



Introduction

1. The Central and South West Wales region is large and diverse, embracing city and urban conurbations, as well as a large rural heartland covering almost 58% of the Welsh land mass and 29% of the Welsh population. The Regional Partnership Board (RPB) for Central and South West Wales was established in October 2012, bringing together two previous Regional Board/Forum arrangements of Central Wales (Ceredigion CC and Powys CC) and South West Wales (Carmarthenshire CC, Neath Port Talbot CBC, Pembrokeshire CC and the City & County of Swansea) which had been set up by the WLGA in 2006. Bridgend CBC is a member of both this Regional Partnership Board and the WLGA South East Wales Regional Partnership Board.
2. The RPB brings together the Leaders and Chief Executives of the constituent local authorities to progress regional collaborative working where it adds value to local service delivery. This response is made to the National Assembly for Wales' Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee in the context of the Public Services Commission review led by Sir Paul Williams. In the timescales available, the response has not been formally endorsed by the RPB.

The extent to which the Welsh Government's collaboration agenda has been taken forward within local authorities

3. The RPB has confirmed its strategic regional working priorities as follows:
 - Education and Lifelong Learning
 - Social Care and Health
 - Regeneration
 - Sustainable Development
 - Transport
 - Waste Management
 - Welfare Reform
4. These priorities are supported by programmes of regional working either across the whole region, or on the public service regional boundaries (i.e. Mid & West Wales and Western Bay), or other footprints which reflect service demand (e.g. economic regeneration/city region). Some regional projects have progressed according to service specific objectives, economic drivers, or in response to funding imperatives. A summary

of the regional local government collaboration being progressed by the Board is attached at Appendix 1.

5. The RPB can propose collaborative and shared services but has no delegated powers. The decision to participate in joint working programmes and projects rests with the individual Councils. The approach to joint working in Central and South West Wales has generally been incremental, not a "big bang" approach. Some of the larger collaborations undertaken to date have been in response to Welsh Government and Ministerial direction (e.g. the two Social Care and Health Collaboratives and the two waste management programmes in the region). Some of the collaborative working in the region pre-dated WG's policy emphasis on joint working and provided firm foundations for the region to increase the pace and depth of working together (e.g. Education through Regional Working – ERW – shared school improvement services where hubs have been established of pairs of counties to strengthen school improvement services being delivered through shared posts and common performance management regimes). There are also 'bottom up' collaborations which have been initiated to address operational challenges, or to meet service demand and efficiencies (e.g. Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration and the Professional Construction Services South West Wales programme).
6. Two Joint Trade Union Consultative Committees act as high level forums to provide visibility of regional working and engagement with Trade Unions and any potential workforce issues arising from collaboration. In Central Wales, TUs have been actively involved in the development of regional work programmes and have supported the implementation of projects.
7. Emphasis has been placed on optimising external funding opportunities in the region, as well as progressing regional working along given themes such as transport planning, economic regeneration and strategic planning around skills and employment, through the Regional Learning Partnership. Appendices 2a and 2b provide some examples of the regional working projects being progressed with Convergence funding (total value of investment over £200m in South West Wales).
8. The RPB has provided a steer to professional groups working regionally and the escalation of regional issues to Leader and Chief Executive level have provided the means to 'unblock' and facilitate progress in collaborative working. For example, in waste management procurement the RPBs have given clarity and visibility at a senior level where required. The local authority response to the call for transformational joint working in the education and school improvement arena in particular, has been supported and directed by the RPB. Other collaborations such as Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration have progressed under the direction of Member Boards.
9. The Central and South West Wales RPB responded to the Welsh Government's call for increased collaboration via the Regional Collaboration Fund (controversially top sliced from the Local Government Settlement), through the public service footprint

arrangements for Mid & West Wales and Western Bay. Notwithstanding the short timescales and fundamental concerns over the principle of the RCF, each region is progressing a set of regional collaborative programmes to respond to increased service demand or budget pressures.

10. The region has benefitted from the WLGA's regional project management capacity building project, which is part of the Welsh Government's far reaching Local Service Board Development and Priority Delivery project supported by the European Social Fund (supporting the Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration, Central Wales Waste Programme, Shared Legal Services and the Western Bay Social Care and Health Programme).

The structural, political and practical barriers to successful collaboration

11. A fundamental barrier to successful collaboration between local authorities concerns the duty of the Council to further its own community leadership role for the local area and deliver services which are financially in the interests of local tax payers. Collaboration among local public service partners can further this duty but at a regional level there are inevitably "winners and losers" in collaboration and it takes time and often considerable evidence gathering to establish a robust business case. Objectives for joint working need to be firmly identified and agreed from the outset, as well as the potential risks and benefits.
12. The requirement to invest up front in the feasibility of a shared service can be a further barrier to successful collaboration. WG funding intervention has assisted in this regard (e.g. Making the Connections Improvement Fund). The investment financially needs to be matched by an investment in time and energy, as well as in building relationships. Upfront costs to establish new organisations with new configurations of people, IT systems and estate in the current economic climate, are less likely to be forthcoming, unless a clear political mandate is established between Councils to share services and take the risk of another authority or public body providing those services.
13. The structural challenges faced by Local Authorities of a rural nature with low levels of population density and large and complex geographies should not be underestimated in the context of collaboration. Powys, for example has several boundaries, including a significant one with England where some service users will more naturally be drawn (e.g. health services).
14. Politically, the pressure on local Members to respond to local needs and demands is a barrier to collaboration at a regional level. The necessary investment of time and commitment to a regional shared service, where the benefits may not be immediately apparent at a local level is an obstacle.
15. Equally, the threat of a loss of control and autonomy is a genuine concern for some elected Members and officers so the case for collaboration therefore needs to be well articulated, clear and consistent, not perceived as something fuzzy and well meaning.

The suspicion that collaboration will undermine democratic control of services and reduce responsiveness to local needs is a barrier which has to be addressed through clarity of purpose, leadership and effective scrutiny.

16. Complex boundaries and varying definitions of 'regions' can cause confusion and act as a further barrier to collaboration. Different policy imperatives from different WG departments can cut across one another. There is evidence in the region that the most effective collaborations involve coalitions of the willing and these may not necessarily follow an imposed 'footprint.'
17. In practice, collaboration faces obstacles including the difficulties in establishing a common "baseline" of service delivery from the outset. Some Local Authorities will have invested more and prioritised a particular service area, compared to a potential partner or neighbouring authority. It is therefore difficult to secure a collaborative advantage because baselines from the outset may be significantly different.
18. A further barrier is the time and resource required to progress joint working to a stage where tangible benefits are realised. Experiences of collaboration to date reveal the amount of project management expertise required to facilitate the joint working can be significant, as well as the commitment of staff and Members to the joint working initiative, including meetings and travelling. Regional working needs to feature as part of the "day job" if it is to be successful.
19. Also, in grant funding terms each Local Authority has different financial regulations which can act as a barrier to the delivery of collaborative projects. The drawing up of legal protocols can be a further barrier and the larger the number of participating Councils, the longer the time required for agreement to be reached.

The models of governance and accountability adopted when collaboration takes place

20. Different models of governance and accountability are reflected in practise across the region: from Joint Committees (e.g. transport and waste management in South West Wales) to unincorporated partnership arrangements (e.g. Regional Learning Partnership); from Member Boards supported by inter authority agreements (e.g. Central Wales Waste Partnership and CWIC) and shared posts underpinned by Service Level Agreements (e.g. ERW). Scrutiny arrangements of regional working have been through individual Council scrutiny committees which, increases the visibility of regional working for local Members.

