

Economy Secretary sets out changes to governance arrangements for Wales' Enterprise Zones

During his appearance at the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee, Ken Skates announced the conclusions of his review of the governance of Wales' Enterprise Zones while stressing his commitment to the continuation of all eight of the zones.

Speaking after Committee, Ken Skates said:

I am very proud of the achievements and success of our Enterprise Zones and grateful for the hard work and commitment of the Chairs and Advisory Boards in driving their success.

Collectively our Enterprise Zones supported over 10,700 jobs to the end of the last financial year at a cost per job of less than £6k per job, and whilst the pace of delivery has varied between the Zones, this very much reflects each Zone's economic context and starting position.

All eight Enterprise Zones have made significant progress, and are continuing to deliver value for money by laying the foundation for future prosperity and creating the right environment to support the development of sustainable job opportunities in communities right across Wales, both in the short and longer term.

And this is something that is very much in line with the focus of my recently launched Economic Action Plan, which seeks to empower all our regions in Wales to become more productive.

Projects such as the Advanced Manufacturing Research Institute on Deeside, which will deliver game changing skills and innovation support to business – and Tech Valleys, which will lead the development and delivery of emerging technologies in Ebbw Vale, very much support that commitment to regional empowerment and have emerged from the work of the Boards. They will only add to the Zones' reputation for delivery.

The changes I have outlined today are about streamlining bureaucracy and utilising other governance structures where I believe that represents the most sensible way forward. They have also been made as part of a wider review of advisory architecture across my portfolio.

The views of the Chairs of the Enterprise Zones have been invaluable in shaping my decisions and I am pleased to have their broad support for the changes.