

Cross-Party Group Annual Report.

7th February 2020

Cross Party Group for North Wales

1. Group membership and office holders for 2019/20

Chair: Llyr Gruffydd AM

Vice Chair(s): Mark Isherwood AM and Ann Jones AM

Members:

(Members are invited to attend each meeting)

Sian Gwenllian, Rhun ap Iorwerth, Janet Finch-Saunders, Darren Millar, Hannah Blythyn, Jack Sargeant, Lesley Griffiths, Ken Skates, Dafydd Elis Thomas, Mandy Jones, Michelle Brown

Secretary: Stephen Jones, Regional Co-ordinator for North Wales, Welsh Local Government Association

Note: Invitations to Group Meetings are also sent to Members of Parliament and Council Leaders in North Wales when the meeting is to be held in North Wales. Invitations to meetings in Cardiff are restricted to Assembly Members and Speakers due to the travelling involved.

Group Membership and Office Holders for 2020/21

Chair: Llyr Gruffydd, AM

Vice Chair: Mark Isherwood

(Labour AMs in North Wales were invited to nominate a Vice Chair)

Secretary: Stephen Jones (WLGA)

The membership remains the same as in 2019/20.

2. Group Meetings since the last AGM.

The last AGM was held on the 15th February 2019. The costs of the 2019 AGM and the proceedings were included in the 2018/19 Annual Report.

Meeting 1.

Meeting date: 10th May 2019 –Briefing on HS2 and the Proposed Crewe Hub

(Location: Coleg Cambria Business School, Northop, Flintshire)

Attendees:

Assembly Members

Llyr Gruffydd AM (in the Chair), Sian Gwenllian AM, Michelle Brown AM, Frances Taylor (office of Rhun ap Iorwerth AM), and Jason McLellan (Office of Ann Jones AM)

Partners (Westminster APPG, Councils and Business Leaders)

David Hanson MP and Mark Tami MP (Mersey Dee and North Wales APPG).

Cynghorydd Dyfrig Siencyn (Arweinydd, Gwynedd) and Councillor Ian Roberts (Leader, Flintshire)

Ruth Wojtan, (Programme Manager, Growth Track 360 (GT360), Stephen Jones (WLGA) Secretary and Sponsor representative in attendance.

Speakers:

Leo Warren and Jennifer Singleton (DfT), Calum Taylor (Wales Office), Dewi Rowlands (WG), Sasha Davies, (Chair of the North Wales Business Delivery Group) and Ashley Rogers (Chair, North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council)

Summary of issues discussed:

The meeting received a briefing on the UKG DfT's work to appraise the viability of an enhanced HS2 Hub Station at Crewe. A Crewe Hub Station for HS2 is essential to bring benefits to North Wales from HS2. The meeting heard that the SoS DfT is well disposed to upgrading plans for Crewe Station to allow for more HS2 services to stop at Crewe and improve planned connectivity between North Wales and HS2 Services.

There was a presentation from Sasha Davies, the Chair of the North Wales Business Delivery Group on its role and its relationship to the North Wales growth Deal. As part of this item Sasha Davies, Cllr. Dyfrig Siencyn and Ashley Rogers gave updates on the progress of the North Wales Deal.

Ashley Rogers gave a presentation on the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council's Business Monitor which brings together a series of business health indicators for the North Wales Mersey Dee geography.

Meeting 2:

Meeting date: 7th June 2019 – Briefing on the Progress of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) in moving out of Special Measures, held in the Optic Glyndwr Centre, St. Asaph Business Park.

Attendees:**Assembly Members**

Llyr Gruffydd AM (in the Chair), Sian Gwenllian AM, Darren Millar AM, Janet Finch Saunders AM, Mark Isherwood AM, Rhun ap Iorwerth AM, Ann Jones AM, Jason McLellan (Office of Ann Jones AM), Guto Davies (Office of Jack Sergeant), Julia

Partners (Westminster APPG, Councils and Business Leaders)

Mark Tami MP and Ian Lucas MP, Catherine (Office of Ian Lucas) and Katie (Office of Chris Ruane) (Mersey Dee and North Wales APPG)

Cynghorydd Llinos Medi Huws (Arweinydd, Cyngor Sir Ynys Mon), Councillor Sam Rowlands (Leader, Conwy) and Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill (Deputy Leader, Denbighshire, for Cllr. Hugh Evans)

Stephen Jones (WLGAs) Secretary and Sponsor Representative, in attendance.

