



Llywodraeth Cymru
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Vibrant and Viable Places New Regeneration Framework

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1. Executive summary

Definition, Vision and Outcomes

Our **vision** is that everybody in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life.

We **define** regeneration as “an integrated set of activities that seek to reverse economic, social, environmental and physical decline to achieve lasting improvement, in areas where market forces will not do this alone without some support from government”.

Our **national outcomes** are:

- *Prosperous communities*

A range of activities at the regional and local level will support:

- improved levels of economic activity and more jobs;
- strong and diverse local economies with private, public and third sectors working together;
- well-connected communities supported by transport and broadband connections;
- sustainable use of the natural environment for local energy and food production;
- a thriving private sector and social enterprise;
- successful town centres and coastal communities; and
- a well-managed historic and natural environment contributing to the distinctiveness of Wales’ landscape and settlements with heritage and historic character conserved, valued and sustained.

- *Learning communities*

Regeneration is intrinsically linked with the skills and capacities of individuals, families and communities. Regeneration interventions will support:

- a skilled and confident existing and future workforce;
- a high aspiration local culture;
- engagement with school, post 16 and adult learning opportunities;
- clear opportunities for development of social and cultural capital and strengthening equality; and
- a belief in a better future.

- *Healthier communities*
The health and wellbeing of residents is central to the vitality of places. Regeneration activity will support:
 - healthy and cohesive communities able to grow and work together;
 - safe and secure localities;
 - good housing which is affordable and provides tenure choice;
 - a sustainable and high quality local environment;
 - positive and inclusive local identities; and
 - well-planned, appropriately used and good standard buildings, amenities and facilities.

Our principles and approaches

Our **principles** for effective regeneration are:

- *partnership*, involving effective communication and joint working between and across all sectors, which embraces good practice, equality and innovation;
- *strategy*, underpinned by evidence-based programmes and combining dynamic leadership with robust governance, including monitoring and evaluation, to ensure value for money; and
- *sustainable development*, the Welsh Government's central organising principle, enabling long-term investment through locally conceived and delivered projects, within a shared overarching strategy.

Our **key approaches** are:

- using robust *evidence* of all types to inform strategies and investment decisions; and
- combining improvements to *places* with support for the people who live in them.

Our new regeneration framework

The two key areas in the new framework are joined up delivery to maximise impact and key priorities for regeneration investment.

Joined up delivery

- Strong links with tackling poverty and jobs/growth.
- Full Cabinet support of regeneration as a cross cutting agenda.
- Strengthened governance with a Ministerial Advisory Group to oversee the implementation of the regeneration framework.
- Internal Steering Group to oversee regeneration to ensure the join up of Welsh Government officials at a senior level linked to the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan.
- Integration wherever possible of the £1.4 billion European Union projects to maximise investment opportunities.
- Outcome indicators for Prosperous Communities, Healthier Communities and Learning Communities.
- Recognising innovation and creativity is required as is learning from previous experiences.

Key priorities for regeneration investment

- A more targeted approach to successful place making resulting in more intensive investment in fewer places to maximise impact.
- Three key urgent priorities for targeted investment:
 - Town centres serving 21st Century towns
 - Coastal communities and
 - Communities First clusters
- Recognition of the importance of local delivery and accountability through local partnership bidding into Welsh Government for town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters using the five case business model and assessed against clear criteria.

Key performance indicators

Our key performance indicators, against which funding bids will be assessed and projects monitored, are:

- Investment levered in (split by private, public and third sector)
- Percentage of spend retained within Wales-based supply chains
- Net additional jobs created
- People supported into work (including through targeted recruitment and training).

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will be built in from the inception of all investment programmes.

Implementation

Moving forward on this ambitious agenda will require significant momentum from key partners across Wales. There is a degree of urgency to have more joined up delivery at every level to ensure that we achieve value for money, maximise positive impacts and improve the long term well being of the people of Wales particularly in the current economic climate. The Welsh Government is committed to this agenda and providing the resources wherever possible to make this happen.



Stryd Fawr Bangor

2. Foreword



Our regeneration policies encompass a range of integrated activities which aim to reverse economic, social and physical decline in order to achieve lasting improvement, in areas where market forces will not be sufficient to achieve this without some support from government.

My regeneration portfolio contributes to all of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government objectives including jobs and growth and has strong links to our Tackling Poverty Action Plan. As a Cabinet, we all recognise the potential for targeted regeneration programmes to deliver against this broad range of Programme for

Government outcomes, and acknowledge that successful regeneration depends upon the alignment of mainstream programmes across portfolios.

It was against this backdrop that I instigated a policy review of our approaches to regeneration. The review was led by my officials. I am grateful for assistance from my Cabinet colleagues' departments, the Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales, the National Regeneration Panel and the specialist consultants who carried out some independent evaluation of our work in this area. We also benefited from the work undertaken by the National Assembly for Wales Enterprise and Business Committee during their inquiry on town centre regeneration.

Our vision is that everybody in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life. As we pursue that vision I am acutely aware of the unprecedented economic circumstances in which we now find ourselves. Budget constraints across the public sector and beyond, combined with the changing roles of town centres in the way people access retail and other services, present major challenges in terms of the way we have pursued regeneration in Wales to date. It is essential that our proposals for change should reflect these new challenges as well as providing an effective means of addressing them in communities across Wales.

Regeneration is about transforming underperforming places, reducing inequalities and ensuring economic growth which is inclusive, sustainable and focused. The scale of that challenge underlines the need for us to work collectively across government and in collaboration with the public, private and third sectors to support innovation and share good practice.

Three key messages came out strongly from the review:

- Strengthened governance is needed to improve delivery. In particular, there is an opportunity to target investment more intensively in fewer places. This will help to maximise impact in a more structured way. A new Ministerial Advisory Group will provide strategic oversight.
- Partnership is critical. Sustainable regeneration can only be delivered through genuine engagement with communities, local authorities and other public sector organisations, the third sector and the private sector.

- The Regeneration Areas approach is transforming some of our most disadvantaged places, but there are still opportunities to improve the way we invest at local level.

I am extremely grateful to everybody who participated in the recent policy review and subsequent consultation. This framework has benefited enormously from input from different sectors, areas and interest groups. It has also been strengthened by the oversight of the National Regeneration Panel and the expert advice of the Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales and other regeneration professionals. The feedback has endorsed the approach of:

- New national outcomes
- A people and place based approach which is well evidenced and evaluated
- A more targeted approach to successful place making resulting in more intensive investment in fewer places to maximise impact
- Specific regeneration targeted investment in town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters
- A renewed commitment to cross-portfolio working within Government.

As we move forward with implementing the framework, I entrust its success to the partnerships at every level which I know will be enthusiastically entered into. The backing of the entire Welsh Government Cabinet will give the delivery of the framework special impetus, but that delivery will be underpinned by ever closer working across all sectors.

As the economic crisis – and uncertainty – persists, there is no second chance for those of us who serve our communities, to help them create new opportunities.



Huw Lewis AM

Minister for Housing, Regeneration & Heritage



3. Context – What has changed and where are we now?

3.1 What has changed?

We recognise the current unprecedented economic conditions that we find ourselves in. Financial challenges are enduring and these very difficult economic conditions are unlikely to improve significantly for the foreseeable future. Over the next decade we expect to have £2-4 billion less capital available than in the previous decade. This sharp reduction in capital budgets does not, however, reflect any reduction of investment need. As a Government we are rising to the challenges of this uncertain global economic climate. Our Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan (WIIP) for Jobs and Growth sets out how we will invest around £15 billion over the next decade in capital priorities to boost growth and jobs, a cornerstone of the approach Wales needs to ensure its sustainable economic success.

Regeneration plays a pivotal role in delivering a sustainable prosperous economy. However, conventional approaches to regeneration – for example property-led initiatives – are not currently forthcoming and are unlikely to return to the speculative levels of investment seen in the past. In addition, consumer patterns of behaviour are changing permanently in favour of out-of-town and internet shopping, creating a fundamental challenge to the retail-dominated role of our town centres. These conditions present a new challenge for those working in the regeneration field. By the very necessity of the current economic climate we have to change the way we work and deliver. Innovative practices are emerging and the ability to meet these challenges exists in Wales. This regeneration framework will support these processes by enabling the public, private and third sectors to work together to support innovation and share good practice where it emerges, in order to tackle poverty and the issues arising from our current economic climate.

3.2 Recent Welsh Government practice

Regeneration has been a key feature of the work of the Welsh Government since its inception in 1999. Significant investment in regeneration has delivered improvements in outcomes for those who live in communities across Wales. This investment has come directly from specific regeneration project funding, but often the biggest investment in communities is through mainstream services.

Through our seven Regeneration Areas, Newport Unlimited and Valleys Regional Park Partnership, we have established important principles for successful regeneration which have informed this framework. One of the key features of our approach to date has been the way we have worked across Government and beyond to combine regeneration funding with other investment streams to deliver maximum impact.

The strengths of the Regeneration Areas approach, which have been endorsed through independent evaluation, are:

- partnership working across geographical, organisational and sector boundaries;
- integrated strategic planning across policy areas;
- local level understanding of and ability to, address acute need by maximising opportunities;
- leveraging in additional investment; and
- flexible funding to deliver tailored solutions for local challenges.



