

CENTRE FOR REGENERATION EXCELLENCE IN WALES

PROPOSAL

**Chair & the Technical Secretariat to the Task and Finish Group
October 2008**

Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales

The Concept and Draft Outline Proposal

1. Introduction

1.1 In April, a Task and Finish Group was established by the Deputy Minister for Regeneration, with the purpose of investigating “the potential for establishing a Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales, based in the Heads of the Valleys area; how it might be structured and funded; and what services it might offer both on site and virtually”. The full Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group forms Appendix 1 to this report.

1.2 The membership of the Task and Finish Group has included policy makers and practitioners from regeneration and associated areas of activity from the public, private and the third sectors working in Wales and beyond. Whilst not formally representative of their sectors, members have sought views and opinions of their peers / colleagues throughout the duration of the TFG. In addition, some members have sought direct input from their sectors (e.g. through the Welsh Local Government Association; and the Higher Education Response Group Wales).

1.3 Between April and the end of September the Group has met 5 times and considered the key questions of what the functions, structures and funding of a Centre might be, where in the Heads of the Valleys it might be located and how it would both add value to existing regeneration work and initiatives in Wales and, while representing an important regeneration investment in the Valleys, serve the whole of Wales.

1.4 This report seeks to provide answers to these questions and to deliver the report required of the Task and Finish Group by the Deputy Minister for Regeneration. We believe it does and brings that much closer an ambition which those involved in regeneration in Wales have sought for many years: a centre which would promote notable practice and knowledge transfer in regeneration, help coordinate the range of regeneration activities underway in Wales and support the development of the regeneration skills base.

1.5 In so doing our ambition for a Centre has been that it will make a significant contribution to the professional development of those involved in regeneration, add to the capacity of organisations in the community, private and public sectors who participate in it and benefit from it, thereby making a long term difference in the outcomes of regeneration work in Wales. Along the way we are hopeful that as the work of regeneration in Wales progresses and as the Centre deepens its contribution that Wales will be seen as an exemplar for small nations seeking to solve their own problems with the best use of their own resources and opportunities.

1.6 We are very mindful in developing a proposal for a Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales that the uniqueness of regeneration in Wales be uppermost in our plans. Regeneration sometimes gets conflated with urban regeneration and we are very clear that to serve the whole of Wales the Centre must be a focus for building up understanding and capacity for the regeneration challenges facing the great diversity of communities we have in Wales and must capture

both the differences, and the interplay, between urban areas, their hinterlands and the rural communities.

- 1.7 Clearly since the Task and Finish Group started its work the business and investment climate has markedly deteriorated internationally and in Wales. Regeneration and housing schemes in many areas which were considered marginal at the best of times will stall or be abandoned. Recovery will come but the world will have changed in the meanwhile. This initiative is not damaged by this context. It seems to us that it is made more urgent by it. Wales will need to marshal all the regeneration and development capacity it can to help it succeed now and in the future.
- 1.8 We were mindful in seeking to make sense of the proposition to have some kind of Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales that we should learn from relevant experiences elsewhere. As part of assessing the potential for establishing a Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales, there is clearly a need to reflect on the situation elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Whilst action taken elsewhere should not dictate solutions in Wales, they may be able to assist in terms of developing proposals that are relevant to circumstances in Wales. The secretariat did a considerable amount of research including site visits and interviews in undertaking this project so as to ground it in reality and to learn from the successes and errors of others.
- 1.9 In England, the two main responses to the key Urban Task Force report (1999) and the subsequent Egan Review (2004) have been the Academy for Sustainable Communities and the separate but related Regional Centres of Excellence (RCE). The latter have particularly focused on the regeneration skills agenda, although more recently they have addressed the increasing importance of the Climate Change agenda. A range of professional & generic skills deficiencies and a lack of capacity for 'delivery' were identified, originally focusing on those professional skills engaged mainly in the built environment; but latterly a broader agenda that embraces physical, economic and social regeneration skills, allied to an increased emphasis on community capacity building and better communication between professionals and communities. In England there has also been an emphasis on 'sustainable communities' and on 'place making', and the activities of each RCE have been an integral part of the Regional Regeneration Strategy and related to the work of the Regional Development Agencies.
- 1.10 The Academy for Sustainable Communities was established in 2006 as the national centre for delivering skills and knowledge needed to make better places in England. Following reorganisation, it will be incorporated into the new Homes and Communities Agency in December 2008. The main functions of the Academy are to lead, influence and coordinate others in the sector to reduce skills gaps and labour shortages; build the skills, knowledge and capacity of individuals responsible for creating and maintaining sustainable communities; and champion a shared understanding of sustainable communities and provide practical knowledge and support delivery. The Academy works across the public, private and voluntary sectors with education providers, employers, professional institutions, relevant Sector Skills Councils, Regional Centres of Excellence and other skills bodies to provide and promote excellence in sustainable community skills and knowledge development. Its overarching aim is to develop world class generic skills sets amongst all those involved in delivering and maintaining sustainable communities through building capacity, skills and knowledge and multidisciplinary cross sector working.

