

Enterprise and Business Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date:
11 June 2015

Meeting time:
08.30

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Agenda

Co-investment in Skills Business Breakfast (08.30–10.00)

Private pre-meeting (10.45–11.00)

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

2 Co-investment in Skills (11.00–11.45) (Pages 1 – 17)

Julie James AM, Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology

Huw Morris, SHELL Director

Dr Rachel Garside-Jones, Head of Strategy, Skills Policy & Youth Engagement Division

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

EBC(4)-14-15 p.1 Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology

3 Papers to note

3.1 City Regions (Pages 18 – 25)

Attached Documents:

EBC(4)-14-15 p.2 Revised written submission by Professor Gillian Bristow

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting.

5 Employment Opportunities for People over 50 (11.45–11.55)

(Pages 26 – 62)

Attached Documents:

Cover paper for the draft report on Employment Opportunities for People over 50

Draft Report on Employment Opportunities for People over 50

De-brief in private (11.55–12.00)

Agenda Item 2

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Paper to the Enterprise and Business Committee Implementing the Framework for Co-investment in Skills

Introduction

The Welsh Government is committed to investing in skills alongside employers and this engagement will continue for as long as resources are available to allow us to do so. In 2014-15 we invested over £536m which focused on supporting individuals and employers in Wales. This included £507m in post-16 education, a further £19.8m in employment and skills support and over £9.4m to underpin our work on youth engagement and employment¹. Furthermore, in April 2015 we announced £144m of investment, supported by the European Social Fund, to deliver 52,000 apprenticeships in West Wales and the Valleys over the next four years².

This paper provides background to how the Welsh Government investment in skills development, such as via apprenticeship provision, will continue into the future and how it will be underpinned by the *Framework for Co-investment in Skills* which was published in November 2014³. The paper focuses on:

- the challenges facing Wales with respect to employer investment in skills and the need to raise overall skills levels in response to future jobs;
- the engagement we have made with stakeholders in developing the framework;
- the activities underway with respect to the three elements of the framework – influence, investment and impact; and,
- the timeline for implementing the framework by April 2017 including the cultural change required amongst employers, particularly those who have come to rely on government funding, in developing the skills of their workforce.

Understanding the challenge facing Wales

Despite the investment we are making in skills development we cannot ignore the fact that the landscape for skills investment is changing, particularly as we look ahead to a time beyond 2020 and the current round of European funding. The historic approach purely to expand

¹ The figures provided are based on a review of overall expenditure associated with budget lines within the Department for Education and Skills. Figures do not include expenditure associated with Higher Education, Post-16 Learner Support, Qualifications and Welsh Language.

² www.gov.wales/newsroom/firstminister/2015/10049697/

³ Framework for Co-investment in Skills (Welsh Government, 2014)
www.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/141120-framework-for-co-investment-in-skills-en.pdf

the supply of skills, for example by increasing grant funding for training, is not financially sustainable and neither will it address the cultural shift which is required of employers to recognise skills as an investment decision for which they should take lead responsibility.

Wales has seen improvements in recent years in the scale of skills investment made by employers. For example, overall levels of employer investment in training have risen from £1.5bn in 2011 to £1.6bn in 2013⁴. This has been driven partly by the increase in spending of smaller establishments (although there has been a decrease for the largest employers). We have also seen a higher proportion of staff receive training over the same period. However, if we are to develop a financially sustainable skills system built on strong employer engagement we must take action to address the underlying challenges for Wales, including:

- the 38% of employers who are not investing in skills;
- the lag in employer investment in Wales compared to the UK average by £240 per employee (or around 18%);
- the need to improve skills levels at Level 4 and above in response to future jobs⁵;
- the fact that just 13% of employers in Wales are engaged with formal apprenticeships and 44% of employers are offering work placements or work inspiration activities⁶;
- the need to reduce skills gaps associated with Essential Skills such as literacy, numeracy and basic IT; and,
- the need to prepare for the commercial opportunities and community benefits offered by major planned investments in infrastructure⁷.

The *Framework for Co-investment in Skills* has therefore been developed in recognition of these and other challenges facing Wales' skills system over the coming decade. Its content does not alter our position on skills investment or retract all government support for training. It seeks to be clear on those government investments which will continue to be made and how these will align with, and add value to, the investments which should be made and led by employers.