Aberdulais Falls Heritage

However, we also recognise the limitations of the approach, particularly in relation to:

- broad objectives into which a wide range of different projects can fit;
- some displacement of mainstream funding rather than more targeted funding;
- lack of clarity about the selection criteria for Regeneration Areas;
- rigid boundaries which sometimes do not reflect the economic geographies of places and regions;
- funding allocated before strategic planning has been completed and subject to annualised funding targets;
- timing of funding allocations does not always match opportunities/capacity to deliver;
- lack of coordination related to the allocation of funding; and
- insufficient involvement of the private sector in planning and delivering integrated regeneration solutions.

Current area-based programmes with regeneration implications include:

- *Communities First*. This is a key, community-focused, poverty-tackling programme working through clusters in the most deprived areas in Wales. The Welsh Government is committed to seeing regeneration and Communities First teams working together to facilitate improvements for communities and the people living in them. We see this as the primary vehicle for community engagement and empowerment in the most deprived areas, working within wider regeneration plans. In particular, we want to work with Communities First clusters to make the most of economic opportunities in their wider areas.
- *Structural Funds*. The 2007-2013 European Regional Development programmes have directly supported physical regeneration activities focused on some of Wales' poorest communities. Structural Funds also support a range of interventions important in achieving regeneration outcomes such as: infrastructure; sustainable transport; business support; skills; improving access to the labour market; and innovation.

- *Sustainable and resilient communities.* We are working with colleagues from across Government to meet the Programme for Government commitment to ensuring that our policies and programmes reflect sustainable development by encouraging inclusive, sustainable and focused economic development, by living within our environmental limits, tackling poverty and improving health and educational outcomes. The natural environment is not only a provider of our life support system but also brings a sense of place, feelings of wellbeing, of better health, more social cohesion, increased job opportunities and long-term success. We are working to ensure that our support for the people, environment and economy of Wales is well integrated for long term benefit.
- *Rural Development Plan (RDP).* Concentrations of deprivation tend to be located in urban peri-urban areas, many of which are designated as rural in the RDP context. We recognise however that traditional more remote rural settlements tend to have similar issues but arising from different circumstances, and with different pressures meaning different acute problems. Bespoke programmes already exist to address these issues, with the RDP in place to address the needs of our rural and semi-rural areas, including the need for regeneration. However, we can and will do more to integrate activities across programmes.
- *Flying Start.* Flying Start is targeted at 0-3 year olds in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. It aims to create positive outcomes in the medium and long term. It is a prescriptive programme, based on international evidence of what works. In practice this means free quality part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds; an enhanced Health Visiting service (where the Health Visitor caseload is capped at 110 children); access to Parenting Programmes; access to Language and Play sessions. These are universally available to all children aged 0-3 and their families in the areas in which the programme runs. The local economic impacts of this programme in terms of improving life chances for parents and children, can be linked more closely to regeneration interventions as well as broader opportunities.
- *Housing-led regeneration.* Increasing the supply and standards of housing contributes to the wellbeing of communities and individuals and makes a significant contribution to the regeneration of areas, in particular through achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. Collaboration with key partners has ensured that supply and quality are increased alongside increasing community benefits through procurement, including jobs and training opportunities. Housing renewal areas are an example of area-based housing-led regeneration programmes.
- *Enterprise Zones.* Our Enterprise Zones are designated areas where specific incentives are offered to attract new businesses and industry to that prime location. Their aim is to strengthen the competitiveness of the Welsh economy – and demonstrate the Welsh Government’s continued commitment to creating jobs and long term growth.

3.3 Emerging Welsh Government programmes

- *City Regions*. An independent report has been submitted to the Welsh Government, recommending city region approaches to economic development in South East and South West Wales. Such approaches could provide a framework within which targeted regeneration activity could be used to develop the complementary roles of settlements within the city regions.
- *Local Growth Zones*. The Powys Local Growth Zone is an example of how partners committed to the regeneration of places can develop the strategies required. The public, private and third sectors are now working together to deliver recommendations within the Powys Local Growth Zone report.
- *Sustaining a Living Wales*. The Green Paper on future environmental and natural resource planning has proposed a fresh approach to establishing overall objectives with communities to enhance the opportunities provided by the local environment and address poor quality urban environments.
- *A new round of Structural Funds*. There are also opportunities for a more joined up approach with the new £1.4 billion of European funding round which will focus on **More Jobs and Better Lives** – through Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive economic growth:
 - **Smart:** economy based on knowledge and innovation which is focused and targeted.
 - **Sustainable:** a more resource efficient, greener and competitive economy.
 - **Inclusive:** high employment economy – delivering social and territorial cohesion.
- *The legislative programme*. This includes Bills which will help us deliver this regeneration framework, including on Housing, Heritage, Sustainable Development, Health, Planning and the Environment.



4. Our definition, vision and outcomes

4.1 Our definition

Our definition of regeneration is:

“an integrated set of activities that seek to reverse economic, social, environmental and physical decline to achieve lasting improvement, in areas where market forces will not do this alone without some support from government”.

This definition, though grounded in Welsh experiences and expertise, is similar enough to other ones across the UK to allow for meaningful comparison. We have also received endorsement for this definition from the consultation process and believe it reflects opinion in Wales.

“Integrated activities” means delivering programmes in a co-ordinated fashion, recognising the complexity of the issues involved in social, economic and environmental decline. This requires an holistic approach, targeting economic decline, poor health, housing and educational attainment and loss of environmental quality which have become knotted together in our deprived communities. It also involves supplementing and helping to improve the flexibility and targeting of mainstream government services in underperforming areas.

“Lasting improvement” means securing long-term change sustainably, by tackling barriers to growth and reducing worklessness to break cycles of poverty, raise aspirations and unlock potential. Places need to be improved in terms of their attractiveness to residents and investors, enabling new and existing businesses to prosper. The aim is to move communities and individuals from dependence to independence – helping them evolve and prosper in a sustainable way.

“Where market forces will not do this alone without some support from government” means addressing, if government intervention is appropriate, specific inefficiencies or malfunctions in the way markets allocate resources. But it also includes compensating for instances where the correct operation of markets produces outcomes which do not coincide with government’s social or environmental objectives. Intervention needs to be targeted and focused and subject to a robust assessment of what government should and should not do.

Regeneration is about helping underperforming places, usually by managing transitions beyond or indeed away from the economic circumstances which may have given them their original purpose. Economic growth needs to be smart, sustainable and inclusive. Ensuring places that are doing well continue to flourish is also important.

Regeneration also provides a different perspective from which to examine national policies, programmes and projects – in terms of the effects (both intended and unintended) they have on particular places, and the ways in which different decisions have impacts on each other.

4.2 Our vision

Our vision is that:

Everybody in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life.

Our consultation has also confirmed widespread support for our vision. Eradicating poverty is a key priority for the Welsh Government. To ensure we change Wales for the better we have to join up, not only within the Welsh Government but with all key partners and communities. Collaboration is at the heart of what we do to ensure real outcomes are met and we make a positive sustainable difference to the quality of people's lives.

The joining up of Welsh Government departments alone is challenging. Where collaboration has already been established at a national strategic level (for example the WIIP), we must ensure alignment to maximise the outcomes and the impact that our programmes deliver, avoiding duplication.



Blaenavon Cultural Event

4.3 Our national outcomes

Our national outcomes have been aligned with the Communities First programme and Welsh Government's Programme for Government objectives. They are:

4.3.i Outcome One: Prosperous Communities

This will be supported by a range of activities at the regional and local level which support:

- improved levels of economic activity and more jobs;
- strong and diverse local economies with private, public and third sectors working together;
- well-connected communities supported by transport and broadband connections;
- sustainable use of the natural environment for local energy and food production;
- a thriving private sector and social enterprise;
- successful town centres and coastal communities; and
- a well-managed historic and natural environment contributing to the distinctiveness of Wales' landscape and towns with heritage and historic character conserved, valued and sustained.

4.3.ii Outcome Two: Learning Communities

Regeneration is intricately linked with the skills and capacities of individuals, families and communities. Regeneration interventions will support:

- a skilled and confident existing and future workforce;
- a high aspiration local culture;
- engagement with school, post 16 and adult learning opportunities;
- clear opportunities for development of social and cultural capital and strengthening equality; and
- a belief in a better future.

4.3.iii Outcome Three: Healthier communities

The health and wellbeing of residents is central to the vitality of places. Regeneration activity will support:

- healthy and cohesive communities able to grow and work together;
- safe and secure localities;
- good housing which is affordable and provides tenure choice;
- a sustainable and high quality local environment;
- positive and inclusive local identities; and
- well-planned, appropriately used and good standard buildings, amenities and facilities.

Harmonising regeneration outcomes with Communities First and the wider Programme for Government was welcomed by the majority of responses to the consultation document and clearly supported at the consultation events. Sharing national outcomes with key Welsh Government policies will assist us in developing a whole government approach to regeneration that effectively derives regeneration benefits from the overall Welsh Government delivery programme.

4.4 Outcome indicators

Outcome indicators will be collected for each of the three key outcome areas i.e. Prosperous Communities, Healthier Communities and Learning Communities. These indicators will include the following key measures:

Prosperous Communities

- % of workless households (gap between deprived areas and other areas)
- Employment rate (gap between deprived areas and other areas)
- % age of people who think their neighbourhood has improved in last 3 years

Healthier Communities

- % adults reporting fair or poor health (gap between deprived and other areas)

Learning Communities

- % obtaining the key stage indicators at age 16 (gap between deprived and other areas)
- % of people with post school qualifications (gap between deprived and other areas)



5. Our principles and approaches

5.1 Key principles

The key principles by which we will operate are Partnership, Strategy and Sustainability.

