

# PSB Project Group Report

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Date: 26.05.21

<b>Well-being Plan Aim</b>	<b>Enable communities to become prosperous, sustainable and connected by supporting the transformation of economic prospects</b> Improve physical and digital infrastructure to support economic development, including suitable and affordable homes	
<b>Our Values</b>	Welsh Language, Tackling Inequalities, Involvement, Sustainability, Leading By Example	
<b>Project Group Name</b>	Enterprise & Innovation	
<b>Chair Vice-Chair</b>	<b>Russell Hughes-Pickering</b> (Ceredigion County Council) <b>Gareth Price</b> (Tynrhyd)	

<b>Project Group Membership</b> <i>(Names in <b>bold</b> signify attendance at meeting)</i>			
Ceredigion County Council (CCC)	Diana Davies, <b>Lynne Walters, Michael Smith, Manon Horscroft,</b> Eifion Evans, Meleri Richards, Sara Dafydd, <b>Arwyn Davies, Rob Starr, Mark Gleeson,</b> Elen James, <b>Cllr Gareth Lloyd, Cllr Rhodri Evans.</b>	Aberystwyth University	<b>Rhian Hayward</b>
NHS	Peter Skitt	Menter Busnes	<b>Alun Jones</b>
Dyfed Powys Police	Insp Andrew Merry	Coleg Sir Gar	<b>Matt Morden</b>
MAWWFS	Geraint Thomas, Amy Richmond-Jones, Christine Robertson	Welsh Government	Duncan Hamer, <b>(Carys Roberts)</b>
Antur Teifi	<b>Kevin Harrington</b>	Additional Members	<b>Rachel Rowlands, Stephan Rowlands,</b>

## SYNOPSIS OF PROJECT GROUP MEETING

### Key Points discussed at Project Group meeting:

**Apologies:** Diana Davies, Julie Davies-Jones, Gwyn Howells, Meleri Richards, Peter Skitt, Prof David Langdon, Eifion Evans Duncan Hamer.

The Chair Russell Hughes-Pickering (RHP) began the meeting by welcoming all members. The minutes of the previous meeting of this project group were agreed as a true record. The Chair opened discussion for members to discuss whether now is the right time to resume conversations via task and finish focus groups and if so what will be the agreed areas moving forward.

Gareth Price (GP) noted that the last 14/15 months have been very challenging for all businesses in Ceredigion and suggested that one focus for the group should be on the recovery. Consideration should be focused on what next and what programs are being developed to nurture opportunities for business development and survival in the future. In addition discussion led to an agreement that the group should also focus on the consideration of how to ensure the availability of the Public Services for the direct benefit of Businesses in Ceredigion.

The operating landscape for businesses has changed in recent times and the focus of this Project Group now needs to reflect these changes. A place focus is required which will facilitate a greater understanding of our market towns along with the new dynamic which is emerging on our high streets.

### **The Economic Impact of COVID 19 in Ceredigion**

Arwyn Davies (AD) provided a brief update to members noting that the Economic Strategy 2020-35 and noted that the feedback from consultees had now been formally taken into account by Cabinet earlier this year. AD confirmed that the Economic Strategy 2020-35 had been formally adopted by Cabinet in March 2021. In line with the feedback from the engagement and consultation AD noted that the range of interventions required to support people, places, enterprises, infrastructure and connectivity provided the right focus moving forward. AD agreed with the point raised by GP, regarding the involvement of support measures and drew reference to the specific grant support mechanisms which were urgently developed in Ceredigion over the last year to sustain businesses. Different rounds of grant funding had been announced for businesses in Ceredigion and initial evidence has started to come through to suggest that in addition to surviving some businesses have been able to diversify and plant the seeds of growth via the funding which was put in place by Welsh Government. A quick

turnaround was made on these new support measures and the funding was to be spent by the end of March, 2021. The importance of these support measures was recognised by all.

AD went on to raise a key point regarding the importance of job creation within the County. Current activity is focusing on 80 new projects which has a target of resulting in the creation of 150 new jobs for people in Ceredigion. AD and the team is now hoping that the regional team in Welsh Government are working on another tranche of funding as the feedback received to the March support packages has been very successful. Vital Business support has been made available and Welsh Government are now in discussion with partners with regards to the next stages of Business Wales. The key importance here will be placed on regionalising the product offer and responding to specific needs which are identified in the County. AD informed the group members that there is currently an opportunity to influence the shape and intervention of Business Wales moving forward.

On a final note AD raised that there is still a large Agenda around the existence of training provision and the availability of relevant skills. Feedback is now suggesting that businesses in Ceredigion are now searching for the right skills in individuals, which will enable them to take forward their businesses into the future.