Developing the Framework for Co-investment in Skills

⁴ Employer Skills Survey (UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2013)

⁵ For example, 36% of working age adults possess qualifications at Level 4 and above compared to the UK average of 38%. See: www.gov.wales/docs/statistics/2015/150422-levels-highest-qualification-held-working-age-adults-2014-en.pdf

⁶ Employer Perspectives Survey (UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2014)

⁷ For example, Wylfa Newydd, Wrexham Super Prison, Tidal Lagoon, M4 improvements, rail electrification, new housing developments, significant inward investors and growing businesses.

The context for developing a policy of co-investment has been known to employers, unions and delivery partners for some time. As part of both the Policy Statement on Skills⁸ and Skills Implementation Plan⁹ we made clear our intention to take forward a policy of co-investment and, in doing so, we indicated the potential implications for some of our mainstream programmes.

A public consultation¹⁰ also took place on how best to balance the responsibility for skills investment in Wales and this had some 57 responses from a range of organisations in Wales. We supplemented the consultation by additional engagement with the Wales Employment and Skills Board and an expert working group comprising of Colegau Cymru, the Federation of Small Businesses, CBI Wales, Wales TUC, the National Training Federation for Wales (NTFW) and a representative of the Regional Skills Partnerships.

We considered all consultation responses alongside the current evidence of employer engagement and investment in skills, the major skills priorities for Wales (including Essential Skills and higher level skills) as well as the overall backdrop for achieving a financially sustainable skills system. We have also considered the wider priorities for Wales, such as youth employment and engagement, as well as the statutory responsibilities placed on Welsh Ministers.

We also considered the risks associated with government investment displacing the training for which an employer should take lead responsibility and undertake with their employees. For example, it could be argued that sectors with minimum standards for training have developed a culture of dependency on government funding, particularly in relation to all-age apprenticeship provision, and this approach is not financially sustainable or beneficial as we move forward to develop a competitive skills system for Wales.

The framework has moved some way from the initial consideration to express co-investment as a purely transactional relationship between government and employers. We are not, however, dismissing methods for determining some form of contribution from employers towards specific training products, as is required under State Aid regulations, but consider that these should be viewed in the context of the broader framework.

⁸ Policy Statement on Skills (Welsh Government, 2014)
www.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/140129-policy-statement-on-skills-en.pdf

⁹ Skills Implementation Plan (Welsh Government, 2014) available at:
www.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/140714-skills-implementation-plan-en.pdf

¹⁰ The consultation document and report detailing the summary of responses received is available at: www.gov.wales/consultations/education/proposals-for-co-investment-in-post-19-adult-skills-delivery/

In November 2014, we published the detail of the framework which brought together a coordinated perspective on how best to balance the responsibility for skills investment between employers and government. The framework looks beyond the historic approach simply to increase the supply of skills to an approach which influences the demand for, quality of, and the deployment of skills within the workplace by focusing interventions across three areas:

- **Influence:** Detailing the action that government can take, working with employers, providers, unions and other stakeholders, to influence the investment decisions being made by employers.
- **Investment:** Defining the collective responsibility for skills investment (co-investment) and the investment principles which will drive areas of government and employer intervention.
- **Impact:** Evaluating investment decisions using the Skills Performance Measures published by the Welsh Government in September 2014 and ensuring that there is appropriate performance accountability factored within relevant areas of policy and programme delivery.

The framework therefore focuses on how we can continue to influence, compel and incentivise employers to invest more in the skills of their workforce and to develop the business practices which put those skills to productive use.

Influencing skills investment

Our Skills Implementation Plan highlights a number of interventions being taken forward to influence the supply, demand, quality and deployment of skills and these are interlinked with the framework. Of significance is our work with the Regional Skills Partnerships (RSPs), formally announced in October 2014, which have produced Regional Employment and Skills Plans which review the economic and skills priorities for each of the three regions¹¹. In addition to our work with RSPs we have also:

- Initiated two pilot projects working with the construction and creative industries sectors to explore skills utilisation. These pilots are focusing on how employers can plan/ develop workplace practices which improve the deployment of skills in the workplace.
- Recognised the on-going importance of linking procurement activities, and particularly social clauses, to the skills agenda so that employers recognise and act upon their responsibility for skills investment should they be awarded specific types of government contracts.