5.1.1 Partnership

- Partnership working is at the fore, within and between all key partners including Welsh Government, the wider public sector with the third sector and private sector.
- A whole government approach agreed by Cabinet.
- Use existing best practice, but also recognising that there are no silver bullets which work in all circumstances and that innovative approaches also need to be supported.
- Innovation and creativity.
- Good communication (visibility and articulation) to promote good work and to manage expectations.

5.1.2 Strategy

- People and place approach with genuine involvement of communities in which regeneration takes place, delivering strategic outcomes while taking account of local needs.
- Effective spatial planning to inform investment decisions at all levels.
- Schemes with clear leadership and commitment to good management, clear accountability and good governance are essential. Monitoring of issues and risks need to ensure that we have evidence and evaluation and the ability to stop and close a project if it is not delivering.
- Developing opportunities and addressing need, and crucially developing opportunity out of need.
- Evaluation as a key component in any scheme, planned from the start, maintained as a core element of programme design and followed through to project conclusion and beyond.
- Added value and value for money need to be key considerations. The ability to maximise leverage from mainstream programmes and external funding.

- Within the framework of our Strategic Equality Plan, we will ensure that equality and diversity are embedded in the process, taking into account all protected characteristics. In particular, we will take every opportunity through public procurement to advance equality and inclusion and to improve employment practices.

5.1.3 Sustainability

- The approach must reflect sustainable development as the Welsh Government's central organising principle.
- Encouraging inclusive, sustainable and focused economic development.
- Sustainable development embraces social justice and equality so the approach makes a key contribution to the Tackling Poverty and equality agendas.
- Clearly based on evidence – political drivers and influence cannot be the lead rationale.
- Bottom up approach, and not just top down – bottom up ideas need to meet and work with a clear strategic overview.
- Enable investment and delivery by private and voluntary sectors rather than inadvertently creating barriers through public sector intervention.
- Articulate and promote total place approaches and share best practice.
- Recognition of the long term timescales required for real change, suggesting programme cycles of at least 10-15 years. There is a clear need to move away from being driven by short term, political horizons.

5.2 Key approaches

The new regeneration delivery model must be able to evidence that investment is made to ensure greatest impact. A more evidence based approach is vital. So too is recognising the need to integrate people and place.

5.2.1 Evidence based

It is acknowledged that many existing Welsh Government programmes and those of other organisations contribute to achieving the vision that everybody in Wales should live in vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong economy. We will map existing resources and interventions to help all partners understand the current position.

An area-based approach is also required to understand opportunities and needs. Our review of the history of regeneration in the UK points to the centrality of area-based approaches in all regeneration policy to date. There is a broad agreement that the neighbourhood or community level of intervention is an essential component of the delivery mechanisms required for successful regeneration interventions.

Measurement of performance and achievement of national outcomes will be an important element of the implementation process and projects and programme will be expected to regularly evidence their achievements. In keeping with developments across Welsh Government, Results Based Accountability will be employed to ensure

that our investment achieves real outcomes that change the conditions in which people live and work. Continued funding will be dependent on well-evidenced achievement of outcomes.

5.2.2 People based

Our review of the history of regeneration in the UK identifies a clear distinction between 'people-based' and 'place-based' regeneration and suggests that the most successful programmes have combined approaches which recognise the complex connection between the characteristics of families and individuals and the places they live in. People based approaches recognise the need to support the development of skills and capacities to engage with the economy and critical public services.

Skills, education, health, and work opportunities all play a critical role in the regeneration process. Key programme areas must work together to integrate and achieve maximum impact. Communities First for instance is a predominately revenue based programme of around £30 million to assist people to come out of poverty, improve health, education and learning. The mapping of Communities First clusters on a regional and local level is essential to understand how mainstream funding is contributing to regeneration. In turn, understanding the quantity, quality and strategy of mainstream spending is essential to enable maximisation of impact and full synergy with regeneration delivery. The most significant achievable spend in any community already exists in the multiple strands of expenditure delivered by multiple public services. Recognising the regenerative impact of this total spend can help us achieve higher level outcomes. This mapping should include all the mainstream interventions that contribute to the people aspect of regeneration.

Whereas capital in general is important to fund elements of regeneration, including maximising community benefits from procurement, our evidence clearly shows the importance of social capital, the expected collective or economic benefits derived from the connections and cooperation between individuals and groups. Although different social sciences emphasise different aspects of social capital, they tend to share the core idea "that social networks have value". Communities that are joined up with their sporting, cultural and educational aspirations working together can deliver substantial benefits.

Being alive to issues of equality and inclusion is intrinsic to successful regeneration. Bringing together all the people in an area, and unlocking their talents and energy, is what regeneration is all about: and that means bringing people together across divisions of ethnicity, faith, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation. The way that this needs to be addressed needs to reflect the make-up of the local population and the issues in each area.



Big Pit

Organisations in the sporting, art and cultural fields and the assets they own or manage, can have powerful regeneration impacts at community level. We have clear evidence that participation in sports, as well as in other cultural activities, can make a significant contribution to the acquisition of the transferable skills required by

employers. A key part of this is addressing poor health, and increasing levels of physical activity has been identified as a priority in our Programme for Government and in Creating an Active Wales. Critically, such engagement also provides alternative social experiences which challenge low aspiration and raise confidence to pursue personal development through learning and training. We do, however, also recognise that groups engaged in these activities may not automatically see themselves as having such a regeneration role beyond their own social objectives.

We need to ensure we achieve community benefits and obtain the maximum benefits out of every investment, particularly given the current economic climate. Targeted recruitment and training, as well as local supply chain development, from public sector expenditure (including where mandated through procurement) can offer additional economic opportunities for local people, over and above the primary rationale for the investment.

5.2.3 Place based

A place-based approach has been recognised as a successful approach to creating physical and environmental improvements to an area. It is particularly recognised that settlements are key to regeneration and that there is growing need for town centre and seaside town regeneration. These can create a developmental hub in a region which has wider economic impact as a place of employment, leisure activity and location of public services.

Mainstream programmes such as economic development, transport, educational and health establishments, housing and environmental initiatives including heritage and the historic environment should also be mapped to understand what is currently being delivered in an area and how this can be utilised to maximise impact to make a real difference to that settlement or place. The quality of place is a key determinant of the general quality of life and place based indicators has been regularly deployed to more fully understand key aspects of the social experience of poverty. Improvements to place (e.g. physical environment) have been a constant feature of regeneration policy to date but, to be effective, have to link to social regeneration.



Theatre, Colwyn Bay

The historic environment is a powerful driver for renewed community confidence and inward investment, and lies at the heart of local distinctiveness and sense of place. No two places share a history, so every place has a unique historic character, which is a powerful asset in regeneration. Understanding that character and how it was formed is the foundation for planning, design and management that sustains local distinctiveness. A process of characterisation that describes the historic character of an area and identifies the opportunities presented by its heritage, is an important tool in regeneration activity.

We can capture local distinctiveness through characterisation – identifying how places have been shaped over time and what makes them special. We find historic character in patterns of space and connection, as well as in traditions of building. These are the ingredients of unique identity, and we can use them to ensure that as places continue

to change, they also keep hold of what makes them special. Cadw has been looking at a series of towns across Wales, each one of which has its own special character. The studies set out a definition of local character which can inform the management of change.

Persistent deprivation of place is often characterised by combinations of:

- derelict sites and buildings;
- contaminated land;
- poor quality housing;
- unskilled workforce;
- lack of employment opportunities;
- health inequalities;
- insufficient transport infrastructure;
- poor local environment quality; and
- lack of connection to the natural environment.

Although these problems tend to be more visible in urban areas, they affect rural areas too. Indeed, although our population is concentrated in the city regions on the South coast (which are themselves modest on a European scale), most of Wales is characterised by small settlements in a rural context.

There are various ways to measure the performance of places. The place-related domains of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation provide a good foundation; more detailed local work can be undertaken through for example a town centre healthcheck, the PlaceCheck methodology or by using CREW's Regeneration Impact Assessment toolkit. The Design Commission for Wales is currently developing a town shapers' guide which will be published in the Spring.

As the National Assembly's Enterprise and Business Committee noted at the start of their town centre regeneration report, "vital, vibrant town centres are at the heart of our sustainable communities, and they are core to a healthy and prosperous Welsh economy".

An integrated/holistic approach is required across local authority functions, businesses and communities and beyond just physical (typically retail) projects. This kind of approach needs to focus on the provision of services, the promotion of cultural activities, the nurturing of civic identity, and providing the community and visitors with an enriched town environment. The vision is for diversified town centres in which retail constitutes a key element of the offer but is supported by learning, health and leisure facilities providing multiple reasons for town centre footfall.



6. Our new regeneration framework

6.1 Joined-up delivery

Successful regeneration delivery is characterised by genuine partnership. The private, third and public sectors all have key contributions to make, and are dependent on each other. We are committed to developing appropriate governance arrangements that facilitate meaningful involvement of all three sectors in the development of planning and delivery mechanisms.

