

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BWRDD TYFU CANOLBARTH CYMRU /
GROWING MID WALES BOARD HELD BY ZOOM ON MONDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER
2022**

PRESENT

Ceredigion County Council Members:

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader and Cabinet Member for Democratic Services, Policy, Performance and People and Organisation **(BD)**

Councillor Catrin M S. Davies, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Customer Services **(CD)**

Councillor Keith Henson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services and Carbon Management **(KH)**

Councillor Matthew Vaux, Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Housing, Legal and Governance and Public Protection **(MV)**

Powys County Council Members:

Councillor James Gibson-Watt, Leader and Cabinet Member for an Open and Transparent Powys **(JGW) (Chair)**

Councillor Aled Davies **(AD)**

Councillor David Selby, Cabinet Member for a More Prosperous Powys **(DS)**

Councillor Amanda Jenner **(AJ)**

Officers:

Eifion Evans, Chief Executive, Ceredigion County Council **(EE)**

Barry Rees, Corporate Director, Ceredigion County Council **(BR)**

Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer: Legal and Governance, Ceredigion County Council **(EP)**

Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services, Ceredigion County Council **(LE)**

Russell Hughes-Pickering, Corporate Lead Officer: Economy and Regeneration, Ceredigion County Council **(RHP)**

Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement, Ceredigion County Council **(DH)**

Arwyn Davies, Corporate Manager: Growth and Enterprise, Ceredigion County Council **(ADa)**

Ffion Lloyd, Solicitor, Ceredigion County Council **(FL)**

Carwyn Jones-Evans, Growth and Major Developments Service Manager, Ceredigion County Council **(CJE)**

Dr Caroline Turner, Chief Executive, Powys County Council **(CT)**

Clive Pinney, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Powys County Council **(CP)**

Cathy Martin, Operations Manager, Growing Mid Wales **(CM)**

Aggie Caesar-Homden, Partnership Manager - Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership, Growing Mid Wales **(ACH)**

David Owen, Digital Programme Manager, Growing Mid Wales **(DO)**

Angharad Massow, Communications Officer, Growing Mid Wales **(AM)**

Paul Griffiths, Advisor, Powys County Council **(PG)**

Martin Kiss, Economic Advisory Group representative **(MK)**

Government Observers:

Gareth Ashman, Head of Regional and Local Growth, UK Government Wales

Susan Corcoran, Regional & Local Growth Team, UK Government Wales

Ann Watkin, Head of Strategy, Operations Alignment and Planning, Welsh Government

1.	CROESO AC YMDDIHEURIADAU / WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
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The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillor Clive Davies (CCC), Councillor Matthew Dorrance (PCC), Nigel Brinn (PCC), Diane Reynolds (PCC) and Nicola Williams (PCC).

2.	DATGANIADAU O FUDDIANT PERSONOL / DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST
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There were no declarations of personal interest reported.

3.	COFNODION DRAFFT Y CYFARFOD DIWETHAF / DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
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The minutes of the last meeting held on 21st June 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

CT highlighted that not all elected members representing Powys County Council on the Board were Cabinet Members as noted on page 1 of the minutes.

4.	PARTNERIAETH SGILIAU RHANBARTHOL CANOLBARTH CYMRU / MID WALES REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP
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ACH provided members with a progress update on the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership. It was noted that the RSP had received a copy of the Grant Award Letter and Schedule 2 Targets documents. Reference was given to the Forward Work Programme, including the key deliverables for the next 12 months as listed in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

The deadline for a second RSP Project Officer has been extended to 09.10.22. Due to the period of mourning, the RSP Annual Meeting, due to be held on 12.09.22 has been re-arranged for 17.10.22 at 2pm. ACH along with both Leaders of the Council recently held interviews for an RSP Board Chair which would be announced at the Annual Meeting. Adrian Watkins would remain as Chair until 17.10.22. Reference was given to the Growing Mid Wales newsletter released on 22.08.22 and to the background of the proposed RSP Board Logo.

The Chair explained that both he and the Leader of CCC were pleased to be able to appoint a high-quality Chair before the Annual Meeting.

ACH clarified they had received 68 responses to the business survey which was relatively low, yet comparable to previous surveys. The survey had been shared in all possible ways. Engagement with businesses was ongoing and another survey to seek their views would be shared in due course. To date, other RSPs had also received low response rates. In terms of the delivery of apprenticeship

provision, ACH explained that the report had not yet been shared with the RSP Board therefore she was unable to go into detail. Generally, many employers chose to pay for apprenticeships across the border due to barriers such as the availability, quality and the appropriateness of courses. Further conversations needed to take place with partners. Members were urged to come forward if they had any suggestions.

KH highlighted there would be a cause for concern if businesses chose apprenticeships across the border due to linguistic reasons and specialist framework. Consideration may need to be given to a more flexible approach to ensure that skills required in the region were developed within the region.

ACH explained that there had not been much response related to the Welsh language despite working with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the Welsh Language Commissioner. Workshops to engage with employers to develop access to the Welsh language would be held once the Employment and Skills Plans had been launched. WG was working with RSPs to raise and address concerns around the lack of provision of the Welsh language in post-16 education.

In terms of expertise, England had apprenticeship standards, which met the needs of employers and businesses by considering improved methods and technology. The framework used in Wales was deemed much more rigid and there was no flexibility for input from employers. Employers were choosing to pay for the Standard in England, given that it offered a baseline skills level.

CT highlighted that key points and valuable feedback had been shared by the private sector and employers in the region.

ACH clarified that the concerns mentioned had been raised with Huw Morris and later with Chris Hare and at every other opportunity, however WG were content with the framework. Further education providers and sixth forms report that the framework in Wales worked however businesses did not share the same view. A greater number of responses to the survey would have been preferred therefore more work would be done with business to gather evidence. Once this had taken place, ACH noted that they would accept the support of both Chief Executives to raise the concerns with WG.

RESOLVED

- For GMW Joint Committee members to approve the proposed RSP logo
- To note progress to date.

5. EITHRIO'R CYHOEDD / EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The report relating to item 5 is not for publication as it contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007. If, following the application of the Public Interest Test, the Council resolves to consider this item in private, the public and press will be excluded from the meeting during such consideration, in accordance with Section 100B(2) of the Act.

RESOLVED

It was agreed to exclude the public and press during consideration of item 5 below on the basis that documents included information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Councils, which should not, on balance, be disclosed to the public and press.

6. BARGEN TWF CANOLBARTH CYMRU / MID WALES GROWTH DEAL:
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CM provided members with an overview of the Quarter Progress Report circulated prior to the meeting. Reference was made to the following points included in the report:

- Growth Deal Progress
- Programme Development – Digital
- Programme Development - Sites and Premises
- Project Development – Strategic Outline Case Assessments

RESOLVED

- To consider the progress update and identify any key issues/concerns.
- To approve the recommendations of the Portfolio Management Office Team and Management Group set out in paragraph 9.2 of the Report following assessment of the Growth Deal projects, in order to take the Portfolio forward to unlock funding.

7. UNRHYW FATER ARALL / ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8. DYDDIADAU CYFARFODYDD NESAF / DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS
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12 Rhagfyr 2022 – Rhithiol / 12 December 2022 – Virtual

Following a discussion, it was agreed that a face-to-face visit would be organised for members to familiarise themselves with each other and the projects under consideration before the meeting in December.

**County Councillor James Gibson-Watt
Chair**