¹¹ See announcement made in October 2014:
www.gov.wales/newsroom/educationandskills/2014/141011regionalskillspartnershipsskills/

In developing the framework we have also worked closely with the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO). As referenced within the framework document, WEFO will expect ESF-supported activities to consider the importance of stimulating employer demand for skills and incentivising, where appropriate, employer or participant contributions to help develop a stronger culture of cost sharing. Indeed we are already seeing a number of project proposals coming forward which include an element of co-investment from employers. We will continue to liaise with WEFO on how projects are taken forward in line with the co-investment framework.

Investment

In reviewing the long-term capacity of some of the mainstream Welsh Government skills programmes we considered the current evidence of employer engagement and investment in skills, the backdrop for achieving a financially sustainable skills system as well as the wider economic and social priorities for Wales, such as youth employment and engagement, the need to raise standards of literacy and numeracy amongst adults and the issue of being able to develop higher levels of skills in response to future jobs.

The most significant change as a result of the framework is the shift to prioritising apprenticeship provision for those under the age of 25 whilst continuing to provide support for higher apprenticeships on an all-age basis. Our priorities for apprenticeships recognise the changing nature of work in Wales, particularly in terms of promoting the development of higher level vocational learning and in reducing the risks of all-age apprenticeship provision being used as a proxy for training which an employer should be prepared to undertake and fund themselves.

We recognise the cultural shift this will require across a number of sectors. In line with the framework therefore, we are undertaking joint action with employers from the early years and health and social care sectors. Specifically, we are progressing an ESF-funded project where the full cost of an apprenticeship in early years for those aged 25 and above will be supported. In health and social care we have agreed a co-investment project for entrants aged 25 and above where the Welsh Government contributes 70% of funding for apprenticeship delivery. Looking ahead, we expect further changes to be made to the apprenticeship model in Wales, informed by the responses to the consultation on aligning the apprenticeship model to the needs of the Welsh economy which concluded on the 24 April¹².

¹² www.gov.wales/consultations/education/aligning-the-apprenticeship-model/

Employers will also continue to benefit from the support being made available through our employment and skills programmes including our new Flexible Skills Programme and Skills Priorities Programme. These will provide additional investment in skills alongside that of employers and will focus on increasing the demand, quality and deployment of skills in the workplace.

Impact

The framework makes use of the Skills Performance Measures which we published in September 2014¹³ and focuses on four areas:

- **Jobs and growth** – Improvements in employment and productivity levels.
- **Financial sustainability** – Ensuring an appropriate and sustainable balance of funding is available to support the skills system sourced from government, employers, individuals and European funding.
- **Equality and equity** – Providing equality of opportunity for individuals in accessing post-19 employment and skills support.
- **International skills benchmarking** – Improving the skills profile of Wales to ensure we remain competitive as a nation.

These measures will be used to monitor the impact of the framework to ensure that it is delivering the appropriate balance of social and economic outcomes for Wales, thereby providing a strong lever for tackling poverty by strengthening the creation of jobs and growth. A summary infographic is included at Annex A of this paper which provides baseline information in relation to the indicators for each of the above measures as at the 13 March 2015.

The measures not only relate to the level of skills investment being made by employers but include monitoring the proportion of employers who are investing in the skills of their workforce, the forms of training being undertaken and the volume of employees being supported. The measures will be important in monitoring the quality and impact of the investments being made in skills and in providing the evidence for making any adaptations required to the framework as we move forward with its integration into policies and programmes.

Compared with reforms to the post-19 funding system in England, which have been essentially market-led, our aim has been to provide clear leadership to guide and direct the skills system in Wales and to work with partner organisations as we move forward with co-

¹³ www.gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/skills-performance-measures/

investment, thus aiming to prevent a retrenchment of post-19 skills provision.

We will also be continuing our work with the Regional Skills Partnerships to ensure that their Regional Employment and Skills Plans are aligned with the framework and that there is a commitment at a regional level to increasing employer investment in, and engagement with, training. This will include further action to develop our Skills Performance Measures over coming years to generate appropriate indicators at a regional level with the aim of ensuring that providers, whether these are companies, voluntary agencies, colleges, universities or work-based learning providers, are playing their part in delivering targets associated with these indicators. We will also aim to work with these providers to see how they can develop their own corresponding measures and targets at a more localised level.