6.1.1 Private sector

We recognise in current conditions that stimulating private sector investment in underperforming places is critical but yet harder to achieve. Private sector confidence is a strong indicator of the sustainability of public sector investments for the improvement in places. At the same time, we acknowledge that the private sector itself is under pressure and needs any investment to deliver a payback in core business terms whether this is in profitability, turnover, accessibility, marketing or workforce issues. Companies need repeat business, good reputation and an effective supply chain for their own production or services.

We will look to the private sector at national, regional and local levels to work alongside the public and third sectors to create improved opportunities within our communities by:

- tackling difficult sites to bring forward good quality development which makes a positive contribution to regeneration outcomes;
- seeking out opportunities for business to become actively involved in future delivery structures;
- providing business mentoring and project management support to communities and projects;
- securing private sector investment in, and delivery of, joint projects and services;
- provision of procurement expertise to benefit communities and contribute more directly to regeneration outcomes, particularly local supply chain benefits to Welsh communities. This will be in line with the principles of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement, which sets out good procurement practice that will deliver benefits for the people of Wales;
- improved access for communities to new jobs and training; and
- continuing to bring more innovation to the marketplace.

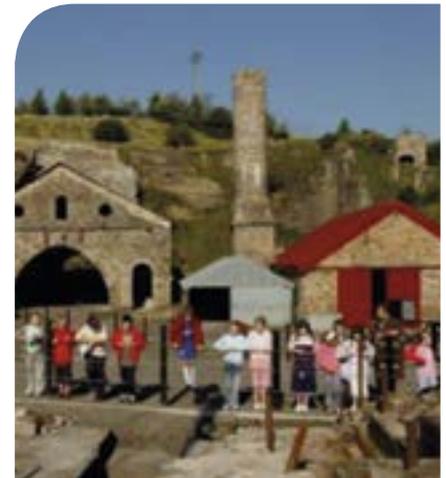
In parallel we will engage with businesses to secure the immense contribution which they can make, in partnership with the public and third sectors, to solving these problems.

6.1.2 Third sector

The Welsh Government acknowledges the breadth and depth of the skills and knowledge within the sector and therefore wishes to ensure that this is harnessed as part of implementing this framework and the subsequent programme delivery and development.

The third sector, in its various forms, plays a significant role in regeneration but must be engaged at the right level and the right time. Opportunities provided by the third sector range from volunteering through to social enterprise development, and from delivering physical improvements to services which reach those who find it difficult to access mainstream programmes.

Outcomes from third sector engagement include community pride and sense of place, as well as health and wellbeing, social and cultural and skills and employment. Increasingly, the third sector offers opportunities for alternative models of enterprise including a variety of different social enterprise models, such as cooperatives, community businesses and development trusts. Larger third sector regeneration agencies, especially Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), are becoming increasingly important partners in delivering major projects in local areas. RSLs are not only equipped to deliver capital projects, but can reach marginalised groups through tenant engagement and empowerment. They have a unique relationship with some of our most marginalised communities.



Children at Blaenavon Ironworks

The diversity of organisations in the third sector provides a voice for under represented groups in campaigning for change, creating strong, active and connected communities and promoting enterprising solutions to social and environmental challenges. Third sector organisations by their nature are closer to the community than government, can be more flexible in their approach and are well placed to advise on the situation “on the ground”. We will therefore work with other key third sector organisations to ensure views are sought from the widest possible audience and seek engagement with, for example, the following disadvantaged or excluded groups:

- Black & minority ethnic groups.
- Single parents.
- Young people.
- Older people.
- Disabled people.
- Special needs groups.
- Faith groups
- Carers.

6.1.3 Public sector

The public sector remains an important partner, especially local authorities in their regulatory, service delivery and strategic roles. Local authorities are often the lead body in the coordination of economic development, regeneration activity and tackling deprivation at a local level. They are also the lead partners in community planning,

the key process through which positive local outcomes for communities are planned and delivered. However, in fulfilling these functions, they depend not only on other public sector organisations, such as town and community councils, Local Health Boards and Further and Higher Education Institutions, but also on private sector investment, and community buy-in. In the current climate of falling private sector investment there are new responsibilities and opportunities for local authorities to build on their significant contribution to the regeneration process.

The Simpson report “Local Regional National, What services are best delivered where” set out the case for collaboration and other forms of joint delivery in order to respond to the twin pressures of increased service needs and reducing budgets. In response to the report, Welsh and Local Government agreed the “Compact for Change” setting out specific commitments for service areas including those key to securing area regeneration. Increasingly, local regeneration will need to be seen in the context of wider regional economies. This could, for example, mean taking advantage of specialist services secured and delivered regionally whilst ensuring that collaborative procurement includes social clauses to maximise the benefits for the local, regional and national economies.

As well as joining up sectors, effective regeneration will require joining up across a wide range of policy areas. Whilst this is a significant challenge, working in this way can generate major benefits for communities and for organisations.

6.1.4 Housing, Regeneration and Heritage

To enable joined up delivery, the Welsh Government’s Housing, Regeneration & Heritage portfolio will ensure that it acts as a catalyst for joined up planning and delivery across a range of government departments.

Housing is seen in the context of housing-led regeneration, providing an important element in many regeneration schemes. Having access to decent affordable housing whatever the tenure is a key objective of Welsh Government. The benefits of investing in homes and related services extend well beyond putting a roof over someone’s head. A decent home that people can afford is essential to their ability to live healthy, productive lives in safe, strong, inclusive and fair communities. It provides children with the best possible start to their lives and the chance to realise their full potential. Good homes can also reduce carbon dioxide emissions, which can help to tackle climate change, exemplifying sustainable development in practice.

Capital investment in social housing (particularly driven by the need to reach the Welsh Housing Quality Standard) is transforming communities. This change is achieved only partly through the physical impact on the attractiveness of communities and individuals’ own living spaces, with increased wellbeing and an impact on fuel poverty (through energy efficiency). Housing investment is also creating new local supply chains and targeted recruitment and training opportunities. Furthermore, housing associations’ and local authorities’ participation in regeneration schemes has seen new services for tenants and new mixed-use developments being brought forward.

The private sector also has a key role to play in tenure choice and quality, with the associated regeneration benefits. This includes providing new, affordable homes

which add to the vibrancy and viability of places, but also ensuring that private rented accommodation is of a high standard and accessible to those who need it.

Housing Renewal Areas can deliver significant regeneration impacts, and need to be part of wider plans, particularly in town centres. This is why future funding for Renewal Areas will be included in overall regeneration budget allocations, rather than as a separate investment stream.

Our green infrastructure provides an opportunity to support the green economy through support for sustainable home construction which utilises green construction techniques. This would stimulate and support a local timber economy and associated modular manufacturing processes, together with incorporating the latest energy efficiency systems.

The Welsh Government also places considerable emphasis on the regenerative impact of *heritage* investment, and the role of the historic environment in delivering tangible social, economic and environmental benefits for Welsh communities. We also recognise the role of heritage in conferring sense of place through historic character. And we know that regeneration activity can help protect and make best use of heritage assets, both physical and cultural.

In terms of practical steps, we want to integrate heritage investments as part of wider regeneration schemes to help realise the economic, social and environmental benefits that heritage can bring. This will also help to maximise leverage of increasingly limited funding, including potentially from European programmes. We want regeneration investment to make a positive contribution to the historic environment, and strengthen and enhance historic character. Therefore characterisation will be a key part of the development work supporting business cases for future regeneration investment.

The historic environment is an outstanding asset which contributes to quality of life and economic vitality. Its contributions to regeneration include: physical assets, local distinctiveness and a sense of place, narratives which bind communities and give confidence and a sense of belonging, attractions for visitors. Promoting traditional building skills can provide employment opportunities in local communities, and help to safeguard historic assets.

Regeneration brings to the historic environment: investment providing protection, viability and utility; it gives historic assets fresh meaning and relevance.

Heritage-themed regeneration has two components. First, regeneration can be heritage-led, particularly where a historic area or major historic asset is concerned. Second, sustaining historic character can also be an objective of regeneration schemes in a wider sense, strengthening a sense of place and making best use of existing assets.

Key opportunities for strategic alignment and collaborative working include maritime heritage, and joining up investment with Heritage Lottery Fund geographical and strategic priorities. However, acknowledging heritage and historic character and interpretation as potential components of all regeneration activity should be an important aspect of a place-based approach.

The role of sport, arts and culture in contributing to the vibrancy of communities is also extremely important. In addition, the roles of museums and libraries as service hubs, strengthening our learning communities, should be maximised.

6.1.5 Other Government policy areas

We need to join up more effectively across a range of Government policy areas to deliver successful regeneration. These areas include:

- **Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science**

Growth and sustainable jobs are the heart of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government. The Welsh Government is helping people into sustainable employment through direct support to business, facilitating private sector jobs growth by improving the overall business environment and helping create the conditions and framework for the private sector to flourish.

It is important to take a long term view of our policies, and address the structural issues (infrastructure, skills etc) but we also need to ease the pressures faced by individuals and businesses in the short term and using the levers that we have to stimulate demand in the economy.

This means action in the short term to help businesses through challenging times. For example through making it easier for business to access finance (e.g. Wales Economic Growth Fund, SME Investment Fund); action to support our micro businesses (e.g. Micro-business Loan Fund); making it easier to start and grow a business; supporting international trade and investment; promote Wales as a tourist destination and reviewing our business rates policies in Wales.

