

Cydweithio i gael y gorau o'r ystad gyhoeddus
Working together to make the best use of the public estate

Property Collaboration Toolkit

Working together to make the best use of the Public Estate



Contents

1	The Benefits of Collaboration	3
2	A Background to Property Collaboration	24
3	Case Studies	25
	South Wales, Sharing Blue Light Assets	25
	Wrexham Ambulance and Fire Services Resource Centre	26
	Bridgend Joint Fleet Maintenance Facility	27
	Isle of Anglesey County Council	28
	Denbighshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	29
	Carmarthenshire County Council	30
	North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police Joint Estates & Facilities Department	31
	A One Public Estate Strategy in Blaenau Gwent County Council	32
	Natural Resources Wales and Swansea University	33
	Combined Services Centre, Parc Noyadd Park, Llandrindod Wells	34

1. The Benefits of Collaboration

1.1 Why Collaborate?

Put simply, collaboration leads to a more efficient delivery of public services. In this context, collaboration is necessary so that Public Sector Organisations can work together to contribute towards the *Seven Well-being Goals of Wales*.

More and more Local Authorities around the UK are using or acquiring assets to generate new or increased revenue income to protect front-line services. As pressure on Public Sector spending in Wales continues to grow, it is likely that this will become more prominent in the future.

The Welsh Government and Ystadau Cymru (YC) recognise that the effective use of Public Sector assets can contribute towards meeting financial targets and the delivery of services in a more effective and joined up way, which can deliver financial savings, and in some cases, create a better environment for service delivery. Ystadau Cymru supports innovation in the management of the Public Estate to improve service delivery.

In 2016, The Welsh Government commissioned the Cwm Tâf Pilot Study for its multi Public Sector representation, which includes two Local Authority administrations, and its socio-economic and geographical characteristics. The study reported in June 2017 and demonstrated that a strategic approach to property management-based collaboration across wider regional areas and organisational boundaries could provide significant opportunities.

1.2 Seven Steps to Successful Collaboration

Successful collaborations manage risks and break down potential barriers in order to maximise the benefits. The Cwm Tâf Pilot Study outlined seven steps to successful collaboration; they are:

1. A Shared Vision and Motivation

The Cwm Tâf Pilot Study showed a shared commitment and dedication to the *Seven Well-being Goals of Wales* – from The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales), 2015 – and created a Property Collaboration Board to deliver its objectives as a Public Service Board. It set four key success criteria for successful delivery:

- Creating economic growth;
- Delivering more integrated and customer-focussed services;
- Generating capital receipts; and
- Reducing running costs.

An additional criteria is also useful and relevant:

- Generating revenue income.

2. Committed Leadership

The leadership of the respective partner organisations must demonstrate commitment and support to the work of the Property Collaboration Board. Without this, collaboration will flounder and there will be a lack of confidence within the partnership to deliver the changes that are necessary.

The Property Collaboration Boards have a responsibility to keep their respective leaders informed. This can be through internal organisational briefings and reports to Regional Public Service Boards.

3. Sharing Benefits

Collaborative projects work best when the outcome is beneficial to partners or service users. This can include improvements to people's quality of life, for example, by releasing land for new homes, cost savings from sharing accommodation, or revenue income for the owner of the shared building. For example, the new joint Ambulance and Fire Resource Centre in Wrexham provides operational benefits to both services (read the case study for this project on page 26).

4. Embracing Change

Partners should embrace change if it leads to benefit. Partners can take the lead on a pilot project, help to develop and trial a new process, outline a successful approach that they have already implemented or report back on their participation in a conference or industry initiative, such as *Constructing Excellence Wales*. To deliver improved outcomes, best practice should be shared with the partnership.

5. Trust and Respect

Collaboration requires trust, which results from being open and honest with partners. Sharing information across the partnership is vital to its success and helps to set priorities and identify the quick wins and the biggest benefits or largest savings.

Partner organisations may have different values, cultures and ways of working and these differing perspectives should be received with mutual respect and understanding if collaboration is to work. It is important, therefore, that Property Collaboration Boards operate in a non-hierarchical way.

6. Relationship Building

Maintaining positive relationships with partners is always beneficial, but it can be complicated by issues such as competing interests or concerns about confidentiality. Open communication is important as it means that partners trust each other, which makes collaboration more likely.

Unlike the selection of external service providers and constructors, Public Sector Organisations cannot choose their partners, and in some cases, they will be unable to share potentially commercially sensitive information with each other in meetings. In these circumstances, an appreciation of this situation is essential, and there are a number of formal and informal ways to achieve good working relationships on both an organisational and an individual level, such as integrated teams, joint projects or information sharing.

Every Public Sector partner has the responsibility to select the best candidates for the Property Collaboration Board. The individuals should be able to demonstrate collaborative working behaviours, as well as contribute their skills, experience or expertise. They should also be empowered by their respective organisations to make decisions, but also recognise that the respective authority or the Welsh Government will need to make key strategic decisions.

7. Skills and Resources

The collaboration partnership will rely on expertise from colleagues and will need to consider finances, so it is essential that the ground rules for this are established. A commitment to undertake or get involved in activities or research between collaboration meetings will also be necessary.

1.3 What are the Benefits of Successful Collaboration?

When collaboration initiatives work at their best they deliver tangible benefits, which include:

New or Improved Services

Successful collaboration means that the public can receive better integrated services, which suit their lifestyle rather than being governed by the structures of the delivery organisations. This can be as simple as two service providers working together so that they can have a presence in more than one area. Alternatively, it can take the form of new Public Sector hubs where organisations collaborate to replace their existing assets which may no longer be fit for purpose with a new shared building.

Collaboration can also promote greater understanding and awareness between organisations. This can help Authorities to complement each other's efforts, providing a more systematic approach to service delivery which minimises inefficient duplication. For example, the new Emergency Services Station in Abertillery brings together all Blue Light Services and has enabled Gwent Police to re-establish a permanent base in the town following the closure of the police station (read the case study for this project on page 25).

Contributing to Culture Change

Organisations that do not collaborate can become insular and inward-looking. Collaboration provides a forum to share knowledge, information and best practice, which encourages a more outward-looking and innovative culture.

Developing and Implementing Best Practice

Collaborative initiatives enable all partners to deliver property services more efficiently and effectively and can include joint procurements, piloting new and innovative ways of working and developing standard documentation.

Increased Capacity and Mutual Support

Public Sector Organisations have varying levels of property, capacity, skills and expertise and through collaboration, these can be shared to achieve economies of scale and deliver better outcomes within limited resources.

Sharing the Risk

When organisations work together they can take risks that might not otherwise be possible, meaning that they can deliver more innovative projects and initiatives.

Financial Savings and Improved Efficiency

Some organisations have space in their properties, while others work in cramped, overcrowded and out of date premises. Collaborative property projects can provide the opportunity to maximise the use of Public Sector assets by sharing accommodation and implementing new, agile and flexible ways of working. The Bridgend Joint Fleet Maintenance Facility Project will improve efficiency in vehicle maintenance and generate future revenue savings and revenue income for Bridgend County Borough Council and South Wales Police (read the case study for this project on page 27).

1.4 Risks and Barriers to Successful Collaboration

Collaboration is not without its challenges, and we have included some of them below. By being aware of these potential challenges, you can learn how to manage them.

A Parochial Attitude

Collaboration between neighbouring areas can raise long-standing parochial differences which can get in the way of beneficial partnerships. It is important to distinguish between the pride that Local Authorities have for their areas and the benefits to their communities that might result from working in partnership with others.

A Lack of Capacity and Resources

Collaboration can increase capacity and resources, but this can create challenges for organisations where these are already limited. One of the main risks of collaboration is that outcomes sometimes do not justify the invested time and resources. Partnerships need to constantly assess their resources and make sure that they are used appropriately.

Innovation is Stifled

Strict adherence to standard procedures and documentation and a general resistance to change can stifle experimentation and innovation. Consistency and standardisation is only efficient when they are implemented effectively, and new systems, procedures and documentation should be considered as ways to develop continuous improvement.

Group Think

Strong personalities can dominate discussion, which can deter others from expressing a different perspective. This can result in a loss of engagement and the perception that the partnership is only of benefit to a limited number of partners.

Longer Decision Times

Project deadlines can be extended when there are a number of people who need be consulted as part of the decision process, but this can delay progress. It is possible to make quicker and more balanced decisions when partners are:

- fully engaged and working to a common purpose;
- empowered to make decisions by their organisations; and
- able to recognise the synergies and realise the knowledge and experience of their partners.