The overall costs and benefits of collaborating to deliver local government services

21. The record of the collaborations established in the region in improving services and delivering savings are generally good but they have yet to deliver major scale efficiencies. Local Authorities have found it easier to make significant savings internally through budget prioritisation measures, rather than through collaboration. There are some notable exceptions and these have tended to be in the area of procurement (waste

management and social care). Notwithstanding the smaller scale, the benefits of collaboration between local authorities are quantifiable and have been captured through the RPB and the various groups reporting to the Board. The underlying premise of many of the local authority shared services have not been on efficiencies but on other benefits outlined below, including resilience and continuity of service, or improved effectiveness through the sharing of good practise, or supporting economic development. The benefits may be summarised as follows with some examples highlighted:

(a) Service resilience (e.g. Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration and Professional Construction Services South West Wales programmes focused on property, engineering and transport services); shared legal services (collaboration in specialist areas of such as trading standards/ animal health; traffic management);

(b) Efficiency savings associated with procurement (e.g. waste management; social care; legal services; ICT; property, engineering and transport services);

(c) Economies of scale (e.g. housing services; waste management; education; telecare);

(d) Cost avoidance (e.g. social care collaboration in commissioning of services; legal services);

(d) Strategic planning (e.g. transportation; education; economic development; skills and learning and regeneration);

(e) Staff/ workforce development (e.g. shared training and workforce development programmes in specialist areas, including school improvement services; shared legal services);

(f) Optimisation of external funding opportunities through strategic planning and delivery (e.g. European Structural Funds; housing grant; regeneration funding);

(g) Sharing of good practice (e.g. shared legal services; CWIC; waste management; education and social care; RLP).

Conclusion

The Seven Local Authorities in the Central and South West Wales region are committed to collaboration between Councils and also to partnership working with other public service partners. The region is large and diverse and therefore there are different governance arrangements spanning different joint working initiatives. The region's response to Welsh Government's policy to encourage increased collaboration has been positive, although the barriers to joint working are not always fully acknowledged. In terms of large scale efficiencies, collaboration has not yielded significant savings, as the approach has generally been incremental, but some efficiencies, cost avoidance and service resilience benefits have been identified and are ongoing. In the face of increased service pressures and financial cuts, collaboration is not a panacea but there are examples in the region where it is adding value, especially in service areas where common solutions to demanding issues require a joined up approach, or where resilience of specialised services can be sustained through working together.

Central Wales South West Wales Regional Collaboration Update



1. PURPOSE OF PAPER

The purpose of this report is to provide an update and overview of the regional working activity across the WLGA Regional Board for Central & South West Wales.

2. BACKGROUND

In June 2012, prior to the merger of the two Regional Boards, a summary report was provided to Leaders and Chief Executives setting out a summary of the activity, the geographical footprint and associated governance arrangements for the various strands of regional working. This report has been reviewed and updated.

3. REGIONAL JOINT WORKING PORTFOLIO

The priorities for regional working across the two regions are set out below, together with maps to indicate those local authorities and other public service partners engaged in the regional working.

The RPB has confirmed its strategic regional working priorities as follows:

- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Social Care and Health
- Regeneration
- Sustainable Development
- Transport
- Waste Management
- Welfare Reform

These priorities are supported by programmes of regional working either across the whole region, or on the Public Service Footprint regional boundaries (i.e. Mid & West Wales and Western Bay). Some regional

projects have progressed according to service specific, economic drivers drivers or in response to funding imperatives.

This report attempts to provide an update on the key areas of regional working which are relevant to the Regional Partnership Board. The Board is supported by two regional Trade Union Consultative Committees (South West Wales and Central Wales) and some officer groups and networks.

Education & Lifelong Learning

Six counties of South West and Mid Wales working together in establishing the Regional Integrated School Improvement Service (RISIS). The remodelling of services by individual Local Authorities within the region together with projected savings will potentially realise efficiency savings by the end of 2012/2013 financial year which are currently being quantified. The consortium is known as “ERW” (Education through Regional Working) following a rebranding and re-launch in July 2013.

The Regional, Support, Challenge and Intervention Framework (RSCIF) has been implemented across the region and is being used to ensure a consistent level of monitoring, challenge and intervention across schools in the 6 LA's.

The capacity to deliver targeted and focussed challenge, intervention and support to schools within the region is being increased through the identification and training of a pool of school based system leaders who have a wide range of skills and areas of expertise to support the team of Consortium School Improvement Officers.

A regional approach to implementing national initiatives, including the national numeracy and literacy tests and addressing the impact of social and economic disadvantage on educational attainment, is being developed thus providing schools with additional support.

Processes to ensure the consistent collection, analysis and evaluation of data and information at school, local authority and regional level have been developed and the information gathered is used to identify and inform priorities for improvement.

The partnership is utilising expertise held by staff employed by the six Local Authorities within the region and within schools in order to:-

- Decrease the number of schools in the region that are being identified as a cause for concern or underperforming
- Increasing the number of schools that are categorised as outstanding or excellent
- Improving the attendance rates in schools within the region
- Improving the performance of pupils who are socially or economically disadvantaged

Regional and National priorities and agreements are implemented within the three hubs (Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire; Ceredigion and Powys; Neath Port Talbot and Swansea) with all practises being informed by a consistency of regional principles.

Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund support has been secured to further embed delivery of two of the three hubs in Mid & West Wales where integrated services are



making further progress with shared posts between Carmarthenshire CC & Pembrokeshire CC and Ceredigion & Powys CC for example. Timescale for delivery is ongoing.		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: RISIS Partnership Board meets on a quarterly basis and reports to the Regional Partnership Board Central & South West Wales</p> <p>Sponsoring Leader: Cllr Alun Thomas, Neath Port Talbot CBC</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: Mark James, Carmarthenshire CC</p> <p>Lead Director: Eifion Evans, Ceredigion County Council</p>		

Regional Learning Partnership

Central & South West Wales

A transformational partnership bringing education and regeneration partners together to plan regionally and deliver locally in the area of skills and employment. Its focus is analysis of need and provision against delivery of skills for employment and increasing participation in learning. The partnership covers the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea.

Three key pillars of action:

- Partnership brokerage and development
- Regional Learning and Skills Observatory
- Regional e-portal

Participation of public service partners from local government (education and regeneration), further education, higher education, the Third sector, JobCentre Plus and the Careers service, together with the private sector, which makes the RLP a unique and effective forum. It has been confirmed as a 'transformation partnership' by the Department for Education and Skills, Welsh Government.


High level benefits include strategic 'buy in' from key partners to address the challenges of the Central & South West Wales region in terms of skills and employability; a commitment to identify appropriate innovative approaches to reduce duplication of provision for the learner and intelligent use of data sharing and application.

The aim of the RLSO is to improve access to local data and intelligence, for learning, skills and the labour market through a single interactive information base and website which provides partners with a shared resource and therefore provides economies of scale and avoids duplication.


The basic premise of the e-Portal is to be a 'virtual' one-stop-shop to a number of key audiences in a bid to improve rates of participation in learning and training; encourage return to learning and to promote available opportunities around



learning and skills, as well as access to employment		
<p>Funding for the continuation of the RLP has been secured until December 2015 via the Welsh Government's Regional Collaboration Fund. The focus of the partnership's activities is to develop a Regional Delivery Plan for Employment & Skills in line with the Welsh Government's policy direction to develop a Single Adult Employability & Skills model.</p> <p>www.rlpwww.org</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Partnership Steering & Strategy Groups</p> <p>The partnership is currently scoping governance models for its future operation</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: none</p>		

Social Care – Mid & West Wales	
<p>The Mid & West Wales Health & Social Care Collaborative brings together the four counties of Carmarthenshire Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys with the Health Boards of Hywel Dda and Powys.</p> <p>The overall aim of the Collaborative is to provide a strategic framework for co-ordinating and delivering a range of health and social care programmes across the region, maximising resources available, reducing duplication, achieving consistency and bringing about service improvement and transformational change in how we jointly commission and procure high quality services at a better price, improving outcomes for citizens in the region.</p> <p>The Collaborative will directly benefit services by increasing the pace of service transformation across the region thus producing sustainable services for the future.</p> <p>The work streams have been identified as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional Complex Needs and Transition Service. All LA's are experiencing significant budgetary pressures in this area and there is a need for a consistent approach across the region which due to the specialist nature of the services provided is best dealt with on a regional basis. 2. Learning Disability Strategic Efficiency Team. A partnership drive through a programme of transformational change for developing and delivering sustainable Learning Disability services with all six organisations working together to provide a pragmatic and incremental approach towards full integration of services ensuring consistency in planning, commissioning, procurement and delivery of health and social care LD services across the region. 3. Regional Commissioning and Procurement Hub 	

