

A Digital Vision for the Valleys

The two schemes were put forward as part of a digital vision for the Valleys at the latest taskforce meeting in the Dulais Valley earlier this week.

One of the priorities in Our Valleys, Our Future, the delivery plan for the Ministerial Taskforce for the South Wales Valleys, is to develop a digital vision for the Valleys, by working with communities, to identify how technology can be used to deliver better outcomes for people living and working there.

Some of the proposals being considered are;

- An Uber-style app for patients who need to travel to hospital for appointments and treatment, which would bring together all providers of community transport;
- A community WiFi scheme, encouraging existing community hubs to open up their WiFi to local people;
- Investigating better use of the online data mapping tool Lle.

At the latest taskforce meeting, held at the Dove Workshop in Banwen, members approved plans for pilot schemes for each of these proposals.

Leader of the House and Chief Whip Julie James, who is also the Welsh Government lead on digital infrastructure and inclusion, said:

“Wales has always punched above its weight on the world stage in terms of digital innovation and the South Wales region in particular has a high concentration of successful digital companies, as well as university expertise in the sector. The taskforce has a really important role to play in ensuring these successes benefit Valleys communities.

“I look forward to seeing how the schemes we’ve agreed to pilot in the Valleys – which have been developed in response to local feedback – can improve the lives of people living and working here, as well as the economic prosperity of the area.”

Ann Beynon, who leads the delivery of digital elements of Our Valleys, Our Future, added:

“We are supremely aware of the rapid advancement of digital technology across the globe and how it is transforming the ways in which we live, work and socialise.

“Our challenge is to apply that to our own lived experience and to channel it to drive tangible benefits.

“South Wales has a vibrant digital sector which is growing in strength. It is supported by digital skills and training plans developed by the Learning and Skills Council working with local employers and training providers and by significant government investment in digital infrastructure.

“We are determined to tap into the wealth of knowledge available to us and to exploit that investment as we develop the vision for a future digital Valleys.”