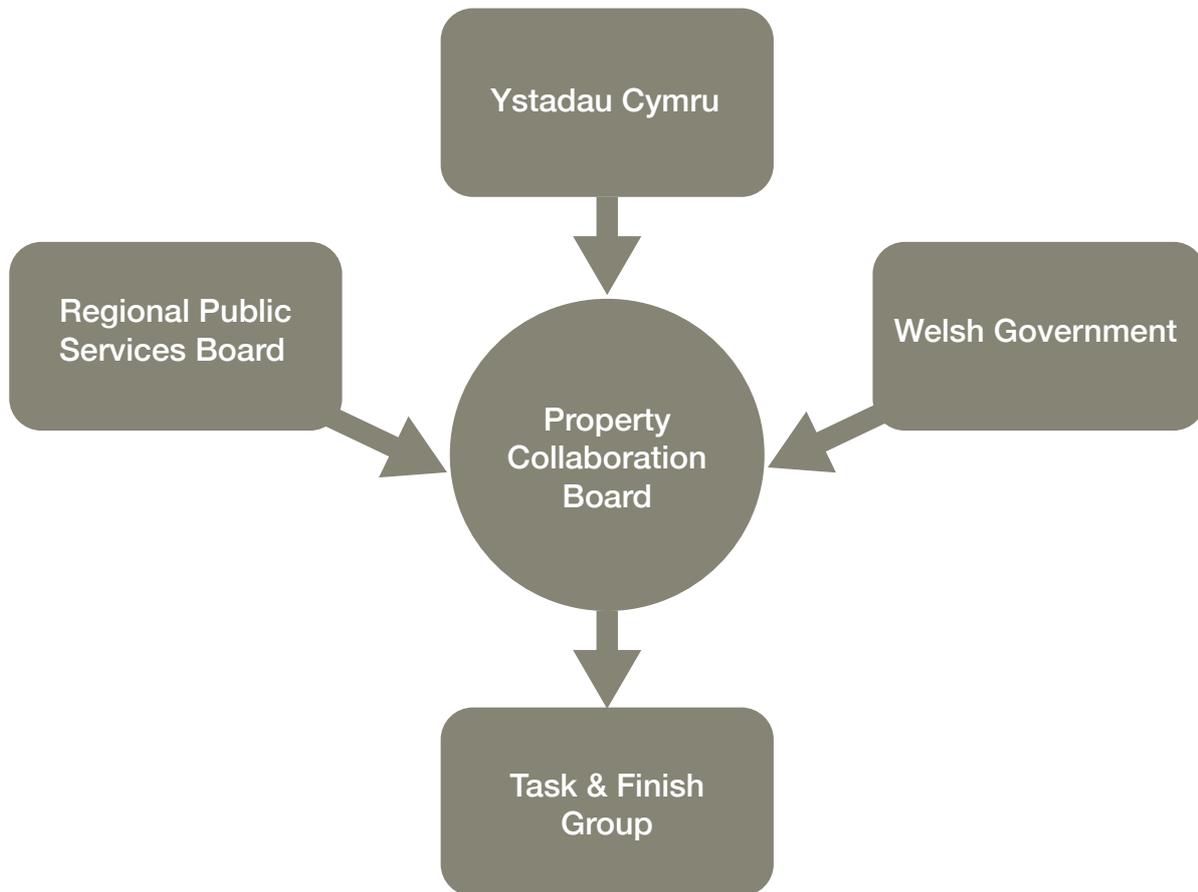
Inequality Perception

Collaboration is about working together to a common purpose and partners should keep in mind that asset collaboration will sometimes be of greater benefit to local communities than to partners. There might be an occasional imbalance in costs and benefits from individual asset collaboration projects, but overall, everyone will benefit, and acknowledging this should influence behaviour and decision-making.

1.5 Governance and Reporting Framework

The Cwm Tâf Pilot Study, supported by the Welsh Government and Ystadau Cymru, recommends that asset collaboration should take place on a regional basis. This Toolkit is designed to support other regions to develop collaboration programmes and the diagram on page 7 illustrates a potential governance structure based on that adopted by the pilot study.

If this model (or a variation of it) is used, it will be important to ensure effective delegation and empowerment of groups and teams at the most appropriate level. The temptation to exercise too much transactional control at the higher level should be resisted as this could delay progress and stifle innovation. Instead, delivery teams should be encouraged and supported by reporting progress and performance and celebrating success.



Higher level groups and boards should foster change and intervene only to remove obstacles. The challenge to all groups in the hierarchy should be whether collaboration and innovation are taking place because of their **contribution** or **despite** it.

1.6 Preparing for Collaboration

Successful collaborative working takes time to establish. The following steps can be taken to prepare for successful asset collaboration on a regional basis:

Assess Current Regional Relationships

The first step is to establish what regional arrangements already exist. Is there a Regional Public Service Board or equivalent group already in existence, and is it a suitable host for a Property Collaboration Board? Its suitability will depend upon its geographical spread and whether there are a sufficiently broad range of Public Organisations with a presence. If the area is too small, both geographically and/or in population, this will limit the opportunities for successful asset collaboration. In this case, consideration should be given to the feasibility of collaboration over an area of more than a single unitary Local Authority. Conversely, some Local Authorities cover a large geographical area and several Property Collaboration Boards may be considered more appropriate.

Establishing a Property Collaboration Board

If there are no suitable Property Collaboration arrangements in place, it will be important to show high level commitment to their establishment. Like the Cwm Tâf Pilot, it is vital that leading Chief Executives champion the establishment of a Property Collaboration Board. Key property participants in the Property Collaboration Board should be selected by the respective Public Sector Organisations, while remembering the need to demonstrate collaborative behaviours, property skills, knowledge, experience and expertise. Participants should also share a passion, commitment and vision for achieving results.

Defining Objectives

The identification of and commitment to shared strategic objectives is an important start to a successful collaboration. The key strategic leaders of the initiative and the property leadership appointed to the Property Collaboration Board should be fully engaged in defining its objectives. These should show a clear link with the *Seven Well-being Goals of Wales* and any Public Service Board well-being objectives. Partners should then turn these objectives into specific outcomes – that is, answer the question, ‘How will I know when these objectives have been achieved?’. The next step is to identify which of these outcomes can be measured and monitored. This can be done by setting specific performance measures or milestones.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council One Public Estate Strategy sets out a shared vision and objectives for Public Sector partners (read the case study for this project on page 32).

Terms of Reference

The constitutional framework of the Property Collaboration Board should be proportionate to its powers and responsibilities. If it rests within existing regional structures and roles are fulfilled by the respective partners, simple Terms of Reference will be adequate; they should capture:

- The name of the partnership, its aims and objectives, and membership;
- The appointment of those fulfilling key roles e.g. chairing meetings, secretarial arrangements, performance management reporting;
- The relationship to the partner organisations and the regional and national bodies to which they are accountable;
- Any powers which may be delegated to it;
- The frequency of meetings;
- Standards of conduct and accountability, for example, the confidentiality of sensitive information shared; and
- The expected lifespan of the board.

If it is decided that the Property Collaboration Board is responsible for managing a pooled budget, making spending decisions or employing a core team to administer its work, the Terms of Reference will need to be expanded into a Constitutional Agreement between the partners.

More detailed advice and guidance can be found in CIPFA’s *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* publication.

Successful Collaboration

The Property Collaboration Board will need to establish some points at the outset of the project; these include:

- The benefits that can result from successful collaboration;
- The culture and behaviours necessary to achieve a successful collaboration;
- The barriers and risks and how they can be managed and overcome;
- The demands that will be placed on people's time; and
- The financial or other resources that might need to be identified.

1.7 Developing Collaborative Property Initiatives and Programmes

The Property Collaboration Board will need to ensure that collaborative property initiatives have strong connections with its own objectives, which in turn link to the Seven Well-being Goals for Wales and any regional well-being objectives. The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has published the Future Generations Framework for Projects and supporting guidance and this should be used to make sure that the programme of initiatives can make the maximum contribution to these strategic goals.

When developing the scope of projects, Property Collaboration Boards should use the Five Ways of Working outlined in the framework.

Long-Term

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.

Prevention

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse can help Public Bodies meet their objectives.

Integration

Considering how the Public Body's well-being objectives can impact on each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other Public Bodies.

