



Growing Mid Wales December Newsletter

Skills takeover

Happy December,

It's the last month of 2023 and what a year it's been for Growing Mid Wales.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you, for signing up to receive this newsletter each month and for your continued support in helping us to share our vision to progress jobs, growth and boost the local economy.

We wish you well over the festive holidays and look forward to working alongside you to unlock key developments in 2024.

The Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) takeover this edition to bring you the latest news from the team and the work they've been carrying out - including the skills survey and engagement opportunities.

Our *Meet the Team* colleague this month is Dai Price, our Regional Skills Partnership Manager. Dai talks about what he's been involved with since joining us this year and the current skills landscape.

Helping to grow opportunity in Mid Wales,

The Growing Mid Wales team

[Cover: Winter scene, Powys ©Visit Wales]

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Growth deal workshops

The first stakeholder engagement workshops were held on the Mid Wales Growth Deal, giving the opportunity for project sponsors to present their proposals.

1

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

2

A growing team

The team continues to grow with new team members joining through the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP), Energy and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025

Launched at the *Grow-Define-Deliver Together* event, the Plan identifies key sectors, skills, and priorities for regional investment to support jobs growth.

3

MARCH

APRIL

4

Engaging with businesses

With the first meeting held in the spring, nine business cluster groups are being established, identifying and addressing the barriers and issues affecting businesses in the region.

Europe day

The May newsletter was dedicated to the legacy of European-funded activity in the region and to acknowledge the final months of the EU Structural Funds programmes.

5

MAY

JUNE

6

Expanding the website

New web pages set up on Energy and also the Mid Wales Growth Deal portfolio, providing a summary of the current project proposals and programmes.

Growing opportunities in Mid Wales

A reception was held at the Royal Welsh Show to reflect on the progress that Growing Mid Wales has achieved to date and to look ahead at the next stages of development.

7

JULY

AUGUST

8

Skills Survey

The RSP's survey went live to find out more on the challenges Mid Wales businesses face. The survey data will be analysed and used to inform Welsh Government and influence change.

Growth Deal funding flows into region

The first allocation of Mid Wales Growth Deal funding was received, enabling financial support delivery to the project proposals and programmes when they are ready to receive it.

9

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

10

Green light for delivery

Both Mid Wales Growth Deal Programmes; the Sites & Premises Programme, and Digital Programme, given approval to develop the project proposals further.

Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)

The newly formed CJC developed a corporate plan for 2023-2027 relating to the economy, strategic development planning and regional transport planning.

11

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

12

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)

To date, over a 100 projects across Powys and Ceredigion have been awarded SPF-funding. More calls for funding will be announced in 2024.

Skills Survey



This year, we've been running a survey to find out what you have to say about the challenges you face as a business in Mid Wales and, in particular, around the recruitment of skills now and in the future.

A big thank you to all who have participated so far – the survey is still live so there's still time to share your views if you haven't yet. Complete the survey [here](#) [Survey closes at the end of the year]

Skills Survey



We're listening carefully to what you have to say. Once the survey is closed, we will be analysing the data and using it to inform Welsh Government and influence change in the right places.

One of the questions we're asking is what is the biggest challenge facing your business? So far, 64% cited recruitment as their biggest challenge.

As a result, we will be considering the best way to support training providers and back to work agencies to improve the supply of labour for businesses in Mid Wales.

We will share the full results of the survey after analysing the data in January.

Business Cluster Groups

This winter, the RSP is busy doing the groundwork connecting with businesses and education providers across the region so that sector specific cluster groups can now be formally established.

Each cluster group will be chaired by a business leader who will feed information and updates from their group back to the RSP Board that meet every quarter.

This engagement and collaboration helps the RSP identify and address the barriers and issues affecting businesses in Mid Wales.

To join a cluster group, email midwalesrsp@powys.gov.uk.



Manufacturing & Engineering

We recently had an engaging start for our Manufacturing & Engineering (including research and innovation) business cluster group held at Hope Church, Newtown. Meeting for the first time, businesses discussed the skills gaps in Mid Wales.