- 1.11 The definition of a Centre of Excellence in England used by the former ODPM is that it is an organisation “to drive up skills and knowledge in the related fields of regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. The services it provides will be available to a wide range of people from the public and private sector including built environment professionals, regeneration practitioners, people working for local/regional government and community representatives”.
- 1.12 The focus in Scotland has been more on community regeneration skills and they have endorsed National Standards for Engagement, but issues both of capacity to deliver and on better communication between professionals and communities, have again been a feature of training programmes. Recently, the Centre for Regeneration has been absorbed into the Scottish Executive, but with a ‘ring fenced’ budget.
- 1.13 The differences between the English and Scottish approaches are suggestive of the key proposition put forward in our own report: whilst there are generic issues for all involved in regeneration – how do you get quality private sector investment, how do you ensure in developing a place that local communities benefit too, how do professional cultures collaborate and also work closely with and learn from communities themselves - the needs of each context differ. So the answers differ. Wales’s Centre will be rooted in Welsh realities and help bring solutions that work for Wales.
- 1.14 Indeed the impetus for this initiative, though partly influenced by regeneration debates and institutional initiatives elsewhere in the UK, came from those within Wales seeking a way of helping deal with specific Welsh challenges. That impetus derives from:
- Actions taken by HE institutions in Wales from 2002 onwards, particularly with the establishment of the Regeneration Institute at the University of Cardiff and the subsequent establishment of the Regeneration Hub at the University of Glamorgan and other course development work in other Welsh HE institutions.
 - The activities of Regeneration Skills Collective Wales (RSC), comprising a member network of six professional institutions (CIH Cymru, ICE Wales, LI Wales, RICS Wales, RSAW & RTPI Cymru). Established in 2003, this is a unique initiative in the U.K. context.
 - Particularly influential in our thinking has been the report on skills gaps in regeneration in Wales done by the RSC entitled “Professional and Cross Professional Sustainable Regeneration Skills in Wales” (Recommendations from the report attached: Appendix 2, full report available on request); and the report from the HE institutions in Wales submitted to this Task and Finish Group which called for a new initiative to add value to the significant work of the universities and colleges in Wales and to enable cross professional regeneration learning (Extracts from the report attached: Appendix 3).
 - The appointment of a Deputy Minister for Regeneration by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 with responsibility for regeneration, including provision of sites and premises; derelict land; Business Eye matters relating to regeneration; the Mon a Menai and the Heads of the Valleys programmes; Communities First; Communities@One; Communities Facilities and Activities Programme; Post Offices; Physical Regeneration Fund; Groundwork Wales; Coalfields Regeneration Trust; Social Economy; and scoping ICT in relation to regeneration and the economy. This is a unique & unified regeneration

portfolio in comparison with other nations in the UK and a unique opportunity to align regeneration forces behind common strategies.

- The 'Heads of the Valleys' Conference held in February 2008 which led directly to the establishment of this Task & Finish Group.

1.15 Clearly the conclusions and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group can take forward a process to a certain point. In this context, acceptance and approval of the concept of a Centre for Regeneration Excellence that meets the needs of Wales is a critical point in this process, with guidelines on how to maintain the momentum of realising the aspirations linked to the proposed concept, within a realistic timescale.

2. The public policy connections

2.1 The broad policy agenda implied in the regeneration of Welsh communities suggests that a number of WAG Directorates would be supportive of, and find their objectives met, by the proposed CREW. This is so not least because the Centre will help develop the skills and the knowledge base which will be required by all such directorates in meeting their core aim of strengthening the vitality of Welsh communities. In Appendix 4 we highlight the 'fit' we see with the key policy objectives of a wide range of WAG directorates.

2.2 We note further that in the 'One Wales' document that the government states that "Over the next four years we will establish integrated and cross-cutting initiatives aimed at economic development and regeneration, particularly in areas of high deprivation". We see the CREW as potentially being a very important example of a cross cutting regeneration initiative and one which will command the support of all sections of and interests in Wales.

