

Press release: Welsh Secretary: Now is the time to deliver transformational change for the North Wales economy

- Budget commitment to a North Wales Growth Deal gives region the scope, the power and the resources to act.
- UK Government ambitions for cross-border working presents huge economic opportunities for the region.

Speaking at the Wrexham Business Professionals dinner, Mr Cairns will say that there are exciting times ahead for North Wales but that partnership working was crucial to best exploit cross-border opportunities, and the support offered through growth deals and the upcoming Industrial Strategy.

The speech comes 24-hours after the UK Government confirmed a series of Budget investments set to bring real growth opportunities to the North Wales region.

The UK Government has already delivered the £1.2 billion Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and, earlier this year, the Prime Minister signed the Swansea Bay City Region Deal. The Chancellor yesterday confirmed that he will now turn his attention to delivering a growth deal for North Wales and to consider the funding of specific projects.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The simple fact is that growth and city deals recognise that local people know their areas best. This is North Wales' opportunity to benefit from this movement and I'm delighted that we are in a position to look at the financial aspect of a deal for the region.

We will now look in detail at the proposals which draw on the strength of the east of Wales as a centre for advanced manufacturing and North West Wales for energy production and make the most of its connections to the Northern Powerhouse.

The Secretary of State will also address the crucial aspect of cross border working and the benefits North Wales can draw from it to bring prosperity to the region. He'll highlight the plans announced by the Chancellor for a number of potential rail schemes designed to improve journey times on the North Wales Main Line, as well as providing funding to explore proposals to improve journey times on the Wrexham to Bidston line.

He added:

Cross border connectivity is crucial. As we work towards a growth

deal for North Wales I am firmly focused on tapping into cross border opportunities – linking the proposed new power station on Anglesey to nuclear expertise in Manchester University and supporting advanced manufacturing on Deeside to benefit Toyota and Nissan investments in Sunderland and Derbyshire.

The UK Government is committed to strengthening the links between the economies of England and Wales. We will work with local authorities and local businesses on both sides of the border to encourage growth, investment and innovation to bring prosperity to all corners of our nation.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Wrexham Business Professionals group is made up of highly skilled professional firms of solicitors, accountants and other businesses working together to raise the profile of expertise that exists in the region and beyond.