

Establishment of Sub-Groups

Questions:

- Do you agree with the proposed **sub groups** and their proposed scope?
- Do you have comments on the **process for appointing representatives** to the sub groups?

Purpose and Scope

The Welsh Government is committed to co-producing with stakeholders a new regional investment approach to replace the EU Structural and Investment Funds once the UK leaves the EU.

The Regional Investment for Wales Steering Group will be the strategic and national mechanism for engagement with stakeholders, and will play a key role by discussing strategic issues and new ideas about policy direction and implementation approaches. The early discussions of the RIWSG are informing Cabinet discussions, which will lead to the development of a consultation document by the end of 2019. To support the detailed work required to prepare a consultation document, the establishment of a number of independent specialist sub groups are proposed to inform thinking and generate ideas around specific issues. These groups would be populated with relevant experts from different sectors.

Proposed sub groups, including suggested aims and coverage, are set out below. Arrangements will therefore need to be put in place as early as possible so sub-group meetings can be held regularly from June/July 2019 onwards; in order to inform a consultation document by the end of 2019 and subsequent development work in 2020.

A specific set out outputs for each sub group will be developed by the chair/secretariat as part of the terms of reference and ongoing review of progress. Other task-and-finish groups may also need to be established during the course of the work programme. Structured linkages, such as cross-membership and sharing papers, between each of the sub groups will ensure the seamless development of the overall framework. This will include:

- at the Regional Investment for Wales Steering Group
- in relation to the work of the OECD
- within other partnerships, including those involving the Chief Regional Officers and their regional teams
- through wider stakeholder engagement and consultation

Proposed Sub Groups

(1) National Framework Sub Group

These papers are provided for discussion purposes to inform Cabinet decisions and do not represent an agreed Welsh Government policy.

This group's main role will be to draft the consultation document and finalise the content of the new national investment framework for Wales. Suggested subject areas to be considered include evidence from socio-economic analysis and SWOT analysis; prioritisation of investment objectives and indicative activities; programme logic and rationale for intervention; coordination with regional plans; and regional targeting and concentration.

(2) Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Sub Group

This group will be responsible for overseeing analysis of research, monitoring information and evaluations to help inform an evidence-based regional investment framework for Wales. Subject areas the group may focus on could range from developing a national performance framework (measuring success/impact, indicators, targets, milestones, reviews), to national guidance (on data collection, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) to analysing lessons from thematic reviews, to exploring experimental designs/pilots around future investments/projects.

(3) Implementation / Delivery Sub Group

This group will be responsible for developing arrangements to ensure the effective delivery of the new national investment framework and regional investment plans. It will lead on the development of a common investment rulebook to provide a level and consistent playing field across the regions. Other subject areas could include a national assurance framework, IT systems and accessibility, coordination mechanisms between national-regional-local levels, or best practice for community led local development and the use of financial instruments.

(4) International / cross-border working Sub Group

This group's main aim will be to explore and build on influential engagement mechanisms and networks at a cross-border level, including with the UK, Ireland and worldwide. This should seek to ensure regional investment policy and its delivery arrangements maximise opportunities for regions to work together and share best practice to create positive, sustainable benefits for Wales. The aims may include mechanisms for combining different funding streams, cross-border coordination, and links to EU programmes and networks.

Membership arrangements

The sub-groups will be populated with relevant experts from different sectors, with the secretariat of each sub group responsible for seeking appropriate representation from within Welsh Government and external organisations.

Nominations for external representatives will be sought from the private, public, and third sectors (including via RIWSG, regional partnerships, thematic groups). Direct expressions of interest from individuals will also be considered, invited via cross-government web, e-newsletter and social media channels (including partners' mechanisms, such as Regional Engagement Team and 3-SET newsletters).

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In appointing members to the group, previous experience will be taken into account, as will the balance of membership from the private, public and third sectors, geographic location of members and diversity.

The progress and membership of the sub groups will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure they are representative of key interests and remain fit for purpose.

To ensure effective discussion and development, we would expect a maximum of 25 people to participate in each sub group. For the purposes of continuity during a busy development phase, the use of alternates will be discouraged and only permitted with the prior agreement of the sub-group chair.

Process and criteria for appointing sub-group members

Following the selection process, each secretariat will put together a recommended list of members for their sub group, for agreement with the relevant sub group chair. The following points will be taken into account:

- Experience of investment programmes and relevant policy
- Relevant specific experience as appropriate to each sub-group
- Balance of membership from public, private and third sectors
- Balance of geographical representation and diversity (including gender balance)

Where there are more suitable nominees than places available on the sub-group, a reserve list will be maintained to address changes in membership.

Meetings

The frequency of initial sub-group meetings is likely to be monthly throughout 2019 to inform the consultation document preparation. This will be kept under review.

The secretariat of each sub group will prepare notes and action points from the meetings. These will be reviewed at the subsequent meeting and shared with other sub groups to ensure seamless development of the investment framework overall. Cross-membership or presentations can support linkages. Summaries of the main issues addressed at each sub group meeting will also be co-ordinated to report progress to meetings of the Regional Investment Steering Group.

Confidentiality

Much of the content and discussions at the sub groups will represent early thinking on a range of topics. In this context, a degree of confidentiality will promote a more open and productive dialogue. The papers and discussions at the meetings will not be published and will be regarded as confidential unless otherwise advised. Developed papers will be escalated to the RIWSG and will be published as appropriate. The Chair/Secretariat will advise how papers can be circulated.

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