

# Growing Mid Wales Partnership

- Present:** Councillor Rosemarie Harris – Leader: Powys County Council – in the Chair
- Councillor Aled Davies – Deputy Leader/Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Finance, Countryside Services and Transport (Powys County Council)
- Councillor James Evans – Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Economic Development, Housing and Regulatory Services (Powys County Council)
- Councillor Myfanwy Alexander – Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Adult Social Care and the Welsh Language (Powys County Council)
- Councillor Phyl Davies – Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Education and Property (Powys County Council)
- Councillor Dafydd Edwards – Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Highways and Environment including Housing (Ceredigion)
- Councillor Rhodri Evans – Cabinet Member: Economic Development (Ceredigion)
- Ann Watkin – Welsh Government
- Arwyn Davies – Ceredigion County Council
- Arwyn Watkins OBE – Cambrian Training
- Carwyn Jones-Evans – Ceredigion County Council
- Ceri Stephens - Mid Wales Manufacturing Group
- Claire Miles – Mid Wales RET
- Eifion Evans – Chief Executive: Ceredigion Council
- Emma Wilde – Mid Wales Chamber of Commerce
- Gareth Jones – Powys County Council
- Gareth Thomas – Councillor, Gwynedd County Council
- Hayley Thomas – Powys Teaching Health Board
- Hywel Davies – University of Wales: Trinity Saint David
- Jane Lewis - Regional Learning and Skills Partnership
- Mark Dacey – Neath Port Talbot Coleg Group of Colleges
- Matt Morden - Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion
- Nia Williams – Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care
- Nicki Hunter – Welsh Government
- Nina Davies – Powys County Council
- Nigel Brinn – Powys County Council
- Rob Holt – Welsh Government
- Rhodri Griffiths – Welsh Government
- Rhodri Llwyd Morgan – Aberystwyth University
- Rhys Horan - Welsh Government Energy Service
- Rowland Rees-Evans – Mid Wales Tourism
- Russell Hughes-Pickering – Ceredigion County Council
- Steve Hughson – Chief Executive: Royal Welsh Agricultural Society
- Sella Owen – NFU Cymru
- Tom Yeo – Powys County Council

**In attendance :** Eileen Kingsman, Peter Tyldesley and John Challen - representatives from the Centre for Alternative Technology

**Apologies:** Ann Elias – Ceredigion County Council

Alan Davies – Managing Director, Farmers Union of Wales

Caroline Turner – Chief Executive: Powys County Council

Councillor Ellen Ap Gwyn – Leader: Ceredigion County Council

Helen Jones – Welsh Government  
 Helen Minnice-Smith – Welsh Government  
 Jane Davidson – University of Wales: Trinity Sant David  
 Jenni Thomas – Powys County Council  
 John Jones – Welsh Government  
 Peter Davies – Farmers' Union of Wales  
 Peter James – Welsh Government  
 Peter Skitt - Mid Wales Joint Committee Programme Director  
 Vanessa Naughton – Welsh Government

Minutes from a meeting of the Growing Mid Wales Partnership held on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020 in The Council Chamber, Powys County Hall, Llandrindod Wells.

	Action
<b>1. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING – 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019</b>	
<p>The minutes from the previous meeting held on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record subject to amending references to the Neath Port Talbot College to read NPTC Group of Colleges. It was agreed that all matters for action had been moved forward.</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the Minutes for discussion/update that would not be discussed as part of the agenda.</p>	
<b>2. MID WALES GROWTH DEAL - UPDATE PAPER</b>	
<p>Carwyn Jones-Evans circulated a Growth Deal update report and apologised for not circulating it prior to the meeting. During discussion and update particular reference was made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>UK and Welsh Governments</b> – following the 12<sup>th</sup> December General Election the UK and Welsh Governments had recently re-affirmed their commitment to supporting the Mid Wales Growth Deal. The £55 million would be made available over a 15-year period had been announced as a down-payment. It would be important to maximise the drawdown of funding for the region.</li> <li>b. <b>Proposition Document</b> – the requirement to submit a Mid Wales Growth Deal proposition document to the UK and Welsh Governments by March 2020 stands. Officers are confident that the requirement would be met. It would be important for the Partnership to consider the proposition document at the next meeting which will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> March</li> <li>c. <b>Heads of Terms</b> – the timetable includes signing off on a Heads of Terms Agreement during 2020. The Heads of Terms would bind the region to deliver on projects under the Growth Deal programme.</li> <li>d. <b>Welsh Government Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee</b> – senior representatives from the region had attended a session of the Welsh Government's Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 to input regarding the Mid Wales Growth Deal and progress to date. The Committee had reviewed the progress City Deal and Growth Deal programmes in Wales. It is likely that programme reviews would be regular</li> <li>e. <b>Inter-Authority Agreement</b> – the agreement between the two local authority areas had been signed off</li> <li>f. <b>Economy Strategy Group</b> – Fiona Stuart - Green Man Festival had accepted the chair position, Steve Hughson – Royal Welsh Agricultural Society had accepted the vice-chair position. There are 8-9 businesses that are represented on the ESG. It was agreed to share the details of those that sit on the ESG with the Partnership alongside the meeting minutes. It was stressed that the membership of the group</li> </ul>	

