

Question	North Wales Regional Skills Partnership	Cardiff Capital Region Employment and Skills Board	Regional Learning and Skills Partnership: South West and Mid Wales
<p>Is the data and evidence being used by the RSP timely, valid and reliable? Have there been any issues?</p>	<p>The data used by the RSP is based on recognised sources e.g. NOMIS, EMSI. LMI around key sectors and growth sectors is accurate and timely. The RSP employ 2 researchers who review and update the information on an annual basis. The RSP also make use of our Career Check data e.g. career aspirations of young people were considered in a report on construction skill supply in the region.</p> <p>There are some instances where actions have been based on possible assumptions or individuals influence which are not necessarily accurate e.g. a need for a cross border careers service. There is evidence of cross-border working and migration – but not evidence of the need for a cross border service. (This action appeared in the skills plan without any consultation with Careers Wales - 2016)</p>	<p>Data and evidence would appear to be current and comprehensive, especially on LMI and priority sectors.</p> <p>There are some issues or key actions identified in the Employment & Skills plan which need better evidence from/or primary research from learners and/or service users. For example, for several years in SE Wales access to better ‘careers support’ has been an area for improvement. Whilst there is some evidence of a mismatch between subject choice and growth sectors, there doesn’t appear to be any specific supporting evidence from individuals receiving ‘careers support’ from the wide range of stakeholders involved in this complex area of work.</p>	<p>Data and evidence would appear to be comprehensive and reliable. The RLSP in the West and Mid region has a dedicated team of data/Management Information specialists who mine data from a range of sources including NOMIS.</p> <p>They also incorporate a lot of local and regional sectoral information from the sector- based groups that are all led by and comprised of employers within those sectors.</p>
<p>How well do the partnerships engage with and take into account the views of those who do not sit on the partnership boards, and how well do they account for the skills providers themselves?</p>	<p>There is a lack of employer engagement or employer ‘voice’ in the partnership and more of a focus on FE and HE sectors.</p> <p>The RSP does consult with the Chamber of Commerce but we are unclear as to how much ‘real’ input there is from employers in the region.</p>	<p>The board has a diverse range of representatives and appear to be open to new members where value can be added.</p> <p>There are also a range of sub-groups with more specialist representation and a range of surveys</p>	<p>The RLSP reorganised 18 months ago in order to specifically incorporate more employers and to improve employer voice within the partnership.</p>

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	<p>The RSP is aware of this issue and are working to address it.</p>	<p>have been used to gather opinion from a wider audience.</p>	<p>The partnership is now comprised of the strategic board and a number of 'cluster' groups which include employers whose chairs sit on the strategic board. This has greatly improved engagement with employers and employer groups.</p> <p>There is also a 'partnership cluster group' where other stakeholders can input into the work of the RLSP.</p> <p>The RLSP manager has undertaken meetings or presentations at most of the local secondary schools and with other stakeholder groups.</p>
<p>How do the key city and growth deal roles of the RSPs influence their Welsh Government remit?</p>	<p>The North Wales Growth Deal has been a driver for developments over the last 2 - 3 years and there seems to be synergy between the RSP and the Growth Deal in terms of Key aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart North Wales • Resilient North Wales • Connected North Wales <p>Developments this year (2019) will see the employees who work for the RSP being transferred over to the newly established Programme Office.</p>	<p>The CCR 'City Deal' has resulted in some governance issues in terms of the Welsh Government requirements of 'RSPs', but these appear to have been overcome through the CCR structure.</p>	<p>The RLSP engages very closely with the Swansea Bay City Deal and Growing Mid Wales and these are regular topics on the strategic board agenda.</p> <p>Representatives from City Deal attend board meetings and provide links and feedback</p>

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<p>Are the RSPs able to reflect current and future skills demand within their regions? What about very specialised skills for which there may be low volumes of demand?</p>	<p>The annual skills and employment plan is very detailed and outlines clearly areas of skills shortages and growth. However, there hasn't been much focus on low volume demand.</p>	<p>The data included in the CCR Employment & Skills plan appears to be very comprehensive and at a level of detail to effectively inform planning e.g. specific numbers on FE courses versus requirements.</p>	<p>The annual skills and employment plan is very detailed and outlines clearly areas of skills shortages and growth.</p> <p>For the past 2 years, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on using sector employers to help gauge demands and shortages. The difficulty with that is that it can sometimes be anecdotal and subject to challenge.</p>
<p>Do the RSP have sufficient knowledge and understanding of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational economy and the needs of those employed in it and • The demand for skills provision through the medium of Welsh 	<p>Not aware of any shortcomings.</p> <p>The North Wales RSP was the first to publish a report on the skills shortage for Welsh language in the workplace.</p>	<p>Not aware of any shortcomings.</p>	<p>Not aware of any shortcomings.</p> <p>The partnership regularly discusses the importance of the foundation economy in its board meetings and this is discussed in the annual plans.</p>
<p>Are the RSPs adequately resourced to fulfil their growing role?</p>	<p>The RSP is supported by a small team of employees. a Project Manager, Senior Researcher, ESF officer and a researcher. They rely heavily on sub-groups and volunteers to work on task and finish groups to achieve some of their goals.</p>	<p>This has been a problem in recent years. For example, the partnership in SE Wales was based on T&F groups to take forward the key actions from the Employment and Skills plan, however, the group on <i>Careers, Schools and</i></p>	<p>The current team of 4 maintain all the work relating to the RLSP and this is a reduced team to that of previous years.</p> <p>The team manages the bulk of the work between them but also have to rely on the</p>