Collaboration

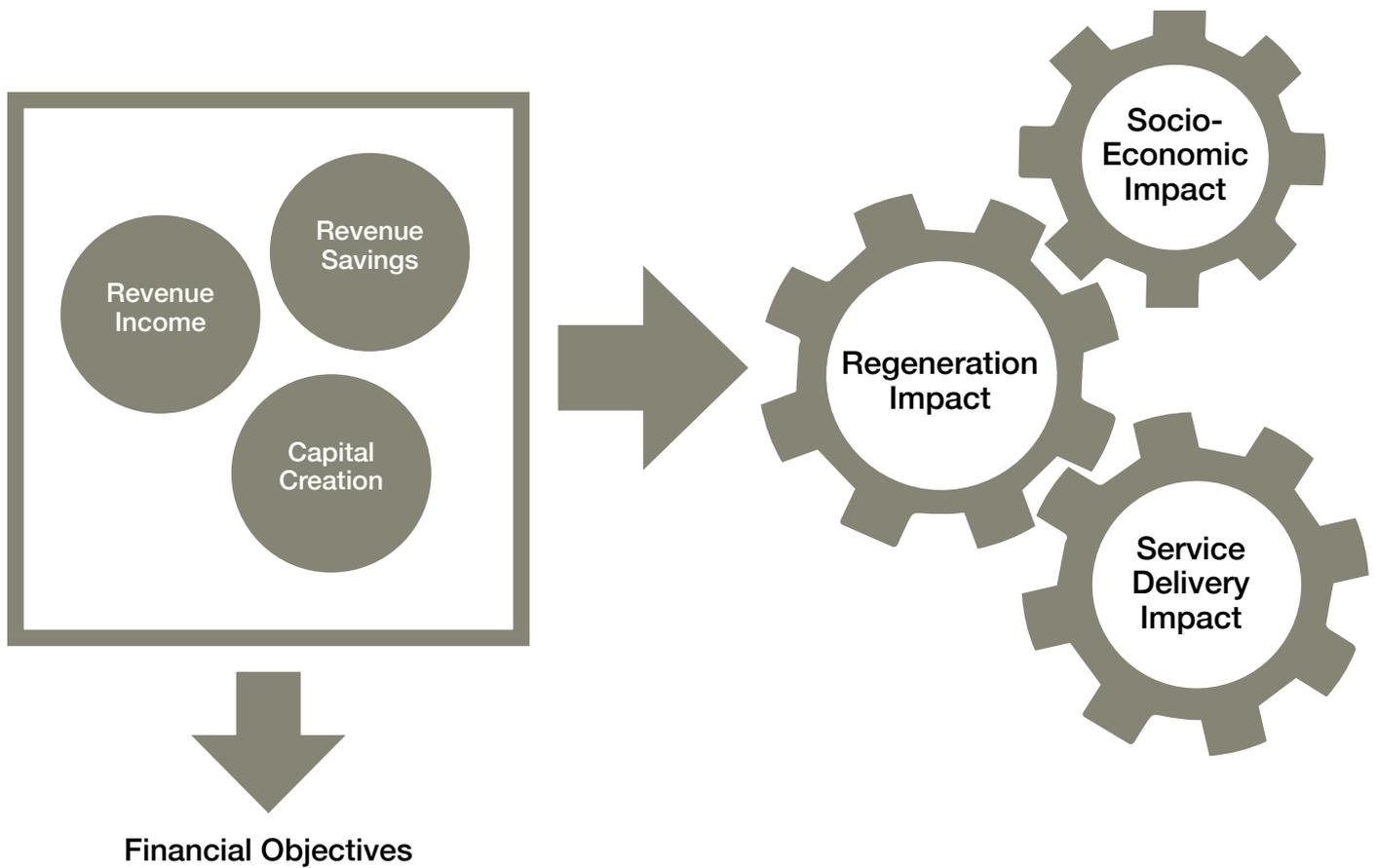
Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

Involvement

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area served by the body.

This will help to identify the knowledge and skills and the Project Delivery Teams required to take the projects and initiatives forward. These socio-economic priorities are driven by local, regional and national Well-being Goals.

Property Collaboration Boards will also need to consider the financial status of the partners when prioritising and developing projects and initiatives. The priority should be to identify projects which contribute to one or more of the following financial imperatives.



Mutual understanding and agreement on these strategic drivers will help the Property Collaboration Board to focus its activity on initiatives which deliver the best outcomes for its region.

Denbighshire County Council has been working together for a common goal to provide a cost-effective and seamless service to customers of both Health and Social Care organisations. This collaboration was prompted by the Health Flexibilities Act in 1999 and in preparation for the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (read the case study for this project on page 29).

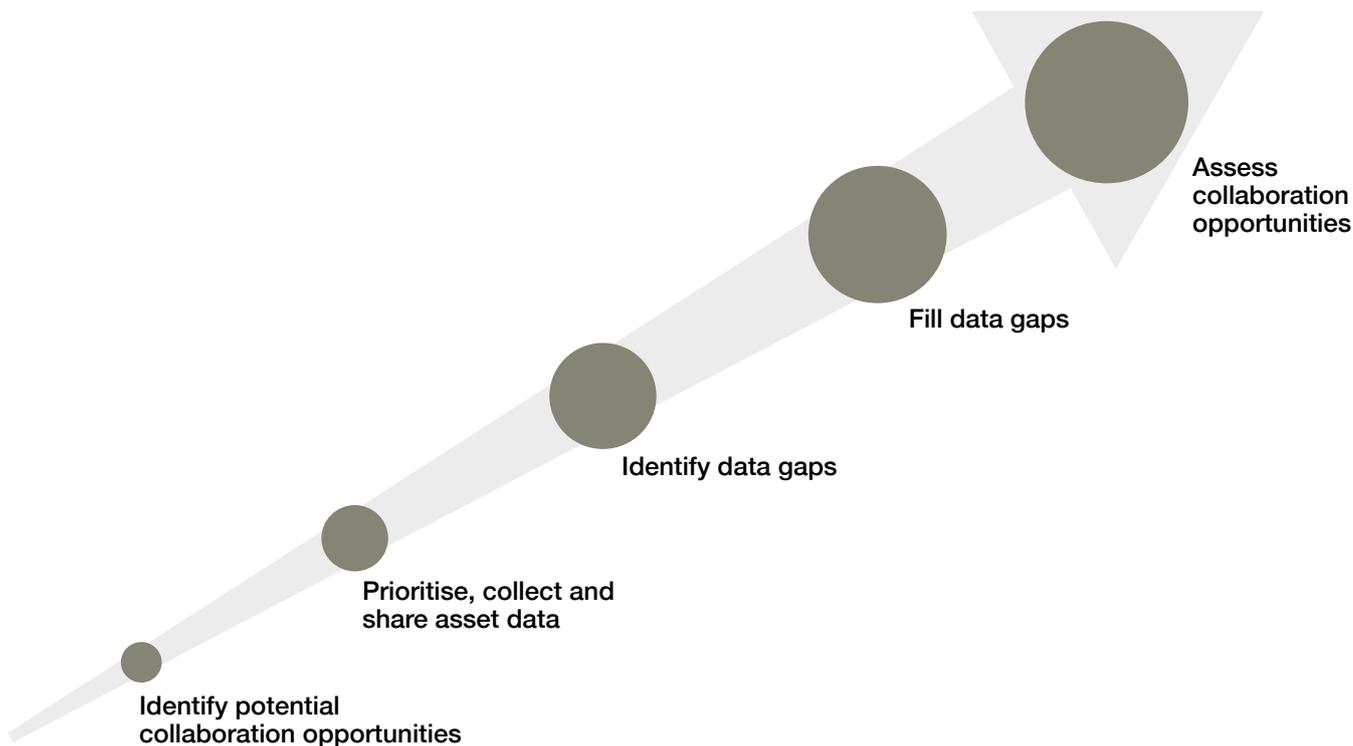
Collaborative asset management projects are successful when certain criteria are met; these are:

Sharing Asset Data and Information

The Cwm Taf Pilot Study identified that one of the challenges for collaborative asset management is the availability of appropriate data to help Public Bodies to critically look at their estate. Data helps with the effective management of an organisation's own estate, and when shared, it can be used to facilitate or support policy initiatives more widely. The Welsh Government has provided funds (through the Asset Collaboration Programme Wales) and offered practical support to help Estates Teams to compile sufficient property data on their own estates to enable rigorous and consistent analysis of cost and performance. Ystadau Cymru has launched an initiative to strengthen the shared e-PIMS lite software platform ¹and to readily identify who owns what and where.

¹ The Electronic Property Information Mapping Service (e-PIMS) is a UK Government IT platform designed to capture information about public sector property. It is available to Public Sector organisations in Wales to assist them with strategic property management planning by recording and sharing information on who holds what and where.

A fuller understanding of the collective Public Sector Estate will help to identify opportunities for joint working and more integrated and improved service delivery.



The Cwm Tâf Study shows that managing detailed asset information in a consistent way can take some time to do, unless the partners already have robust information management systems.

It also shows us that organisations need to prioritise collecting property information as it can provide opportunities for asset collaboration ties.

Isle of Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd Council have worked with their Public Sector partners to consider asset sharing. The project is led by the Fire and Rescue Service, and by prioritising their activities, some quick wins have already been identified (read the case study for this project on page 28).