	<p>would continually evolve. The ESG would play a very important part in providing strategic comment on the Growth Deal programme.</p> <p>g. <b>Mid Wales Regional Learning and Skills Partnership</b> – links between the ESG and Regional Learning and Skills Partnership would be very important in order to provide local skill needs. The Welsh Government had accepted the need for a Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership and endorsed the approach. It would be important for it to become operational as soon as possible</p> <p>h. <b>Co-ordination</b> – Carwyn Jones-Evans has oversight of all work being undertaken under the Growth Deal programme including links with the Welsh and UK Governments, and reports into the Chief Executives of both councils. Workstream leads report into the Growing Mid Wales Management group which meets on a regular basis. It was agreed to recirculate the papers from the last Joint Committee to partnership members.</p> <p>i. <b>GMW Partnership</b> – the Partnership's role is viewed as very important in order to discuss/challenge and agree on matters for progressing etc. It is a forum for bringing together representatives from across sectors that represent the region</p> <p>j. <b>Project Team/Welsh Government Resource</b> – the outcome of a bid to WG for funding to resource a regional programme office would be known soon (in January). There would be a requirement for 50% match funding, and an ESF P5 bid is currently in development in this respect.</p> <p>k. <b>Workstream Activity</b> – Carwyn encouraged representatives to let him know if they felt that relevant organisations had not been involved in regional discussions to date</p> <p>l. <b>Recognising the Region</b> – it would be important for the Welsh Government to recognise the Mid Wales region as a region in its own right. There are three other Welsh regions that are recognised</p> <p>m. <b>Tourism Strategy/Initiative</b> – Visit Wales will be announcing its new tourism plan on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. Representatives from Visit Wales would welcome working closely with those leading on tourism in the Mid Wales region in order to support activities and ensure alignment.</p>	Claire
3.	<b>CENTRE FOR ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY – PRESENTATION</b>  Peter Tyldesley, CEO for the Centre for Alternative Technology provided an update in relation to activities being undertaken during which particular reference was made to the success of the site which had been in existence since 1973. The site is internationally recognised and a considerable asset to the Machynlleth and wider area. Peter drew particular attention to The Quarry masterplan project which is a scheme that would be progressed, if funding allows, to develop the site over the next 15 years. The Quarry project could be delivered in stages and costings for the full project were in the region of £20 million. The project would deliver on Growth Deal requirements, and wider economic requirements for Mid Wales, Wales and possibly the UK. Peter stressed that programmes of work would continue to be very mindful of the local economy and, in particular, the farming community.	
4.	<b>REGIONAL ECONOMIC FRAMEWORKS</b>  Ann Watkin, Welsh Government reported that the Welsh Government would be holding engagement sessions in order to obtain views to develop a Regional Economic Framework for South West and Mid Wales. Ann stressed that Framework documents would be owned and developed by the region. The frameworks would not replace other WG plans/strategies but would identify and clarify the regional position. Details of engagement events would be circulated once confirmed. It would be important for all sectors across each region to engage/input. Carwyn reported that there had been good discussions between officers from the region and the Welsh Government concerning alignment of activity.	

