

New partnership with Heathrow puts Wales on flightpath to growth

The Strategic Partnership will be signed in Cardiff by First Minister Carwyn Jones and Lord Paul Deighton, Chairman of Heathrow Airport Ltd, which marks the start of a close working relationship between both parties.

Top of the agenda is ensuring Heathrow expansion maximises job creation in Wales. Set to be Europe's largest privately-funded infrastructure project, an expanded Heathrow will need extensive support from UK manufacturers and SMEs to deliver the project on time and on budget.

This partnership opens up new business opportunities in Wales as Heathrow, which invests more than £1bn a year at its site, wants to broaden its supply chain to support demand.

The First Minister said:

"This Strategic Partnership is very welcome and I am delighted the Welsh Government and Heathrow Airport will be working closely together for our mutual benefit.

"It opens the door to explore a wide range of new opportunities particularly for our existing supply chain companies that have the experience and expertise to support infrastructure projects at Heathrow. I would certainly like to see a far higher percentage spend in Wales and the Welsh Government will do all it can to support companies in Wales to bid and win more business at Heathrow.

"I am also pleased to announce that plans are already underway to host the first Heathrow business summit in Wales, where our supply chain companies will have the chance to meet and discuss opportunities with Heathrow's procurement team.

"It certainly marks a great start for this new relationship and there are very many other areas we are keen to explore with Heathrow Airport."

Heathrow Chairman Lord Paul Deighton said:

"I want to ensure that every corner of Britain benefits from Heathrow expansion. This strategic partnership will bring us closer to Wales and help us to deliver an expanded Heathrow.

"A new Heathrow runway will unlock up to 8,400 new skilled jobs and underpin up to £6.4bn in growth from construction through to

increased tourism and exports for Wales. This new partnership is a sign of our commitment to ensuring Heathrow expansion delivers tangible benefits for every corner of Britain and we are looking forward to working closely with the Welsh Government and Welsh businesses to make it a success.”

Areas of mutual co-operation and delivery identified in the Strategic Partnership include:

- broadening and seeking new supply chain opportunities in Wales to help meet the operational objectives of Heathrow Airport
- exploring the possibility of locating off site manufacturing logistic hubs in Wales to support delivery for the 3rd runway
- explore the eligibility of funding for potential flights between Wales and Heathrow to be funded through the proposed Heathrow Route Development Fund.

To encourage growth in its Welsh supplier base, Heathrow will host its first ever business summit in Wales on July 5th. Heathrow will bring its biggest suppliers to Cardiff City Stadium to welcome Welsh businesses of all sizes to one-on-one meetings providing a unique opportunity to secure contracts at the UK's largest airport.

Recognising the importance of connectivity in driving economic growth, the partnership includes a joint study into the benefits for Welsh businesses and tourists from reduced journey times. The agreement also confirms that airlines wishing to operate a route from Wales to Heathrow would be eligible to bid for start-up capital from the airport's £10m route development fund.