<p>Develop an overarching regional procurement and contracting structure to be responsible for procuring and contracting health and social care services to include Older People, mental health and Substance Misuse Services to assist in the delivery of key priorities for the work streams.</p> <p>In addition, the Collaborative has identified work streams which are being developed around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a regional approach to an integrated programme for reablement/rehabilitation (covering services for Older people) • a regional approach to workforce development /practice improvement achieving economies of scale in the learning and development that is provided to the workforce • and the development of a regional local children safeguarding board <p>Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund has been secured to support the delivery of the work programme.</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Directors Programme Board reporting to Mid & West Wales LA Chief Executives with Health Boards</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: Jeremy Patterson, Powys CC</p>		

<p>Social Care – Western Bay</p> <p>Established in January 2012 (phase one to Oct 2014) the Western Bay collaboration on social care involves Bridgend CBC, Neath Port Talbot CBC and the City and County of Swansea, together with the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABMU).</p> <p>The aim of the Western Bay Health & Social Care Programme is to make service improvements through optimising collective effort across the 4 organisations to deliver high value sustainable Health and Social Services.</p> <p>The key projects (which focus on services) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Learning Disability Project • Adult Mental Health Project • Older People and Disabled People • Children Services • (Integrated Family Support Service has been operational since Feb 2013) <p>Other priorities identified are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Adults and Children Safeguarding Boards • Supporting People Regional Committees <p>The Business cases will identify measurable outcomes for all</p>		
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<p>the projects, though business cases are not yet complete.</p> <p>The overriding partnership aims remain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the increased demand in the service • Avoid an increase in service costs • Ensure services are sustainable for the future <p>Lessons learned from this complex reorganisation programme will prove incredibly useful and could be disseminated back into the organisations involved and also to other Welsh public bodies to assist with other collaborative programmes and projects. Shared knowledge and learning can be translated into practice and policy to transform care and support to ultimately benefit the workforce, service users and carers.</p> <p>This regional programme of change will enable knowledge sharing and shared learning within the key project areas across the ABMU footprint. This shared knowledge and learning can be translated into practice and policy to transform care and support and will ultimately benefit the workforce, service users and carers.</p> <p>The programme has been supported by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government and the WLGA's Improvement Fund. Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund support has been secured to further the delivery of the programme.</p> <p>Phase 2 of the programme could be initiated before the end of phase 1 in 2014 depending on the completion of projects. It is expected that this will be a long term programme (5 years plus). The programme is due to formally launched in July 2013.</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Programme Board with reports from Programme Team</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: Jack Straw, City & County of Swansea</p>		


Social Care - Careline

Careline aims to deliver a first class and robust 24x7 lifeline service across the region (Swansea, NPT, Powys, Bridgend & disaster recovery for Merthyr and Vale of Glamorgan and a lone worker service for Pembrokeshire), enabling more people to stay in their own homes for longer. Additionally, handling council out of hours calls when required by partners, and provide an LA/Health 'communications hub' supporting the Health integration.


Swansea's contribution to the partnership includes provision of their previous operating suite as an alternative 'disaster recovery suite' should the need arise.




<p>Costs are reduced by approximately 25% compared to partners running individual services. All lifeline calls are now answered within TSA (Telecare Services Association) targets whereas previously most partners were unable to reach the targets. Each year Careline apply for reassessment by the independent industry body, TSA, which carries out a thorough audit of all operating activities and performance. Defined standards must continue to be met or accreditation will not be awarded.</p> <p>Partnership working enabled coordinated procurement of an upgraded operation system (PNC6) and high level benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced overall operating costs • Shared expertise • Improved service quality and resilience • Service sustainability <p>Bridgend County Borough Council has recently joined the partnership as they see benefits of being in the same Health Board area as NPT and Swansea councils, who are both Careline partners with Carmarthenshire.</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Lead Authority (Carmarthenshire CC)</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: N/A</p>		

<p>South West Wales Waste Management</p> <p>A consortium of local authorities has been established to further WG aims of securing partnership working, collaboration and efficiencies across the public sector in Wales. The consortium seeks to procure food waste and residual waste treatment for the region to meet national recycling and diversion targets and secure economies of scale in the solution, whilst also sharing the procurement costs. The consortium consists of five authorities in SWW for food waste treatment; could extend to seven (inc CWWP) for residual waste procurement.</p> <p>Economies of scale are estimated from food waste procurement costs to date and exclude the further potential economies of scale to be derived from the final solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2012/2013 - £2,100,000 • 2011/2012 - £2,600,00 • 2010/2011 - £1,370,00 		
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009/2010 - £1,200,000 • 2008/2009 - £600,000 <p>The impact on local authority service budgets will be confirmed when the procurements have reached financial close. The most advanced procurement for Food Waste Treatment (inc haulage and disposal) is expected to produce a 55-60% saving in cost over a 20 year contract period.</p> <p>Local Authorities are required to monitor and report waste management performance monthly to Welsh Government. In the future this will include contractor's performance data together with any operational and performance failures.</p> <p>The procured solutions will help deliver continuity in waste practice across the region and assist local authorities to meet national recycling and landfill diversion targets. The partnership is achieving increases in source separated food waste collected to feed the new Anaerobic Digestion plant once established, a key aspect to meeting the contractual obligations and national targets.</p> <p>High level benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of Scale • Procurement cost sharing • Continuity of waste practise 		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Joint Committee and reporting to WLGA Regional Partnership Board</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: Steve Phillips, Neath Port Talbot CBC</p>		

<p>Central Wales Waste Partnership (CWWP)</p> <p>Central Wales Waste Partnership aims to deliver more sustainable and efficient waste management services across the Central Wales region in accordance with the Welsh Government's policy objectives and operational targets.</p> <p>Actual food waste treatment cost reductions are being realised. These are of the order of £11 per tonne with the additional benefit of around £55,000 per annum for Ceredigion in WG revenue support for the next 15 years. The CWWP food waste treatment project was carried out as part of the WG Infrastructure Procurement Programme, realising WG financial grant of £1.2m support of the procurement costs, which more than met the total external costs of procurement.</p> <p>Efficiency savings have already been realised through the joint procurement of food waste treatment services from the maximum use of internal resources; increased competition for the food waste treatment contract (economies of scale);</p>	
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<p>reduced waste treatment costs and shared procurement costs.</p> <p>Options are currently being explored for a collaborative procurement of residual waste treatment across the Central Wales and South West Wales regions, which will realise similar efficiency savings to the above.</p> <p>The partnership expects to deliver cost savings through service efficiencies; however these cost savings are yet to be fully quantified.</p> <p>Powys and Ceredigion coming together to work as a region means that there is scope to align policies and to some extent waste services that would reduce duplication and increase performance. It is anticipated that by working together, sharing expertise and best practise, the partners will improve their recycling against Welsh Government targets.</p> <p>By working together with the Welsh Government through the Collaborative Change Programme, the partners aim to improve the quality of the waste services they deliver for the citizen, by making recycling services more accessible, more efficient, more robust, easy to use and more cost effective.</p> <p>High level benefits and areas of added value include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver more sustainable, efficient and robust services for the partnering authorities through closer collaboration • To review and where possible pursue joint management arrangements • To deliver the Simpson Compact commitments 		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: The Central Wales Waste Partnership Board (relevant Cabinet Members/Portfolio Holders)</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: N/A</p>		

<p>Economic Regeneration</p>	
<p>Working to the recently launched Swansea Bay City Region footprint, an Economic Regeneration Strategy (ERS) has been agreed among four local authorities and stakeholders. The ERS is underpinned by a strong evidence base setting out the economic challenges facing the region. A framework of identified regional economic priorities has been developed and an associated set of work streams plans. The strategy underpins the Swansea Bay city region delivery and will inform the next round of European Structural Fund prioritisation for the region post 2013.</p> <p>The ERS has been progressed building on a firm foundation of collaborative working which has focused to date on business support, enterprise development, physical regeneration and inter-trading as well as supply chain development. The Swansea Bay Partnership vehicle has created economies of</p>	

scale in regional business support activity and includes Pembrokeshire CC where there is added value locally.