2.3 The consequence of this would seem to be that the CREW should attract funding from more than one Directorate and any successful CREW business model should anticipate this to some degree.

2.4 In agreeing more specific funding from the various Directorates there will be a need for more detailed agreement with funders on the outputs they require. That will be an early task of the CREW executive start-up team. Any outputs agreed should provide added value and be additional to existing programmes or otherwise help Directorates achieve their targets; a commitment to value for money will be written in to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the CREW.

3. The Concept

3.1 Overall, it is important that a Centre for Regeneration Excellence is established that is dedicated to the needs of Wales. There are particular characteristics relating to the sustainable regeneration agenda that are specific to Wales, such as those relating to culture, design, sustainability and the unique character of Wales rural and urban communities. In addition, the process of devolution is 'making a difference' between Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, which is likely to grow rather than diminish in the foreseeable future. Resolving the lack of sustainable regeneration skills and capacity in Wales by relying on the provision of solutions, services and facilities 'across the border' is not an answer to the needs of Wales. In addition, by finding solutions within Wales, the potential exists to create higher skills and higher earning capacity from within Wales, one

cornerstone of the Welsh Assembly Government's policy of improving GDP and GVA.

3.2 Four options relating to the concept of a Centre were identified, as follows:

- A single and highly centralised National Centre, situated in a strategic location. This type of Centre would normally provide the full range of services and facilities at a single location. It would possess a very high profile, with the potential to generate income.
- Regional Centres, operating in a fairly autonomous manner, possibly based in existing institutions, with each Centre having a dedicated Manager and administrative support. Whilst this approach would focus on local needs, it would be more difficult to achieve consistency at the national level.
- A Virtual Centre, taking the form of a virtual web based 'hub' and network, supported by a relatively small administrative physical Centre with a manager and administrative / ICT support. This approach would ensure consistency in provision of skills & training. However, it would be totally dependent on the capacity and availability of high quality ICT infrastructure, and might be inaccessible or unacceptable to some client groups.
- A Distributed Centre, comprising a national physical centre, with regional operating hubs and a strong virtual platform. The main role of a national physical Centre would be overall coordination and the provision of administrative support, linked to regional 'hubs' that would ensure local delivery. This network would be supported by the high quality provision of virtual services (web based). This means the network is essentially the CREW but the administrative and service centre will have a physical location and team to support it.

3.3 The fourth option was agreed by the Task and Finish Group to be the most relevant to the needs and geography of Wales. Whilst the majority of the population of Wales is concentrated in the South East and the North East of the country, with professional services allied to sustainable regeneration being likewise located, issues of sustainable regeneration are distributed throughout urban and rural Wales. Therefore it is essential that the facilities and services associated with a Centre for Regeneration Excellence are accessible by all means possible throughout the country. It would also be desirable that regional provision is incorporated into the model adopted, to give the opportunity for more local ownership and relevance to the services provided.

3.4 This approach has been adopted in some regions of England, most notably the East of England (Inspire) and South East England (excluding Greater London), both of which are poly-nuclear and diverse in character. In these regions, the Regional Centre is relatively small scale, performing the overall coordination and administrative functions, with sub regional Centres based in Universities or similar institutions specialising in one type of regeneration (e.g. urban, rural, community etc.).

4. The preferred option of the Distributed Centre in Wales

4.1 In terms of this preferred option, it is proposed that the **main physical Centre** of the CREW will perform the overall coordination and administration functions for an all Wales network and associated services. In these terms, location within Wales is not particularly a barrier to or condition for success, other than it should possess a reasonable level of accessibility, especially from the main population centres in Wales. Should the main physical Centre develop services & functions

beyond those specified above (e.g. a significant 'campus' role, perhaps with dedicated residential accommodation), then the accessibility of the location would arguably become more important. This report does not propose a campus development.

4.2 In these circumstances, the explicit proposition set out in the Terms of Reference that the physical location for the Centre would be in the Heads of the Valleys needs no further elaboration. However, we do see local benefits to having the Centre associated with the Heads of the Valleys area:

- The area will be a priority for sustainable regeneration action by the Welsh Assembly Government and its partners over the next decade.
- There is a need to ensure that professional services are encouraged to contribute to the regeneration of the Heads of the Valleys area.
- The location of the proposed Centre will create more profile for the area in terms of upgrading its status.

It is accepted that the location of the Centre in the Heads of the Valleys area will not in itself create a significant number of jobs or have any direct economic impact. However, it will contribute towards changing public, and hopefully investor, perceptions of the area, thereby having an indirect economic impact.

