



31 JULY 2023

ENGAGEMENT WITH REGIONAL HIGHER & FURTHER EDUCATION

REPORT OF CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION ACTING DIRECTOR

AGENDA ITEM: 6

Appendices 1-3 to this report are exempt from publication because they contain such information as described in paragraphs 14 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person) and 21 (public interest test) of sections 4 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

Reason for this Report

1. To set out the proposed Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) approach to collaboration with regional Higher and Further Education Institutions and, if appropriate, approve substantially the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with each institution.

Background & Context

2. As identified in the Regional Economic & Industrial Plan, CCR has a key objective to be a competitive region. Innovation-led growth is central to the plan, and this will be achieved by identifying and developing our areas of competitive strength, allied to collaborating with industry and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
3. The plan also identifies key indicators in regard to this, including performance in R&D rankings; UKRI and other public sector grants awarded and research power for regional HEIs. While there has been progress, Wales continues to lag behind in terms of performance.
4. Data for CCR is being developed as part of improvements to Monitoring & Evaluation and the Gateway Review process. Per 2020-21 UKRI data, the total amount of R&I funding to Wales in 2022-23 was £89m, equivalent to £30 per person or 0.1% of local GVA. Both Scotland (£85 per person and 0.3% of local GVA) and Northern Ireland (£33 per person and 0.2% of local GVA) out-perform Wales in this regard.

5. There is also a need to further develop complementarity between HEIs in regard to funding calls and developing projects that fuel regional competitiveness. There have been significant successes – for example, Cardiff University and University of South Wales (USW) successfully collaborated on the Media Cymru/ Strength in Places bid and the Cyber Innovation Hub project. However, there have been recent examples that highlight the lack of clarity around relative strengths and priorities.
6. Likewise, the REIP sets out a clear ambition to convene an industry-led series of skills and employability interventions that improve opportunities for people across the region. This implicitly requires alignment with regional provision, including Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE).
7. There are currently some successful examples of business engagement with academia in the region, but data suggests that these tend to be focussed on primes and that penetration is less successful with the SME community. CCR has an ambition to improve penetration in this area and to increase opportunities for commercialisation and innovation-led business growth.
8. Given the concentration of HEIs in Cardiff, there is also a recognition that the wider region must realise the benefits of cooperative working. CCR has a key role to play in ensuring that HEIs embrace the regional growth agenda and that civic commitments to inclusivity and sustainability are at the heart of new and emerging initiatives.
9. USW successfully led a collaborative bid to form a South Wales Civic Engagement Partnership (SWCEP). CCR are members of this Partnership, alongside Cardiff University (CU), Cardiff Metropolitan University (CMU) and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD) and FE partners including Merthyr Tydfil, Coleg Gwent, Cardiff and Vale College, Coleg Y Cymoedd and Bridgend College.
10. This seeks to build on existing relationships in terms of civic engagement resulting in a strategic approach to delivering civic mission activities in the region, including enhancing links between higher education and further education to support transitions, well-being and health, student hardship, skills, knowledge transfer and innovation.
11. CCR will work with SWCEP partners with the intention of developing an overarching civic agreement for the region.
12. While there is HE & FE representation across selected CCR Governance and Advisory Boards, there are no formal arrangements in place for CCR collaboration with HE or FE in relation to specific Research, Development & Innovation (R,D & I), and skills & employability provision.

Institution-specific Memorandum of Understanding

13. Over and above the excellent work of SWCEP, CCR initiated discussions with Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and University of South Wales

on developing institution-specific MoUs that align with the competitive ambitions of CCR.

14. This will allow CCR to resource and develop specific bids and projects with, and across, HE & FE through a framework of future collaboration. The MoUs will be agreed with CU, CMU and USW. The agreement with USW will also cover FE Colleges, including Merthyr Tydfil, Coleg Gwent, Cardiff and Vale College, Coleg Y Cymoedd and Bridgend College.
15. At an early stage the MoUs will focus on forming a framework for future collaboration. The framework will be based on:
 - Formation of a partnership to initiate and oversee collaborations;
 - the identification of subject-specific areas that may result in collaborative programmes between CCR and the institutions;
 - the establishment of resources, systems and procedures in order to support, administer and sustain collaborations;
 - opportunities for commercialisation and business engagement;
 - collaboration in teaching, learning, research and knowledge transfer that are beneficial to the institutions and the region;
 - advocacy with UKRI, UK & Welsh Governments;
 - staff development and training for staff; and,
 - marketing and promotional activities.
16. In terms of specific areas of focus, the MoUs highlight potential areas of focus for each institution but this will be defined and a lightweight forward delivery plan produced for each. This will identify potential quick wins; aligned priority areas; and potential areas for future investment.
17. There will be reporting and alignment with SWCEP on a regular basis, highlighting priorities and initiatives. Likewise, CCR will ensure that cluster organisations, such as FinTech Wales and CSConnected, are engaged in the development of plans and can leverage opportunities.
18. MoUs for each of the three are appended to this paper (**Appendices 2 – 4**). It is the intention that each will be signed by the relevant Vice Chancellors (VCs) and selected Regional Cabinet members.
19. Progress reports will be made to Regional Cabinet on an annual basis or on an as-needed basis for significant initiatives.

Reasons for Recommendations

20. Regional alignment with HE & FE is an identified area of need for CCR and the agreement of MoUs, allied to the work of SWCEP, is a significant step forward in this area.
21. As noted in the REIP Delivery Plan, the activity will enable achievement of Key Performance Indicators, such as leveraging R,D & I funding to the region.

Financial Implications

22. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
23. Any future reports in relation to the proposed MoUs and in respect of funding decisions impacting on the Cardiff Capital Region Wider Investment Fund will be brought forward to future Regional Cabinet meetings.