Since the merger of the Regional Boards, Ceredigion CC and Powys CC officers have been working more closely with the SWW group. The Ceredigion Economic Regeneration Strategy is under development and aims to 'dovetail' with the City Region Strategy where common themes emerge. The Powys Regeneration Strategy was launched in June 2011 and an implementation plan is being progressed for the county as part of the Powys Change Plan.

Ceredigion CC is working to progress the Teifi Valley Initiative as a local employment growth zone with particular emphasis on the digital economy and the Welsh language, engaging with parts of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

The Directors Group has regular engagement with the regional office of the Welsh Government Department of Economy, Science and Transport, together with the Department for Education and Skills' employment and skills team and the Infrastructure Investment Division of WG.

A Regeneration/ Development Directors' Group has managed the front end process of identifying and developing projects suitable for collaboration for submission under the West Wales and the Valleys Convergence Programmes (European Structural Funds) and reviews the portfolio of approved schemes with investment secured to date of:

SUMMARY			
Project Type	Number of Projects	Total Cost	Total EU Funding
South West Regional Collaboration Projects	15	£177,443,926.00	£108,770,705
L.A Contracted Delivery Organisation or Joint Sponsor Projects	13	£31,904,100	£13,037,970
L.A Individual Projects	11	£212,328,317.00	£107,419,092
Totals	39	£421,676,343.00	£229,227,767

N.B. In relation to the figures outline above, a caveat is that the total project costs include those for *all* partners for which the LA is either Lead Sponsor or Lead Delivery Organisation. In the case of collaboration projects the partners are mostly other LAs but in the case of Joint Sponsors or Contract Delivery Organisation projects, that may not always be the case.

Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Governance arrangements: Directors Group reporting to WLGA Regional Partnership Board

Sponsoring Chief Executive: none

Economic Regeneration: Planning services

Regional working in planning services covering work streams of minerals and waste planning; planning services and the Welsh language; landscaping and ecology, as well as a regional study around the Community Infrastructure Levy; development of Local Development Plans post 2014; workforce resilience and protocols for service specialisms. Includes engagement with Pembrokeshire National Park Authority.

The Heads of Planning South West Wales Group has an agreed regional work plan which covers:

- Minerals and waste planning
- Workforce resilience

A detailed workforce study was undertaken in 2012, resulting in agreement to undertake an options appraisal to further embed a regional approach to minerals and waste planning.

The Group has also reviewed and worked collaboratively on the following areas:

- Planning services and the Welsh language
- Landscaping and ecology
- Regional study around the Community Infrastructure Levy
- Protocols for service specialism's

It is overseen by the Directors of Regeneration/ Development Group.



Service Efficiencies

Service Improvements

Citizen Engagement

Governance arrangements: Directors Group reporting to WLGA Regional Board

Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration (CWIC)

The aim of the Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration (CWIC) is to create a more resilient service to deliver high quality infrastructure services to the people in Central Wales by establishing a regional management structure that will generate deep rooted regional working. The four work areas are Property Services, Engineering Strategy, Engineering Operations and Transport and Road Safety.

Work includes:

- Pooling of work will allow for the smoothing of peaks and troughs in workloads
- In house expertise is being developed and shared learning
- Capacity is being built in new areas such as ecology and land drainage
- Succession planning to address workloads and age profile of staff resources
- Shared training
- Reduction of risk of non-compliance with statutory



obligations		
<p>Although not the primary objective of the partnership, some service efficiencies and cost savings have been identified and forecasts made for future years. Over the past two years over £100,000 savings (across the two counties) have been realised.</p> <p>Costs avoidance is a key driver for the project, whether by pooling resources to reduce reliance on external consultants or joint procurement exercises and shared systems and policies – costs avoided for 2011/2012 stand at approximately £65,000.</p> <p>Four shared posts have been appointed to support regional service delivery (passenger transport unit manager; engineering design manager; engineering design services ecologist; streetworks manager, as well as shared programme manager and project officer). The programme has been supported by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government and the WLGA's Improvement Fund.</p> <p>High level benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain high value jobs within the area and create growth in services to aid economic development • Maintain highly responsive services that suit local needs and implement improvements to improve consistency across the region • Leaner working to achieve efficiencies whilst striving to improve opportunities for staff • Create growth in services to aid economic development • Increase and improve opportunities for staff • Reduction in the overall cost of service delivery <p>The partnership produces an annual Business Plan which sets out what has been achieved and intentions for the following year. Highlight reports provide periodic updates on progress with the milestones in the Business Plan. The Benefits Realisation Plan quantifies savings and benefits to date.</p> <p>The latest edition of the CWIC Bulletin can be found on both councils' websites www.ceredigion.gov.uk/CWIC</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: The Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration Board (Cabinet Members/Portfolio Holders) is convened under the terms of an Inter Authority Agreement</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: N/A</p>		

Professional Construction Services

The Professional Construction Services project focuses on service improvement and efficiencies in architecture and engineering professional services, including the development of collaborative working for design services and the development of regional construction frameworks and approach to procurement across Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.



Financial savings are focused around the cost avoidance associated with individual Authority procurement activity (circa £100k); regional arrangements for consultancy and construction services is carried out once instead of four times.

Measurable outcomes to date include:

- Regional Framework for Engineering and Property Consultancy
- Regional Framework for Engineering and Property Works Services
- Documented and agreed approach to prioritising internal resource across the region
- Comprehensive forward workplans for Construction and engineering

The partnership has a resource management workstream which will analyse the age and skills profiles of the architecture and engineering professionals in each authority with a view to making informed decisions on the following:

- Forward work planning for the use of internal resource on a regional level
- Sustainability of internal resource against the forward workplan

High level benefits include:

- A regional forward workplan for construction and engineering activity that can be used to plan: future procurement; future internal resource requirements
- Establishment of appropriate regional construction frameworks, covering design and construction
- Improved regional awareness and knowledge sharing

The project is also working on shared apprenticeships schemes. The regional partners have now signed up to use the Value Wales Community Benefits Measurement Tool on all capital projects over £2million in value which provide a summary of local workforce benefits including apprenticeships, training and the use of Welsh contractors.

Service Efficiencies

Service Improvements

Citizen Engagement

Governance arrangements: Project Steering Group reporting to WLGA Regional Board

South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH)

In recognition of the benefits of working together in improving access and transport to, from and within the region, SWWITCH was established in 1998. Overseeing a programme of capital projects and the implementation of a regional transport plan, joint working has secured capital investment for the region and the opportunity to engage with a wider range of stakeholders.

An example of a measurable benefit is regional working on road safety revenue projects which has enabled economies of scale to develop. The four LA's now arrange various training courses or advertising on a regional basis and this has facilitated lower costs. In addition the transport planning and policy capacity of SWWITCH has allowed councils to utilise Officers to cover additional functions within the council, thus reducing costs.

Another measurable benefit has been the establishment of a South West Wales Engineering Framework for the procurement of external engineering capacity. This allows each Council to procure services via a mini quotation from pre-selected consultancies and this has saved Councils staff time and cost associated with individual tendering processes.


Working together as SWWITCH creates the opportunity to engage with strategic partners such as Welsh Government, Economic/Business community, Large employers, Network Rail, Rail and Bus operators, Community Transport Association and Transport User groups. This level of engagement would be resource intensive for each LA to manage independently. It also allows the councils to be part of engagement on strategic issues like the National Transport Plan and Long Term Planning Process (for rail for example) without the additional staff costs associated with procuring Senior Transport Planners. In addition in 2012/2013 extra RTP and RSG funding was secured by good progress in the region (over £1m in total); this is because of mature joint working and regional programme management through SWWITCH.