In addition, locating the Centre in a regeneration area holds out real possibilities for 'action learning' from a large regeneration programme on the doorstep and access to and involvement with local communities engaged in the process of regeneration, community development and place-shaping.

4.3 In order to fulfil an all Wales function and to ensure 'ownership' of the Centre concept throughout Wales, it is proposed that **Regional Hubs**, working with the main Physical Centre, be established to serve the specific needs of North, Mid and West Wales. Given the institutional networks that already exist in Wales (e.g. Higher Education, Further Education, third sector initiatives and sub-regional regeneration initiatives etc.), there should be no lack of opportunities in identifying potential Regional Hubs, with associated support networks.

4.4 Potential exists to establish Hubs in North West Wales (linked to the Mon a Menai initiative), South West Wales (linked to a number of initiatives), and contact with potential network partners has been made in these areas. The possibly exists to extend these networks into North East Wales & Mid Wales. It is essential that these regional networks include some level of local authority, Higher Education, Further Education, private sector and third sector representation.

4.5 In order that all regeneration practitioners have reasonable access to the main training / skills development / research and information services provided by the proposed Centre, there will be a need to establish high quality **'virtual' facilities** accessible throughout Wales, in particular to those areas that are relatively remote from the main physical Centre and the Regional Hubs. This will require a strong commitment to the provision of the highest quality information and communication technology available in areas where such provision may be difficult and/or costly.

4.6 The 'distributed' approach also involves significant partnership working with relevant networks to advise and shape their delivery, for example the Built Environment Forum and Sector Skills Council.

5. The role of the Centre

- 5.1 **A strategic role:** The Centre will need to serve the whole of Wales. It must ensure that high quality, integrated regeneration policy and practice can be effectively developed both through identifying good practice and building capacity. The Centre will need to promote and encourage other key stakeholders and providers to recognise and adopt best practice, and establish standards that all can aspire to within Wales.
- 5.2 **A coordination and facilitation role:** The Centre would need to ensure that all stakeholders in the sustainable regeneration sector in Wales are working effectively together to develop unified and integrated solutions. The Centre should also ensure that all of the gaps in the delivery of its main functions are adequately filled, preferably by encouraging others to meet evidenced need; or by acting as provider of last resort.
- 5.3 **A commissioning role:** The Centre would need to have a commissioning role to enable it to work with relevant partners to apply their expertise to specific activities; this should be resourced from external funding processes. In addition, the Centre should have some dedicated funding at its disposal to promote rapid responses to need, where external funding sources have excessive lead-in times; and also to offer matched funding opportunities which might lever in external funding more effectively. Both HEFCW & WAG have a key role to perform in terms of providing funding resources.
- 5.4 **A policy role:** The Centre would need to be in a position to influence policy developments relating to sustainable regeneration in Wales. This particular role will require the Centre to possess a degree of independence from the main public sector bodies in Wales.
- 5.5 **A delivery role:** The Centre would need to have a delivery role to enable it to fill gaps in provision and to undertake relevant research and development.

6. The scope of activities undertaken by the Centre

- 6.1 **Professional and cross-professional regeneration skills**, thereby ensuring that the range of professions engaged in the regeneration of communities in Wales share a common language and a common vision of how regeneration can be achieved. The main evidence base in Wales relating to this activity is the research report "Professional and Cross-Professional Skills in Sustainable Regeneration in Wales" (March 2008), see Appendix 2 for the recommendations, the full report is available upon request. This was prepared for Regeneration Skills Collective Wales by Miller Research (UK) Ltd., funded by Construction Skills Wales, the Construction Industries Council and the RSCW. Reference has also been made to other research reports undertaken in England (mainly by the Academy for Sustainable Communities) and Scotland (mainly by the Scottish Centre for Regeneration).
- 6.2 **Community regeneration and community development skills**, recognising the essential contribution made to regeneration by individuals and organisations from within the communities being regenerated. The main evidence base for this activity in Wales are reports relating to the HE / FE project based in the Heads of the Valleys; and papers prepared by the RISE initiative, based in Newport. Wider evidence from key initiatives such as the Joseph Rowntree Neighbourhood Programme also point to the major benefits of community involvement in the

regeneration process. In addition, the attention of the Task and Finish Group was drawn to the wide variety of training and skills programmes that had been established in different parts of Wales in relation to community regeneration / development.

6.3 Achieving effective interaction and better integration between these two defined areas of activity, ensuring that effective professional development can occur, as well as enhancement of community capacity to engage with regeneration professionals within partnerships and other forums.