Data can be shared at Property Collaboration Boards and complemented by sharing the strategic asset management plans,

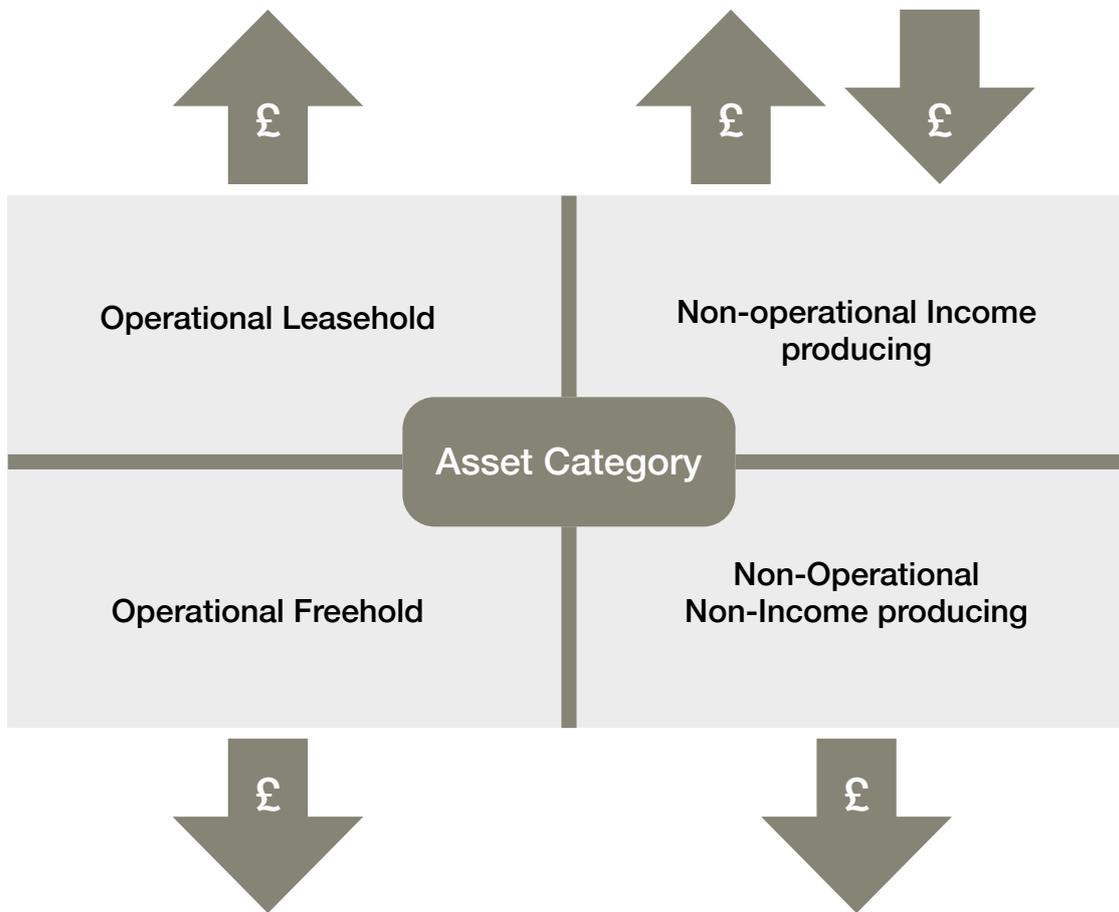
service delivery aspirations and the estates management capacity of Public Sector partners.

Asset Management Plans should identify the nature of the regional estates of the Public Sector Organisations, their condition, suitability, sufficiency and sustainability. Existing buildings may not be based in the most convenient locations for the needs of their local communities and customers may need to make multiple visits to different locations. Mapping data can help partners identify areas where collaborative projects might be particularly effective.

This data will help to inform:

Holistic Property Review of the Regional Public Estate

Grouping assets using a consistent model will help to identify opportunities to contribute to financial objectives, such as those set out on page 12.



This can then be used to develop a strategy to meet partners' financial targets. Some organisations, like the Welsh Government, categorise their assets using different models, like Core Inflexible, Core Flexible and Non-Core Surplus.

The asset categorisation will need to be discussed and agreed with potential collaboration partners so that there is a clearly understood baseline position of the different categories of asset that might come under consideration.

Revenue Savings

When this is the financial priority, the strategy should:

- Vacate leasehold property and move to freehold property to reduce rental payments;
- Rationalise and consolidate the occupation of freehold property to reduce running costs;

- Manage and dispose of non-income producing land or property to reduce maintenance costs; and
- Reduce the operating costs of income producing assets.

Revenue Income

This can be used alongside a revenue savings strategy to protect front-line services and it could contain the following features:

- Releasing value from existing non or low-income generating assets to reinvest in assets that generate a greater return;
- Developing assets on land already in Public Sector ownership. This can take the form of:
 - A residential rental investment portfolio. Special arrangements would need to be put in place to protect any residential rental investment portfolio, but there are models that can be replicated. For example,

some Authorities have set up a Local Authority Trading Company to hold the investment assets and others have established a joint venture Limited Company or a Limited Liability Partnership with a private sector partner to bring in more commercial expertise. In Wales, where the right to buy no longer applies, it may not be necessary to set up such special purpose vehicles. It is still advisable to make sure that any investment portfolio is accounted for separately, so that its performance can be monitored and reviewed; and

- A commercial, retail and industrial investment portfolio.
- Enhancing existing revenue streams by:
 - Running them more efficiently;
 - Investing in an existing portfolio to increase returns.

Capital Creation

A strategy for generating capital receipts to reduce debt or for reinvestment in new public assets or income generating assets will target:

- **Low Income Producing Assets** – Some Public Bodies have long-standing retail or industrial portfolios that have not been a priority for pro-active management. The net return from some of these might be modest after taking into account the costs of management in the form of rent collection etc. Traditional Public Sector income generators such as car parks may have a greater capital value if sold for redevelopment.
- **Capital Intensive Assets** – Some Public Assets are in such a poor condition that they require the investment of substantial capital structural maintenance funds to make them safe, suitable and sufficient for ongoing use. Working in collaboration across two or more Public Organisations

can make the business case to replace inefficient assets and contribute to improved public service delivery.

- **Surplus Properties** – Many Public Organisations have ongoing property review processes which identify assets that are surplus to their current or future requirements. Organisations and Property Collaboration Boards should give full consideration to the Estate Co-ordination and Land Transfer Protocol produced by Ystadau Cymru. This is a best practice guide that is designed to make best use of asset resources and help reduce the cost and time associated with the transfer and disposal of Public Estates between Public Bodies in Wales. If, after following the protocol, the asset is surplus to the requirements of all Public Sector Organisations, it can be marketed for disposal. Maximising capital value from the disposal of assets requires a degree of commercial expertise that many public organisations cannot access. If a site is marketed unconditionally, is subject to planning or has planning permission that makes it more attractive to the market, it could benefit from wider Public Sector collaboration.
- **Properties Released from Rationalisation** – Property rationalisation programmes are widely used by Public Sector Organisations, and collaborative rationalisation across two or more Public Organisations could identify more opportunities to improve public services and generate property efficiencies. Capital receipts from properties released for disposal can be reinvested in new and more efficient shared assets which deliver joined up public services.

- **Development Projects** – Public Sector partners generate capital receipts so that they can be reinvested into projects that regenerate town centres, build more homes or create more employment opportunities – and these local projects can contribute towards Well-being goals. The re-provision of public buildings currently in prime redevelopment locations can release land for regeneration and generate capital receipts. Some Local Authorities have worked with their local universities to release assets for student accommodation or new departmental facilities which, as a result, has helped to regenerate a town centre.
- **Land Assembly** – It can be advantageous for collaborating Public Sector Organisations to combine their assets with neighbouring land that isn't in public ownership. This could make the combined asset more attractive to the market, generating a bigger capital receipt, or help to facilitate a more comprehensive redevelopment opportunity.

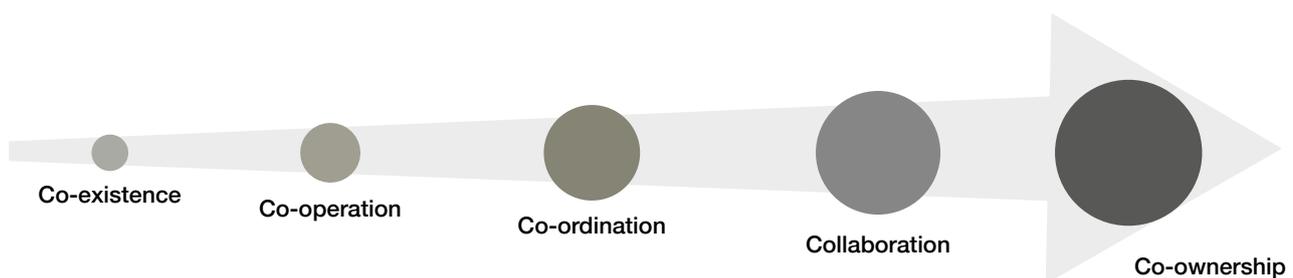
- **Investment in Existing Assets** – The capital creation strategy can also be combined with revenue savings or revenue income strategies. The investment of capital receipts from the disposal of one asset could be reinvested into an existing asset to reduce running costs, accommodate partner Public Organisations or generate more income from an investment portfolio.