Since April 2013, in addition to the Regional Transport Consortium Grant (over £6m) SWWITCH has been managing the Bus and Community Transport funding for the region (Over £5m). This regional approach has been more efficient and required fewer staff than if each Council had managed the process separately.

SWWITCH is also supporting the evolution of the City Region for Swansea Bay which is co-terminus with SWWITCH and is viewed as a key facilitating group for



<p>achieving city region objectives in the future.</p> <p>Additional benefits have been identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows sharing of best practise and development of service specific collaboration and also opportunities to up skill staff without expansive external cost. • Encourages development of cross LA boundary transport schemes which focus on user need rather than administrative boundaries. • Enables external agencies to have a clear entry point to the region for discussion on transport issues. <p>Under the auspices of SWWITCH there are a number of areas of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering • Telematics • Parking • Road Safety • Public/ Community Transport • School transport • Travel Planning and Behavioural change • Walking and cycling (Active Travel Bill) 		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Joint Committee</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: none</p>		

<p>TraCC Trafnidiaeth Canolbarth Cymru / Mid Wales Transportation</p> <p>TraCC works across the counties of Ceredigion, Powys and the former Meirionnydd district of Gwynedd. Established in 2003 with a Joint Committee, the core team is based in Aberystwyth.</p> <p>The main purposes of the partnership are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and review of shared local/regional transport policies, plans and strategies (Regional Transport Plan); • Contribution to development of policies, plans and strategies of national government and other partners; • Development and management of regional highways and transportation grant funding programmes; • Undertake monitoring, evaluation and reporting of impacts of regional plans and funding programmes (RTP Annual Monitoring Report); • Provide specialist support and advice on travel planning, active and environmentally-sustainable travel across Mid Wales; 	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political lobbying in support of regional policies and funding programmes <p>Working together has enabled TraCC to draw down funding for example Sustainable Travel Centre grant (to Ceredigion) of £2.5m over 3 years. For some time there have been a number of collaborative projects/initiatives being undertaken directly through TraCC or in support of strategic policy direction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Walking and Cycling/Active Travel Strategy • Regional Travel Planning/Smarter Choices delivery • Development of Regional Passenger Transport Strategy and Implementation Programme • Review of Regional Core Passenger Transport Routes/'Network Strategy' • Development of Rail Strategy and review/rationalisation of existing rail partnerships • Issue of Concessionary Fare Smartcards • Road Safety/ Casualty Reduction (linked to road safety grant delivery programme) • Aberystwyth Area Sustainable Travel Centre Project <p>High level benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual local authorities have an opportunity to be engaged via TraCC at an all Wales level for the purposes of transport policy and planning, scheme development, responses to consultations and calls for evidence and project and programme management; • Allows sharing of best practise and development of service specific collaboration to be developed and creates opportunities to up skill staff without expensive external courses; • Encourages the development of cross local authority boundary transport schemes which focus on users needs rather than administrative boundaries • Enables external agencies (including WG, WLGA) to have a single point of entry for engaging with members and officers engaged in transport. WG, WLGA and other agencies are increasingly keen to engage with four regional consortia as opposed to 22 local authorities. <p>Links to CWIC for shared engineering and consultancy services.</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Joint Committee</p> <p>Sponsoring Chief Executive: none</p>		

Shared Legal Services

The shared legal services project South West Wales benefits partners through improved efficiencies and effectiveness, specifically, through targeting areas of 'external spend' which may be reduced and establishing shared knowledge and best practise between authorities.

The underlying premise of the shared legal services project has been around resilience and shared learning/ training. Some service efficiencies have been realised.

High level benefits include:

- Efficiency saving: reduced external spend and joint procurement
- Improved effectiveness: shared best practise, training, development and processes
- Continuity and resilience: preservation of quality, cost effective services to local government

Savings:

- 2012/2013 – £357,351
- 2011/2012 - £257,153
- 2010/2011 - £107,786

Currently undertaking the following workstreams:

(a) Joint Teams

The project board have recruited the first regional legal team. Specialising in commercial property, contracts and procurement, the team deal with matters relating to other regional projects for which there is increasing demand; for example, Public Protection.

(b) Joint Procurement

Ten public sector organisations have contributed to a procurement framework exercise which has resulted in a bespoke software solution which allows officers to search effectively and efficiently for Chambers or Solicitors when outsourcing work. This was a significant exercise with the participation of several LA's; the system is such it can be rolled out across Wales.

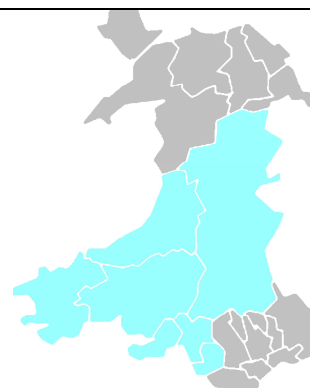
Additionally, the Authorities have jointly procured their online and loose-leaf Legal Library resources; resulting in savings of £156,533 over the three year period 2013/14 to 2015/16

(c) ICT

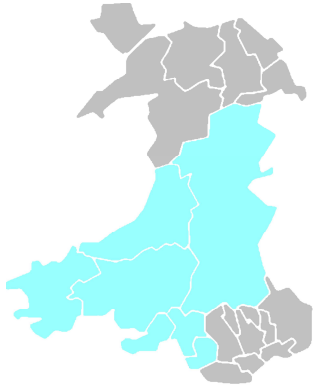
A joint case management system has been procured on behalf of five of the six project partners. Initially Swansea and Carmarthenshire Councils will be using the system, which will allow the sharing of cases between Authorities and facilitate more efficient working practises.

(d) Best Practice

Special Interest Groups focus on thirteen specialist areas of law; the group meets regularly to share best practice, training and development. The SIG's have created a network for colleagues to access specifically public sector advice and



<p>support without using private firms. This additional support generates significant time savings for the Council’s solicitors, giving rapid answers to queries through regional channels previously unavailable to them.</p> <p>Moving forward the project will focus on the following areas of work: Regional Graduate Trainee Programme Creation of a second regional team Use of a ‘portal’ for file sharing with the other sectors</p> <p>The Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund support has been secured to increase the pace and delivery of the shared legal services project in Mid & West Wales. The other partner counties remain committed to the programme. The Project management capacity has been provided by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government and the WLGA’s Improvement Fund.</p>		
Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Governance arrangements: Project Board reporting to WLGA Regional Board Sponsoring Chief Executive: Mark James, Carmarthenshire County Council</p>		

<p>Shared ICT Services</p> <p>With the aim of delivering a more efficient and robust ICT service for the participating authorities through closer joint working, the project has identified a series of work streams, some of which include engagement with other public service partners, including health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joint procurement, including single hosted applications ○ Joint Regional ICT Team ○ GIS collaboration ○ Best practice ○ Regional ICT capability ○ Rationalisation of systems ○ Exploitation of Open Source ○ Common development Platforms <p>The CIO council regional delivery group is brought together with the local authorities to ensure synergy with the national ICT Strategy.</p> <p>The Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund support has been secured to increase the pace and delivery of the shared ICT services project in Mid & West Wales. The other partner counties remain committed to the programme. The Project management</p>	
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capacity has been provided by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government and the WLGA's Improvement Fund.

To date the Project has realised the following savings:

- GIS open source savings over a five year period 12/13 to 16/17 **£638,710**, actual cashable savings compared to legacy product, in reality savings are higher as each authority would have had to have moved to a more expensive proprietary product to met the 'channel shift' agenda.
- Joint Procurement of hardware **£62,486**
- Joint procurement of Apple devices **£43,504**

Service Efficiencies

Service Improvements

Citizen Engagement

Governance arrangements: Project Board reporting to WLGA Regional Board

Sponsoring Chief Executive: Bryn Parry-Jones, Pembrokeshire CC

Human Resources/ Workforce/ Learning Development

The Heads of Human Resources Group bringing together six counties review any workforce implications arising from the above programmes and projects.