6.4 It is proposed that the Centre for Regeneration Excellence does not embrace the core functions of

- A Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Construction or a Construction Training Centre.
- A national Design Centre.
- A Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development.
- A Centre of Excellence for Social Enterprise.

However, it will ensure it interfaces with any such similar Centres established in Wales to add value to public investment, to achieve interaction for mutual benefit and provide pathways for learning for regeneration policy makers and practitioners at all levels in Wales. In addition, there may be opportunities for seeking and securing co-location with one or more of these potential institutions.

6.5 The Centre is intended for existing or potential policy makers, decision takers and practitioners in sustainable regeneration in Wales. This includes professionals, non-professionals and all those interested in contributing positively to the process of sustainable regeneration throughout Wales. There are additional potential opportunities for co-location with organisations involved in the delivery of the proposed CREW functions outlined below, particularly in relation to training, education and skills development. Discussions are already being held in this respect.

7. The functions of the Centre

7.1 Training, education and skills development

In relation to the provision of sustainable regeneration training and skills development both currently and in the future, it is essential to build on what already exists and is being delivered by DCELLS, SSCs and HE/FE institutions, rather than reinvent whole new structures. Therefore a sound information base is needed of what is already being provided; and what is currently proposed. This will be progressed by the Technical Secretariat.

There is a range of skill set and training issues that need to be addressed:

- a) Careers advice: There is no current coordinated careers programme that promotes the potential job opportunities presented by sustainable regeneration. For example, individual professional institutions tend to adopt their own careers programmes. There have been examples of relatively uncoordinated, but successful, joint careers events in the past. A Centre for Regeneration could help to build more sustainable joint programmes targeting the skills required for sustainable regeneration; and promoting the wider employment opportunities that exist. An opportunity currently exists in relation to the EU Convergence Programme to take this forward.

- b) Professional / technical skills: The RSCW research report indicated that there are problems in terms of the capacity of certain professional skills associated with the sustainable regeneration agenda in Wales. However, potential solutions are not solely dependent on improving the provision in Wales of graduate / post graduate courses leading to professional qualification. For example, there are known external factors that mitigate against qualified graduates & professionals staying in Wales. Whilst the main responsibility for this remains with HEIs for degree level courses, and with the professional institutions for professional accreditation, it is suggested that a Centre for Excellence might be able to lobby to create the circumstances where professional and technical skills capacities relevant to sustainable regeneration can be improved in Wales.
- c) Generic / cross professional skills: The RSCW research report has identified a significant deficiency in the provision of generic / cross professional training programmes in Wales, both from the perspectives of public & private sector employers and from existing sustainable regeneration practitioners. This appears to be a UK wide issue, and based on sound evidence, the Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales needs to address this issue as a high priority. In addition to the skills identified as part of Lord Rodger's Urban Task Force and the Egan Review of Sustainable Communities, the generic skills associated with 'place making', Climate Change and sustainability are also assuming increasing importance. These deficits exist at both "leadership" and middle management levels. The Centre could play a primary role in "contextualising" training in these areas towards regeneration. One of the objectives of the Centre should be to ensure that the best regeneration advice is available to those procuring design and construction projects. Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and the housing market in Wales are currently undergoing big transformation and change, and there are new stock transfer vehicles on the scene. The skills requirements for this moment of transformation need to be recognised, and the CREW can play a part in helping deliver relevant training and support.
- d) Community regeneration skills: From the evidence available to the Technical Secretariat, there appears to be a wide range of relatively uncoordinated training programmes of varying quality relating to community regeneration and community development throughout Wales. These skills are required by professional practitioners as well as those directly involved in more localised community activities, including local residents and local elected Councillors. The Welsh Assembly Government Community Development Learning Task and Finish Group is addressing these issues and progressing towards a national endorsement scheme for training courses in this field. The Centre can play a key role in promoting a more structured and coherent national programme of learning which will ensure the availability of endorsed community regeneration training throughout Wales. There is also a direct interface between community regeneration skills and the generic / cross professional skills outlined in c) above. Therefore the provision of these skill sets need to be embraced within a Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales. Another issue that need to be addressed is that of the balance between accredited and non-accredited training provision.

Consequently, the Centre will need to consider how to ensure consistent quality of provision of training and education across Wales and take a central role in taking this forward.

