





**Growing Mid Wales
Partnership Meeting - Minutes
Ceredigion County Council, Penmorfa, Aberaeron, Ceredigion
Monday 28 September 2015, 2.00pm**

Attendees


Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, Leader of Ceredigion County Council (Chair)
 Councillor Barry Thomas, Leader of Powys County Council
 Councillor Gareth Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Regeneration
 Councillor Avril York, Portfolio Holder Regeneration and Planning
 Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Aberystwyth University
 Dr Jane Davidson, University of Wales, Trinity St David
 Gareth Price, Chair, Mid Wales Regional Tourism Forum
 Arwyn Watkins, Elected Representative of the Regional Learning Partnership
 Paul Evans, Business Lead on Powys Stronger Communities Programme Board
 Jacqui Weatherburn, Coleg Ceredigion and Teifi Local Growth Zone
 Steve Doodson, Principal NPYTC Powys Campuses
 Dr Ruth Hall, Chair of Mid Wales Health Collaborative
 Jack Evershed, Chair of Mid Wales Health Collaborative
 Hazel Lloyd-Lubran, CAVO
 Ceri Stephens, Mid Wales Manufacturing Group and Chair of Mid Wales Chamber of Commerce
 Carl Cooper, PAVO
 Aled Jones, FUW County Executive Officer Brecon & Radnor
 Mared Rand Jones, FUW County Executive Officer Ceredigion
 Elid Morris, Manager of Regional Learning Partnership
 Huw Morgan, Ceredigion County Council
 Russell Hughes-Pickering, Ceredigion County Council
 Mike Shaw, Ceredigion County Council
 Ann Elias, Ceredigion County Council
 Eirlys Lloyd, Ceredigion County Council
 Paul Griffiths, Powys County Council
 Susan Bolter, Powys County Council
 Ann Watkins, Welsh Government
 John Jones, Welsh Government
 Lisa Cascarini, Powys County Council (minute taker)

1.	<p>Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn welcomed everyone to the meeting. Councillor ap Gwynn reiterated the promotion of the two Counties through a Regional Partnership and that the focus of the Partnership was the promotion of economic development. Councillor Barry Thomas noted that although the two Authorities were working closely together on this issue, people should not interpret this as showing the two authorities would be merging in the future. Each Authority retained its own identity while Powys was actively seeking a closer working relationship with the Powys Teaching Health Board.</p> <p>Apologies received from: Steve Cass, NPTYC Group Cllr Allun Williams, Chair of TraCC</p>	
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	<p>James Harrison, Chair of Mid Wales Economic Forum Peter Howells, NFU Sarah Jowett, Powys County Council Doug Hughes, Chair of Newtown Local Growth Zone</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of meeting from 24 June 2015 The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting, proposed by Councillor Barry Thomas.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u> There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
3.	<p>Terms of Reference Mike Shaw advised that changes had been made to the ToFR, incorporating points that were raised at the meeting in June including roles and responsibilities, replacing the word “lobby” with “collaboration” and adding new members.</p> <p>Paragraph 15 had been changed to allow deputies to attend when members were prevented from attending.</p> <p>All the Partnership agreed with the revised terms of reference.</p>	
4.	<p>Experiences of ‘The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership’ James Harrison had prepared papers on The Marches LEP but unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting though ill health. James had been asked to look into how the LEP was organised, funded, what their priorities were and what organisations they supported. The projected growth of tourism and farming is small in The Marches, not the same as Mid Wales. James was thanked for opening the door and laying a foundation, it was agreed the work was valuable. It was noted that the Marches are happy to talk with Growing Mid Wales Partnership.</p> <p>Councillor Avril York thanked James for his work and highlighted the value of the private sector partners in the Partnership. It was suggested that the Partnership should focus more on areas that have the potential of higher wages and growing job opportunity. Create conditions that allow young people to stay in Mid Wales and make it inviting for them. It was acknowledged that the report is relevant to Mid Wales as it highlights a state of maturity Mid Wales would want to reach. Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan advised the message is crucial to take back to the Innovation Campus to promote innovating research for new products.</p> <p>The Partnership will look forward to receiving a populated action plan, where high level economy is given a prominence. The Third Sector have involvement as the Partnership drive forward this work which will include social enterprise. Acknowledgement needs to be given to the economic impact the voluntary sector brings to Mid-Wales. The current hot topic is Health and Social Care which is very important to the economy.</p> <p>Dr Jane Davidson offered to submit a paper to the next meeting on The University of Wales, Trinity St David’s work with the Third Sector. The University works across the whole of the region.</p>	<p>Dr Jane Davidson</p>

