

**Growing Mid Wales  
Partnership Meeting**

**The Chamber, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys**

**10.30 a.m. Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

**10:30am- 01:12p.m.**

**Attendees**

- Councillor **Ellen ap Gwynn**, Leader of Ceredigion County Council (Chair)
- Councillor **Rosemarie Harries**, Leader of Powys County Council (Vice Chair)
- **Ann Elias**, Ceredigion County Council
- **Ann Watkin**, Welsh Government
- **Bronwen Morgan**, Chief Executive – Ceredigion County Council
- **Carole Weller**, Welsh Government
- **Ceri Stephens**, MWMG
- **Chris Rowland**, MDS Transmodal
- **Claire Miles**, Mid Wales Regional Engagement
- **Cllr. Alun Williams**, Ceredigion County Council
- **Cllr. Gareth Lloyd**, Ceredigion County Council
- **Cllr. Liam Fitzpatrick**, Powys County Council
- **Cllr. Myfanwy Alexander**, Powys County Council
- **Jane Lewis**, RLSP
- **John Jones**, Welsh Government
- **Matthew Williams**, FSB
- **Mike Shaw**, Ceredigion County Council
- **Paul Griffiths**, Powys County Council
- **Rhian Williams**, Gwynedd County Council
- **Rhodri Llwyd Morgan**, Aberystwyth University
- **Rob Halford**, Welsh Government
- **Russell Hughes-Pickering**, Ceredigion County Council
- **Sandra Isaac**, Coleg Ceredigion
- **Susan Bolter**, Powys County Council
- **Val Hawkins**, Mid Wales Tourism
- **Vivienne Lewis**, Welsh Government

**In attendance**

- **Felicity Llewellyn** – Powys County Council

1.	<b>Introductions and Apologies</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Matthew Brown</b>, WCVA</li> <li>▪ <b>Doug Hughes</b>, Doug Hughes Architects</li> <li>▪ <b>Jenni Thomas</b>, Powys County Council</li> <li>▪ <b>Joshua Miles</b>, FSB</li> <li>▪ <b>Mared Jones</b>, FUW</li> <li>▪ <b>Terri Thomas</b>, Welsh Government</li> </ul> <p>A letter was received on 27 July 2017 from Gwynedd County Council to accept the invitation to join the Partnership. Councillor Dafydd Meurig [Cabinet Member Environment] and Councillor Ioan Thomas [Cabinet Member Economy] will represent Gwynedd Council at future Growing Mid Wales Partnership meetings.</p> <p>Representatives from FSB and Mid Wales Tourism were welcomed to their first meeting.</p>	
2.	<b>Confirm Chair and Vice Chair for the 2017 – 2018 year</b>	
	<p>Councillor Ellen ap Gwyn, Leader of Ceredigion County Council, was elected Chair for 2017/18 at the previous meeting.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Barry Thomas for his input into Growing Mid Wales whilst 2016/17 Chair.</p> <p>Councillor Rosemarie Harris, Leader of Powys County Council, was elected Vice Chair for 2017/18.</p>	
3.	<b>Minutes and actions from last GMW Partnership on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017</b>	
	<p>The Chair was authorised to approve the minutes of the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017 on behalf of the Partnership.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(Item 5) JJ &amp; CM to discuss further the possible availability of the Flexible Skills Programme in Mid Wales.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MS has had subsequent discussions with John Jones; this will be brought back to the Cross-Sector Working Group with a view to developing a specific package for the Region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(Item 6) Secretariat to re-arrange the circulation of the RLSP documents to enable comments to be submitted to the RLSP for 20<sup>th</sup> July.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This is an agenda item; the agenda items have been completed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>(Item 7) Chair of the Mid Wales Regional Tourism Forum to be invited to future Partnership meetings. (Admin).</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussions are taking place with Visit Wales. The matter arising is also covered under item 7.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
4.	<b>To Receive Presentations</b>	
(a)	<p><b>Marches and Mid Wales Freight Strategy (Presentation by Chris Rowlands MDS Transmodal)</b></p> <p>Chris Rowlands was welcomed.</p> <p>The “Supermarket Train” concept was clarified as being a secondary distribution method, where containers are transported via railway and then transferred to trucks to deliver to supermarkets; this is currently an active method in Scotland.</p> <p><b>The strategy covers two different governance areas (England and Wales); how will this be used to inform other documents which are not cross-border?</b> There are a number of connections which will need to be considered further within the strategy.</p> <p><b>The Marches is a crop-growing area. Could a figure be identified of the number of vehicles that are being held up by farm vehicles on the roads?</b> Further information will be sourced, if possible.</p> <p>It was discussed that some consideration of niche Air Freight may be beneficial due to Shobdon, Welshpool, Aberporth and Llanfair small airports.</p> <p>In the South of Powys there is an existing canal network; canals are in use within England for niche freight that is not time-restricted.</p> <p><b>Is there scope to introduce rail freight in Mid Wales to develop out to the rest of the region and Wales?</b> It would be beneficial to consider further. It may not be cost effective due to single track width capacity and the relatively poor loading gate.</p>	