The remit of the group is :

- To identify and take forward opportunities to collaborate on people management & development issues at a Central and SW Wales regional level, including the sharing of best practice and other experience/s.
- To undertake any specific people management-related activities requested by the Regional Partnership Board
- To further develop partnership working with the trade unions at a regional level.

The Heads of HR Group has identified 4 areas in its work programme:

- Learning and Development
- Equalities issues



<p>c) The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. d) Workforce Planning</p>		
<p>The learning and development strand is being delivered through the South West Wales Workforce Development Network (SWWWDN). The WLGA Improvement Fund has supported a collaborative project which has reviewed learning and development activities with a view to identifying economies of scale through joint working. The work streams are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A mapping exercise has been completed for Corporate Learning and Development provision for 2012/2013. This has provided data to inform the three year proposal for future collaboration in local authority workforce learning and development with the working title of 'South West Wales Workforce Development (SWWWD) Virtual Collaboration Hub'. 2. An evaluation has been completed on a regionally delivered management development programme, 'Managing Change Successfully' which is a model of regional delivery. 3. The Equalities Learning and Development Task and Finish group has designed a regional framework for the design and delivery of generic equalities learning and development. Focus is now on the design of learning materials and formats. 4. An analysis of mapping data for management and leadership development has been completed. A SWWWDN workshop is to be held in October 2013 with the purpose of creating a regional delivery and development programme. 5. An E-Learning Task and Finish group has been formed to identify programmes for learning for immediate regional development. It is the intention that this work will contribute to the All Wales Academy in due course. <p>High level benefits are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic HR engagement that realises a consistent approach to change (regional working) • Regional protocols and policies developed which address potential duplication of effort • Positive workforce engagement via regional TU consultative committee 		
<p>Service Efficiencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Service Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Citizen Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Governance arrangements: Project Board reporting to WLGA Regional CEO Group Sponsoring Chief Executive: Jack Straw, City & County of Swansea</p>		

IN SUMMARY

1. The portfolio of shared service and joint working arrangements above is not exhaustive, a considerable number of collaborative projects underpin many of the strategic priorities identified above (eg. a programme of collaborative Convergence funded schemes outlined in a separate document).
2. Many of the shared service arrangements listed above are sponsored by a lead Chief Executive, or Sponsoring Leader. Some are reported by exception to the WLGA Regional Board. Member engagement is facilitated through briefings, or Member Boards, or Joint Committees as listed above. Work between Powys and Ceredigion has been primarily governed by Member Boards. The WLGA Regional Board Chief Executive's Group fulfils the role of a Programme Board overseeing the portfolios outlined above.

For information

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South West Wales

SET for Growth

Supporting access to
European funding



ERDF



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ewrop & Chymru: Buddsoddi yn eich dyfodol
Cronfa Datblygu Rhanbarthol Ewrop

Europe & Wales: Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund



ESF



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ewrop & Chymru: Buddsoddi yn eich dyfodol
Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop

Europe & Wales: Investing in your future
European Social Fund

The European Union **Convergence** programmes

Building firm foundations...

The Convergence programmes 2007-2013 funded by the European Union through the Welsh Government are helping to pave the way for people, places and business to achieve their full potential in South West Wales.

The South West Wales Specialist European Team continues to provide free support, information and advice to all sectors seeking to operate European-funded projects.

These pages give a brief overview of the many ways that European funding supported by **Specialist European Teams** is helping to transform the way we live, learn, work and play...





Supporting People

EU funds are helping young people get the best start they can by supporting them to remain in the education system gaining skills and qualifications. The **ENGAGE** project has done just that for over 10,317 young people, ensuring over 3,782 qualifications were achieved thereby improving the employability and confidence of the next generation.

For people already in employment but needing to develop skills, **Regional Essential Skills** is now working across the region to help people remain in work and continue to develop their talents by getting the basics right.

For those unemployed or out of employment for many years, projects like **South West Workways** are on hand to provide detailed support and guidance to help make the next steps into a new job.

“Having [this] opportunity from **Workways** has been brilliant. I feel more confident and am able to take my daughter to more places. The whole experience has been life-changing!”
Rebecca Shepherd, lone parent from Neath

Investing in enterprise

Helping to create the future workforce is important, but goes hand in hand with the need to create employment opportunities.

The **Local Investment Fund** has committed £6.6m of investment in over 1,159 small businesses to help them grow and create jobs. One example is VIBE TV, based in Swansea, a dynamic production company that offers specialised services for businesses, which received support to extend their broadcasting equipment.



“We have worked with such prestigious companies as The Walters Group and Celtic Energy based in Caerphilly; and the Welsh Assembly commissioned us to cover the biggest and most successful Trade Mission ever to leave Wales as we followed 80 companies in and around Washington DC, including a trip to NASA Langley and meetings with Boeing. Without the **LIF** grant VIBE TV would not have had the resources to cover such work.” *Sue Powell Reed, VIBE TV*

Collaborative Communities is an initiative designed to support the development of social/community enterprise across the four counties. One such enterprise is Cyfle i Dyfu — Chance to Grow Cyf — a not for profit company limited by guarantee, is based at Delta Lakes in Llanelli.

“Collaborative Communities has been wonderful. The flagship officer has been brilliant. He has given us expert, sound knowledge and advice and direction for our business.”
Andrew Soroka, Director, Cyfle i Dyfu

Investing in infrastructure

Growth in the number of businesses and employment opportunities requires good infrastructure especially transport and property. The **Peripheral Distributor Road Harbour Way** is a major £107m investment to reduce congestion and delay on the M4 and improve transport access to the South West.

The **South West Wales Property Development Fund** has supported a range of major property investments that would otherwise not have been realised in the region.

For example, take Pembrokeshire firm Austwel Holdings who have received assistance towards building new workshop and office space at the Thornton Industrial Estate in Milford Haven.

"We have committed our funds in conjunction with the **PDF** grant to provide this new facility, which will hopefully attract national companies into the area. In today's economic market we would not be able to do this without the grant assistance we have received from the **PDF** fund,"
Austwel Holdings Managing, Director, Chris Davies



Transforming our Urban Centres

A range of major investments are being made across the South West town centres and Swansea city centre. These schemes are major upgrades to the appearance and performance of our urban and rural centres, to encourage further investment, confidence, accessibility and employment opportunities.



Increasing Tourism

A range of destinations from Norman castles to historic parks and gardens are being significantly improved for the benefit of the local population as well as helping encouraging significant increases in visitors from across the world.

The **Stackpole Rediscovered** project is a £3million transformation of a 2,000 acre heritage and environmental centre owned by the National Trust in Pembrokeshire.

The Stackpole Estate, dating back to the 18th century, receives more than 300,000 visitors a year, offering visitors the opportunity to learn about its unique history, a diverse range of environmental habitats, ancient woodlands, supporting biodiversity and much more.

The **Cognation Trails** is all about investing in mountain biking, improving the current trails, building new ones, renovating facilities and creating a new bike park.



Europe and South West Wales:

Investing in your Future

The **South West Specialist European Team** has helped advise and support many of these schemes, and remains on hand to sign-post you to information and support in relation to current and future 2014-2020 European funding and European-funded projects across the South West.

For contact details and further information on the projects described in this booklet, and many more, visit the following websites:

www.npt.gov.uk/convergence

www.swansea.gov.uk/convergence

www.wyec.org.uk

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/european

For full details of European programmes in Wales you can also visit the Welsh European Funding Office website at:

www.wefo.wales.gov.uk





Convergence - Approved Collaborative projects for south west Wales

September 2013

The following details provide a summary of the *regional* European Convergence collaborative projects which have been led by local authorities in the South West Wales area of the Central and South West Wales region. Some of the schemes involve the Local Authorities alone but several include delivery with other public service partners. There are further national and local projects which are not included in this summary below.

Gypsy Traveller Learning & Future Employment Project

Led by Pembrokeshire County Council (*together with Neath Port Talbot CBC, City and County of Swansea and Carmarthenshire CC. In addition, the counties of Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen are partners in the project.*) Total Cost £4.2m Grant: £2.3m

Aim: To tackle low education standards and economic inactivity amongst the Gypsy Traveller population with a focus on young people aged 11-19.