MT noted that the availability of personnel with the required skills is essential. Developing business practices aimed at supporting staff, providing a positive working environment and encouraging professional and skills development is vital as this nurtures the commitment of the individuals who work for you.

During the discussion which followed GP raised that as businesses have been fighting for survival to a large extent the private sector have been oblivious to what has been going on behind closed doors during this very difficult time. GP raised that Ceredigion continues to be at risk of missing a lot of the investment and the benefits for business may fall by the way side if criteria for capital investment continues to focus heavily on Job Creation. In addition to this key performance measure additional criteria needs to be taken into consideration whereby grants and interventions also recognise the vital importance of jobs sustainability and diversification.

**ACTION: Members to consider ideas and feedback relating to the experience of businesses in accessing interventions and to provide Arwyn Davies with this information.**

#### **Facilitated workshop - Assessment of Local Wellbeing**

Rob Starr (RS) facilitated an interactive workshop for members on the Assessment of Local Wellbeing, which will be published in March 2022. Members had been provided with 3 key questions in advance of the meeting and following a presentation and a

discussion each member was requested to focus on these question and provide personal/organisational feedback to [performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk).

**ACTION: Members to respond to the three key questions provided in the facilitated workshop.**

**ACTION: A copy of the Assessment of Local Wellbeing presentation to be circulated to members following the meeting for reference and ideas.**

#### **Future work and direction of the group**

It was agreed by members that the focus of the future work of the Project Group will be around intervention and consideration would also be given to working with other groups to progress a place focus. The opportunities to encourage discussion on place was considered and it was suggested that there may be merit in placing an advert for additional business representatives to express an interest in the future of towns.

It was also agreed that all members need to consider broader sector representation for the Project Group and to forward any new suggestions via email.

**ACTION: Individual members who expressed their interest in participating in a task and finish group will be contacted and invited to attend a focus group discussion. Initial expressions of interest at the meeting included MT,KH,GP,CR and AD. If any other member is interested in participation please contact [lynne.walters2@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.walters2@ceredigion.gov.uk).**

**ACTION: Russell Hughes-Pickering to consider the timing for the release of a possible invitation/expression of interest.**

**ACTION: All members to forward any suggestions of names to ensure broader business sector representation through to [lynne.walters2@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.walters2@ceredigion.gov.uk)**

#### **A.O.B**

The Chair thanked all for their attendance and time this afternoon. It was agreed that the dates for future meetings will be circulated in due course following individual responses received from project group members. Initially it was agreed that it will be the task and finish group which will be arranged via Microsoft Teams.

**Next meeting:** yet to be confirmed.

### **ACTIONS CONTAINED IN LOCAL WELL-BEING PLAN UNDER THIS AIM**

Short Term Action	Medium Term Action	Long Term Action
Promote innovation, entrepreneurship and career progression through the establishment of PSB secondment, training and work opportunities. We will also develop a framework to assist individuals and communities to understand future trends, overcome barriers and grasp opportunities for enterprise and initiatives.	Utilise PSB organisations' underused land and buildings, alongside procurement procedures, to deliver greater sustainable community benefit.	Ensure that infrastructure (transport, housing, digital and work places) aligns with asset-based community development in Ceredigion.

#### ACTION PLAN: APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021

KEY	
<b>GREEN</b>	Active and on track
<b>AMBER</b>	Active but some concerns and needs close monitoring
<b>RED</b>	Active but major concerns and needs corrective action
<b>BLUE</b>	On-hold
<b>BLACK</b>	Closed

STEP 1: Establishment of Task and Finish Group to focus on support Interventions			
	Activity	Due Date	Comments
1.1	Establish a task and finish group to consider the range of interventions which are in place to support businesses.	June '21	Agreement of Project Group members secured at the meeting held on the 26 <sup>th</sup> May and individual members have agreed to contribute the work of this task and finish group.
1.2	Undertake a review of current provision and assess the overall impact of selected interventions.	Sept '21	
1.3	Consider the identification of gaps in the provision of interventions and focus on	Sept '21	

	job creation, job safeguarding and skills development.		
1.4	Link with place focus work of partners and consider the establishment of a task and finish group to implement this work.	Oct'21	
1.5			

**STEP 2: Consideration of Project Group membership**

Activity		Due Date	Comments
1.1	All project group members to consider broader sector representation.	July '21	Suggested names to be shared and consideration to be given to the general release of an expression of interest notification.
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			
1.5			

**STEP 3:**

Activity		Due Date	Comments
1.1			
1.2			

1.3			
1.4			
1.5			

**PSB: DECISIONS & RISKS**

<b>Decisions Required or Risks to be highlighted to the PSB</b>

DRAFT