It is important that the Centre's learning delivery role is clearly defined. This could be achieved:

- a) Directly as a recognised place of excellence, but as a provider of last resort.
- b) Indirectly, by signposting to a wider network of stakeholders and training providers associated with the Centre. This includes the Higher & Further Education sectors, the third sector (e.g. the Development Trust Association) and private sector providers.

The identification of a range of key learning 'products' can ensure that those engaged in both urban and rural regeneration throughout Wales can access high quality learning materials that have emerged from thorough research and review of practice. In particular, high added value can be derived from learning materials which address cross-sector skills and promote professional excellence and community engagement. The Higher Education institutions should play a major role in the development and delivery of these 'products'. Key mechanisms could include secondments and placements of recognised experts for specific curriculum development and delivery activities. In this context, it is highly desirable that the Higher Education Response Group that was re-established as a result of the Task and Finish Group, should continue in some form.

It is also essential that the CREW establishes links with qualification / training providers and Learning Networks, in order to ensure collaboration with the Assembly Government's Educational, Skills and Lifelong Learning agenda. Depending on the success of achieving these links, the potential exists for the CREW to take on an accreditation function, especially in relation to generic skills relating to sustainable regeneration.

In such ways the CREW will help support those directorates that are wishing to increase the number, range and quality of qualifications possessed by the people of Wales.

7.2 A national base for comprehensive and rigorous research

Research facilitated by, or undertaken at, the proposed Centre could take forward existing research initiatives, inform policy development, connect research with practice, develop delivery models/toolkits, evaluate effectiveness and promote innovative thinking. Mapping current practice will enable the identification of the distribution of skills as well as gaps in support for the regeneration process.

The above functions could be achieved by:

- a) A core research team based at the Centre performing a primary research role.
- b) Co-ordinating and commissioning other agencies to conduct research and by providing a brokerage system to encourage joint activities.

Higher Education institutions in Wales could make a significant contribution to the research function of the Centre and provide expertise and support. It would be able to approach funding sources including research councils, European programmes such as FP7 and research trust funding to help the Centre achieve a strong research base.

7.3 Information and dissemination function (A 'virtual' Centre)

This function includes the dissemination of information through the creation of a national repository of information and knowledge, including library resources of physical and online materials.

Ensuring effective communication of good practice and excellence will represent a primary function for the CREW. This is critical to the overall concept of a 'virtual' Centre and associated network that can serve the needs of the whole of Wales, particularly in those rural areas where physical facilities are less accessible.

Whilst this might be most closely associated with the development of learning materials, the Centre will also be able to provide information and communication services which will be of high added value to the sector. Key functions potentially include the development of a library resource of physical and online materials for general access by regeneration personnel and partnerships. Information would include materials developed by the Centre but also key outputs from other agencies and institutions including universities, government departments and key organisations. Additionally, support for networking by the use of appropriate web-based resources including discussion forums, email groups and web content will provide means to quickly disseminate materials to the point of delivery.

There will be a great reliance on the Centre being able to use the highest quality of new Information and Communication Technology, with appropriate 'back up' to ensure the provision of reliable and updated services. This is a huge challenge to Wales, as current infrastructure is inadequate; and private sector providers will have to respond proactively as partners in providing 'state of the art' and reliable services that are attractive to all potential clients in the sustainable regeneration sector.

7.4 Facilitating the exchange of experience and excellence in Welsh and international practice

The exchange of excellent or notable practice and the sharing of knowledge will be critical in supporting sustainable regeneration policy makers and practitioners in Wales. Any Centre that is established should be a repository for information, knowledge and practice that is accessible and widely available. In this context there is a need to identify 'notable' practice both within, and from outside, Wales. It will also be necessary to examine the different, and most appropriate, delivery vehicles of sustainable regeneration in Wales.

In terms of the exchange of experience, benefits could be gained from establishing working relationships with similar initiatives elsewhere in the U.K., Europe and, where appropriate, internationally. A network between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was established approximately four years ago, but this has become less active over the past twelve months or so. The Scottish Centre for Regeneration is keen to use the proposals in Wales to re-energise the U.K. network. In terms of other opportunities, initial discussions with the Wales European Funding Office have identified opportunities for exchanges of experience through Trans-National Cooperation programmes between Wales and the Republic of Ireland; and between Wales and other selected regions elsewhere in the E.U.

The opportunity exists to establish a Centre that can earn an international reputation for training, research, and the exchange of experience / practice. Possible facilities required to achieve this status would be:

- a) Conference and seminar facilities.
- b) Access to some form of good quality residential accommodation.