David Price, RSP Manager provided the group with an overview of the team's work and what Personal Learning Account courses are available in the region.



Advice sessions to boost economic growth

Powys County Council are arranging a series of roadshow events for businesses. The RSP team will be present to engage with businesses about their work and how businesses can get involved with the cluster groups.

Powys County Council will be hosting drop-in events, between 9am and 3pm on the following time and dates:

- Hafan yr Afon, Newtown, Wednesday 13 December
- The Royal Oak Hotel, Welshpool, Wednesday 24 January
- Y Gaer, Brecon, Thursday 29 February
- Ystradgynlais Library, Thursday 28 March
- Hay Castle, Thursday 25 April

There will also be experts attending from Business Wales, Development Bank of Wales, Cwmpas Co-op, Mid Wales, Severn Wye Energy Agency, and from Powys County Council's regeneration, property, planning, trading standards and environmental health teams.

No appointment is necessary. For more information, visit Powys County Council [website](#).

Meet the Team

Dai Price, our Regional Skills Partnership Manager



1 - Dai Price

- **When did you start with the team?**

July 2023

- **Can you tell us more about your role?**

My role involves a lot of engagement with businesses and stakeholders to listen about their challenges and ideas around skills and recruitment. This will lead the RSP team to facilitate partnerships that will work with business leaders and stakeholders to identify current and future skills needs across the region. In doing so, we will be supporting and enabling innovative ideas that

help to bridge the gap between education, skills and regeneration to create a strong growth for business, and a capable workforce across Mid Wales.

- **What are your current priorities?**

Our current priorities are the establishment of our business partnerships (Cluster Groups) that will inform the RSP team of the skills and recruitment requirements for their sector.

In addition, the creation and advertising of our website and Labour Market Intelligence hub is a priority for the next six months.

- **What developments have you seen over the years?**

In the skills world, I have definitely seen a shift in how businesses now understand the importance of a local skilled workforce. I have been impressed with how businesses have wanted to lead this conversation at all levels.

The development of the skills offer to people has seen a huge shift from traditional educational academic offers and 3-5 year apprenticeships to vocational courses, learning from home and adult learning.

It is the intention of the RSP to ensure that those opportunities are increased and align with Mid Wales priorities.

- **What's been your biggest achievement?**

Since joining the team, our biggest achievement has been to establish a 5-step work plan that has increased the visibility and awareness of the RSP and created a structure for business engagement.

- **One word that sums up the Growing Mid Wales Team:**

Effective:

Everyone I have seen and the roles they play within the structure created have an impact.

Other News

Investment Fund for Wales

The Investment Fund for Wales by the Business British Bank will deliver a £130m commitment of new funding to the country. The fund aims to drive sustainable economic growth.

Find out more about available funding options here: www.british-business-bank.co.uk/nations-and-regions-investment-funds/investment-fund-for-wales-ifw/



Consultation on the School Year

Welsh Government want your views on proposals to amend school term dates.

Responses are welcome from stakeholders with an interest in the Welsh economy and from a business perspective.

Consultation ends: 12 February 2024

English consultation: www.gov.wales/structure-school-year



Keep up to Date

Need to catch up on what's been discussed in our meetings? Here's a reminder of where you can find the minutes for the following meetings:

- All minutes relating to the Growing Mid Wales Board are hosted on Powys County Council [website](#).
- Papers relating to the Growing Mid Wales Partnership can be found on our [website](#).

Keep up to date with Growing Mid Wales news, developments on activity and organisations we support by following our Twitter and Linked In pages:

<https://twitter.com/growingmidwales>

www.linkedin.com/company/growing-mid-wales

We're eager to reach out to as many organisations and businesses across Mid Wales as possible. You can make this possible by following, liking and sharing our pages.

Disclaimer: As a Growing Mid Wales Stakeholder you receive these emails so that we can share news and information with you on a regular basis. You can inform us if you no longer wish to receive these emails by emailing growingmidwales@ceredigion.gov.uk.