Start: Sept 2009 End: Sept 2012

Progress:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has now closed. 	
Description	Achieved to September 2012
Project Participants	317
Gained a Qualification	91
Other Positive Outcomes	83
Entered Further Learning	37
Entered Employment	37

SW Wales Materials Efficiency Project

Led by Pembrokeshire County Council (*together with Carmarthenshire CC.*)

Total Cost £8.2m Grant: £4.9m

Aim: To invest in infrastructure and the delivery of services, that will contribute to the creation of a more attractive and clean environment for the general public and businesses by providing enhanced services which will increase the options available to 'Reduce, reuse, recycle' more waste.

Start: Jan 2012 End: March 2015

Progress:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pembs Glass Collection project is well underway with 56,475 households (89%) already receiving the service. Installation for street and beach bins is underway; recruitment of recycling advisors has been completed and they have started their participation work. Secondary Reprocessing Centre – a contract has been let for the reprocessing of mattresses to a company who achieve 97% recycling rate. Carmarthenshire has appointed a community champion and two part-time assistants - whose role will be to encourage further uptake of recycling in some of the least participating residential areas. Carmarthenshire have established agreements with four community groups to manage locally run 'adopt a recycling' site with the aim of increasing recycling of materials not collected at the kerbside. 	

- CM International appointed as the project evaluators – initial work is underway.

Description	Achieved to March 2013	Target by end of project
New / improved services	1	1
Waste reduced reused recycled	478	10,000
Enterprises created	-	1
Gross Jobs created	5	13

South West Specialist European Team (SET)

Led by Pembrokeshire County Council, together with Carmarthenshire CC, Neath Port Talbot CBC and, City & County of Swansea

Total Cost: £2,085,849 Grant: £1,197,553

Aim: to provide an expert regional support service that is able to advise and assist those organisations delivering Convergence funded projects or aspiring to do so.

Progress:

- Progressing well.
- Evaluation by SQW has been completed. SET officers are working together to map the evaluation activity across the region (one of the recommendations of the evaluation).
- The day to day work of SET officers is increasingly focused on close down of projects and preparation for the next round of funding.

COASTAL

Led by City and County of Swansea (*together with Neath Port Talbot CBC, Pembrokeshire CC, Carmarthenshire CC, Ceredigion CC and Bridgend CBC*) Total Cost £44m Grant: £23m

Aim: Support to individuals who are currently economically inactive as a result of illness and/or physical/mental disability, the project will provide vocational, employment, training and lifelong learning opportunities and social inclusion for this target group.

Start: Jan 2009 End: June 2014

Progress:

- **Sub-regional working:** The concept of sub-regional collaboration is gathering pace quickly, with a number of joint initiatives now being explored. Discussion is underway between partners to consider the 'franchising' of some of the more successful supported employment projects, which have a potential for long term sustainability.
- **'Bikeability' / 'In Tandem' / 'Bspoked' / Cycle Hire:** Neath Port Talbot and Swansea COASTAL teams, in partnership with University of Wales Swansea, have been successful in being awarded a £150,000 Sport Wales grant to establish the cycle hire facility which will serve Singleton Park and the Swansea foreshore. This initiative, which has huge potential for long term sustainability, will ultimately create a range of employment, training and work experience opportunities for participants. Participants will not only be engaged in the customer service elements of the enterprise, but also in the administration of the project and the hands-on maintenance of the cycles and all related equipment. Not to be left behind, the 'InTandem' Project at Fabian Way has just received confirmation that they have been awarded Platinum Standard Accreditation by Velotech, only the second Award of this level in Wales. The award means that the Project is able to deliver accredited training and issue Award Certificates both in-house and externally to other organisations/customers. There is also excellent news with regard to the 'Bspoked' cycle furniture initiative, developed by the Neath Port Talbot COASTAL team. Increased interest in the products has been shown by a number of venues, including the Lea Valley Olympic velodrome and the Sheffield velodrome plus a number of individual customers. The ever-growing range of products is currently being subjected to severe safety and stress testing, with the aim of securing a British 'Kitemark' Quality standard.
- **Port Talbot Gateway Bookshop and Coffee Shop:** The 'Coffee Bound' coffee shop and bookshop is enjoying increasing popularity and is building a regular customer base. This new initiative based in the town centre shopping complex has not only provided employment and training opportunities for participants within the shop itself, but also indirectly through the refurbishment of the property. In addition to the participants who have gained qualifications as a result of their involvement with Down to Earth, in manufacturing the recycled furniture for the

shop, ten COASTAL participants in the 'Wood-B' joinery project in Bridgend have gained a Level 3 Agored Cymru qualification in 'Supporting a Machine Cutting Operation' following their manufacture of the hardwood flooring for the Coffee Shop. In true regional collaborative spirit, the flooring for the bookshop area has been provided by the Pembrokeshire COASTAL team based at Norman Industries Joinery Project in Haverfordwest. As a result, this initiative has produced direct benefits for participants in three local authority areas.

- **Welsh Game Fair – June 2013:** Further to the success of the Self Employment and Entrepreneurship Fair held last year, by the teams in Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, a similar opportunity was provided at this year's Welsh Game Fair, held at the Carmarthen Showground in June. In addition to displaying and selling a wide range of products made by all COASTAL partners, this was an opportunity for all participants who have ambition to become self-employed artisans or artists to test the market for their individual products.
- **DWP Work Programme:** Partners are experiencing growing numbers of referrals from Job Centre Plus, in respect of individuals who have been referred back from the Work Programme as a result of the WP provider's inability to provide the level of support required. Also increasing are the number of attempted self-referrals from individuals who have been referred to the WP, but who have not received any practical support or assistance other than a monthly interview with an 'advisor'. Partners have also been approached by WP providers with requests to provide support to individuals with high levels of support need, as they, the WP provider, is not able to deliver such a service. Unfortunately, at this stage, these occurrences are mainly anecdotal. Therefore, we are now looking into possible ways in which the incidents might be formally logged and reported.
- **Improving Performance:** The performance of the Project over the past two quarters has improved greatly. The long-term nature of the training and support required by our participants has meant a protracted period of intervention before results have become apparent. Similarly, the ethos of the Project, i.e. focussed upon vocational need and employment, has been a major culture change for the Local Authority services, which has taken a considerable time to become embedded.
- Project website online: <http://www.coastalproject.co.uk/>
- In addition to the formal outputs listed below, the Project has also secured employment of less than 16hrs p.w. for a total of 132 participants. Whilst these achievements are not formally recognised as meeting the required 16hrs + criteria, for the target participant group, this represents a major contribution to economic activity.

Outputs:	Achieved (As at May 2013)	Target by end of project
Participants engaged to date:	5,600	7,500
Positive outcomes	2,291	4,500
Participants into employment 16hrs +	159	750
Participants into employment of less than 16hrs (See progress note above)	132	N/A
Gaining Qualification	1,535	4,500
Participants currently working towards a qualification	451	N/A
Further learning:	148	1,875

REGIONAL ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR THE WORKFORCE

Led by City and County of Swansea (Delivery to South West Wales by *procured contractors – Computeraid Ltd, WEA South Wales, City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot College, Ceredigion CC, Pembrokeshire CC*)
 Total Cost £11.2m Grant: £7.4m (undergoing reprofile)

Aim: The *Regional Essential Skills for the Workforce* project is a Regional Strategic Project, covering the 5 local authority areas of Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, with the main aims of promoting and delivering basic skills to employed people. It will also include delivery of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills up to Level 2 including ICT and ESOL.

Start: February 2012

End: August 2014

Progress:

- All procured lots are delivering training.
- Observations of project activity by all partners was carried out by project manager.
- Financial reprofile has been submitted to WEFO and the project team are awaiting the outcome.
- Project manager met with other project managers e.g. VALREC, Skills for Industry to make links, referrals and discuss how projects can be complimentary.
- Key documents drawn up including environmental/sustainability plan, evaluation plan, exit strategy and annual implementation report.