<p><b>(b)</b></p>	<p><b>The link to the Ordnance Survey database is very important;</b> some consideration could be given to including information to help reduce damage to bridges etc. by misdirected freight traffic.</p> <p><b>Additional passing places could be a cost-effective way of moving freight more quickly; is there any way of costing the impact per parking place per road?</b> There are suggestions to have regular access to ‘dual’ stretches of roads in appropriate locations to allow vehicles to overtake agricultural vehicles.</p> <p><b>Communications; could courtesy road notices be used to raise awareness of giving consideration to other road users?</b> There is a lot scope but, ultimately, there is a sanction for agricultural vehicles which do not pull in.</p> <p>Minimising the impact to residents of agricultural traffic should include full consideration for bypassing villages and communities.</p> <p>Could there be a safe through-link between Newtown and Aberystwyth, as it has been referred to as the most dangerous road in Wales? The Newtown – Welshpool – Shrewsbury route links could be improved.</p> <p>MS thanked Welsh Government for their support to the Partnership and for all of the work that has taken place. Reporting to the Marches LEP element of the strategy will commence at the beginning of September; joint arrangements will need to be considered for publicity.</p> <p><b>The recommendations were approved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Consider the report and its recommended actions and, subject to comments and discussion, <b>agree to accept</b> the report, <b>and;</b></li> <li>ii. <b>Agree to forward</b> the Freight Strategy report [and technical appendices] to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure for his consideration.</li> </ol> <p><b>WG Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRIP) (successor to the Vibrant and Viable Places Programme) (Presentation by Carole Weller).</b></p> <p>Carole Weller was welcomed.</p>	
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The new £100million Programme, with a notional ring-fenced allocation of £7m for the Mid Wales region, has not yet been signed off by the Minister. Draft hardcopies of the guidance were made available.

Notional capital funding allocations will be made available on a rolling basis over a three year period rather than in one lump sum, and will need to be aligned with other revenue sources. This will be a continuing opportunity to promote larger, longer-term initiatives, including joint working and integrating community services.

Robust regional plans for regeneration should reflect and reinforce each authority's wider vision for the region and add value to existing and planned interventions, and will need to promote the goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act.

VL is available to assist Local Authorities with their plans, should they wish to contact her.

CMA highlighted the problems of rural poverty, and the difficulty some communities have in accessing opportunities. CM echoed CMA's comments, and noted that strategic plans must align with the investments.

CGL reinforced the concern that opportunities may be focused on urban areas. CW responded that the Local Authorities (LA) will be encouraged to propose rural or urban opportunities that will be inclusive and area-appropriate. The onus is on the LA to decide upon the focus.

It was confirmed that there are four regions: the City regions in Swansea and Cardiff, the North Wales Economic Ambition Board area, and the Growing Mid Wales Partnership.

CM thanked CW for the presentation.