Speakers: Mark Polin, Chair of the BCUHB and Gary Doherty, Chief Executive of the BCUHB

Summary of issues discussed

The meeting received an update from the Chair and CEO of the BCUHB on progress to take the BCUHB out of Welsh Government “special measures”. Assembly Members raised issues of concern and had responses from the representatives of the BCUHB.

Meeting 3.

Meeting date: 18th June 2019 – Briefing from the WLGAs on Local Government Finance and Local Government Reform held in Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay

Attendees:

Assembly Members

Llyr Gruffydd AM (in the Chair), Sian Gwenllian AM, Darren Millar AM, Mark Isherwood AM, Rhun ap Iorwerth AM, Mandy Jones AM

Stephen Jones (WLGA) Secretary and Sponsor Representative, in attendance.

Speakers: Chris Llewelyn, Chief Executive, WLGA, Jon Rae, Director of Finance, WLGA and Iwan Prys Jones, North Wales Economic Ambition Board

Summary of issues discussed:

The meeting received a briefing on Local Government Finance and Local Government Reform. Members asked questions with particular reference to the Formula for distributing Revenue Support Grant to Councils.

There was a short update from Iwan Prys Jones on the progress of the North Wales Growth Deal.

Meeting 4.

Meeting date: 7th February 2020 – AGM for 2020/21 and Transport Themed Meeting held in the Port of Holyhead, Anglesey

Attendees:

Llyr Gruffydd AM (in the Chair), Sian Gwenllian AM, Rhun ap Iorwerth AM, Hywel Williams MP, Cynghorydd Dyfrig Siencyn, Cynghorydd Llinos Medi Huws, Councillor Ian Roberts, Councillor Sam Rowlands.

Stephen Jones (WLGA) Secretary and Sponsor Representative, in attendance.

Speakers: Wyn Parry, Stena Line, Dewi Rowlands Welsh Government, Lee Robinson, Transport for Wales. William Calderbank, Stena Line and Lowri Joyce, Transport for Wales in attendance.

Summary of issues discussed:

The meeting heard about: -

- The plans to redevelop and expand the Port of Holyhead
- The challenges and progress of Transport for Wales in delivering the new rail franchise commitments in North Wales
- Plans to develop a North Wales Metro and to improve bus services
- Welsh Government's Transport Priorities and intentions for the National Transport Plan
- SAIL's views on alternative sources of employment and development to the nuclear industry in North Wales.

3. Professional lobbyists, voluntary organisations and charities with whom the Group has met during the preceding year.

The Group had no contact with professional lobbyists. The group met representatives of: -

- The Welsh Government
- The Welsh Local Government Association
- The North Wales Economic Ambition Board
- The North Wales Business Delivery Group (which advises the NWEAB)
- The Mersey Dee and North Wales All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)
- The North Wales and Mersey Dee Rail Task Force (Growth Track 360)
- The UKG Department for Transport and Office for the Secretary of State for Wales
- The North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council
- Transport for Wales
- Council Leaders of North Wales Local Authorities
- The Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- Stena Line
- SAIL (A community group advocating a different model of economic development arising from the Stop Wylfa campaign)

Annual Financial Statement.

7th February 2020

Cross Party Group for North Wales

Llyr Gruffydd AM

Stephen Jones, Regional Co-ordinator for North Wales, Welsh Local Government Association

Group's Expenses.	None.	£0.00
Costs of all goods.	No goods purchased.	£0.00
Benefits received by the group or individual Members from outside bodies.	No benefits received.	£0.00
Any secretariat or other support.	<p>a) Translation of Group Documents into Welsh commissioned and paid for by the WLGA.</p> <p>b) Simultaneous Translation for meetings held in North Wales commissioned and paid for by the WLGA</p>	<p>£TBC</p> <p>£400</p> <p>£640</p> <p>Total £1040</p>

Services provided to the Group such as hospitality.		
All refreshments and room hire paid for by the Welsh Local Government Association (£TBC).		
Date	Description and name of provider	Cost
10 th May 2019 (Coleg Cambria)	Coleg Cambria (Catering Only, room hire free)	215.52
7 th June 2019 (Optic Glyndwr, St. Asaph)	Catering and Room Hire	£250.00
18 th June 2019 (Ty Hywel)	Assembly Caterers (Catering Only, room hire free)	£140.88
7 th February 2020 AGM (Stena House, St. Asaph)	Catering and Room Hire	£0.00 Services provided for free
Total Cost for Translation, Room Hire and Catering		£1,646.40