Markets generally contribute to the economic and social vitality of towns and can bring increased footfall to benefit the wider businesses and services. Further, street markets are rooted in the local economy and spend with local traders brings an added "multiplier" impact compared to spend in large national chain stores.</p>
1.05	Mold indoor market comprises 16 stalls and is currently 90% occupied. The units in the market are let to retail and service businesses on a commercial basis. The majority of the stalls in the market were forced to close during the pandemic lockdowns with only the essential retail stalls able to trade. Some traders were able to establish click and collect services.
1.06	The Mold street markets on Wednesdays and Saturdays remain one of the most successful in the region and, pre-pandemic, drew coach trips of visitors from across North Wales and the North West. Although traders have seen a considerable reduction in the scale of trade over time the market had continued to enjoy a sustainable level of trade and was a popular location for traders, drawing them from across North Wales, the North West and the Midlands. Around 45 traders currently attend the market although there is space for 54.
1.07	The Holywell street market on Thursdays has struggled traditionally to attract both customers and traders although the recent support by the Town Council and Friends group has helped to bring in some additional traders. Those traders that attend, though, report a sustainable level of trade and good customer loyalty. Around 10 traders attend the market although there is space for considerably more. The Council has offered heavily subsidised rents to traders in Holywell for many years to help to maintain the market and to attract new traders (who can trade for free).
1.08	The pandemic has brought very serious impacts to the businesses that make up the markets in Flintshire. The majority have been unable to trade for a considerable period and the availability of funding support has been less certain than for traditional High Street businesses. The traders have worked proactively and flexibly with the Council to accommodate the

	changing Covid-19 regulations. Although the number of traders returning to the market after the last lockdown period is consistent with those beforehand, the majority of businesses have not found that trade has recovered to pre-pandemic levels which will be threatening sustainability. It is, though, still too early to judge the full impacts of the pandemic on both the town centres and their markets, not least because the pandemic is still ongoing.
1.09	The Council was due to operate Christmas markets in Mold and Holywell during 2020 and these were cancelled earlier in the year due to Covid risks and restrictions in place. The Council took the decision at the start of 2021 not to commit resources to organising any specialist markets during the year due to the risk of cancellation. The Council continues to licence private sector operators should they wish to operate additional market activity subject to them working closely with health and safety and regulatory teams.
1.10	Since the start of the pandemic the Council has waived all rents for street market traders to help them to maintain resilience. Rents are currently returning to normal levels following a phased reintroduction. The commercial rents for the indoor market businesses have been maintained but deferred payment periods were offered to help businesses to maintain cashflow.
1.11	There appears to be increased support for local shopping and local businesses in general that has arisen during the pandemic. The Council has been heavily promoting the importance of local businesses, especially Shop Local, since September 2020 focussing on the critical role they have played during the pandemic. This campaign has featured a wide range of businesses including market traders. The campaign will continue until August 2021.
1.12	The ability of the Council to fully promote the markets is limited during the pandemic. Once restrictions are fully lifted the Council will work closely with the market traders and other stakeholders to develop a new promotional campaign targeting both local and regional customers and reintroduce pre-pandemic support including hotel and group travel engagement, subsidised shuttle buses from the major caravan parks and supporting trader social media activity. It will also develop a new support campaign for potential market (and wider retail) businesses to help to attract and develop new traders.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None arising from this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	None.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Niall Waller (Enterprise and Regeneration Manager) Telephone: 01352 702137 E-mail: niall.waller@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet (link) and maintained by the Executive Office



ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 6 th July 2021
Report Subject	Update on Deeside Hydrogen Hub Project
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Transportation Cabinet Member for Streetscene
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2019, the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) commissioned consultants to consider options for the decarbonisation of passenger transport networks in North Wales, and one of the areas under consideration was Deeside Industrial Park (DIP).

Separately and, as part of the development work for the North Wales Growth Deal, Advisian / Jacobs were commissioned to consider opportunities for the development of the hydrogen economy in the region as part of the Growth Deal Smart Energy Programme. This study provided a high level review of the hydrogen energy market, developed a long list of options for hydrogen generation and use in North Wales, and led to a series of high-level concepts for hydrogen energy projects in North Wales.

One of the project concepts was a hydrogen hub in Deeside (also referred to as a hydrogen bunkering facility), which was conceived as part of the North Wales Growth Deal (signed in December 2020), as part of the region's commitment to decarbonising transport and delivering low emission transport solutions. The project is based on local generation, storage, and use of "green" hydrogen (i.e. hydrogen generated from renewable electricity via water electrolysis). The Growth Deal is for the whole North Wales region and has allocated £11.4 million to the Deeside Hydrogen Hub project and this project falls under the Smart Access to Energy programme.