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	<p>As stated above employed staff will soon be transferred to the Programme Office as part of the Growth Deal. We are not in a position to comment on the impact of this move and whether there will continue to be enough resource to support the RSP.</p>	<p><i>Opportunities</i> was only recently established and the delay was essentially based on lack of resource.</p> <p>As a result for several years improving 'careers support' was identified as an area to be strengthened, but without a mechanism for doing so.</p> <p>This was problematic because setting out a plan to ensure that careers advisers, teachers and employers work together to provide the appropriate level of careers education, work related experiences and specific advice and guidance is potentially a very detailed piece of work.</p> <p>The sub-group is now operational and through the City Deal there does appear to be more support in terms of staffing. That said, the 'Skills for the Future' proposal, which seeks to improve employer engagement with schools amongst other things, has been subject to significant delay.</p>	<p>sub-groups (sector cluster groups) and other volunteers to work on tasks..</p>

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Is there an appropriate balance between the work of the RSPs and wider views on skills demand?	<p>The work of the RSP reflect in the main the wider view, there does not appear to be any conflicting messages or agendas within the region.</p> <p>However, there are numerous sub-groups working across the region and at times it is difficult to know what is being implemented and what outcomes are being achieved. This has been raised in RSP meetings and issue of communication is being addressed.</p>	The discussions at skills board are in the main very strategic and broad ranging.	<p>Discussions at Strategic boards can be very lively with a wide range of views on skills demands, there is a good balance.</p> <p>The views of employers are far more prominent than they have been in the past and this has been a positive change with very challenging questions being posed to learning providers and the other support agencies around the table.</p> <p>Views taken from the sector cluster groups are represented at board and any conflict or dissent is addressed appropriately.</p>
Is the level of operational detail set out by Welsh Government for skills provision in higher/further education and work based learning provision appropriate?	From a Careers Wales perspective, the guidance appears clear.		
If there are any, how are tensions between learner demand/learner progression reconciled with RSP conclusions and the Welsh Governments preference for funding higher level skills?	Representation on the group from some of the sectors that represent foundation industries challenge the perception of higher skills being a priority and the RSP recognises this as a challenge for the region.	Desire to fund higher level skills to drive GVA is clearly understood. However, whilst 'tension' may not be the most appropriate description, there is perhaps too much focus on priority sectors and not	The balance between supporting the development and promotion of higher level skills and meeting the ongoing needs and demands of the foundation economy is a challenge.

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	<p>There is a lot of focus on the high- level developments within energy, technology and advanced manufacturing however, the RSP recognises the need to support the industries that rely heavily on foundation skills. They are currently supporting a project to raise awareness of primary school children of opportunities.</p>	<p>enough on the foundation economy.</p> <p>Everybody recognises the likely impact of Industry 4.0, but not all learners have the capacity or drive to aspire to higher level skilled jobs and unless the balance is achieved the impact could be an increase in the NEET population.</p>	<p>However, this is discussed openly in meetings and the partnership endeavours to raise the profile of both.</p>
<p>Have the RSP and Welsh Government been able to stimulate changes in skills provision on the ground to reflect demand?</p>	<p>Whilst the data on priority sectors appears to be strong, it is debatable as to whether this has led to the sort of changes in provision that it was hoped.</p> <p>Some work has been carried out with major employers e.g. Berwyn Prison, a clear employment plan was put in place with key partners working to ensure that local people were aware of the skills demand and opportunities.</p> <p>There is a similar plan for Wylfa however, due to recent challenges it is on hold.</p> <p>Work is also being carried out with the 2 FE colleges in the region to review provision and to secure funding for additional courses to meet identified need.</p>	<p>Whilst the data on priority sectors appears to be strong, it is debatable as to whether this has led to the sort of changes in provision that it was hoped.</p> <p>This should be reflected in funding arrangements/ course provision. FEIs and other providers do appear to be required to report in more detail on courses that exceed tolerance levels.</p>	<p>Whilst the data on priority sectors appears to be strong, it is debatable as to whether this has led to the sort of changes in provision that it was hoped.</p> <p>The exclusion of 6th form provision and Higher Education is a gap that needs to be addressed in terms of addressing comprehensive changes on the ground.</p>

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<p>What in general is working well and what evidence of success and impact is there?</p>	<p>The impact for young people, adults and the economy are not always clear.</p> <p>The brand #TeamNorthWales is recognised across the region.</p> <p>What is lacking is the 'so what' - what is the impact on the skills agenda?</p>	<p>The impact for young people, adults and the economy are not always clear</p>	<p>The impact for young people, adults and the economy are not always clear.</p> <p>Improved employer consultation and influence is very apparent.</p>
<p>Are there any aspects of the policy that are not working well, have there been any unintended consequences, and what improvements have been made?</p>	<p>There have been occasions where key national developments have been duplicated in regional plans e.g. the employability plans.</p> <p>This has now been addressed with Working Wales and Regional partners working together on developing a collaborative model.</p>	<p>There have been occasions where key national developments have been duplicated in regional plans e.g. the employability plans</p>	<p>There are still some tensions in relation to the size of the partnership and its ability to equally represent the skills needs of a rural and diverse geography such as Mid Wales whilst balancing the priority afforded to some of the bigger capital projects in the City deal.</p>