In summary, the holistic property review can identify collaborative initiatives which reduce running costs and generate capital and revenue returns.

Sharing data and its analysis geographically and financially can then be used to:

Identify Programmes and Work Streams

Collaboration can take a number of forms and the following model can be a useful tool to help Property Collaboration Boards to identify projects, programmes and work streams.



Co-existence – This is the relationship that many Public Organisations have with one another. They may know of each other's existence and have a broad idea of their role, but have not yet collaborated on any meaningful basis. All public organisations that are members of a Property Collaboration Board should develop these relationships.

Co-operation – When data, plans, estates management capacity and expertise is shared between Public Sector partners, it will no doubt become clear that some organisations have greater capacity and expertise or have gaps in knowledge. The Property Collaboration Board can work to develop plans to share skills, knowledge and information.

Co-ordination – Public Sector Bodies can co-ordinate their efforts by using the e-PIMS platform for data purposes and sharing future asset management plans. This will result in a more joined-up approach to the delivery of public services.

Collaboration – There should be many opportunities for Property Collaboration Boards to develop collaborative initiatives. Reviews of properties within particular localities, collaborative procurement and contract management are just some examples.

Co-ownership – Property Collaboration Boards can examine opportunities for shared accommodation, Public Sector hubs, pooling assets and even sharing property services.

Partners can hold workshops to identify opportunities for collaborative programmes and initiatives. Delivery teams can then be established to develop the projects. This is how Carmarthenshires' Estates Collaboration

Group conducted its Local Area Asset Review (read the case study for this project on page 30).

1.8 Delivering Collaborative Programmes, Work Streams and Projects

This section sets out some examples of collaborative initiatives and how they might best be delivered.

Sharing Data and Information

Once a Property Collaboration Board is established, it will soon become apparent:

- Which Public Sector Organisations have up-to-date asset data on the e-PIMS system and which do not;
- Whether all partners will be able to provide asset information geographically;
- If asset data can be grouped according to whether it is operational or not, whether it is core or non-core, leasehold or freehold, and whether it generates income;
- Whether data on floor and land area, rent payable, running costs and maintenance liabilities is available; and
- Which organisations have up-to-date Asset Management Plans in place.

The asset management capacity of public organisations will vary and so will the quality of their data and plans. The lack of data available from some bodies should not delay the collaborative work of others. However, one of the advantages of a collaborative arrangement is the help and expertise that a more advanced organisation can provide to others.

To provide this support, the Property Collaboration Board can establish a Delivery Team to address this issue. Membership should include all organisations that need to produce quality data in order to critically

analyse their estate and it should be led by an agency that can provide the necessary support and expertise, and if available, a member of the Estates Team at the Welsh Government.

The greater the understanding of the collective estate, the greater the potential to identify opportunities for joint working and more integrated and improved services.

Sharing Capacity, Skills and Expertise

The Cwm Tâf Study found that of the seven major Public Sector partners, 78% of internal estates management resource was employed by the Cwm Tâf University Health Board and Rhondda Cynon Tâf County Borough Council. Similarly, 85% of the external spend was incurred by the two Local Authorities (Rhondda Cynon Tâf County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council) and the University Health Board. The study found that:

- This huge variation in resource made it difficult for some partners to respond to changing workloads;
- The majority of internal and external resource was deployed within facilities management;
- Most Estate Teams focussed on day-to-day issues with limited capacity for strategic estate management and collaboration with other partners' estates;
- The operation of a full Corporate Landlord Model was inconsistent and budgeting and decision-making was often devolved to service departments, making it hard to exert 'control' on a holistic basis (the benefits of this model will be considered on page 20 of this toolkit);

- The partners have understandably focussed on the effective management of their own estate which they have achieved through significant rationalisation programmes; and
- The majority of partners have been involved in some form of property-based collaboration, but these have tended to be opportunistic and reactive rather than planned.

These findings suggest that collective Public Sector gains can be achieved when capacity, skills and expertise are shared. This can include:

Joint Training and Development

Training courses can help partners increase their skills and develop a closer network of estates employees.

Secondments

Experts can be seconded to partner organisations to help with particular projects or work streams, such as data collection and analysis, development of performance frameworks, formulation of strategies etc.

Working for Partners

Partners with spare capacity could help others with a heavy workload and this can be reciprocated. If organisations would otherwise have bought in additional capacity and expertise, and this is budgeted for, a recharging arrangement could be agreed, which would generate income for the provider agency.

Establishing a Regional Shared Service

Estates and Asset Management resources could be pooled to deliver a more flexible service with economies of scale. This could be hosted by one of the partners, delivered by a special purpose vehicle or separate agency, or through a private sector service provider

jointly procured, to which existing staff would be transferred. A change on this scale would take time, resources and commitment, and might outweigh the possible benefits. It would require a recharge mechanism to ensure that organisations only get what they pay for and that there is no unfair cross-subsidisation.

Smaller organisations and service departments with a dedicated resource may feel that they have lost their personalised service and that there is a lack of awareness and expertise. Setting up a separate agency would require the establishment of a range of back-office services so it might be more efficient for one of the partners to host the service. The partners may wish to assess whether similar benefits could be achieved through closer collaboration between partners before embarking on such an initiative. For example, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police established a Joint Estates and Facilities Department in 2006 (read the case study for this project on page 31).

Knowledge Sharing

When partners have already worked on some form of property-based collaboration, they can share its successful features – and the pitfalls to avoid in future. Some partners may be active in industry-wide initiatives, like Constructing Excellence Wales, and could share some of the best practice developed, which the Property Collaboration should action.

Collaborative Procurement

Major procurement exercises can be time-consuming and costly, which can be prohibitive for some organisations. They may decide to use more conventional procurement approaches which may result in a more costly, poorer quality service that is difficult to monitor and oversee. Collaborative

procurements can widen access to efficient and effective service delivery arrangements which provide a higher quality service. They can:

- Allow partner Public Sector Bodies to access constructors or service providers that have been procured in compliance with European Union Procurement Rules and the relevant Public Contract Regulations. This can be achieved by adding an agency into the scope of the procurement and advertising this appropriately; and
- Fully engage partners in the process. The procurement documents and contracts should be designed to meet the needs of all participating partners so that they can be a part of the selection process and have more confidence in the constructor or service provider.

It is important to avoid a conflict of processes when committing to a joint procurement. Each organisation will have different contract procedure rules and arrangements for the opening of tenders and their evaluation. Collaborative procurement works best when a lead Authority is identified, and the procurement can be conducted in accordance with the procurement rules and protocols of the lead partner.

Some partners may already use the National Procurement Service of Wales.

1.9 Asset Transfer, Shared Accommodation and Joint Projects

Asset Transfer to a Collaboration Partner

The Welsh Government via Ystadau Cymru has published comprehensive guidance on Community Asset Transfers (CATs) and this is available on the Welsh Government website. A transfer could be between Public Sector Bodies or to a Third Sector Organisation.

Sharing Accommodation Already Owned by a Public Sector Partner

Property assets are held by most Public Sector Organisations and account for a large part of their annual budget. When property assets become underused or surplus to requirements, action should be taken to limit potential loss. Closer co-operation within the Public Sector can lead to shared use of the assets, which provides benefits to the owner and the occupier.

Ystadau Cymru's Estate Co-ordination and Land Transfer Protocol sets out the general arrangements for shared occupations by Public Sector Organisations.

It aims to create a framework which should normally be adopted by Public Sector Bodies when sharing occupations or using the property assets of another. Because each organisation and each property is different, the terms and conditions may need to be amended by agreement between the parties.

The YC guidance sets out the standard terms of occupation for very specific scenarios where an alternative agreement has not been reached. All parties are advised to take legal advice on the suitability of any document for their particular requirements.

Two scenarios are set out by YC; they are:

1. Occupation of a part of premises on a short term basis, where the occupier does not have exclusive use of the space, for example, sharing an open plan area. This can be documented by way of a Licence Agreement. The YC guidance provides a standard agreement for this type of scenario, which contains the following terms:

- Costs – The occupier will contribute towards the costs of the building. The agreement does not specify how the licence fee is calculated and instead suggests that there should be two elements to the fee. The cost of occupation, unless otherwise agreed, will be based on the market rental value of the building and will include a proportion of the estimated running costs of the building, car park and any other common areas. This will be based on the proportion of the net internal area occupied.
- The obligations of the parties – The building owner is responsible for the repair, maintenance, decoration and cleaning of the building. The occupier must keep premises clean and tidy, remove all fixtures and fittings and repair any damage at the end of the term. They should follow the owner's protocols for security, health and safety and any other rules and regulations relating to the building to indemnify the owner against all actions, losses, damages or costs that may arise.

2. Occupation of an area, either on a long-term basis or where the occupier has exclusive use of the space. This should be documented by way of a lease which can be excluded from the provisions of Sections 24-28 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, if security of tenure is not granted. The terms of the lease agreement vary greatly and using a standard document is not relevant. The obligations of the parties will very much depend on the building and the area occupied, and the YC guidance outlines terms which can be adopted depending on the situation.