**ACTION: Officers supporting GMW will lead on and co-ordinate a consolidated regional response to the draft guidance, and will report progress and developments regarding TRIP to the Partnership**

5.	<p><b>To consider GMW’s response to the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership for South West and Mid Wales’ Draft “Regional Employment and Skills Plan, South West and Mid Wales”</b></p>	
	<p>The draft response was circulated on 17 July 2017. The final version of the RLSP Regional Employment and Skills plan, draft response and supporting spreadsheet was circulated on 26 July 2017.</p> <p>It was discussed that Officers may be invited to meet with the Partnership to further discuss how the needs of the Mid Wales Region are met.</p> <p>SI noted that the arrangements between Coleg Ceredigion and Coleg Sir Gar aim to increase the provision available for 2018/19.</p> <p>CMA attended a meeting on vocational education at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show and emphasised to the educational institutions the need to increase the opportunity within Mid Wales, as students are accessing the provision ‘over the border’. Whilst Welsh Government emphasise that Welsh Language education should be made available to every learner, it isn’t readily available in Mid Wales.</p> <p>JJ noted that the viability of Further Education in Mid Wales is heavily affected by the current funding model, as it does not reflect the difficulty of maintaining a provision in a rural area.</p> <p>JL highlighted that, although there is an increased amount of information included within the plan, much of the supply information provided by WG is currently not broken down into sub regional level. This issue has been raised and the collection and presentation of data for future plans is being addressed so future plans can clearly identify what the delivered provision is in Mid Wales.</p> <p>CEaG noted that there is too much emphasis placed on Further Education (FE); there are different ways of providing qualifications, including vocational.</p> <p>RLM commented that there is an opportunity to strengthen the contact between FE and vocational skills providers, and develop the funding and sustainability of provision.</p> <p>MB highlighted that there is a significant proportion of self-employment within the region; currently the document may seem to focus on</p>	

younger people, but the Mid Wales workforce is generally older than in the rest of Wales.

In closing, CM noted the need to think strategically and long-term.

**The recommendations were approved:**

- i. Welcome arrangements by RLSP to work more closely with businesses across the Mid Wales region.
- ii. Welcome arrangements and congratulate staff on efforts to engage with key stakeholders in Mid Wales, and for allowing time for the 2017 iteration of the plan to be considered properly within region.
- iii. Express disappointment that GMW is unable to consider the plan properly on a regional basis due to the lack of clear data on regional supply and demand, and ask WG to provide data and evidence on a sub-regional basis to allow for skills and provision planning in-line with emerging regional arrangements.
- iv. Express disappointment that only one cluster group has been supported in Mid Wales, in comparison to seven in the South West. We must therefore question the representative nature of comments arising from the Mid Wales cluster group.
- v. Note GMW's request that specific allocations for vocational training, of which the minimum are detailed in this report, are made for Mid Wales in the Employment and Skills Planning Template. GMW cannot support proposals where it is unclear what provision will be specifically delivered in the Mid Wales region.
- vi. Note GMW's increasing concern that the system, of which this plan forms part of, is unable to meet the needs of the region. Therefore, Mid Wales is starting to pursue work to ensure vocational training that will actually meet the needs of scattered and sparse businesses, and ensure access to right time, right place training. We consider the region to be disadvantaged by the failure of the formal system to consider access to opportunities.