Outputs:	Achieved	Target by end of project
Total Participants	1179	3,364
Participants Gaining Qualifications	233	2,226
Participants Entering Further learning	1	809

South West Wales Local Investment Fund (i.e. LIF)

Led by Carmarthenshire County Council (together with Neath Port Talbot CBC, Pembrokeshire CC, City & County of Swansea and Ceredigion CC)

Total Cost £20,157,326 Grant: £8,973,599

Aim: Flexible financial support in the form of capital grants, up to a maximum of £10k, targeting existing SMEs and start ups.

Start: July 2008 End: March 2015

Progress:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £7.8 million of grant has been offered to 1285 businesses within the South West. • Priority of team is now on re-committing funds which are being recycled through scheme from clients claiming less grant than offer amount or not taking up their offer of grant . • Monitoring of paid grants is also a priority in order to gather all evidence required to claim outputs. 		
Outputs:	Achieved to June 2013 claim	Target by end of project
Enterprises financially supported	649	1050
Individuals financially supported to set up a new enterprise	170	300
Gross jobs created	615	750
Enterprises created	170	300
Social enterprises financially supported	13	14

Regional Learning Partnership

Led by Carmarthenshire County Council with Careers Wales West as Joint Sponsor (together with Neath Port Talbot CBC, Pembrokeshire CC and City & County of Swansea and Further Education, Higher Education, Third Sector and Private Sector, with key stakeholders such as Job Centre Plus, NIACE Dysgu Cymru).

Total Cost:£1,771,771 Grant: £942,000

Aim: To establish a Regional Learning Partnership for South West Wales creating a holistic regional approach to learning and training furthering joined up approaches between education and regeneration for the benefit of the local economy. Focus on employment and skills.

Start: Dec 2009 End: Dec 2013

Progress:

- The ESF element of the RLP funding has been extended to Dec 2013.

- Additional funding has been secured via the WG's Regional Collaboration Fund until Dec 2015.
- The RLP is pursuing the formalisation of its governance structure. Draft articles of association to support the establishment of a company limited by guarantee structure are being considered by the RLP Strategy Group.
- The RLP has been tasked by the WG to develop a Regional Delivery Plan for Employment and Skills for central and south west Wales. The first draft is to be developed by January 2014.

Delivery Issues:

- No issues

Outputs:	Achieved to June 2012	Target by end of project
Collaborative agreements between public service bodies	5	8
Dissemination initiatives	31	25
Initiatives to support Local Service Board development	4	5
Organisational learning and development strategies	2	4
Secondment placements	8	3

Bwcabus Led by Carmarthenshire County Council *together with Ceredigion CC*

Total Cost £3,548,999

Grant: £1,847,751k

Aim: The BWCABUS will provide demand responsive transport solutions for rural north Carmarthenshire and south Ceredigion. Utilising new technologies the service will provide more effective and efficient integrated rural public transport network.

Start: December 2008 End: 31 March 2015 (Activity ceases 31 December 2014)

Progress:

- Bwcabus celebrates its fourth birthday next month and has moved forward considerably. Since the project commenced, Bwcabus has carried over 64,383 passenger journeys, covered 475,171 miles and over 2,000 registered users.
- Following public consultation a number of changes have been made to the service. We will shortly be launching a new booking software system, which will improve the efficiency of the process to members of the public. Call centre agents has visited the area to familiarise and gain better knowledge of the area. A new specialist customer service team has been introduced to ensure Bwcabus customers receive a high quality and efficient service.
- A number of community events have been and will be attended over the forthcoming months to further promote the service. In addition a number of presentations have been undertaken.
- Bwcabus has engaged with local organisations and accommodation providers and will continue to work closely with these organisations. New infrastructure has been installed to enable further marketing.
- Bwcabus is currently undertaking a midterm evaluation, which is due for completion in the next few weeks.
- A reprofile exercise is currently being undertaken with WEFO and the project will commence its annual audit shortly.

Outputs:	Achieved to July 2012 claim	Target by end of project
Public transport services created or improved	1	1
Gross passenger kilometres on public transport	475,171	780,338
Gross jobs created	3	5

South West Wales Strategic Employment Property Development Fund

Led by: Carmarthenshire County Council (*together with City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot CBC and Pembrokeshire CC*)

Total Cost: £19,494,793 Grant: £10,001,451

Aim: To provide grant aid to developers to bridge the gap between the cost of providing or refurbishing commercial property and its subsequent market value, within the region's identified strategic employment locations.

Start: July 2009 End: July 2015

Progress:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole of the £9m fund has been committed to 10 projects. • The following five projects have achieved Practical Completion; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Llys Aur, Dafen ➤ Plot 12 Thornton, Milford Haven ➤ Quayside, Carmarthen ➤ Regents House, Llangennech ➤ Harbourside R & D Village, Port Talbot. Llewellyn House on the Harbourside Development, has achieved a BREEAM score of 80.84%, which is currently the highest BREEAM 2011 Post Construction Rating in the UK. • Three projects have recently received Planning Consent and are due to start on site in the next couple of months. The remaining two projects are scheduled to be on site before the end of 2013. • The funding committed will result in the development of 15,184 sq m of additional businesses premises to be created in South West Wales accommodating more than 560 jobs. The project will develop 6.11 hectares of land. • The project is fully committed and a reserve list of projects requiring circa £7 million has been assembled to demonstrate to the Welsh European Funding Office the need for further funding should funding become available via the Convergence programme. 		
Outputs:	Achieved to June 2013	Target by end of project
SMEs accommodated	6	26
Land developed	0.24 Ha	5.00 Ha
Premises created or refurbished	1,365 m ²	13,966 m ²
Jobs accommodated	51	456

Collaborative Communities

Led by Carmarthenshire County Council (*together with Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services, Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service, Neath Port Talbot CBC, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services, Pembrokeshire CC, Swansea Council for Voluntary Service and the City and County of Swansea*)

Total Cost £5,117,682 Grant: £4,151,418

Aim: To support the development of social/community enterprise across the four counties. Developmental support is provided to both emerging and existing social / community enterprises, combined with a targeted finance package of over £1.3m over the duration of the project to assist with developmental costs of the social enterprises.

Start: July 2009 End: Dec 2013

Progress :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 329 organisations have now been supported with over 7 hours of support since the project began. • An additional 344 groups have been or are currently being assisted in the region, many of which will be claimed in future reports. • The Targeted Finance Package has offered capital / revenue funding to 29 organisations. • Final TFP funds will be awarded at the panel in August. • WEFO have verbally agreed an extension to the project to Sept 2014. This will include re-profiling existing funds and provide additional outputs to those originally set. The intention is to extend the

project for six months to end of June 14 for the whole team, and allowing for an additional three-month project closure period.

Delivery Issues:

- None

Outputs:	Achieved to March 2013 claim	Target by end of project
Organisations assisted	329	400
Organisations financially supported	29	10
Gross jobs created	57.03 FTE	200 FTE
Social enterprises created	11	30
Organisations adopting and implementing Environmental Action Plans	23	40
Organisations adopting or improving equality strategies and monitoring systems	13	20
People accessing services	24,764	25000

Workways

Led by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (together with *Carmarthenshire CC, Pembrokeshire CC and City & County of Swansea*)

Total Cost £22m

Grant: £17.4m

Aim: The project will provide a gateway for economically inactive and unemployed in the South West to assist their transition from benefits to employment. This will be facilitated via mentors and employment liaison officers combined with a menu of provision which will include, work placements, temporary jobs, and volunteering opportunities.

Start: April 2009 End: March 2014

Progress:

The South West Workways Project is progressing well in achieving Job outcomes, currently able to report 42% of project leavers entering employment.

A re-profile has been submitted to include the finance and outputs profile for Workways Bridgend and an extension request to June 2014.

Outputs:

Description	Achieved to June 2013	Target by end of project
Project Participants	9601	12204
Entered Further learning	61	244
Gained a qualification	573	1099
Other positive outcomes	4051	4272
Entered Employment	3633	4272