Following a request by the Committee in February 2021, this report provides an update on the work carried out to date by Jacobs to develop a Strategic Business Case (SBC) for a new hydrogen hub at Deeside and seeks comments from Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee welcomes the report and supports the work carried out to date in partnership with the NWEAB to consider the options for a hydrogen energy hub in Deeside
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	<p>In 2019, the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) commissioned consultants to consider options for the decarbonisation of passenger transport networks in North Wales, and one of the areas under consideration was Deeside Industrial Park (DIP).</p> <p>That initial proposal envisaged the potential use of electric or hydrogen electric buses on the Deeside shuttle service. The report concluded that the area would be suitable for a pilot project, as long as the appropriate vehicles were available.</p> <p>Separately and, as part of the development work for the North Wales Growth Deal, Advisian / Jacobs were commissioned to consider opportunities for the development of the hydrogen economy in the region as part of the Growth Deal Smart Energy Programme.</p> <p>This study provided a high level review of the hydrogen energy market, developed a long list of options for hydrogen generation and use in North Wales, and led to a series of high-level concepts for hydrogen energy projects in North Wales.</p> <p>One of the project concepts from this piece of work was a hydrogen hub in Deeside (also referred to as a hydrogen bunkering facility), which was conceived as part of the North Wales Growth Deal (signed in December 2020), as part of the region's commitment to decarbonising transport and delivering low emission transport solutions. The project is based on local generation, storage, and use of green hydrogen (i.e. hydrogen generated from renewable electricity via water electrolysis). The Growth Deal is for the whole North Wales region and has allocated £11.4 million to the Deeside Hydrogen Hub project.</p>
1.02	<p>In 2020, Jacobs completed a Strategic Assessment for Hydrogen on behalf of the NWEAB and Welsh Government's Smart Living Programme.</p> <p>The assessment created a series of high level mini business cases to further an understanding of the opportunities, and potential challenges, to developing hydrogen projects in North Wales. The opportunities identified were aligned with the North Wales social and economic context and the North Wales growth deal vision.</p> <p>The Strategic Assessment identified a significant opportunity to develop a key site for a hydrogen generation and storage facility in Flintshire, specifically at DIP.</p> <p>The Assessment determined that there is the potential to develop a demonstrator project in Deeside that links various opportunities together as a pilot project to support the use of hydrogen in the decarbonisation of transport networks. A potential early enabling opportunity for current occupiers at Deeside Industrial Park to be early adopters of a range of hydrogen fuelled vehicles was also identified.</p>

1.03	<p>The Deeside project proposes to develop a “hydrogen hub” at Deeside Industrial Park, which would utilise renewable energy to develop green hydrogen to support transport decarbonisation.</p> <p>Hydrogen Fuel Cell vehicles require a high quality of hydrogen to avoid contamination of the fuel cell and green hydrogen is ideal for this purpose. The outline of the project is that the hub would contain hydrogen generation facilities along with storage and fuelling equipment.</p> <p>A critical component of the project is to assess the potential future demand for the fuel and in particular to assess the potential market for hydrogen for fuel cell vehicles. A detailed analysis of the potential future demand has been carried out with potential users, along with discussions with vehicle manufacturers and fleet users to assess possible take up.</p>
1.04	<p>The public sector in Wales has a key role to play in showing leadership in decarbonisation efforts, for example by transitioning public sector fleets from petrol / diesel fuel to low / zero carbon and zero tailpipe emission solutions.</p> <p>There has been a strong focus on battery electric vehicles in recent years and this technology offers an excellent solution for many vehicle types and duty cycles. However, based on currently available technology pure battery electric solutions are unlikely to be able to meet the needs of all vehicles.</p> <p>Hydrogen fuel cell technology offers a promising solution for heavier vehicles and those with challenging duty cycles (e.g. high daily mileage / high daily energy demands), such as refuse collection vehicles. The availability of suitable solutions in this space is currently limited and joint procurement across multiple public bodies offers the potential to pool demands, attract vehicle suppliers, and potentially improve the commercial case for the hydrogen refuelling infrastructure required.</p>
1.05	<p>At the end of the 2021-2021 financial year, funding was made available by Welsh Government to develop a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for developing hydrogen in the North Wales region with a focus on Flintshire for early enabling work and to further develop the SOC into an Outline Business Case (OBC). The work has progressed well, with Jacobs being appointed by Flintshire to undertake both commissions. A draft SOC has been received, and the OBC is now progressing well.</p> <p>The SOC sets out the policies and drivers for hydrogen at a UK, Welsh and local level. The local level looks at both the Flintshire County Council and North Wales Economic Ambition Board drivers. The proposals within the SOC are being developed through engagement with Flintshire County Council, the NWEAB and Welsh Government representatives.</p> <p>Within the SOC, the role for hydrogen in reducing carbon emissions is discussed in terms of heating, industry and power generation and transport, concluding that there are many opportunities to use hydrogen through fuel switching in all of these markets.</p> <p>Additionally, the current understanding about the market for hydrogen is summarised and specific supply and demand side opportunities in the North Wales and Flintshire region are addressed in the SOC.</p>