7.5 A base for effective and genuine partnership

It is important that a positive relationship is established and maintained between the private public and third sectors, especially in relation to both the social and private enterprise agenda. Central to successful sustainable regeneration is achieving direct interrelationships between the development of vibrant national, regional and local economies and solving the problems of our more deprived communities. In this context, it is essential to harness private and third sector initiative to achieve the economic, social and environmentally sustainable objectives of regeneration projects and programmes.

Critical in this process is the need to continue the 'coming together' of different sector and geographic interests and expertise that have been formed as a result of the establishment of the Task and Finish Group. It is essential that key policy makers and practitioners in Wales, and experts beyond the borders of Wales, are fully signed up to the proposed Centre of Excellence.

7.6 Given the scope of the functions outlined above, and the potential for co-location and associated "spin out" activity, the CREW has a potential to be taken forward as a "Sustainable Regeneration Technium". This may be a variation on the form of the successful Technium already established in Wales, but would nevertheless address issues relating to innovation and the sustainable regeneration agenda.

7.7 Appendix 5 outlines a Draft **Business Model / Programme proposal 2009/10 – 2011/12**. This focuses on the lead up to, and the first three years of the operation of the proposed Centre. During the early part of the work programme for this period, progress will need to be made towards developing a Business Model / Programme proposal for 2012/13 – 2014/15.

8. The process for establishing a Centre of Excellence in Wales

8.1 It is proposed that the process for establishing a Centre of Excellence in Wales should be incremental. This is justified on the basis that:

- Experience in England suggests that there is a danger of seeking to set up a Centre quickly and without the time to take all the main stakeholders on board. Following early failures, the general pattern became one of evolution towards a fully-fledged Centre through a series of incremental stages designed to ensure buy-in from all the main players; and to give the supply side, such as universities, time to respond. The effectiveness of the establishment of a Centre also reflects the degree of commitment from potential funding bodies. Strong, long-term backing is needed, mainly because the agenda that Centres of Excellence are asked to address is constantly changing,
- In some respects, because of the delay in taking forward the concept of a Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales compared with England and Scotland, some of the services and facilities associated with the Centre have already been developed in Wales, through HE institutions, the Regeneration Skills Collective Wales, Sector Skills Councils, local authorities etc. Therefore there is an opportunity to build upon initiatives that already exist.
- We want to build on the momentum we have created, and need to establish the team and a project office. Office accommodation is currently being sought with the assistance of the Department of the Economy & Transport. However,

reasons of profile and to create the right professional environment, we have always wanted to locate the CREW in an appropriate building.

8.2 A number of opportunities are known to exist within the Heads of the Valleys area that could accommodate the needs of a physical Centre. Site options and the pros and cons of the 'offer' in the potential locations are being explored and work continues to identify the preferred options. The Design Commission for Wales will set out the design principles that will govern the appraisal of location options and final site selection, these are appended at Appendix 6.

Criteria being taken into account for the sites include:

- A fit with the strategic context provided by the "Heads of the Valleys Strategy": In this context, both Merthyr Tydfil and Ebbw Vale feature strongly, especially in terms of their existing and future service functions.
- The timing of the availability of suitable sites / premises: There is an urgent need to establish the identity and "brand" of the Centre, in order that it achieves early credibility and status.
- A reasonable level of accessibility from the main population centres in Wales: This must include the availability of public transport options, taking into account both bus and train services.
- Achieving a synergy with complementary facilities and developments, especially where such facilities could be mutually supportive.
- A strong preference is given to ensuring that any building in which the Centre might be housed has a town centre location; and should if possible be an existing building refurbished or renovated for the purpose, meeting the highest standards of design and sustainability and an exemplar for and of sustainable regeneration.
- The overall requirement of meeting the principles of sustainability, for which uniquely the Welsh Assembly Government has a legal responsibility with only two other governments worldwide, is considered to be a high priority of the Task and Finish Group.

8.3 Whilst it is anticipated that permanent premises for the physical Centre may not be immediately available in 2009, it is important for the process of establishing the wider services and functions associated with an all Wales Centre of Excellence that the overall initiative commences as soon as possible. The Business Model set out envisages critical activity being undertaken in the remainder of the current financial year (as set out in Appendix 5), after which a more formal team will be established to take the project forward.

8.4 This incremental approach will enable services and facilities to be developed in the shorter term, which can then be embraced into dedicated Centre facilities in the medium term. The evolving services and facilities will need to be monitored and evaluated over a period of time.