It also means action for the longer term, investing for future growth and jobs. For example, expanding our sectoral approach and working with anchor and regionally important companies; encouraging long-term, local growth and jobs through the setting up of Enterprise Zones across Wales; improving our science and innovation base by recognising the vital importance of research and science in Wales; and action for 21st Century communications. Here, Superfast Cymru will provide next generation broadband to 96% of homes and businesses by the end of 2015 and we will also look at options to best address the remaining hard to reach 4% premises not currently announced under the Superfast Cymru intervention or commercial-led roll-out.



Clydach Cycle Route

- **Communities First**

Communities First is a community focused poverty-tackling programme that supports people in communities in the most deprived areas in Wales. It works in partnership with the public, private and third sector to achieve the common goals of prosperous, healthier and learning communities.

- **Planning**

Planning Policy Wales provides a strong national policy framework supporting regeneration, complemented by technical advice notes, such as TAN 4, Retailing and Town Centres, TAN 12, Design, TAN 16, Sport, Recreation and Open Space

and TAN 18, Transport. Local planning authorities have a key role in assisting delivery of regeneration by having appropriate spatial policies in adopted local development plans, through decisions on planning applications, and by enhancing and improving the built environment. A combined approach is critical in facilitating successful regeneration and creating a sense of place for our communities. The National Assembly's Enterprise and Business Committee Report into Town Centre Regeneration recognised this.

Within Government, we are working together to ensure that regeneration practitioners have the tools, capacity and capabilities they need to navigate the planning system and contribute to sustainable development. The report to the Welsh Government by the Independent Advisory Group "Towards a Welsh Planning Act: Ensuring the Planning System Delivers" (June 2012) outlined an ambitious agenda which will be reflected in the work taken forward by the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development. The forthcoming Planning and Sustainable Development Bills will streamline and strengthen the statutory framework within which integrated regeneration can be delivered.

- **Procurement and Community Benefits**

The Value Wales team works closely with colleagues across Welsh Government and the Welsh public sector to ensure that the £4.3 billion annual expenditure on external goods and services delivers maximum value for citizens. Future regeneration investment will apply the principles of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement. As part of this, the Community Benefits approach recognises public procurement as a major lever to help the public sector to deliver contracts that result in re-investment in local communities, providing opportunities that help disadvantaged people back into employment and foster strong local supply chains.

The Community Benefits approach focuses on delivering:

- employment and training for economically inactive people;
- opportunities for SMEs to bid for supply chain opportunities;
- opportunities for disadvantaged groups to bid for supply chain opportunities e.g. Supported Factories & Businesses;
- support for education;
- support for community regeneration; and
- a positive impact on the environment.

- **Transport**

Transport plays a central role in our daily lives. Its availability and accessibility influence where people live and work, their leisure options, and their opportunities to interact with friends, family and the wider community.

An effective, accessible and affordable transport system will be a key building block of our regeneration framework.

Ensuring sustainable access – especially by public transport and active travel modes – should be an integral element of planning new services and facilities and the regeneration of communities.

Welsh Government and other partners continue to make substantial investment in transport infrastructure in Wales. We will ensure that our investment secures the maximum benefit for communities and helps drive regeneration through targeted

recruitment and training and local supply chain development. We will also work with partners, such as Network Rail, to ensure that their major investments, for example, the substantial investment in Valley Lines electrification and their plans for network renewal throughout Wales, secure significant economic and regeneration benefits for Wales.

We are also reviewing the future of rail in Wales, to better understand the role we will require of rail in future. In making sure decisions on our railways are more accountable to the Welsh Ministers we will be better placed to match railway investment to our regeneration framework.

Our Active Travel Bill will bring forward proposals to enable more people to walk and cycle and generally travel by more active methods. We want to make walking and cycling the most natural and normal way of getting about. This so that more people can experience the health benefits; we can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions; and we can help address poverty and disadvantage. At the same time, we want to help our economy to grow, and take steps to unlock sustainable economic growth.

- **Education and skills**

Wales has developed a distinctive approach to the skills agenda, building on the principles of integration, responsiveness, shared responsibilities, quality, equality of opportunity and Welsh language skills. It is important that our skills system is adaptive and robust to face new challenges. A co-ordinated approach to skills development is therefore key, whether this be progressed on a sector or spatial footprint basis through area or regional regeneration.

An area based approach has the potential to complement the Department of Education and Skills vision to create a cohesive flexible framework that will identify and address skills gaps for businesses and individuals on a regionally specific geographical basis. It would support greater alignment between supply and demand and provide a basis for integrated investments across Government portfolios and for potential multi-fund approaches using Structural Funds.

- **Tackling Poverty Action Plan**

The Welsh Government commitment to social justice and equality of opportunity makes it essential in the current climate that we continue to drive forward Tackling Poverty by prioritising the needs of the poorest and those most at risk of poverty. Our Tackling Poverty action plan, launched in June 2012, aims to achieve better outcomes for everyone in Wales and focuses on the following actions.

- Preventing poverty, for example, through investment and giving children the best start in life.
- Helping people improve their skills and enhance their qualifications.
- Mitigating the impact of poverty here and now.



Pontardawe Riverside Park

- **The Strategic Equality Plan**

The way in which equality and inclusion are central themes in regeneration has been explained already. More specifically, there are links between regeneration and the objectives set out in the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan: notably:

- reducing the pay and employment gaps for ethnicity, gender and disability through a range of action for instance in education, training and in the provision of affordable childcare;
- reducing the numbers of young people who are not in employment, education or training; and
- tackling hate crime (whether motivated by race, faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other reasons).

- **Environment**

During recent years there has been greater realisation of the contribution that the natural environment can play in terms of regeneration. Apart from providing a stunning setting to work and live in, many of the raw materials that stimulated the industrial revolution and previous economic growth in Wales came from the natural environment, and that same environment offers new opportunities for tourism, local sustainable food production, carbon storage, and renewable energy generation and, when managed properly, can mitigate the damaging effects of climate change such as flooding. Managed as a multifunctional resource holistically with other regeneration activities through a strategically planned and delivered approach, this resource is capable of delivering a wide range of economic, social and environmental solutions in a coordinated fashion, thereby enhancing the regeneration potential of areas throughout Wales. The Rural Development Plan will form part of the mechanism for delivering such opportunities.

The Environment and Sustainable Development Department is committed to improving environmental quality in areas of deprivation and to use the natural environment to create long term opportunities to improve wellbeing of present and future generations in these areas, including creating opportunities for jobs and skills and improving health and quality of life. It will develop its grant programmes to ensure that they work alongside other community and regeneration initiatives and build on a common approach to local engagement and priority-setting. Building on the very successful *Tidy Towns* initiative, the Department is currently funding a new scheme that tests different ways of addressing areas of poor air quality or high noise levels. Arbed is also an example of excellent housing, economic, environmental and anti poverty benefits. The Department is working with its funded bodies to develop a concerted approach to community-engagement and support, and will charge Natural Resources Wales with close engagement with local communities in identifying the opportunities available to them.

We will work closely with Natural Resources Wales to develop the environment element using an ecosystems approach. This approach could be replicated in other regions of Wales, forming a component part of the wider regeneration framework.

- **Health**

There are strong links between the Welsh Government's broader regeneration agenda and its goals related to health. The strategic approach set in *Our Healthy Future* and *Together for Health*, is based on good evidence that good or poor health has social roots and most policy has some impact on health, for good or ill. It is linked to work, transport, housing, noise and green spaces, for example. Recognising this and taking it forward in the right spirit can enable policy and investment to generate a health dividend as well as other economic, social and environmental

benefits. There are many ways in which regeneration can help contribute to improved mental and physical health, and its impact can in part be gauged through monitoring the health benefits.

Health impact assessments for both physical and mental health are a useful tool for assessing the impact of regeneration programmes. A prospective health impact assessment can provide a useful opportunity to identify positive health impacts and opportunities and mitigate potential negative impacts for regeneration programmes.

The NHS is often the biggest economic entity in many parts of Wales. Its role as employer, consumer, landowner and traffic-generator is considerable. Because of its economic weight and concentration of expertise, the NHS is also a potential source of prosperity and innovation, one we need to use better.

The potential role of the NHS in furthering regeneration needs to be fully exploited. It has a major service and investment role in every part of Wales, and can do more to help support an active workforce and prosperous economy through:

- providing high quality facilities, which will be important to firms relocating to Wales;
- improving supply chain management and local sourcing;
- providing occupational health services, back to work schemes and other support to local people and employers; and
- supporting research and development and commercial application of innovative ideas within the Welsh economy.

Deprived areas are often characterised by low economic outputs as a result of poor mental and physical health. Whilst some of the health problems are a legacy of past industrial activity or unhealthy habits such as smoking, there is an increasing obesity problem resulting from poor diet and sedentary lifestyles, and low confidence and self esteem tend to predominate in some communities. Tackling both physical and mental health problems will continue to be an essential component of our regeneration activity, with incentives to encourage more active lifestyles, healthy eating and smoking cessation.

- **Community safety**

One area where the public sector and third sector already work together is in the provision of domestic abuse services. This will be further enhanced through the implementation of the 10,000 Safer Lives project, which is seeking to improve the quality of services provided to victims of abuse in cases deemed to be medium and standard risk. We have recently consulted on policy and legislative proposals aimed at ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Programme for Government commitment to fund an additional 500 Police Community Support Officers in Wales – these officers will be highly visible in their communities, engaging with people, providing reassurance and tackling anti-social behaviour, making our communities safer.