1.06	<p>Growing the demand for the hydrogen generated will be essential as part of a new ecosystem for hydrogen across the region and the economic case for using hydrogen in energy applications tends to improve with scale. A certain level of “anchor” demand for hydrogen in (high value) applications such as transport will be required for the project to proceed.</p> <p>Further generation opportunities, storage, distribution and fuelling infrastructure will be required. It will be necessary to grow demand for the fuel, especially if one of the main uses will be to support transport decarbonisation. Deeside is well placed to provide fuel to parts of the strategic transport network and to provide low carbon fuel to other commercial and business users. However, the current geographic scope of the project is limited (i.e. Flintshire) and will require a more regional approach to scale up the project and identify wider demand.</p>
1.07	<p>The emerging proposals are still at an early stage, however, with funding available through the Growth Deal it is hoped that the project can be developed through to a full business case and development funding.</p> <p>Once completed, the OBC will be the subject of a Gateway review, prior to progressing towards the development of a Full Business Case.</p> <p>Initial discussions with the Welsh Government and the UK Government have been positive to date. Further work is underway to assess whether there is support from businesses in the area to be part of the project.</p>
1.08	<p>The various potential elements of the project are set out below.</p> <p>a) Development of a Green Hydrogen Bunkering Facility - This proposal is that this would, initially, be an industrial facility located in Deeside for the production and storage of green hydrogen, from where it can be transported directly to end users. The hydrogen depot facility would be designed to be have above ground industrial scale tankage, and gantries for the discharge of products into road tankers or other vehicles (including shipping) or pipelines, alongside electrolyzers to produce hydrogen on a flexible production schedule. The site would use renewable energy where available to ensure the hydrogen produced is “green.”</p> <p>b) Passenger Transport Services – An opportunity exists to procure a number of midi-bus vehicles that would be suitable for the Deeside shuttle and other passenger transport services in north Wales. There are options to jointly procure with other areas. A further opportunity would be to assess interest from commercial bus operators serving the Deeside area and along the estuary to also convert to zero-carbon hydrogen vehicles.</p> <p>c) Public Sector Fleet – Some Local Authorities have expressed some interest in the use of hydrogen fuelled vehicles to reduce carbon emissions across their fleet. It is likely that zero-carbon vans, light and some heavy goods vehicles will be available on the market. Once again, pooled procurement is likely to be needed to ensure that order size is sufficient to generate interest from manufacturers.</p> <p>d) Heavy Goods Vehicles – The use of hydrogen in fuelling heavy goods vehicles is limited in the UK at the moment and there are few products on the marketplace. In other countries, faster progress is being made. The draft report indicates there could be an opportunity to develop a project in</p>

	<p>partnership with a manufacturer for a specific vehicle type. 18 tonne trucks are suggested. Ideally, these would best be suited to vehicle movements that are on an out and back basis, due to the need for refuelling.</p>
<p>1.09</p>	<p>Currently, there are several other hydrogen energy projects under development across the region, one of which is the HyNet North West project. The HyNet project is predicated on the production of hydrogen from natural gas integrated with carbon capture and storage infrastructure. A key proposal of the project is the creation of a new network of pipelines and infrastructure to capture, store and transport CO₂ emissions from industry and create blue hydrogen from a production plant at Stanlow in Cheshire.</p> <p>Also in development is the Holyhead Hydrogen Hub, which is being led by Menter Môn. The project, now at the technical design stage, would complement the Deeside project by helping to build a more robust and resilient hydrogen network. The project is part of the Anglesey' Energy Island programme and received a specific mention in the Budget on 3rd March 2021. £4.8m has been allocated to support the project, subject to a sufficiently robust business case being prepared. Similarly to the Deeside Hydrogen Hub project, the Holyhead project focuses on "green" hydrogen and the fact both the Holyhead and Deeside hubs would be located at the west and east extremities of the A55 means that there are opportunities for bringing the two projects together, which could present broader geographical and more inclusive outcomes for the whole region.</p> <p>Currently, the two projects in Holyhead and Deeside are running independently of each other, which risks duplication of effort, repeating mistakes, geographical pockets of development, disjointed thinking and a lack of presence on the political landscape.</p>
<p>1.10</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>The draft SOC report from the consultancy work has now been received for the Deeside Hydrogen Hub and is being used to help develop an OBC for the project within the North Wales Growth Deal.</p> <p>Further discussions are also being held with Welsh Government, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Innovate UK to gauge the level of support for an ambitious pilot project of this type. Outcomes from these discussions will be fed into the OBC.</p> <p>The rationale for developing hydrogen in Flintshire is underpinned by a number of key national, regional and local government strategic policies and drivers, in terms of economic growth, low carbon energy and transport innovation.</p> <p>However, currently, there is no joint project vision for transport hydrogen across North Wales and there is a gap in the evidence regarding what could be jointly achieved across the region; consequently, the contribution towards net zero is not known at this stage.</p> <p>It is therefore recognised that there would be some benefit in a more regional approach and further work is now required to bring the Holyhead and Deeside projects together and set out the rationale for a regional strategy on hydrogen development in North Wales, which feeds into the relevant government strategies that are being developed.</p>