Looking ahead

Co-investment represents a clear opportunity for Wales to strengthen our skills system and to ensure that it is not only financially sustainable but that it is capable of delivering the right outcomes to provide a strong lever for tackling poverty by strengthening the creation of jobs and growth.

In developing the framework we have appreciated that increasing the supply of skills alone will not bring employers closer to the skills system and could instead heighten the risk of government resources becoming a proxy for training which employers should be prepared to undertake, lead on and fund themselves. We recognise that this represents a long-term cultural change amongst those employers that have come to rely on public funding to support the development needs of their workforce.

The framework will take time to implement. An initial two-year window to April 2017 has therefore been set so that this transition process can take place. During this time we will continue to review the evidence available on employer investment in skills, linked to our Skills Performance Measures and the work of Regional Skills Partnerships, to ensure we have a strong rationale for making further adaptations to the framework and the co-investment policy as a whole.

We are committed to continuing to work with employers, delivery partners, unions and other industry bodies in the coming years to strengthen the message of employers taking the lead responsibility for skills investment and in promoting the benefits to Wales of a competitive and financially sustainable skills system.

Agenda Item 3.1

Written Submission to the National Assembly for Wales' Enterprise and Business Committee: City Regions and the Metro

Professor Gillian Bristow and Dr Adrian Healy

*City Region Exchange**, Cardiff University

May 2015

**City Region Exchange* is one of Cardiff University's five flagship engagement projects, formally launched at the Senedd in October 2014. City Region Exchange is intended to strengthen the University's engagement with the Cardiff Capital Region's key decision-makers and with its range of different stakeholder communities. The Exchange plans to better understand the University's role in the Cardiff Capital Region, and to support the Region's development by enhancing the linkages between the University's education provision, its research and knowledge exchange activities, and the development needs of the Region and its key partners.

Introduction

We welcome this opportunity to provide a perspective on the issues being discussed by the Enterprise and Business Committee concerning the progress of City Regions and the Metro. This written submission focuses primarily on issues relating to:

- the current progress of the City Region and Metro projects;
- the approach to governance of the City Regions and Metro;
- and the connections between the City Region and Metro developments, and other related policies and plans.

Current progress of the City Region and Metro projects

It is almost three years since the publication of Dr Elizabeth Haywood's report to the Welsh Government which outlined the case for two city regions in Wales around Cardiff and Swansea. In 2013, the Welsh Government formally established two Boards to support strategy development in the two city regions, both of which have recently produced strategy reports.

The work of the Boards and the production of these reports represent positive progress in city region development, with two key general developments worthy of note:

- the clear evidence of a will to collaborate rather than to compete, particularly amongst relevant local authorities, in the interests of their wider city regions;
- the assertion of key strategic projects and themes (such as the Metro in the Cardiff Capital Region) seen as important for the future economic development success of the city regions.

However, these reports also reveal that there is still considerable further work to be done. In particular there is a need for:

- clearly defined objectives and timetables for action. Neither report is explicit in its objectives or sets out key milestones for action. Without clear objectives and appropriate targets, even modest ones, it will be very difficult to judge what it is that the city regions are trying to achieve, and how well they are doing. Timetables need to be realistic and have a suitably long time-frame. The effects of investment in infrastructure and human capital take at least three years to emerge (OECD, 2009). UK City Deals typically have a 10 – 15 year planning horizon;
- delivery bodies. Both reports say very little about how these city region strategies and visions are to be taken forward and by whom, perhaps understandably given that they were advisory in nature. However, with the Boards potentially due to be wound up this month, there is a pressing need for delivery bodies to be established which are capable of providing strategic governance and leadership of city region project plans, and of mobilising action and engagement across not only the public sector, but also the business sector and the diverse communities which make up the city regions. Our recent round of engagement with representatives from across local authority economic development and regeneration departments in the Cardiff Capital Region has found a growing degree of frustration at the slow rate of progress in putting delivery mechanisms in place (see below for further discussion of governance issues);
- appropriate tools and resources for collaborative projects. Neither report presents any proposals for pooling available resources and existing funding streams into single investment funds for the good of the city region as a whole. Yet pooled investment funds are likely to

provide a critical means of activating priority, collaborative projects. Furthermore, when administered by an overarching strategic body, they can work to balance the pursuit of a city region's most attractive economic development opportunities with concern for how evenly their benefits are distributed across it (as in the Sheffield city region for example);