	Private sector involvement brings a whole new dimension in this work. Councillor ap Gwynn suggested North Wales Ambition Board and The Highlands and Islands were invited to video conference in to the next meeting to be held at Powys.	Lisa Cascarini
5.	<p>Demand and Supply Assessment Elid Morris thanked the Partnership for inviting her to give a presentation, a copy of which is attached.</p> <p>The RLP have had a 7 week window from WG to complete a Demand and Supply Assessment. The RLP chose to concentrate the submission on 3-4 priority sectors to cover the Swansea Bay and Mid Wales Regions. The assessment is based on economic development and all decisions are evidence based. The RLP have undertaken quality and quantitate reviews to complete this by Wednesday 30 September.</p> <p>Councillor Avril York asked if the High Schools were included in the assessment. Elid advised that it did include schools with sixth form as it is a post 16 review. Arwyn Watkins advised the assessment focused on work based learning and how best to spend the funding. Jacqui Weatherburn felt the RLP had covered a broad area in a short space of time.</p> <p>Councillor ap Gwynn thought it was an excellent way of working and approved of the focus on Mid Wales as the area is not the same as Swansea.</p>	 September Presentation Grow
6.	<p>Strategic Transport Update Ann Elias thanked the Partnership for the opportunity to give an update on the region. Ann went through the paper that was embedded in the agenda.</p> <p>The Chair noted that there was much to welcome in the report and that east/west travel is still a major concern. Councillor ap Gwynn suggested sending a letter to the Minister from both Authorities regarding these concerns and the need for suitable connections. Mid Wales are happy to have additional services on the trains but are disappointed not to have a connection to Birmingham.</p> <p>Dr Jane Davidson highlighted transport problems in Lampeter. The University are unable to promote the bus service to students. Could demand led transport be considered? Are there any bespoke models or opportunities that could be used across the whole area. Are there opportunities to work with the Third Sector to look at this further? Huw Morgan highlighted the 'T' service. This has provided valuable infrastructure, CCC could consider services around this backbone.</p>	PCC and CCC Officers to draft
7.	<p>Regional Engagement Update - EU funding Eirlys was welcomed to the meeting. Eirlys acknowledged that this was the first time the Partnership had seen her report concerning regional EU funding.</p> <p>Mid Wales is one of the four allocated areas for funding in Wales. Ceredigion is acting as the regional lead and acting as lead beneficiary and was eligible for a higher proportion of EU aid than was Powys. The Partnership was asked to support these operations, and agree arrangements for supporting the regional EU work. Staff will be in place to undertake the work including</p>	 Regional Engagement U

	<p>facilitation and engagement. The funding budget is around £199,500 per annum which does not include some one-off costs such as evaluation.</p> <p>The Partnership acknowledged Mid Wales requires this funding. Collaborative working will be required as the funding crosses county borders. There will be a focus on the needs of this Partnership.</p> <p>The Partnership received a report on developing Welsh Government activities to be funded by European funds; Sites and Premises and Property Development Funds (Priority 4.4, three operations) The Partnership welcomed and supported these Welsh Government proposed operations with the following comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Although the specific operations discussed are confined to the West Wales and Valleys area, the Partnership welcomed the commitment given in the officers' meeting to activity to support bespoke property solutions in East Wales and looked to further consideration of options for the future delivery of advance sites and premises in this part of the mid-Wales region.</i> 2. <i>For the West Wales and the Valleys area, the Partnership noted that in working up the proposal to provide <u>Strategic Employment Sites</u>, Welsh Government has already identified the first priority sites and these did not lie in the mid Wales region.</i> 3. <i>The Partnership asked specifically the employment needs of the Aberystwyth area be raised in the on-going discussions. Aberystwyth is the principal employment centre in the west of the mid Wales region and the availability of an employment site would be a key step for the region as a whole.</i> 4. <i>In developing the <u>Property Infrastructure Fund</u> operation, the Partnership asked that Welsh Government note the region's priority areas in the WWV part of the region. It highlighted the importance of targeting the Teifi Valley Local Growth Zone and reiterated the case for Aberystwyth as a key employment location for the west of the region.</i> 5. <i>The Partnership welcomed the <u>Property for Business Fund</u> as allowing additional resources and opportunities for Welsh Government to be able to respond to the known needs of the local economy.</i> 6. <i>For both East Wales and West Wales and the Valleys, the Partnership would wish to engage in further discussions with Welsh Government as these proposals develop to ensure the schemes continue to align with and meet the needs of the region's economy.</i> <p>While Ceredigion had a higher allocation of EU funding than Powys, Local Growth Zones in Powys could be allocated funding, especially in relation to employment site development.</p> <p>It was noted that Ministers have acknowledged Mid Wales as a separate entity.</p>	
8.	<p>Skills Agenda for Mid Wales</p> <p>Councillor ap Gwynn advised that the Leaders and CEO's of the two Authorities felt the need for a specific skills agenda for Mid Wales. A meeting took place with Huw Morris to discuss possibilities and look at reorganising skills. Following the meeting, Councillor ap Gwynn telephoned the Minister and then followed the conversation up with a letter. The letter looked at how</p>	