	If sufficient interest existed in the area for a pooled approach to such a proposal, it is intended that we would seek to work with Welsh Government and UK Government to develop a funding proposal for such a project. This would target Innovate UK Funding and could be matched with Growth Deal and other funding.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	<p>Revenue: there are no implications for the approved revenue budget for this service for the current financial year. However, should the projects proceed, there would be cost implications, however these will be assessed as part of the development of business cases prior to the delivery of the projects.</p> <p>Capital: there are no implications for the approved capital programme for the current financial year. This report provides an update on work that is currently underway and which is funded from existing approved budgets. Again, should the projects proceed, there would be cost implications, however these will be assessed as part of the development of business cases prior to the delivery of the projects.</p> <p>Human Resources: there are no implications for additional capacity or for any change to current workforce structures or roles. Project and programme management is being carried out within existing resources at NWEAB and the Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) is acting as Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Deeside Hydrogen Hub project for Flintshire.</p>
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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3.01	<p>As this report provides an operational progress review, an IIA has not been produced. However, should the projects proceed, an IIA will be prepared and included with future reports.</p> <p>An assessment of risks will be undertaken as part of the development of the OBC and FBC and a risk and mitigation plan will be produced should the projects go ahead.</p>
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
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4.01	Cabinet Member (Streetscene & Transportation)
4.03	Further project consultation will be undertaken where appropriate at the relevant project development stage.

5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	None
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Katie Wilby, Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) Telephone: 01352 704530 E-mail: katie.wilby@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet (link) and maintained by the Executive Office
8.01	<p>North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) = The NWEAB is a partnership comprised of the 6 local authorities in the North of Wales: Flintshire, Isle of Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, and Wrexham. Alongside the local authorities, the NWEAB has partnered with the region’s Higher and Further educational institutes. Currently, the NWEAB is the governance body for the North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD). The growth deal will play a key role in delivering the economic vision adopted by the Board in the “<i>A Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales</i>” strategy document.</p> <p>SOC = Strategic Outline Case (SOC) = The SOC comprises the strategic, economic, financial, commercial and management cases and forms Stage One of the WeITAG Stages</p> <p>Outline Business Case (OBC) = The OBC examines in greater detail the short list of options for tackling the problem under consideration and forms Stage Two of the WeITAG.</p> <p>Final Business Case (FBC) = The FBC forms Stage Three of the WeITAG appraisal process and its purpose is to make a full and detailed assessment of the preferred option to inform a decision as to whether or not to proceed to implementation.</p> <p>WeITAG is the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance, which is a framework for thinking about proposed changes to the transport system. It contains best practice for the development, appraisal and evaluation of proposed transport interventions in Wales. It has been developed by the Welsh Government to ensure that public funds are invested in a way that ensures they maximise contribution to the well-being of Wales, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and to deliver the Act’s vision of the Wales we want: a more prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, which supports healthy, functioning ecosystems and recognises the limits of the global environment, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales, a Wales of more cohesive communities, a Wales of vibrant culture and a globally responsible Wales.</p> <p>Types of Hydrogen: Hydrogen can be produced through a range of processes that can be categorised according to the energy source and hence the scale of CO₂ emissions they generate.</p>

Below are the types of hydrogen that can be produced: -

- **Green:** Produced using renewable electricity (e.g., solar, wind, with very low or no CO₂ emissions), from water by electrolysis.
- **Blue:** Produced in combination with carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS), typically using natural gas or biomass (thus with very low or no CO₂ emissions). Grey or Brown hydrogen listed below becomes Blue when linked with CCUS.
- **Grey:** Produced by steam methane reforming without CCUS, using natural gas Grey hydrogen produces a more CO₂ than burning methane due to efficiency losses, and
- Hydrogen produced as a by-product of manufacturing processes may also be referred to as grey hydrogen because of the source of energy used to produce it.
- **Pink:** Generated through high temperature electrolysis by nuclear energy.
- **Brown:** Produced through the gasification of coal and not a process used in the UK and with the most environmental impact.