6.	<b>Regional Engagement Update</b>	
	<p><b>Meetings attended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers attended the annual Horizon 2020 WEFO Event on the 30<sup>th</sup> March</li> <li>• On the 6<sup>th</sup> April, officers attended a meeting of companies from across the region facilitated by WG to discuss and promote the Freight Strategy study being undertaken for the GMW Partnership and the Marches LEP.</li> <li>• On the 24<sup>th</sup> May, officers attended and participated in the Wales Rural Network EU Transition Workshop, held in Builth Wells.</li> <li>• 24<sup>th</sup> May, Developing a Sustainable Bioeconomy for Wales: A future Roadmap” Conference paper on ‘Challenging Outcomes to raise the Value of Public Funding’ presented by officers.</li> <li>• On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, officers presented at the All Wales Programme Monitoring Committee on the GMW Partnership and the work of the Mid Wales Regional Engagement Team.</li> <li>• On 19<sup>th</sup> June officers met WSP to discuss radio spectrum opportunities.</li> <li>• On 22<sup>nd</sup> June, officers chaired and facilitated a meeting between WG Transport officials and local authority officer from the region.</li> <li>• Officers participated in a forum on future regional policy held by the WLGA in conjunction with The Bevan Foundation on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June</li> <li>• On the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, officers attended a North West Programme Area event facilitated by DCLG in Cardiff</li> <li>• On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, officers attended the Be The Spark launch event at the Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff.</li> <li>• On 5<sup>th</sup> July, an officer accompanied the Chair and representatives of Powys Council at a National Assembly, Economy Infrastructure and Skills Committee meeting.</li> <li>• On the 5<sup>th</sup> of July, officers attended a seminar hosted by The Bevan Foundation, entitled ‘Making City Deals Inclusive’.</li> </ul> <p><b>The following recommendations were made and agreed, as set out in the accompanying document under item 6 of the agenda.</b></p> <p><b>A. Bangor University; WWV Operation, Institute for Environmental Biotechnology</b></p>	

	<p>To ask WEFO in considering the business plan for this proposed operation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To have regard to <u>the duplications and potential duplications</u> described above, and in particular their impact on the Mid Wales region, <b>and</b>;</li> <li>ii. To note that the framework vision for the Growing Mid Wales region prioritises the opportunities for increasing research and innovation capacity in biotechnology within the region as one of the key opportunities for future jobs and growth in region building on the BBSRC's recognition of IBERS as the sole institution in western Britain. There is wide potential economic impact arising from these technologies and the contribution of the World leading bio-economy research within our mid-Wales region. The <u>bio-technology research base has been identified and prioritised as a driver of the regional economy here in mid-Wales, and</u>;</li> <li>iii. In addressing these, to seek to <u>make better use of the existing assets and capabilities</u> of the West Wales and Valleys region through the development of a <u>collaborative element within the business plan, and</u>;</li> <li>iv. To have regard to the standing of the growing bio-technology sector across Wales and the opportunities arising to develop this and in winning more HEI grant funding into the WWV region, <b>and</b>;</li> <li>v. Additionally, to consider developing the further opportunities identified to build on the proposed operation and add to Wales' and WWV's standing as a centre for bio-technology innovation through collaborative use of existing domestic funded assets by providing additional funding for IBERS to take forward further areas including enzyme expression, fermentation and computational enzyme design, which could add significantly to the impact of the operation.</li> </ul> <p><b>B. Aberystwyth University; WWV Operation; Future Foods</b></p> <p>To ask Aberystwyth University in developing the business plan for this proposed operation;</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To explore potential linkages and complimentary with the EAFRD-funded Helix operation, led by Cyngor Sir Ceredigion as part of the Food Centre Wales, so that research into global food production, trends and waste aligns with the support and assistance provided through Helix helps small to medium sized food manufacturers across Wales to increase production, respond to market needs and reduce waste.</li> <li>ii. To demonstrate how the potential impact of the operation will be felt over the whole programme area and beyond, and not just felt in the immediate locality of the operation</li> <li>iii. To clarify the role of BIC Innovation in the project and whether as joint beneficiary.</li> </ul> <p><b>C. Swansea University; EW Operation; ASTUTE East Wales</b></p> <p>To ask Swansea University in developing the business plan for this proposed operation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To work closely with project staff at partner institutions, especially Aberystwyth University, to ensure local knowledge of potential business-based beneficiaries is fully utilised to ensure impact across the whole of the proposed operational area including that part of the East Wales region in Mid Wales.</li> <li>ii. To ask WEFO in considering the business plan for this proposed operation;</li> <li>iii. To note the GMW Partnership's general support for the proposed operation.</li> </ul> <p><b>D. Cardiff Metropolitan University; Pan-Wales Operation; Next Generation Applied Strategic Innovation;</b></p> <p>To ask Cardiff Metropolitan University in developing the business plan for this proposed operation;</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To consider potential linkages and complementarity with the approved ERDF operation CEMET, led by University of South Wales, as so to avoid any potential duplication of activity</li> <li>ii. To further identify and strengthen what tangible activities will be delivered as part of the proposed operation, so further assessments on potential impact may be made</li> </ul> <p>To ask WEFO when considering the proposed operation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. To take into account the above recommendations when developing and assessing the proposed operation</li> </ul> <p><b>E. Swansea University; WWV Operation; SMARTAQUA</b></p> <p>To ask WEFO when considering the proposed operation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To take into account the concerns regarding strategic fit and ensuring economic impact within the programme area when developing and assessing the proposed operation</li> </ul> <p><b>F. Economic Prioritisation Framework – interim refresh input (Annex C)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To note the submission of these revisions to WEFO.</li> </ul> <p>MS noted that a potential Priority 4 gap filler project – a national radio spectrum engineering centre in partnership with the private sector – had also been discussed at GMW cross sector working group, and had been initially welcomed pending further information.</p> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>There are opportunities for the Elected Members to become involved in these projects. MS confirmed that agendas and papers are circulated to the full GMW Partnership, and Members are welcome to join the discussions.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Mid Wales Tourism Forum Update and to receive minutes of meeting held on 16 June 2017</b></p>	
	<p>The Mid Wales Tourism Forum were unable to provide an update. CM highlighted that Visit Wales will be in attendance at the next meeting and a full update will be made available at the next meeting.</p>	

