

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Meeting - 14 September 2017**

#### **Report of the Managing Director**

#### **Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Show 2017 - Business Breakfast: Feedback Report**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To outline the issues discussed during the Business Breakfast on the topic of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal held at the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Show on the 9 August 2017.

##### **Recommendations**

That the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet as follows:

1. That the success of the Council's Business Breakfast be noted.
2. That the delegate feedback report on the Business Breakfast held on 9 August, attached at Appendix A, be endorsed and issued to all delegates.

##### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

1. To note the success of the event.
2. To allow feedback to delegates who attended the event.

##### **Background**

2. Members will be aware of the work that is continuing on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and that Council is committed to working as part of the City Deal to improve the economy of the Vale of Glamorgan and wider region. With this in mind, the focus of the Council organised Business Breakfast at the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Show related to the City Deal and the relevance of the Deal to the Vale of Glamorgan.

##### **Relevant Issues and Options**

3. The Business Breakfast was attended by representatives from Cardiff Capital Region Councils, business representatives as well as those presenting, further and higher

education, the airport and enterprise zone. The event was hosted by the Council and included contributions from Councillor John Thomas, the Leader of the Council; Rob Thomas, the Managing Director and the Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP, Secretary of State for Wales.

4. An introduction by Rob Thomas set the context for the City Deal and provided detail of the ongoing work in taking the City Deal forward.
5. The Secretary of State for Wales made reference to examples of the work undertaken by other City Deals across the UK and stressed the importance of discussion and ongoing dialogue when taking the City Deal forward.
6. A question and answer session was arranged as part of the Business Breakfast with key issues raised, including:
  - The importance of improving strategic access to the Airport and St. Athan from the M4, particularly in the context of potential improvements to the M4 around Newport and the decision to remove Severn Bridge tolls.
  - The need to consider housing development on a strategic basis across the region.
  - The need to secure appropriate infrastructure improvements to ease congestion.
  - The potential role of the region in providing green, renewable energy.
  - The need to reduce over-reliance of grants.
  - The need to ensure adequate skills to take the region forward.
7. More detailed feedback is provided in the attached delegate feedback report, at Appendix A, which Members are asked to endorse.

### **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

8. The Business Breakfast was funded within existing budgets. Any future similar events will need to be funded from within budget and any initiatives to be progressed will need to have resource implications identified as relevant.

### **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

9. The ongoing work on the City Deal will have sustainability implications that will need full and detailed consideration as part of the wider consideration of issues.

### **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

10. None directly attributable to this report.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

11. None directly attributable to this report.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

12. There are no direct equal opportunities implications relating to this report.

### **Corporate/Service Objectives**

13. The holding of the Business Breakfast allowed the opportunity to network with businesses and partners.

## **Policy Framework and Budget**

14. The matter is for Executive decision.

## **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

15. As the issues are not specific to one particular ward, no Member consultation has been undertaken on the content of the report.

## **Background Papers**

Facilitator feedback and networking notes from Business Breakfast.

## **Contact Officer**

Rob Thomas, Managing Director

## **Officers Consulted**

Legal Services  
Financial Services

## **Responsible Officer:**

Rob Thomas, Managing Director

# Business Breakfast Feedback Report

A business breakfast to talk about how the Vale of Glamorgan can benefit from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal was held at this year's Vale Agricultural Show.

*Hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, public servants, representatives from business, business organisations, further and higher education and politicians met to discuss the issue in Fonmon Castle Park.*



Vale Council Leader, Cllr John Thomas, Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns MP, and Rob Thomas, the Council's Managing Director, all spoke at the meeting, which focused on identifying the key opportunities for both the wider South East Wales region and the Vale of Glamorgan presented by the City Deal.

In opening the business breakfast, Cllr John Thomas, Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council explained that the City Deal was quite rightly being seen as a significant prospect for both the Vale of Glamorgan and the wider region. He argued that now was a critical time in ensuring that those involved invested time and effort in having meaningful conversations about the future of both the wider region and the Vale of Glamorgan. This was why the event was both timely and relevant.





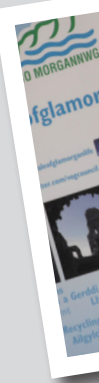
In terms of the Vale of Glamorgan, Cllr Thomas reminded attendees that Wales' only international airport and the Cardiff Airport and St Athan Enterprise Zone are both of great importance to the national economy and their location at the heart of the Vale of Glamorgan means the potential benefits of the City Deal to the Vale of Glamorgan economy are hugely significant. He added that the decision by Aston Martin to select the Vale of Glamorgan as the location for its newest manufacturing base in the UK and that of Renishaw to continue to expand operations near to junction 34 of the M4 both show that the Vale is able to attract serious investment.