Legal Implications

24. The MoUs are undergoing final assessment and approval for signing by CCR's legal advisors, Pinsent Masons. Legal advice should be sought before entering into any further MoUs.
25. All future investment proposals that arise as a result of collaborations with HE & FE that may leverage the Wider Investment Fund will need to be subject to a full business case that complies with the requirements of HM Treasury Green Book.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

26. In considering its endorsement of this report the Regional Cabinet must have regard to, amongst other matters:
 - (a) the obligations set out in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.
 - (b) the public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties, when making decisions, public bodies must have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics, which are set out in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010.
 - (c) the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and is globally responsible. In discharging their respective duties under the Act, each public body listed in the Act (which includes the Councils comprising the CCRC) must set and published wellbeing objectives. These objectives will show how each public body will work to achieve the vision for Wales set out in the national wellbeing goals. When exercising its functions, the Regional Cabinet should consider how the proposed decision will contribute towards meeting the wellbeing objectives and in so doing achieve the national well-being goals.
27. The well-being duty also requires the CCRC to act in accordance with a 'sustainable development principle'. This principle requires CCRC to act in a

way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Put simply, this means that Regional Cabinet must take account of the impact of their decisions on people living their lives in Wales in the future. In doing so, Regional Cabinet must:

- look to the long term;
- focus on prevention by understanding the root causes of problems;
- deliver an integrated approach to achieving the 7 well-being goals;
- work in collaboration with others to find shared sustainable solutions;
- involve people from all sections of the community in the decisions which affect them.

28. Regional Cabinet must be satisfied that the proposed decision accords with the principles above. To assist Regional Cabinet to consider the duties under the Act in respect of the decision sought, an assessment has been undertaken, which is attached at Appendix 4.

Equality Act 2010

29. In considering this matter, regard should be had, amongst other matters, to the Councils' duties under the Equality Act 2010. Pursuant to these legal duties the Regional Cabinet must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are:

- age;
- gender reassignment;
- sex;
- race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality;
- disability;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief – including lack of belief.

RECOMMENDATIONS

30. It is recommended that the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet:

- (1) notes and approves the proposed approach to formal engagement with HEIs and FEIs in the region;
- (2) approves substantially each of the Memorandums of Understanding (attached to this report) subject to minor amendments.

Rhys Thomas
Acting Director
Cardiff Capital Region
31 July 2023

Colan Mehaffey
Head of Digital & Data Innovation

Appendices

Appendices 1-3 to this report are exempt from publication because they contain such information as described in paragraphs 14 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person) and 21 (public interest test) of sections 4 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

EXEMPT Appendix 1 MoU with Cardiff Metropolitan University
EXEMPT Appendix 2 MoU with University of South Wales
EXEMPT Appendix 3 MoU with Cardiff University
Appendix 4 Well-being of Future Generations Assessment

Future Generations Assessment Evaluation

(includes Equalities and Sustainability Impact Assessments)




<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation:</p> <p>Rhys Thomas</p> <p>E-mail: Rhys.Thomas@cardiff.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>Engagement with Higher & Further Education Institutions</p>
<p>Proposal: Engagement with Higher & Further Education Institutions</p>	<p>Date Future Generations Evaluation form completed: 31 July 2023</p>



1. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Strategic partnerships with HE & FE institutions are central to CCR's cluster approach and economic ambitions.</p>	<p>Defining specific institution-specific activities with CCR</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>Strategic partnerships with HE & FE are highlighted within CCR's Regional Economic & Industrial Plan.</p>	<p>MoUs will be developed further in to specific activities with HE & FE.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/a</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>Several CCR LAs and their associated communities have HE or FE institution relationships or direct dependencies.</p>	<p>This will be discussed further as the MoUs are developed.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	HE & FE institutions are critical to global ambitions for the region.	As the work progresses on the MoUs, the opportunity will be taken to draw work together with that ongoing around the REIP.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	HE & FE have statutory obligations in terms of Welsh-language provision.	.
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	EDI are at the heart of HE & FE policy, both at a Welsh Government and UK Government policy level.	To be assessed further dependent on specific activities.

2. How has your proposal embedded and prioritized the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 Long Term Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future	Alignment with the HE & FE is critical for the medium to long-term ambitions of the region in generating inclusive growth outcomes.	
 Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	HE & FE MoUs will involve alignment across the three layers of Government and CCR must lead in that regard	
 Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views	Citizen engagement will be considered in specific activities	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><small>Prevention</small></p>	HE & FE alignment is an important part of regional growth plans and will target employment for citizens in areas of deprivation.	
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p><small>Integration</small></p>	Having an overview of all areas of the HE & FE activity enables wellbeing goals and objectives to be considered in the round.	

3. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The proposal is the development of MoUs and, as such, is not a direct activity at this stage.	None arising at this time.	
Disability	As above	As above	
Gender reassignment	As above	As above	
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	As above	
Pregnancy or maternity	As above		
Race	As above		
Religion or Belief	As above		
Sex	As above.		
Sexual Orientation	As above		

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Welsh Language	As above	Not at this time but the situation will be kept under review.	

4. Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting. Are your proposals going to affect either of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Not directly relevant		
Corporate Parenting	Not directly relevant		

5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

- HE & FE strategies
- CCR Regional Economic & Industrial Plan

6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The main positives are to do with a more professional approach to risk and embedding key principles of ED&I, ESG and sustainability. This will be an ongoing approach but it is clear that as the city deal transitions into a city region – the approach needs to flex and develop to be fit for future requirements.

7. MONITORING: The impacts of this proposal will need to be monitored and reviewed. Please specify the date at which you will evaluate the impact, and where you will report the results of the review.

The impacts of this proposal will be evaluated on:	Q1 2024/25
--	------------