	<p>this could work and how it could be improved. A formal response had not been received but it will be forwarded to the Partnership once it had.</p> <p>Arwyn Watkins advised they are reviewing the position but he felt from the viewpoints raised, Mid Wales require their own separate infrastructure for the skills aspect of the region. The region has not been getting anything back from investment they currently provide. The current position has been challenged that it is very much Llanelli and Swansea centred.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the possibility of having a separate Mid-Wales RLP to better reflect our needs and it was agreed that this might be explored as a possibility in the future depending on the future plans of the WG.</p>	
9.	<p>Emerging Action Plan</p> <p>Mike Shaw explained a draft framework, a copy is attached to the minutes. Mike advised he had used headlines from The Marches LEP in the document. The introduction provides a list of all the positives that are currently going on in Mid Wales and a clear list of achievements. Mike proposed that the Cross Sector Working Group from within the Partnership should feed into the Action Plan. This will ensure the whole Partnership can play a role. It is important to develop a vision for Mid Wales that would help the partnership achieve its aims and tap into funding streams.</p> <p>Action: the Partnership were invited to provide comments on the document and feedback to Mike.</p> <p>Action: Partnership members be invited to be part of the Cross Sector Group.</p>	 <p>DRAFTactionplanG MWSEPT15ver1.doc</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
10.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>A. Cllr Ellen ap Gwynn declared an interest in the following item and took no part in the discussions or decision. Cllr Barry Thomas chaired the meeting for the consideration of this item.</p> <p>Ceredigion have access to a part of the European ERDF programme that could support some tourism development within the County. This is part of the West Wales and Valleys Funding. The Vale of Rheidol Railway in Aberystwyth railway is a major attraction and has an ambitious investment programme to develop an international museum on the site. The plans include rebuilding part of the historic former London Bridge Station there. The development has been prioritised within Ceredigion for some time and the Partnership was asked to confirm their agreement with this prioritisation. The Partnership agreed to this prioritisation.</p> <p>B. The Partnership were asked to note that a Task and Finish Group had been set up By the Minister Mrs Hart to look at renewable energy and the contribution this can make to the economies of rural Wales. It is understood that renewable energy cannot be exported easily due to grid and network constraints. The Partnership asked where the opportunities in this were especially as feed-in tariffs were likely to be reduced. Mike Shaw advised this may be a community based, energy replacing scheme. There is funding available for both Powys and Ceredigion areas but it requires further exploration. The Partnership noted the information.</p> <p>C. Mike Shaw informed the Partnership that the national Mobile Infrastructure Project was making very slow progress. Only 7 of the</p>	

	24 proposed mobile telephone masts had been completed as the project was coming to an end in March 2016. Arwyn Watkins advised the biggest barrier for the project had been securing sites for the masts. The Partnership noted the information.	
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CHAIR COUNCILLOR ELLEN AP GWYNN
Date of next Partnership meeting Friday 8 January 2016, 10.00am Committee Room A,
County Hall, Llandrindod Wells

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