The Fire and Rescue Authorities have responsibility to work collaboratively with the wider public sector and the third sector, to deliver measurable improvements including greater efficiency and more citizen-focused services. This includes community safety activity including arson reduction and the provision of Home Fire Safety Checks.

These projects will help to make communities safer and more secure.

6.2 The new delivery framework, key roles and governance

To enable delivery of the outcomes required for Wales, a clear transparent delivery structure is required which enables the principles of collaboration to succeed. The new framework strengthens local delivery and accountability within a national strategic context.

6.2.1 Local delivery

The delivery of regeneration initiatives is fundamentally a local issue and all, or most, elements of project implementation require some degree of management and accountability at the local level. Local authorities, town and community councils and the local communities concerned have key roles to play in this respect, alongside partners in the public, private and voluntary sector. Local regeneration and growth plans need not be micro-managed by central government. Existing partnerships such as Voluntary Council networks, LEADER Local Action Groups, and Fisheries Local Action Groups can assist with this process.

Local authorities are continually gathering large amounts of information and intelligence about their areas. Along with other available evidence this is fed into detailed forward planning, linked to the requirements to prepare Single Integrated Plans and Local Development Plans covering their entire areas. The work that goes into these Plans has to be developed iteratively with planning at higher and lower spatial levels. It has to:

- feed into and take account of national and regional level strategic objectives/priorities;
- inform and be informed by views and local knowledge of community groups, especially where plans are being developed by such groups (e.g. Communities First partnerships);
- not only react and *respond* to locations where regeneration needs and opportunities are identified but also proactively create opportunities (e.g. by planning links between areas of need and areas of opportunity – which could be through the provision of new physical links, improved access to services, ICT connections and access, training etc.);
- set out spatially where the regeneration priorities are for investment and assistance, based on a clear assessment of evidence and with clear goals identified; and
- identify a range of interventions that are realistic in terms of funding that can be attracted and capable of being delivered given available expertise and capacity.

As with Welsh Government, local authorities recognise the need for an ‘all service’ approach to regeneration. Mainstream budgets and service provision can be managed by local authorities in ways that maximise regeneration benefits (e.g. a new school building project can be used as an opportunity for community development, a source of local contract and employment opportunities, a venue for community education, improved access to sports facilities, local environmental enhancement, provision of new walkways and cycleways etc). Local authorities can also exert a significant influence on regeneration prospects through their roles as major local employers, procurers of services.

Equally, a wide range of local government services can contribute directly to specific local regeneration initiatives. This might involve highways and transport improvements, environmental improvements and maintenance of the public realm, community education, provision of leisure and cultural services and facilities, community safety interventions, assistance to local businesses, improved community access to and use of school facilities, community development activity, enhancements to the housing stock etc. It can also involve local government officers providing expertise to support local communities in relation to planning matters, accessing funding and even the provision of legal and ICT advice.

Through their links with a wide range of partner agencies for service delivery, local authorities are also well placed to orchestrate local partnership working.

Local Service Boards have pulled together key agencies operating in the local authority area to identify joint approaches to a range of issues including regeneration. Many local authorities have specific regeneration partnerships which help to forge agreement on priorities and develop a multi-agency approach to delivery that adds value.

Town and community councils should also take an active part in regeneration, and help other partners to connect with communities. We recognise that much of the creativity and dynamism in Welsh regeneration lies at community level. Hyperlocal media initiatives, whether web or app based, for example, are gaining increasing currency as key community regeneration tools.

It is vital that local communities can take part in the regeneration of their areas. Local Service Boards have an important role to play in ensuring that regeneration is a strong element of their single integrated plan and that there is a clear expression of how actions will be delivered and monitored. It is also important that this is coherent with the relevant Local Development Plan(s).

Local authorities working with the rest of the public, third and private sectors (i.e. local partnerships) will be asked to bid for targeted regeneration investment funding based upon the criteria of town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters.

Where possible, for example on economic growth and jobs, we will seek to develop joint projects combining our funding with both ERDF and ESF across as wide a range of priorities as possible. Integrated holistic projects have the potential to deliver better outcomes more efficiently through:

- linking various work themes to create greater focus on regeneration outcomes in a specific region i.e. a holistic area based approach;
- more effective alignment of match funding opportunities within Welsh Government and the partner organisations involved;
- reduced project management/administration costs;
- greater opportunities for collaboration across boundaries and sectors;
- more flexibility to amend activities and move priorities as projects deliver or opportunities arise; and
- reducing the potential for duplication of activities.

Local partnerships should consider in particular:

- existing or emerging spatially focused strategies, for example major transport investment (particularly rail electrification), Enterprise Zones, destination management plans etc;
- holistic area based planning which takes account of the complementary roles of settlements and the connections between them;
- the role within the economy of truly iconic destinations;
- the impact of planned and future Health and Education capital investment and expenditure on services;
- opportunities arising from the WIIP and other planned infrastructure investment, any gaps, and potential to use green and blue infrastructure for economic renewal;
- opportunities for joint working across regions;
- the impacts of changes in non-devolved policy areas, for example welfare reform, on communities;
- the challenges facing specific equality strands, as well as Welsh language communities, and opportunities to promote equality and inclusive outcomes for all the citizens of Wales; and
- well planned and organised arrangements for promotion and marketing, in partnership with Visit Wales, which positively promote regeneration activity and demonstrate investment and tourism opportunities in Wales, as well as our country being a great place to live.

6.2.2 Regional co-ordination

Regional coordination ensures we achieve the best outcomes for Wales in the most efficient manner. This builds on the Welsh Government's collaborative agenda for public services. The economy, for instance, is not bound by local authority boundaries and it is recognised that challenges cannot be addressed in isolation. Local authorities and other key partners need to work together in order to grow a stronger economy. This approach has been piloted across the Valleys focusing on environment, heritage and tourism through the Valleys Regional Park Programme, and has generally been regarded as successful.

The benefits of regional working are to:

- Ensure that regeneration activities are truly integrated and focused to maximise impact.
- Provide assurance that Welsh Government targeted regeneration investment is directed at places where it will deliver greatest impact and value for money.

Rather than creating another tier of regional boards, further consideration will be given to regional working which will explore how regional coordination will be achieved and the potential of regional planning.

6.2.3 National strategic oversight and facilitation

The Welsh Government has set the strategic direction for regeneration in this framework and national outcomes. We will be an enabler providing catalyst funding to support key regeneration projects and programmes and human resource to support regional and local delivery to achieve the outcomes. We will monitor progress and evaluate the success of these programmes and will enable joining up of Welsh Government activities as well as activities across Wales involving other sectors. Regeneration investment will be aligned with national strategic government policies such as the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan for Growth and Jobs, and the developing work around the Planning Bill. Additionally it will complement the Tackling Poverty action plan, embrace sustainable development principles and work with initiatives such as Enterprise Zones. It will also engage with Local Growth Zones and City Regions should they be established.

Successful delivery will require concerted, cross-Government co-ordination and engagement with partners. To facilitate this, we will establish a Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG), chaired by the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage. The Group will have a wide-ranging, cross-portfolio remit. The MAG will have dedicated resources, both in terms of secretariat and research budget. It will be tasked with keeping this framework under review, and using evidence from across Departments and beyond to advise Ministers about both strategy and delivery.

The terms of reference for the MAG can be found at Annex A.

To support the work of the MAG, an internal Welsh Government regeneration board linked to the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan will be mandated to provide strategic oversight of regeneration at Senior Civil Service level. The board will be asked to oversee the development of a Regeneration Impact Assessment tool for use in Welsh Government (and in due course external) investment decision-making processes, both to influence the targeting of investment but also to maximise regeneration benefits once decisions have been made, for example by ensuring that community benefits are secured wherever possible.

We will explore ways to simplify and enhance the support offered to create and grow social enterprises, which have an important role to play in place-making. In particular, we will work with other funders and investors to seek new opportunities linked to key issues around community resilience and local growth, including:

- supporting young people and their parents (eg through childcare and play opportunities);
- helping older people live independently in their communities (through social care);
- ensuring that resources are available and affordable (through food production and distribution, and energy efficiency and micro-generation);
- stimulating start-up social businesses; and
- making better use of empty properties, buildings at risk and assets controlled by social welfare groups.

We will continue to hold National Regeneration Summits at key points when it is appropriate to bring together partners from across Wales and beyond. We will also develop a programme of events, linked to opportunities in London and across Europe, to stimulate more investor interest in key regeneration sites.

We will work with partners to co-ordinate expert seminars, covering topics such as Business Improvement Districts, meanwhile uses, and enforcement action, for example, to educate regeneration professionals in the field.

We will establish a Support Welsh High Streets Campaign, agreeing the date and format with key stakeholders, and allocate funding for national advertising to encourage people to support their local shops. The artwork for the campaign will be made available to local partnerships so that they can tie in their own local events. We will be looking for partners at the local level to take advantage of the national campaign to organise their activities, events and regeneration initiatives.

We recognise the importance of evidence and the value of research and planning to ensure this is embedded in policy development with a rolling programme of research and studies to ensure the policy we develop and implement has a firm grounding in theory and practice. We also need to have access to the latest information on Welsh places. We will continue to pursue our own research and evaluation, as well as providing funding for partners to identify and share best practice, and for supporting innovation.