In both scenarios it is assumed that the organisation holds the freehold interest in the property. When an organisation occupies a property under a lease, the terms of that lease should be clear about whether sharing the occupation is prohibited or if the landlord's consent is required. Parties should seek legal advice in this scenario.

Sharing existing accommodation can be useful to an organisation. For example, when Natural Resources Wales moved its laboratory from an aging domestic house, it leased free laboratory space at Swansea University. Read the case study for this project on page 33.

Delivering a New Shared Asset

When several public services co-locate to modern, purpose-built accommodation, it can provide the opportunity to integrate and improve public services. It also releases land for redevelopment or to meet the well-being objectives of the region.

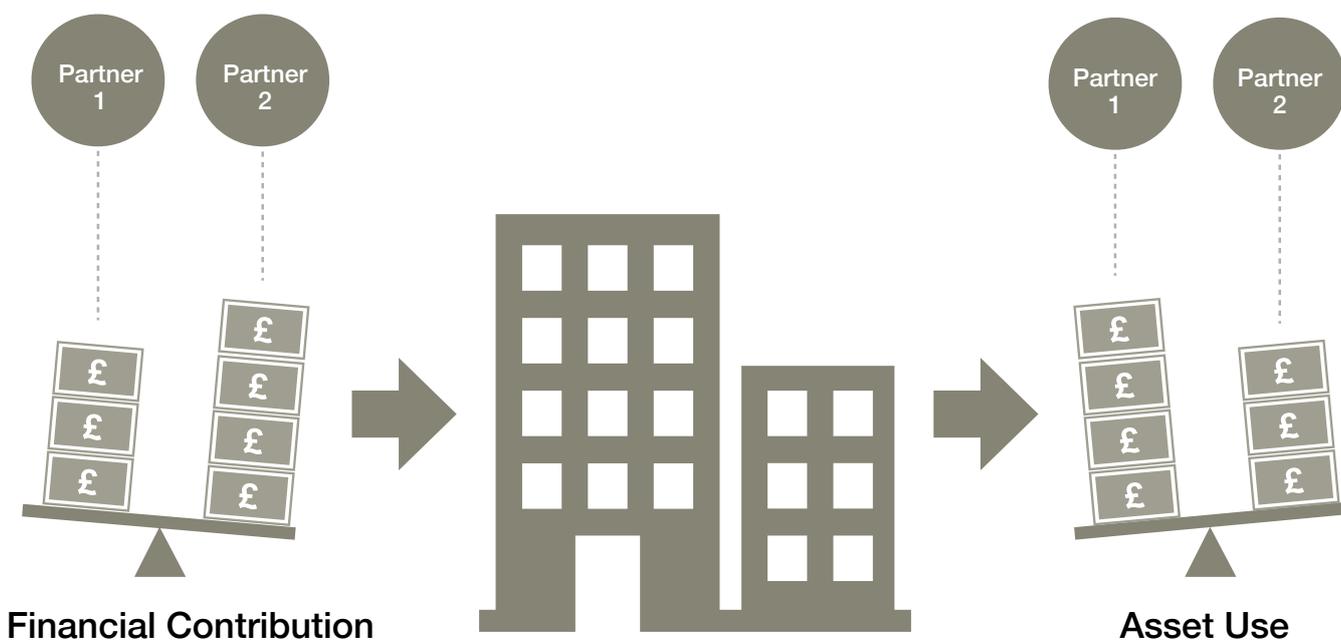
Like any other major capital project, an Outline Business Case (OBC) is necessary. Preparing the OBC for a joint project can be complex, but it can be simplified if there is quality information on existing assets. The OBC might set out the following tests for the joint project:

- Are there synergies that might be achieved by bringing together several public services into a single building, and will this improve the service to the public?
- What is the condition, suitability, sufficiency and sustainability of the existing buildings targeted for replacement by the joint project?
- What are the running costs of the existing buildings, and is it possible to estimate the savings that might benefit partners from the occupation of a new, more efficient building?

- Can the new building be located on a site already owned by the Public Sector which would remove the need to factor acquisition costs into the OBC?
- What is the maximum capital receipt that can be generated from any land or property and declared surplus as a result of the co-location? How much of a contribution can this make towards the costs of constructing the new building? and
- If there is likely to be a surplus capital receipt for the Public Sector, savings in running costs and improvements to public services, the OBC will set out a strong case for the joint project to go ahead.

One of the biggest obstacles to reaching agreement on a new shared asset is when the funding contributions of the partners are not distributed fairly. It is possible that one or more of these scenarios might be present:

- One of the Public Bodies may own the land asset on which the new building will be located;
- Some of the partners may dispose of assets to reinvest the proceeds into the joint project;
- Some of the partners may not release assets, but they might make a contribution from their own capital programme; and
- Some partners may have little or no capital to contribute to the project but may still wish to occupy part of the new building, which could make a significant contribution to the delivery of well-being objectives and improvements to public services.



Delivering a new Shared Asset

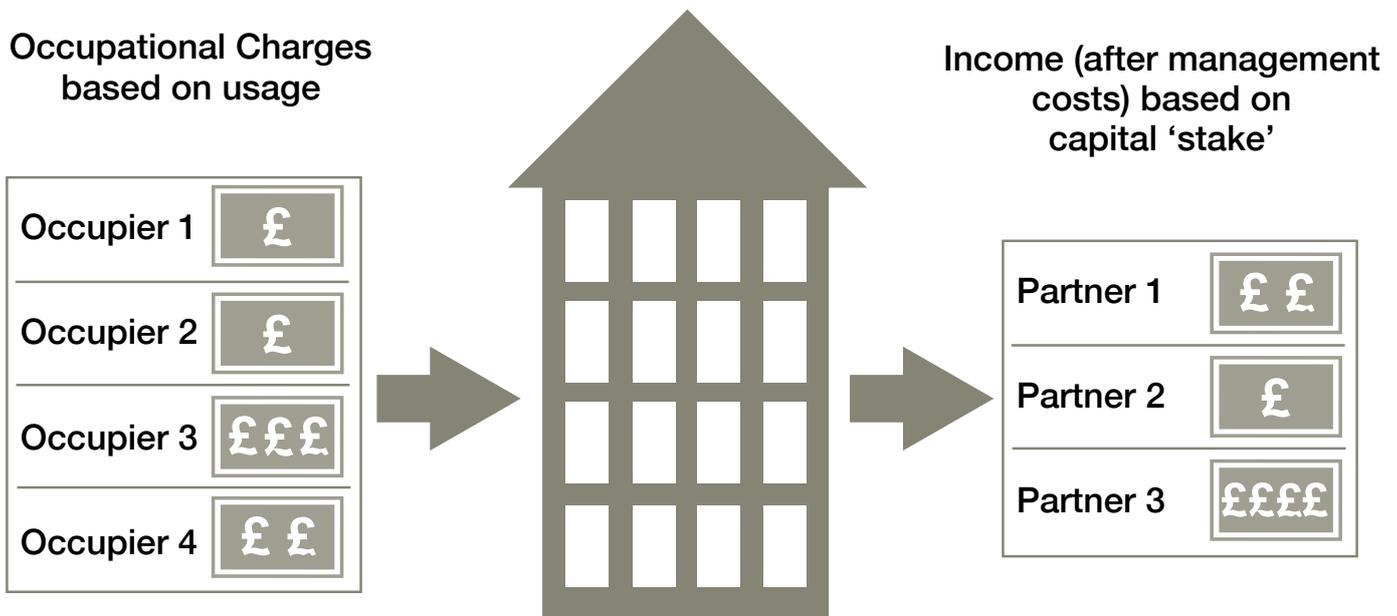
If these challenges are not addressed, any one of them could be a deal-breaker for the participants in the project. This can be resolved by extending Corporate Landlord principles to collaborative projects. Partners should always keep in mind that collaboration can provide more benefit to local communities than to partners. There will occasionally be an imbalance in costs and benefits from individual asset collaboration projects, but overall everyone benefits, and this acknowledgement should influence behaviour and decision-making.

The **Corporate Landlord Model** centralises all estate related budgets, decision-making and activities within a central team. Where this applies to a single organisation, service departments become tenants of the Corporate Landlord. The service department must make a case to deliver a service form for the property, which allows the Corporate Landlord to offer sufficient space for these functions.

The Corporate Landlord is the predominant asset management model in larger private sector organisations and is implemented more and more within Central and Local Government because of its scope for the effective delivery of corporate outcomes, including collaboration and regeneration objectives.

The Corporate Landlord approach helps a Public Sector landowner to use its assets to deliver better, more efficient services to communities, and:

- To unlock the value of assets, seek efficiencies through joint arrangements with Public Sector partners and maximise private sector investment;
- To support the delivery of their Corporate Plan; and
- To integrate thinking about property with financial, regeneration and other considerations.