- **Operational projects and plans** The city regions need transformative projects – projects which have the potential to transform the local economies and around which collaborative, cross-sectoral working can be harnessed. The metro is a great example of this for the Cardiff Capital Region. City region building needs to be done incrementally – taking one step at a time. Developing flagship projects with tangible objectives and delivery vehicles is a key way to progress their development. Starting with the metro and in particular with the development of the light rail network for northern Cardiff will provide literally and metaphorically a direction of travel – a vision and a project around which discussions about integrating planning and economic development can then follow. It is critical to develop the transformative projects now – start with a project – and then the integrated policy developments and governance issues will be addressed in a focused and specific way as the projects develop.

Approach to governance of the City Regions and Metro

it is important to note that city regions are more than simply institutional configurations. They are really a different way of understanding the functional economic reach of a city – its economic footprint if you like. So there is nothing stopping the development of voluntary collaborations and arrangements across the city regions to begin with, with more formal institutional forms and structures coming later. The important thing is to understand what the shared interests are and how these might best be galvanised and supported through region-wide projects and plans.

An incremental approach may be the best way forward – identifying and supporting a few key projects and functions to begin with – e.g. the metro or the debate around strategic planning areas in the Planning Bill. Prioritising one or two key projects and plans which actively work to supporting the functioning of the city regions will provide a key way of developing a nucleus for the collaborative working that is so important in city region building.

Developing effective, co-ordinated governance at the city region scale with strong, effective leadership will ultimately be critical for future success. A growing body of international evidence indicates that organisations dedicated to co-ordinating policies and investments across urban agglomerations have positive effects. This is particularly in relation to land use planning and transport.

Indeed, recent research from the OECD has suggested that governance fragmentation can more than offset the economic effects of urban agglomeration. For a given population size, a metropolitan area with twice the number of municipalities is associated with around six percent lower productivity. This is an effect that is mitigated by almost half, by the existence of a governance body at the metropolitan level (Ahrend et al, 2014).

Furthermore, capable and visible city region leadership has also been found to be critically important internationally. Leadership is important to provide a coherent city region vision, to mobilise coalitions of stakeholders, and to provide profile and accountability for citizens (Slack and Cote, 2014).

Thus, in order to progress the Swansea Bay City Region and Cardiff Capital Region, decisions have to be made about what form of governance will best build and mobilise the collaborative working required to support their development. There is also a need to minimise the risk that current, overlapping discussions on governance reform result in fragmented governance.

There appear to be no legal barriers in the way of developing city regions in Wales or indeed any evident constraints on the form their delivery bodies might take. Experience from city regions elsewhere suggests that various models exist, from more formal structures where co-ordinating bodies are given powers over financial resources and key areas of policy, to more informal and voluntary partnerships or coalitions of authorities who work together to agree plans and objectives. Critically, no one governance model stands above the rest – there is no one size fits all governance model. City region governance models should and do vary according to context. Their form should match their function and suit the economic and political context of the region. This supports the assertion made earlier that starting with practical projects may be the most practical way forward, and then developing governance arrangements which address the cross-cutting challenges which arise.

Nevertheless, there is strong evidence to suggest that city regions need authorities with capacities to influence land use planning, and transport at

the very least, if not also skills development and training to better support the functioning of labour markets.

It may be preferable and indeed appropriate to develop different, place-specific arrangements for the form and structure of city region authorities in Swansea Bay and the Cardiff Capital Region. The two city regions face different economic and organisational challenges and serve different functions for the Welsh economy as a whole. In practical terms, it may also be easier for arrangements for Swansea Bay to evolve out of its existing Board given there are only four local authorities involved, each of which is currently represented on the Board. A slightly different model may have to be developed for the Cardiff Capital Region given it has 10 local authorities, not all of whom have direct representation on the current Board.

The Metro

In terms of the metro, again there would appear to be no insurmountable legal barriers to its implementation. There are some issues to be resolved around powers and governance, For example, the electrification of the Great Western mainline remains the responsibility of the UK government (for which funding has now been agreed with the Welsh Government). The transition from heavy rail to light rail and the development of integrated rail and bus services may require some changes in powers for the Welsh Government (e.g. as regards bus franchising), but these can be negotiated with UK government and any challenges overcome with good leadership, a strong political commitment to take the project forward and to build the critically important coalitions of support across key stakeholders.