6.3 Investment

6.3.1 Investment/funding opportunities

Delivering 'Vibrant and Viable Places' will require innovative and effective use of a range of funding mechanisms maximising the opportunities for mixing and matching capital and revenue funds from different sources in accordance with the individual criteria set for each to achieve integrated funding arrangements.

The main opportunities are likely to be:

- Welsh Government Departmental allocations
- European Structural & Investment Funds 2014-2020 (ERDF, ESF, EAFRD and EMFF)
- Other EU programmes (Interreg Territorial Cooperation, LIFE etc.)
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Big Lottery Fund
- Local Authority Contributions
- Private Sector Loans and Investment Contributions

In accordance with Welsh Government policy, and Europe 2020 goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, proposals for the new Structural Fund programmes have been developed with a clear focus on jobs and growth.

The business case proposals set out herein will provide the strategic basis and evidence of need to underpin the development of funding proposals that maximise the opportunities presented. Clearly an important component is likely to be EU structural funds; and working with partners through the regeneration boards we will seek to bring together match funding to help prioritise investments to ensure we make effective use of any available EU funds.

We will work with WEFO and the European Programmes Directorate to coordinate and support the development of business plans to access EU funding in order to deliver the outcomes of the regeneration plans rather than as a means to simply secure funds. Projects will be prioritised according to EU and Welsh Government criteria and form the basis of strategic integrated programmes involving appropriate regional and local partnerships.

6.3.2 Our priorities for directing targeted funding

Although mainstream budgets will be used to deliver the majority of regeneration impact across Wales, there remains a rationale for targeting additional funding to incentivise behaviours likely to deliver successful regeneration, and support interventions which are known to be successful but are not covered by other funding streams.

We have set priorities for places where we will direct targeted regeneration investment to support area-based, holistic initiatives. There are three priorities, which reflect the comments we received during the consultation. They do overlap, and indeed the links between them are very important. They are not intended as labels to differentiate between settlements. Rather, each is intended as shorthand for a range of characteristics and challenges which logically fit together. The priorities are:

- Town centres serving 21st Century towns;
- Coastal communities; and
- Communities First clusters.

Town centres serving 21st Century towns

Town centres are the heartbeat of our communities; they are where people meet, where people shop and where people work. We recognise the important role our town centres play and the Welsh Government is committed to ensure that our town centres across Wales have a sustainable future.

One of the main challenges facing urban communities is the decline of the traditional high street. This is often characterised as a threat to independent retailers, but recent high-profile crises for multiples have reminded us that changing shopping habits, in particular increasing online and out-of-town purchases, combined with falling disposable incomes, cause difficulties for all sections of the high street.

It is clear that while some urban centres will be able to sustain a retail offer, in many cases this will be much reduced, with more town centre accommodation being redeveloped – recognising and reinvigorating the distinctiveness conferred by historic character – for residential use and to deliver local services. Alongside the future of our high streets, it is important to consider the relationship – i.e. connections and interdependencies – between urban settlements and the natural environment, including where appropriate their rural hinterlands which have inherent tourism potential that must be used, through effective destination management, to increase town centre footfall and create a more diverse local economy.

A number of new business starts often lack premises to operate out of either by way of test trading or establishment. New businesses are varied in nature and size. We will promote meanwhile uses and other approaches for new uses of town centre premises,

developed in collaboration with business start up services, for example incubation units, test trading facilities, development of non retail in town businesses.

Our rural settlements also suffer from other pressures and pose a different set of challenges to encourage vibrancy and viability. Low population densities, poor accessibility and connectivity, and poor ICT and Broadband coverage are all factors that restrict local growth. Remoteness presents both an opportunity for and a barrier to sustaining vibrant and viable places. Sustaining settlements which typically have poor connectivity is a major challenge. So too is maintaining services in uplands settlements where these provide hubs for rural areas.

We need to support our town centres to explore and discover a different future, an alternative future. The next 10 years will be about the diversification of our high streets and standing up and making tough decisions. It will also be about the reinforcement of what makes them special. Our towns will no longer be able to depend on retail alone; we need to develop our towns into destinations for living, for working and for leisure. Our towns need to respond strongly to the challenges. We can no longer see the Internet as a threat. It needs to be considered as an opportunity, to embrace and exploit. Our towns need to discover a niche, unique selling points, a reason for people to visit. This will include a more diverse and vibrant night-time economy, and ensuring that services, such as health and education, are increasingly delivered from within town centres.

Coastal communities

Many have unique natural assets and maritime heritage which adds to their interest and distinctiveness. Although some are finding renewed success by using both historic roots and new investment, others are struggling to contribute as they once did to their local economies. As patterns of tourism have changed, for example, “seaside towns” – or traditional resorts – have lost footfall and lustre. Regeneration activity needs to recognise and maximise unique selling points without holding out false hope about recapturing the faded glories of the past. For example, coastal communities can all take advantage of the Wales Coast Path which connects them and celebrates their attractiveness as places to live and visit.

Seaside towns face similar challenges, but as they are a distinctive group of places, they also face unique challenges. Because of their history of tourism, and in most cases the continuing significance of this sector, they tend to share a number of features that distinguish them from other places along the coast or inland. This includes a specialist tourist infrastructure (promenades, piers, parks etc), holiday accommodation (hotels, B&B, caravan sites etc) and a distinctive resort character that is often reflected in the built environment. Moreover, while some resorts have fared better than others, they have all to a greater or lesser extent faced challenges arising from the changing structure of the UK holiday trade.

Communities First clusters

Through the new Communities First clusters, we have the mechanism in place to help our partners deliver better outcomes for people in deprived areas, by tackling poverty and enhancing wellbeing. Many of the aspirations that clusters have for their areas will

be dependent upon additional capital investment, to complement the funding available from the Communities First programme itself. We expect clusters to take an active part in developing and delivering regeneration projects.

6.3.3 How we will allocate and commit targeted regeneration funding

We will continue to make available a limited amount of targeted regeneration investment funding, as a pot of last resort over and above the mainstream budgets which will deliver the majority of regeneration impact. All of Wales will be eligible to apply.

Local partnerships (i.e. local authorities working with the public, private and third sectors) will be able to bid into Welsh Government for the three priority themes of town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters. These bids will follow the five case business model principles. Existing commitments, for example, to the current Regeneration Areas and current housing renewal schemes, will be top-sliced from the available budget that local partnerships can bid for. Partnerships will need to consider how to manage the transition between these investment programmes and delivery of the new plans and priorities. It will also be important, in developing new strategies for targeting funding, to ensure that the impacts of previous investment are safeguarded and built upon.

Partnerships will then be tasked with developing a prioritised portfolio of projects, for consideration by the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage and the Ministerial Advisory Group. These proposals will need to follow the five-case business model now being used widely within the Welsh Government, to enable rigorous assessment.

The objectives of the funding will be:

- to tackle poverty by creating jobs and helping people into work;
- more targeted and intensive investment in fewer areas;
- to address the themes of town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters, making the most of their heritage and historic character, and housing investment, in order to deliver greater prosperity, learning and health for vibrant and viable communities;
- to deliver strategic, regionally important projects of significant scale; and
- to lever in as much additional investment as possible, particularly from European programmes and from the private sector.

The key performance indicators against which bids will be assessed are:

- Investment levered in (split by private, public and third sector)
- Percentage of spend retained within Wales-based supply chains
- Net additional Jobs created
- People supported into work (including through targeted recruitment and training)

These indicators provide flexibility for targeted regeneration investment to be directed at both supply and demand side interventions; that is, both creating jobs and helping

people access jobs which either already exist or are created by other investment. Facilitating access to jobs could include interventions, **additional to mainstream provision**, such as:

- linking existing employment services to community benefits through capital investment;
- improving local transport and communications links;
- increasing the provision of high-quality affordable childcare; and
- targeted employment support.

Project sponsors will be expected to develop other outcomes, and to select other indicators, appropriate to their specific projects, using Results Based Accountability methodology.

The Welsh Government will appraise the local project applications, taking advice from across our Departments and consulting the Ministerial Advisory Group. We reserve the right not to allocate all the funding. Project applications must:

- show how the project will help people into work, either through job creation or by other means;
- have regional as well as local buy-in and demonstrate cross-sector and cross-boundary collaboration;
- demonstrate how the investment is complementing, but not substituting for, mainstream funding;
- support targeted recruitment and training, local supply chains and other community benefits; and
- show clear commitment to sustainable development in terms of the balance between economic, social and environmental opportunities and constraints, together with long term viability.

Project applications which make use of innovative financial models, for example combining or replacing straightforward grant support with loan-based, recycling funding, will be prioritised.

We will publish guidance for local partnerships which will comprise:

- a set of baseline evidence;
- suggested approaches for developing business cases, and basic requirements for plans;
- an explanation of how the Welsh Government expects European funding to be deployed within this framework; and
- a project application proforma, based on the five case business model.

Equality and diversity will be embedded throughout the process, taking into account, disability, age, religion, gender, human rights, race and sexual orientation and equality assessments to be built into strategies and plans.

