

Press release: Championing UK Government support for the North Wales economy

A raft of initiatives to boost economic growth in North Wales will be on the agenda today (16 March) as UK Government Minister Stuart Andrew visits the region to champion government support for the area's economy.

Mr Andrew will address business leaders at the CBI North Wales Committee meeting at Ruthin Castle where he will update on progress with the North Wales Growth Deal and challenge local companies to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the UK Government's Industrial Strategy.

The UK Government has already delivered the £1.2 billion Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and, last year, the Prime Minister signed the Swansea Bay City Region Deal.

It is now turning its attentions to delivering a growth deal for North Wales, working with local partners and the Welsh Government to identify the best way to strengthen the region's economy and make the most of its connections to the Northern Powerhouse.

The Growth Deal sets out a vision for the region with the aims of creating 5,300 jobs and attracting private sector investment to the value of £1bn in the region over the next 15 years.

UK Government Minister Stuart Andrew said:

From the engineering and manufacturing capabilities of businesses large and small to the research expertise of our colleges and universities, North Wales has long been an engine of the UK's economic prosperity.

The UK Government is doing all it can to support the region; whether that's by backing local leaders to create jobs and growth through the North Wales Growth Deal, rolling out superfast broadband to homes and businesses, or creating Industrial Strategy sector deals that capitalise on the area's strengths.

By taking clear and decisive action and giving direct support to companies and regions they can realise their growth potential and compete in the global economy.

The Minister will also use the meeting to update members on the Chancellor's Spring Statement and address the crucial aspect of cross border working and the benefits North Wales can draw from it to bring prosperity to the region.

He added:

The Northern Powerhouse, coupled with a growth deal represents our best chance to bring transformational change to North Wales – and cross border connectivity is crucial to achieving that aim.

The region is perfectly positioned to benefit from a lucrative export base and a reputation for big energy projects – making it a perfect partner for closer collaboration to expand the economy of the North.

The Minister's visit to North Wales will also see him visit two companies leading the way in groundbreaking design and engineering.

He will visit award winning engineering contractor, Jones Bros Civil Engineering UK in Ruthin. The family owned company was established as a small start-up in the 1950s and now employs almost 350 across the UK. It currently works on contracts in sectors including the construction of highways, flood and marine defence and energy projects around the UK. It has most recently won the contract to build the Brenig wind farm in Denbighshire.

He will then visit a company making a significant contribution to the UK's defence capability in St Asaph. Kent Periscopes is an international supplier of unity vision periscopes, vehicle sights and related equipment for armoured fighting vehicles.