The Corporate Landlord Model

The approach can deliver economies of scale in terms of capacity, procurement and opportunities for collaboration across one or more organisations. It is most effective in ensuring that an organisation’s property portfolio drives, supports and delivers corporate change, service efficiencies and regeneration.

There are Public Sector assets that do not easily fit with the model, for example, where the asset itself is the service to the public. This could be a historic building or monument in public ownership or a natural environment such as a country or urban park or a nature reserve. For some Public Organisations like Cadw, these types of assets make up the majority of the estate, but for most other Public Bodies, they take up little or none of their estate.

Some larger Public Authorities have experience of the Corporate Landlord Model within their own organisation, but may not be aware of its application to collaborative projects involving more than one Public Agency. The principles will be the same, but for a single organisation, a new building will be funded from the Authority’s

capital programme and not from multiple organisations. The main features of the Corporate Landlord Model for a collaborative project are:

- **Capital Contribution** – The Public Sector partners contribute towards the capital costs of constructing the new building or adapting an existing building for multiple agency occupation. If the land is already owned by a Public Authority, this should be counted towards the capital cost of the project. These funding partners become the landlord and each hold a “stake” in the new development which is equivalent to their capital contribution;
- **The Occupiers** – The Public Organisations that occupy the building pay rent and a proportion of the service charge in accordance with their usage of the new building;
- **Revenue Returns** – The landlords share the rental income (after cost) in accordance with their ownership stake;
- **Managing Agent** – One of the Public Sector partners can be appointed as the managing agent on behalf of the partnership. They are

responsible for receiving the rent and service charge, paying for the running and maintenance costs of the building and distributing the surplus back to the investor landlord agencies in accordance with their stake; and

- **Joint Venture Vehicle** – Alternatively, the partners could establish a joint venture vehicle where everyone has an ownership stake and interest in the success of the project. The joint venture vehicle owns the building and appoints a lead Agency or facilities management company to operate and maintain the facility. This model could be used if an external Public Authority or private investor is used to provide additional capital funding but does not intend to occupy the building.

The Corporate Landlord Model principles can provide an equitable solution to the delivery and multiple occupation of public buildings and recognises capital contribution and occupancy levels.

Dyfed Powys Police, HM Courts and Tribunal Service, and Mid and West Wales Fire Station are located in jointly built premises. Read the case study for this project on page 34.

Financial and Governance Arrangements

For a joint project should be established at an early stage. Each Public Sector partner will have its own governance and decision-making processes and if the Property Collaboration Board wants to sponsor a joint project, it will need support from the Regional Public Service Board. This commitment will help take the proposal through the decision-making processes of the participating Public Sector Organisations. It will always be more efficient if a single organisation can be identified to take the lead on project delivery. The other Public Sector

partners should then agree to recognise the lead Authority as the accountable body for the:

- Receipt of any pooled budgets and grants where available;
- Expenditure of funds;
- Procurement of the constructor and any specialist functions that the lead authority or its partners do not wish to undertake in-house;
- Responsibility of project management, either with the use of its own resource, or the engagement of a dedicated project manager;
- Responsibility for document management and retention;
- Reporting of project progress, financial commitments and expenditure; and
- Leadership of a project team.

The partners should also agree the arrangements for the ongoing management of the asset at an early stage and whether this will be through a lead Authority or joint venture vehicle.

Project Management

The principles of good project management should apply to joint projects in the same way that they would apply to any other major capital project. A risk register and risk log should be kept to mitigate or avoid major risks to the delivery of the project.

Performance Management and Monitoring Arrangements

There should be clear accountability between the Delivery Teams for projects and initiatives, the Property Collaboration Board, Public Service Board, Ystadau Cymru and the Welsh Government.

This can be achieved by implementing a robust performance management system with monitoring reports which set out progress against key milestones, financial and socio-economic targets. These in turn should show a demonstrable link back to the well-being objectives of the Public Service Boards.

The information reported should be proportionate to the needs of the team or group. For example:

- Project Delivery Teams may need a regular and detailed breakdown of project progress and costs to identify and address particular cost pressures or time delays;
- Property Collaboration Boards and Public Service Boards (PSB) may only require data at a programme level; and
- The Ystadau Cymru Group and Welsh Government may only require information at a regional level.

The use of a traffic light system of red, amber and green (RAG) can help to focus on key issues that can affect the viability or progress of projects, programmes and regions.

Evaluating your collaboration

This should be an open, honest and transparent evaluation of the elements of the collaboration that work well and where lessons can be learned to improve subsequent collaboration.

There are no set timeframes for evaluating your collaboration, but it is useful to establish at the outset when this will happen and whether it will happen more than once.

Part of any evaluation should include the commitment and resource from collaboration partners. It is easier to engage partners in

the short term and there is always a risk that interest in sustaining the collaboration may wane or disappear altogether.

Conclusions

There is no right or wrong way to create a property collaboration. Some successful collaborations start with a strategy, while others identify collaboration opportunities and develop a more strategic approach later. There are, however, pitfalls that can be avoided and best practice that can be followed to speed up progress and maximise the potential benefits to Public Sector Organisations and the communities that they serve.

This Toolkit provides guidance for Public Sector Organisations that are considering collaboration and suggests some best practice steps for those who have already established partnerships.

2.A Background to Property Collaboration

2.1 Welsh Government Collaborative Agenda

The *Cwm Taf Pilot Study – A Regional Approach to Collaboration* published report recommended the development of this Collaboration Toolkit in June 2017.

2.2 Strategic Context

The *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* places a duty on Public Bodies, including the Welsh Government, Local Authorities, National Parks, Fire and Rescue Services and Health Boards, to make decisions that will have a positive impact on future generations. Each Public Body is required to carry out sustainable development by setting (and publishing) well-being objectives designed to achieve:

- A prosperous, low carbon Wales;
- A Wales which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment;
- A healthier Wales;
- A more equal Wales;
- A Wales of cohesive communities;
- A culturally vibrant Wales with its own language; and
- A globally responsible Wales.

A Public Services Board (PSB) must also:

- assess the state of well-being in its area;
- set local well-being objectives in its local well-being Plan; and
- maximise the PSBs contribution to achieving the well-being goals.

The Act places Local Service Boards and well-being plans on a statutory basis, which simplifies the requirements for integrated community planning.

2.3 Financial Context

Financial settlements and future outlook can be one of the most important influences in the ability of the Public Sector to deliver its strategic goals. Wales has maintained more flexibility than England or Scotland over council tax, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies, forecast spend in England has decreased by just over 22% since 2009-10. This compares with reductions of around 15% in Scotland and 11.5% in Wales over the same period for a similar set of responsibilities.

3. CASE STUDIES

South Wales, Sharing Blue Light Assets

This Emergency Services Station was launched in 2017 in Abertillery, and brings together Police, Fire and Ambulance Services housed under the same roof for the very first time in South Wales.

The recently remodelled station has enabled Gwent Police to re-establish a permanent base in the town following the closure of the police station.

Each service has its own vehicle bay, access to facilities and office space, and the environment makes it easier to share intelligence and local knowledge, therefore improving the service to the community.

The project has been replicated in Barry, where the fire and rescue station was upgraded to an Emergency Services Station and now includes a space for the Ambulance Service. The services will be under the same roof and will share meeting rooms, a community room and a canteen. The Ambulance Service has provided the capital for its refurbished areas and pays a service charge to cover the cost of utilities.



Wrexham Ambulance and Fire Services Resource Centre

When North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) and Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST) needed new facilities in Wrexham, it coincided with the issue of the Welsh Government's Making the Connections – Delivering Beyond Boundaries document which advocated better collaboration between public services.

They jointly invested £15 million in a purpose-built joint facility which opened in April 2016, replacing a fire station in Wrexham, and ambulance stations in Chirk and Wrexham. The new station is strategically located for access to the local road network and the A483. The joint building provides opportunities to share facilities and there are operational benefits to both services working out of the same building.

The purpose-built joint facility includes:

- A six-bay ambulance garage;
- A make-ready depot and fleet workshop;
- An eight-bay fire garage and state-of-the-art training house and drill tower with a road traffic collision training area; and
- Shared facilities including a rest room, dining room, communal kitchen, main office, locker room, a gymnasium, and meeting and training rooms.

Bridgend Joint Fleet Maintenance Facility

In 2015, Bridgend County Borough Council and South Wales Police opened a new fully integrated Joint Fleet Maintenance Facility at a shared location. Both organisations were operating from facilities that were beyond their economic life and required significant investment.

The facility was delivered under budget and the joint venture has achieved a modern, high specification workshop facility for less than the anticipated cost of refurbishing the old premises for each organisation. There will be revenue savings for both organisations in the medium to long term.