5.	<p><b>TARGETED REGENERATION INVESTMENT PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>It was reported that there had been 10 regional projects which had been considered against a regional strategy for Targeted Regeneration Funding under that investment programme. Four projects had been successful and would be supported, however, there were challenges due to the need to draw down funding in the current financial year. Projects to be supported include;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Regional Property Development Fund</b> – six towns would receive up to £250k to support town centre building renovation schemes</li> <li>2. <b>Auto Palace (Llandrindod Wells)</b> – officers are awaiting final sign off an approval from the relevant minister. However, due to the lateness of the decision in the financial year there was a risk that not all the funds would be drawn down. If there was to be a shortfall, region could look to increase support to the regional property fund</li> <li>3. <b>Canolfan Dulais (Ceredigion)</b> – there had been some legal matters regarding tenants that had impacted on progress. Matters had been resolved. £700k would support the project</li> </ol>	
6.	<p><b>REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY</b></p> <p>Claire Miles, Regional Engagement Officer gave an engagement activity update report to the meeting. During update particular reference was made to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Regional Investment In Wales</b> – CM gave an update to the Partnership on the ongoing work by WG to develop a future programme for regional investment in Wales. Regional officers are involved in several of the working groups drafting the forthcoming consultation document, and WEFO will hold a regional consultation event in Mid Wales in the spring. Discussions are ongoing with WG Officers to ensure alignment with the forthcoming REFs.</li> <li>b. <b>Operation Logic Table for Proposed European Structural Funding (Radio Spectrum Engineering Training and Training for Early Identification of Zoonoses)</b> – CM presented two OLTs for ESF operations that are currently in development at Aberystwyth University. The OLTs aligned strongly with the strategic priorities for the region. A comment was made regarding the gender balance of participants. No further feedback was received it it was agreed to support the proposed operations.</li> </ol>	
7.	<p><b>UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND</b></p> <p>Following a discussion in relation to the UK Shared Prosperity Cllr James Evans stated that there had been a recent Ministerial statement that Mid Wales would not be considered for any funding if the administration of the funding was devolved from the UK to the Welsh Government, and therefore he was not confident that funding should be devolved to Wales. He proposed sending a letter on behalf of GMW to the First Minister.</p> <p>Ann Watkin Welsh Government stated that the discussions ongoing future funding are political and reported that the Welsh Government stance was that the funding should be devolved and Wales should not receive a penny less as a result of the UK leaving the EU. Ann also reported that the Welsh Government would consult on the distribution of the fund in line with the four priority areas of reduced income and economy, business support, transition to a zero-carbon economy and healthier and more sustainable communities. Carwyn reported that in his dealings with the Welsh Government there had been no indication that the Mid Wales region would not be considered for support under the fund.</p>	

	<p>Stella Owen supported the sending of a letter in order to demonstrate the ambition of the GMW Partnership. It was agreed a letter would be drafted and sent.</p>	Carwyn
8.	<p><b>CONNECTIVITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING GROUP (TraCC) – QUARTER 4 UPDATE</b></p> <p>During discussion and update regarding the above report which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting particular reference was made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Global Centre for Excellence for Rail</b> – the rail testing complex project is significant and a first for the UK. It would create in the region of 140 jobs. The next stage would be to seek planning permissions for the project. Investment would be in the region of £100 million. Claire Miles would request the relevant officers give a presentation to the next meeting.</li> <li>b. <b>Computer Modelling</b> – Transport for Wales will shortly be sharing modelling data with LAs. It was agreed this information would be useful.</li> <li>c. <b>Bow Street Station/Dyfi Bridge</b> – both Mid Wales schemes would secure significant investments and were welcomed.</li> <li>d. <b>Electric Vehicle Charging Points</b> –There are particular issues for mid Wales due to its rurality and size. It was reported that matters were being reviewed under the Growth Deal: Energy Workstream alongside longer term considerations for hydrogen powered vehicles.</li> <li>e. <b>Connectivity</b> – Councillor James Evans and the Leader reported back on very positive conversations at the UK Government earlier in the week when it had been verbally agreed that DCMS would visit parts of the Mid Wales region. It would be important to build good relationships in order to seek commitments to improve in areas where access is poor.</li> </ul>	Claire
9.	<p><b>TRANSLATION</b></p> <p>It was reported that translation had not been available for today's meeting because of work being undertaken to review the congress system that operates in the Chamber. There would be translation at all future meetings.</p>	
10.	<p><b>PROGRESS – REGIONAL VISION</b></p> <p>Ceri Stephens requested further information on Growth Deal workstreams and projects at future partnership meetings. It was agreed this information would be made available when ready.</p>	
11.	<p><b>ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY – DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>There had been recent media attention regarding an announcement that £26 million had been identified to develop the Hen Goleg site on Aberystwyth seafront. Activity would create in the region of 50 jobs. The matter sits outside of the Growth Deal, but will be significant for the Mid Wales economy. Work will commence by March 2020.</p>	
12.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next meeting would be held on 9<sup>th</sup> March in Aberaeron.</p>	

**COUNCILLOR ROSEMARIE HARRIS - LEADER  
POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN THE CHAIR**