He closed by saying that the City Deal approach and ensuring the success of that approach is something that the Vale of Glamorgan Council and himself as Leader of the Council are totally committed.

## The background and context to the City Deal was presented by the Council's Managing Director, Rob Thomas.

The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal is a £1.229bn investment programme spread across ten local authority areas, including £734m for the creation of a South East Wales Metro transport scheme. Reference was made to key elements of the City Deal, such as improving connectivity and transport, innovation and digital provision and skills and business support. Reference was also made to the working agreement between the 10 partner council's that have signed into the City Deal and that work was now progressing on a business plan for the next 5 years. Reference was also made to potential different ways of working by considering strategic transport, planning and investment decisions on a regional scale, and the need for all involved to think of truly strategic, large scale projects that will make a real difference to the South East Wales economy. Before breaking for breakfast and discussion, some discussion points were highlighted, including:

- How do we best work together across sectors and across the region?
- What are the priorities for the region, across the 10 authorities?
- What should we be focussing our attention on, in the Vale of Glamorgan?
- How do we ensure benefits are widespread and touch all our communities-is this even possible?
- How do we engage on the City Deal – how do we ensure that all key partners and potential partners have an input into the direction of travel.





# Business Breakfast Feedback Report



Attendees then heard from the keynote speaker, the Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP, Secretary of State for Wales.

The Secretary of State also provided a context, by referring to the recent growth in the Welsh economy and the number of people in work in Wales increasing since 2010. Reference was made to the role played by businesses in innovating and driving forward the economy.

Turning specifically to City Deals, the Secretary of State reminded attendees that while these have now been agreed for the Cardiff Capital region and Swansea Bay region, they would only be successful if the business community has a strong voice in these regions. In terms of the Cardiff City Deal, delegates were advised of the terms of the deal and that it was a partnership between 10 local authorities, the UK Government and Welsh Government. The region covers almost half of the population of Wales, at 1.4 million, with the intention of delivering 25,000 new jobs in the region. In this regard, the Secretary of State referred to the on-going work on the semi-conductor cluster project in Newport, and called for more projects to come forward, challenging business to get involved.

The Secretary of State made reference to the signing of the Swansea Bay City

Deal in March 2017, which would aim to boost the economy by £1.8 billion and seek to generate 10,000 new jobs, stressing that the Deals need to be complimentary and not in competition. He also referred to plans for a Growth Deal for North Wales and the need to strengthen links between that region and North-West England.

The Secretary of State then made reference to English City Deals, providing examples of how each is different and focusses on various elements from specific projects to a range of policy interventions.

He closed by making the point that City Deals is just one part of the work being undertaken to stimulate the Welsh economy and that even though we are seeing growth we cannot be complacent and we must continue to demonstrate the huge investment potential in Wales. Working together is the key to driving forward the economy.







## Discussion Points

There was then an opportunity for delegates to ask questions and comment on the subject.

### Issues discussed, included:

- Strategic transport, and the need to improve surface access to the airport and the Enterprise Zone from the M4. This was seen as particularly relevant in the context of removing tolls on the Severn Bridge.
- Linked to strategic transport, reference was made to the opportunity of improving links to the airport from junction 34 of the M4 and that this could include park and ride facilities as well as the potential for a new rail station on the main London-Swansea rail line. This was considered to be an appropriate scheme that would link to the work already planned for Five Mile Lane.
- The need to resolve on-going congestion around Newport and the Brynglas tunnels was raised, and reference was made to the on-going Public Inquiry on the M4 relief road.
- Comments were made in relation to the need to secure local infrastructure improvements to support new housing development.
- Reference was made to the need to consider strategic housing developments at a regional level. The Cardiff Capital region approach will allow such consideration and there was also scope to consider which housing sites would be truly strategic in nature, taking account of transport links and infrastructure improvements.
- The role of the region in providing sustainable, green energy was raised as an issue. Whilst there has been a focus on wind and solar energy in recent years, the view was expressed that there was a need to reconsider the merits of schemes to generate tidal power with reference made to the Severn barrage.
- Improving skills and training and ensuring a joined up approach to skills across schools and colleges was considered to be a vital element of the City Deal
- Whilst grant assistance from government was useful to deliver specific schemes, there was an over-reliance on grants and there should be an increased focus on the role of the private sector and the potential to consider loan arrangements.

With thanks  
to all contributors and attendees.