6.3.4 Additional funding available at local level

The majority of our targeted regeneration resources need to be directed at a few key town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters if we are to have a

transformational impact. But there is still a need to invest at community level. We will therefore retain a suite of local resources:

- We will continue to participate in the UK-wide Coastal Communities Fund (£1.45 million in 2013/14) to enable us to use Crown Estate revenues to support tourism and other micro-business projects particularly those involving marine skills and maritime heritage.
- We will continue the recently established Community Innovation Grant scheme (£1.5 million per annum), which enables us to support fresh approaches and the identification and dissemination of best practice. The scheme will be aligned to our three themes, including inviting projects relating to:
 - hyperlocal projects to reinvigorate high streets;
 - capturing and disseminating best practice in regeneration delivery;
 - supporting the Welsh Government's Procurement Policy in the regeneration sector, to maximise community benefits (by aligning with the milestones of the Community Benefit Task and Finish Group);
 - facilitating the creation and growth of social enterprises;
 - developing town centre hubs serving rural areas;
 - strengthening the use of the Welsh language.
- We recently announced £200,000 of funding to encourage new Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). There is overwhelming evidence from across the world that the BID model is having a positive impact on regeneration and local growth. The Welsh Government has recently commissioned an evaluation of both the Swansea and Merthyr BIDs, currently the only BIDs in Wales. We would like to learn from their experiences and add to the growing evidence base. Recognising the positive contribution a BID can make, we would like to see more BIDs develop within the new regeneration framework.

These funding streams are currently kept separate to protect their specific governance arrangements. However, over time we will streamline and rationalise them as much as possible, and integrate them with related support mechanisms.

We can also help create virtual town teams by bringing together resources from different parts of the public sector as well as other partners. The Place Co-ordinators employed through the Welsh Government's Sustainable Urban Communities programme will be a key component of these teams, and we will combine these with our regeneration specialist teams as far as regional prioritisation allows.

6.4 Monitoring and evaluation

6.4.1 Results Based Accountability and evaluation

The Welsh Government has, through the Programme for Government committed to a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach and we envisage this being central to any Regeneration approach pursued. Regeneration officials will work with all those involved to ensure that this approach is embedded within any project. RBA is a management tool that at a minimum will ensure that expected results (also known as goals) are clearly articulated, and that data is regularly collected and reported to address questions of whether results have been achieved. Additionally in keeping with developments

across Welsh Government, best practice business assurance/governance methodology should be integrated at the inception of any investment to ensure high quality Programme and Project Management and drive value for money.

This approach will be supported by ensuring that evaluation is also embedded in any project, from its inception through to its long term outcomes, something we recognise has not been in place to a great extent previously. For example if investment is put into town centres we will expect clear baseline data on defined objectives, a monitoring programme and a longer term plan of evaluation. European Structural Funds also require us to demonstrate clear evidence particularly for economic impact and jobs.

Through this Framework, we will promote and have in place at the outset a standard methodology for measuring baseline information and a performance measurement approach at the local level. This will allow us to evaluate how well we are doing to reverse the economic, social, environmental and physical decline of our communities. We will monitor relevant data quarterly to track progress and influence decision-making by the Regional Boards and the Welsh Government. Importantly, this information should be manageable to collect and be accessible and understandable to a range of stakeholders in a settlement and enable comparisons between settlements.

The data will be collected from individual projects. We will agree with each project sponsor what data we will need to collect from them as we are working up the project. We will work with the sponsor to develop an appropriate set of performance measures that link in and support our performance framework. Once we have approved an award of grant we will need to undertake an appropriate degree of monitoring of the project and collect relevant data. Progress reports will be required from sponsors at quarterly intervals, when we receive applications for payment and when the project ends.

There is a number of uses for this data. We have to ensure, and our stakeholders would expect us to confirm, that public funds are being used for the purposes for which they have been approved and the project is on course to deliver its agreed outcomes and contributions to prosperous, healthier and learning communities.

We will ensure that our monitoring activities will be proportionate to the funding offered, agreed in advance with all parties and undertaken in a transparent and open manner. Project monitoring is of course not just something that the Welsh Government does, as all effectively run projects will have proportionate management systems in place. We will use these systems as much as possible and if we have requirements that go beyond what a project would normally need we will ensure these requirements are fully agreed by all parties.

Our awards of funding will include standard terms and conditions that will apply to all sponsors. We will keep these as simple and proportionate to the amount of grant awarded as possible. We may also have included specific conditions in an award letter that requires ongoing monitoring to be conducted after the final payment/release of all funding. This is often the case if we have funded the acquisition of an asset or significant improvement works to an existing asset. This is referred to as Post Completion Monitoring.

Where appropriate, we will use an independent third party auditor to provide verification of the overall funding and related expenditure to a project. For local authorities or public sector delivery partners this could be the Wales Audit Office.

6.4.2 Our monitoring criteria

We will be clear what our monitoring activities will be at the start of the framework period so all parties are fully aware of what our respective responsibilities are. European Union (EU) monies and other sources of public funds could be used to fund our regeneration interventions and we will have one set of monitoring activities that meet all the requirements of our funding providers.

Monitoring is a vital component in the effective operation and delivery of our funding agreement with project sponsors and ensuring our programme is on track to reverse the decline of our communities. Our monitoring activities will include scrutiny and evaluation of quarterly progress and claims to assess achievement in the following areas:

- evidence of sustainable development as a central theme from project planning to final reporting. This will include initial and ongoing assessments of economic, social and environmental constraints and opportunities, as well as long term sustainability;
- Collaboration across sectors and between organisations, particularly private, public and third sectors;
- site visits to inspect assets and progress made;
- before and after photographs;
- quarterly and final written reports from project sponsors or third parties;
- copies of all press releases;
- reworking of funding agreements;
- investigation of formal complaints and recovery of funds already released;
- Quantitative data on outputs such as training, direct and indirect jobs, enterprises assisted and other criteria that we reserve the right to include in accordance with Welsh Government or other funding criteria.



7. Implementation Timetable

The timetable for implementation is:

2013

April	Publication of guidance for targeted regeneration investment Recruitment of Ministerial Advisory Group
May	Next round of Community Innovation Grant – call for applications
June	Announcement of Support Welsh High Streets campaign
July	
September	First meeting of Ministerial Advisory Group
October	Deadline for submission of bids for targeted regeneration investment
November	
December	

2014

January	National Regeneration Summit Announcement of successful projects for targeted regeneration investment
February	
March	
April	Project delivery begins

Ministerial Advisory Group Terms of Reference

Aim

The aim of the Vibrant and Viable Places Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) is to assist the Minister for Housing, Regeneration & Heritage with the direction, implementation and evaluation of this new regeneration framework; to oversee the allocation of funding and make recommendations in that regard; to assess emerging Welsh Government policies, strategies and legislation for their regeneration effect and to assist the Minister to facilitate the consideration of regeneration across the whole spectrum of Welsh Government activity.

Membership

Those with experience/interest in the field of regeneration; some candidates will be expected to have expertise in the following areas:

- Town centre regeneration
- Coastal regeneration
- Community regeneration
- Innovative finance modelling
- International best practice

The MAG will be chaired by the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage and will have input from the following sectors:

- Retail
- Third Sector
- Local Government
- Health
- Housing
- Heritage
- Maritime
- Further and Higher Education
- Transport
- Sustainability
- Environment
- Rural Wales
- Procurement
- Tourism

The appointments to the MAG will be via a public appointments process but some of members may be co-opted from key partner organisations.

Remit and Terms of Reference

The MAG's remit includes:

- providing strategic leadership as an (independent) advisory board
- supporting the Welsh Government in implementing the new Regeneration Framework
- meeting quarterly in locations around Wales
- examining the local bids and priorities and to put forward recommendations to the Minister for funding approval taking into account the Wales wide picture
- receiving the progress reports from the key town centres, coastal communities and Communities First clusters chosen and advising the Minister on progress
- advising the Minister of emerging areas of best practice, innovative finance options and any other matters that may be of value to the Welsh approach
- commenting on emerging Welsh Government policy, strategy and legislation to ensure the needs of communities and the National Outcomes are taken into account
- promoting and furthering the dissemination of best practice including the Regeneration Summit, the Annual "Support Your Town Centre" initiative and the London event
- provide independent advice and recommendations to the Minister
- produce an annual report to the Government on progress of the new Regeneration Framework.

All members will also be responsible for:

- ensuring that recommendations made by the MAG follow proper procedures, are supported by sufficient high quality information and are robust and defensible
- staying abreast of evidence and policy approaches to Regeneration in other parts of the UK and beyond in order to learn from those and to evaluate Wales' relative performance
- ensuring that the MAG operates within its remit
- exercising independent judgment, reasonable care, skill and diligence in undertaking duties.

The MAG will not have executive powers. It is advisory only.

The MAG will advise the Welsh Government within the remit agreed for it by the Minister for Housing, Regeneration & Heritage.

VVP Policy Links

VVP has an ambitious aim to encourage and facilitate a more joined up approach across the Welsh Government to ensure that an assessment of regeneration is made in respect of the allocation of main stream funding. As such, VVP has links to all other Welsh Government portfolios. The MAG has a co-ordinating role across the Welsh Government to identify future policy developments that align with the core principles of VVP.

The MAG can decide whether to establish sub-groups and to co-opt members as circumstances dictate. It may choose to form sub-groups to look at particular tasks, e.g. where it requires a particular policy or delivery focus that the whole Board may not need to concentrate upon, or on cross-cutting areas of work. The Chair will decide how to allocate additional work and responsibilities on an ongoing basis.

Secretariat Arrangements

The MAG will be supported by the Homes and Places Division within the department for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage.

Minutes of MAG meetings will normally be published.

Ad hoc contributions and attendance of other individuals may be necessary to ensure the expedient delivery of MAG business.