The analyses which have underpinned the metro proposals clearly indicate that two factors will be critical to its effective development:

- additional sources of funding. For the Cardiff Capital Region the promise of a City Deal offers a potentially very valuable, city region-wide resource for key infrastructure and economic development projects such as the metro. This could be used to leverage other funding sources such as available EU Structural Funds. Other funding sources should also be explored. Again, this demands commitment to negotiate and bring available funding sources together.
- a delivery body. There is a strong case for putting delivery of the metro in the hands of a transport authority with statutory powers, and which draws upon appropriate commercial and technical expertise.

This would seem to be critical to driving forward the metro project and seizing on the opportunities provided by the prospective City Deal and other funding. Specifically, making the transition from heavy rail to light rail and integrating rail and bus networks will need a dedicated body – some kind of special purpose vehicle. There needs to be a dedicated body, possibly led by the Welsh Government or maybe evolving out of existing city region Boards or arrangements to oversee the infrastructure project. The delivery of an integrated transport system will also then require some kind of administrative body to apportion revenues, to deliver and oversee its operations. But the precise details of these can be worked through in the project planning. The precise details as to who governs the integrated transport network can be developed as the project develops, but clear project plans with buy in from local governments and strong leadership are critical ingredients for success.

Connections between the City Region and Metro developments, and other related policies and plans

The city region and metro developments are more likely to be truly transformative if they are developed in a manner which complements other, related policies and plans. Developing the theme of integration across the city region's infrastructure projects and wider economic development plans and agendas, such as the Great Western Cities initiative, will be critical in enhancing the development opportunities available:

- Infrastructure developments. The determining factors of regional economic performance appear to be mutually reinforcing, thereby underlining the importance of cross-sectoral approaches to policy formulation and delivery. Enabling city regions to connect their economic and transport plans with strategic planning powers would seem to be particularly important. This would enable economic development to be encouraged and focused around critical nodes in the metro network (as in Stuttgart) (Frank and Morgan, 2012).

It is also important that skills and training development is developed in a manner which complements infrastructure developments such as

the metro. International evidence suggests that while public investment in infrastructure has a positive effect on regional growth, the effect is much stronger when educational attainment is high (OECD, 2009). Furthermore in terms of skills, reducing the proportion of people in a region with very low skills seems to matter more than increasing the share with very high skills (OECD, 2012). Simply concentrating resources in one place will not necessarily lead to the agglomeration benefits associated with city regions. Developing these benefits critically depends upon the existence of a pooled labour market, strong backward and forward linkages among firms, and knowledge spillovers. Thus ‘the key appears to be how assets are used, how different stakeholders interact and how synergies are exploited’ (OECD, 2009; p. 46). This underlines the importance of integrated city region development strategies that cut across sectors and that are based on inclusive governance arrangements.

- Great Western Cities. The local authorities of Cardiff, Newport and Bristol have recently agreed to work more closely together under the title of the Great Western Cities, to promote the region as a high quality destination for business investment. As part of this, they have agreed to collaborate to shape transport plans, and to work together to realise the energy potential of the Severn Estuary and Bristol Channel. There is a powerful logic for building on the strengths of the economic mass of this large Severnside region which is already characterised by strong economic relationships (as articulated by the City Growth Commission, 2014). In particular, the Great Western Cities alliance provides significant opportunities to raise the external profile of the region and its cities at a time when the continued growth of London makes for a very challenging environment for other metro areas in the UK. In this regard, this is a potentially very complementary development to the Cardiff Capital Region and Swansea Bay City Regions particularly if it allows for the development of a stronger and more coherent place marketing message in support of the attraction of external investment and events to South Wales and the South West. It also carries the important benefit of collaboration on larger strategic infrastructure and energy projects that inevitably cut across Severnside’s geographical and administrative divides. Clear communication across relevant strategic decision-makers will be critical to ensure these developments are complementary in practice.

Conclusions

The development of city region Boards and strategy documents for the Swansea Bay and Cardiff Capital Region represent a positive step forward in the development of city regions in Wales. However, there is further work to be done to turn their ideas into tangible projects with clear objectives, plans and timetables, overseen and taken forward by inclusive delivery bodies with long-term planning horizons and co-ordinated and strong leadership.

References

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Agenda Item 5

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