The project has created the capacity and potential for future expansion and income generation. The collaboration has delivered a template for cross-sector working and using leadership and consistent vision to maximise benefits. The vehicle fleet needs of the two organisations are different which, together with cultural differences, requires active management to achieve full efficiency. Greater engagement and communication with the operational workforce e.g., by including a trade union representative on the Project Board may have helped to allay fears and suspicions about future job security. Further work is required to get the benefits of joint procurement and integration of ICT management systems.



Isle of Anglesey County Council

Following a request by the Local Partnerships Board, Isle of Anglesey CBC and Gwynedd Councils, NHS, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, North Wales Police and Natural Resources Wales are examining the possibility of asset sharing. The meetings are being led by the Fire Service.

Some quick wins have been identified:

Sharing Assets

- The NHS shares offices with the Council's social care teams, which improves communication and joint working. The offices operate a hot-desking approach and a new ICT system provides secure access to NHS data from key work stations;
- Natural Resources Wales uses a local depot of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to store equipment instead of renting storage space in the area; and
- The Council and Fire and Rescue Service share meeting rooms.

Future Plans

Each partner organisation has its own asset data base, but any vacant property is uploaded to the ePIMS system. The Blue-Light Services are developing plans to share assets further between partners.

Denbighshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

The partners have developed four separate projects to deliver their strategic objectives of providing a cost-effective and integrated health and social care service for citizens; these are:

1. Centralised Equipment Store – the development of a jointly funded and managed community equipment service.
2. Single Point of Access – 20 seat call centre – to provide holistic information advice and assistance to citizens in line with the Social Services and Well-being Act
3. Complex Disability Team – co-location of the teams within the Denbighshire County Council office environment.
4. Community Resources Team – established in Rhyl over 12 months.

These four projects used the following Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – the Royal Alexander Hospital ward was converted to office space to accommodate 22 workstations

- Denbighshire County Council Office space across three sites;
 - Caledfryn – Denbigh (16 workstations)
 - County Hall – Ruthin (20 workstations)
 - Russell House Rhyl (20-seat call centre)
- Community Equipment Service – 4 industrial units

The partners plan to develop a further three Community Resource Teams which will include 24 workstations at County Hall, Ruthin and aim to fully integrate health and social care staff across Ruthin, Rhyl and Denbigh by 2020.

The key enablers for this collaboration have been the availability of grant aid for the Single Point of Access project, the council's modernisation, and office rationalisation projects which have provided office space to accommodate the joint teams and encourage staff involvement.



Carmarthenshire County Council

Carmarthenshire County Council has formed an Estates Collaboration Group with representation from the Council, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Dyfed Powys Police, NHS, the University, College, Department for Work and Pensions, HM Courts and Tribunal Service and the National Probation Service. In 2013-14 a Local Area Asset Review was carried out which engaged Public Sector and their Sector Organisations. A series of workshops were held at key locations around the county to identify local assets and future proposals by Public Sector Organisations. This led to a comprehensive understanding of the Public Sector Estate in each area, and a series of collaboration, disposal and investment opportunities.

The following collaborative projects and initiatives have since been delivered:

- Collaboration with Community and Town Councils – As part of the e-PIMS rollout, Carmarthenshire Council worked with all Community and Town Councils and offered to input and host their property data to encourage better property management and mapping availability for these organisations;
- Health and Social Care – Joint Adult Social Care and Health offices were established in 2015 in three key locations around the county, with co-located teams and services; and
- Joint Housing Support – A Joint Housing Support office has been set up in Llanelli involving co-location with the Council's Housing Division and three external organisations: Shelter, Care and Repair and The Wallich – each on a rent-free basis to improve communication, encourage shared problem-solving and provide customers with joined-up services.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police Joint Estates & Facilities Department

In 2006, the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service decided to increase the resilience of the estate's service delivery rather than rely on one technical person. The North Wales Police Facilities Department was well established with a cross section of technical expertise and resilience operating within a 24/7 emergency service environment and was considered a good fit for both organisations.

In June 2006, North Wales Police and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) merged its estates management functions to become responsible for both estates. Four members of staff (three maintenance assistants and one administrator) remained on the NWFRS payroll but worked within the merged Department.

The arrangement operates under a 'Service Level Agreement' (SLA) between NWP and NWFRS. It has been in place since June 2006, initially on a five-year term which has subsequently been renewed twice until March 2021. The SLA is now well-established and provides both organisations with the full range of in-house technical expertise on property and facilities management.

Outcomes

- The arrangement is not for profit but about sharing resources for the mutual benefit of both organisations;
- Contracts are combined, although procurement and financial management systems are separate. The Head of Estates/Facilities reports to both the Force's Director of Finance & Resources and Assistant Chief Fire Officer, and is accountable to the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for estate expenditure; and
- Having the estate capital programme aligned for both organisations has enabled new joint fire and police stations to be developed.

Critical Success Factors

- Collating and analysing all the relevant data for the estate to identify all the risks and potential challenges prior to entering into a SLA so that the expectations and financial impact for both parties are fully understood and managed; and
- Obtaining early 'buy-in' to the proposal at Chief Officer level.



A One Public Estate Strategy in Blaenau Gwent County Council

In January 2017, Public Sector Organisations in Blaenau Gwent CBC published their One Public Estate Strategy. This set out the direction and scope of collaboration between Public Sector Organisations to help to deliver the area's Single Integrated Plan and the new Well-being Plans.

The strategy identifies the Public Sector Organisations operating in Blaenau Gwent, their assets and their key property issues for the future.

The partnership has committed to:

- Review asset and service mapping data in the context of One Public Estate;
- Identify and prioritise opportunities with the most potential to deliver financial or service benefits;
- Discuss progress via quarterly partnership meetings; and
- Report to the Public Service Board (or People and Places Partnership) where appropriate.

The strategy has set out a vision of a One Public Estate which is managed for the benefit of its stakeholders and citizens and has set objectives to:

- Create economic growth – to enable released land and property to be used to stimulate economic growth, regeneration new housing and jobs.
- Generate capital receipts – to release land and property to generate capital receipts.
- Reduce running costs – to reduce the running costs of Public Sector assets.
- Deliver more integrated and customer focused services – to encourage publicly funded services to co-locate, to demonstrate service efficiencies, and to work towards a more customer-focused service delivery.

To achieve the vision and deliver these objectives the strategy commits partner organisations to:

- Work together to actively seek out opportunities to share and rationalise their property, to consider partners before adding to or reducing their portfolio;
- Actively seek out opportunities to present an integrated and seamless face to their customers to make accessing services simpler;
- Work to develop other channels of access for customers and flexible ways of working to reduce reliance on property as a means of service access; and
- Utilise Welsh Government's e-PIMS system to record property ownership details and highlight opportunities when properties are being vacated or available for shared use.

The partnership has implemented a programme of Opportunity Workshops and Property Reviews to exchange information on property and target specific areas, services and buildings for review.

Natural Resources Wales and Swansea University

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) previously had a laboratory in Llanelli which had been retrofitted into an domestic house, but after twenty years, the facilities were not fit for purpose and prevented NRW from expanding its commercial operations.

NRW searched for commercially available properties and opportunities to share space with other Public Sector Organisations. Swansea University had free laboratory space and was considered as the best option financially. It also provided unique non-financial benefits, especially opportunities for collaboration.

The new facility for scientific analysis houses over 30 professional and experienced staff that carry out essential environmental testing and analysis work for NRW, such as testing the quality of the water from beaches every summer and investigating incidents, such as illegal waste sites and pollution. In addition, the facility hopes to offer services to a wider commercial client base from Wales and beyond.

The organisations plan to work together to improve the quality and breadth of evidence used to inform NRW decisions and allow university staff and students to play a significant role in positively shaping the Welsh environment. The main areas of future collaboration are:

- Joint research;
- Shared use of analytical equipment; and
- Student placements.

Recruitment and retention had historically been an issue and the students provide NRW with a pool of potential new employees.



Combined Services Centre, Parc Noyadd Park, Llandrindod Wells

Dyfed Powys Police Station, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service at Llandrindod Wells and a Mid and West Wales Fire Station are located in jointly built premises which have replaced the previous sites. The project provides modern facilities for all three services, including a joint reception area, lecture and meeting room facilities.

The project team was led by Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MWWFRS) with appropriate representation from each stakeholder. The partners pooled resources for the procurement of professional services through the Carmarthenshire County Council framework and secured a contractor through a similar framework managed by Carmarthenshire County Council.

The new shared building has led to increased collaborative working and information sharing. Mid and West Wales FRS also have two joint police and fire stations and three joint fire and ambulance stations. An opportunity to extend the facility to accommodate the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST) is currently under development.

Funding was received through an Improvement Fund from the Welsh Government for the development of a partnering agreement. This ensured the governance of each organisation was catered for to ease the development of a lease agreement for each organisation with MWWFRS.

The pooling of resources to procure services, project manage and commission as well as the ongoing maintenance of the facility has been critical to its success.