	<p>RLM (on behalf of the Tourism Chair, Steve Hughson) noted the wish to make deeper connections with GMW as the Tourism Sector wishes to support the Partnership.</p> <p>BM and CEaG proposed that AW contact Tourism representatives to invite them to attend GMW.</p> <p><b>Action: Ann Watkin to liaise with Tourism representatives.</b></p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Update Report of GMW Connectivity and Infrastructure Group</b>	
	<p>There is an 11-week delay on the programme for the rail franchise review.</p> <p>This morning confirmation was received for £3.9million for Bow Street Station. CAW expressed his congratulations.</p> <p>Bids are invited for a bus network fund (£15million over four years).</p> <p><b>The recommendation was approved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To note the report.</li> </ul>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Endorse GMW response to Welsh Government’s Consultation on “Next Generation Access Broadband”</b> (Closing date extended by two weeks to 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2017)	
	<p>The Partnership agreed to endorse the response to the consultation, previously circulated, and forwarded to WG on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017.</p> <p>It was confirmed that any errors identified within the data should be reported directly to, Welsh Government.</p> <p>MW noted that the broadband provision statistics are focused on the take-up of services rather than the availability of the broadband.</p> <p>CM highlighted that the data may be up to seven months behind ‘real time’.</p>	

<b>10.</b>	<b>Growing Mid Wales – Going Forward</b>	
	<p>CS, PG, and AW highlighted their support to the identification of opportunities, and defining the actions needed in order to secure funding for a regionally based programme of investments. It was agreed that more tangible benefits will need to be identified going forward.</p> <p>It was agreed that Powys County Council will lead on this consultancy exercise.</p> <p>JJ requested that the consultant include clarity on the tangible benefits/added value of proposals; CM confirmed this would take place and the consultants would look at the scale and scope of proposed interventions to ensure best value for money.</p> <p>VL asked if further opportunities could be included; CEaG confirmed that the Partnership would be welcome to input further into the proposals.</p> <p><b>The recommendations were approved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Note the submissions made to the NAW Economy Infrastructure and Skills Committee</li> <li>iii. the outline proposed consultancy task was agreed, <b>and;</b></li> <li>iv. the approach outlined was noted and agreed.</li> </ul>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	No issues arising.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
	<b>03 November 2017 at 10.30am in the Chamber, Council Offices, Aberaeron.</b> (Please note the change of date.)	

**Leader of Ceredigion County Council, Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, Chair**