9. Finance: Sources of Funding

9.1 The approach taken in seeking to identify sources of funding has been to establish what services and facilities associated with a proposed Centre for Regeneration Excellence need to be provided and then seek sources of funding. The approach taken has not been to base the proposal on the priorities of the funding streams that might be available. Creating an effective virtual learning portal for regeneration could potentially generate 'clean' match funding income

that could be used to develop the Centre's programme, this could come from education providers, funders or government departments and has to be a focus.

- Core funding: It is considered that government in Wales should provide the source of core funding. It is proposed that this should be mainstreamed funding and not necessarily be based on the principle of 'match funding' for other sources. There is no predetermined "exit strategy" for the core funding stream. In the context of the Welsh Assembly Government's funding support, it is recognised that the funding of establishment costs could be very dependent on a commitment from Heads of the Valleys Initiative / Mon a Menai Initiative and Regeneration Priority Area funding.
- European funding: The Structural Fund programmes for Wales (2007 – 2013) are an important source of funding support, particularly in relation to 'set up' and 'early years' funding. Both sources of capital (ERDF) & revenue (ESF) support should be sought. However, other EU funding programmes should also be accessed in relation to the functions prescribed for the proposed Centre for Regeneration Excellence. For example, Territorial Cooperation Funds in relation to the exchange of experience & 'best' practice; and research programme funding etc.
- Supplementary funding: It is essential that private (sector) sources of funding should be secured to supplement funding streams from the public sector. The appropriateness of Trust Funds and direct funding from private benefactors needs to be investigated as a matter of priority.
- Earned income: Whilst the Centre for Regeneration Excellence should be a direct provider of training and skills development programmes of last resort, the Centre should take forward a dedicated programme of events that will be attractive to policy makers and practitioners both from within and outside Wales. For example, a National Annual Conference based on the Assembly's Regeneration Summit 2008, and the RSCW's Annual 'Delivering Regeneration Conference 2004 – 2008, is required.
- Depending on the arrangements for when the CREW moves into its appropriate building, it is possible that the CREW would be at the head of the lease and therefore could, in some variations of this project, receive income from rent from other tenants to the building. The TFG were committed to the principle of co-location of CREW with other appropriate organisations so as to maximise synergies and value for money.

9.2 An appropriate budget is in the process of being agreed with the various Directorates. Until it is finalised, no figures or budget will be published. Some elements of the proposed budget will require further clarification, as do the potential sources of funding support – urgent tasks for the new executive start-up team to focus on when they arrive on the scene in Spring 2009.

10. Legal and organisational status

10.1 Given the status of Centres of Excellence in England and Scotland, and potential opportunities that appear to exist in Wales, three main options were considered:

- A part of the government structure, as in Scotland (an 'arm' of the Scottish Executive) and England, where the Academy for Sustainable Communities is part of the Homes & Communities Agency.
- As a more independent legal entity, based on the concept of a Company Limited by Guarantee, with or without charitable status.
- As a part of the Higher or Further Education sector.

10.2 Whilst each of the above need detailed assessment in terms of advantages and disadvantages, the Group have a general preference for the "Company Limited by Guarantee" (CLG) model. This would give a measurable degree of independence, albeit a potentially higher level of risk in terms of not being a direct or indirect 'arm' of government. In this context, a CLG could operate with or without Charitable Trust status. The Group consider that there is potential for a single CLG to operate separate activities with or without Charitable Trust status, thereby maximising the potential benefits from the adopted structure.

10.3 If the CLG model is adopted by the CREW, the specific wording of the Memorandum and Articles of Association are likely to be critical to the success of the proposal. For example, these will need to reflect the role of the core funders; and some level of accountability will have to be written in.

10.4 The Group foresee members of the Board of a CLG as coming from a wide constituency, including public funders and local government representation, in addition to experienced and committed regeneration individuals from the private, community, voluntary and RSL sectors. However, it is essential that all Board members possess knowledge of operational and governance issues in relation to operating a company; in this context the primary responsibility of individual Board members must be to the Company and not to any employing or 'representative' body. It is also essential that each Board member can bring specific expertise to the company.

APPENDIX 1

CENTRE FOR REGENERATION EXCELLENCE IN WALES TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To investigate the potential for establishing a Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales, based in the Heads of the Valleys area, how it might be structured and funded, and what services it might offer both on site and virtually.
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Deputy Minister for Regeneration announced the establishment of a small Task and Finish group to scope the potential for a national Centre for Excellence in Regeneration comprising relevant stakeholders including Community Housing Cymru, the Regeneration Skills Collective, the WLGA and the private sector. It is anticipated that the Centre will be located in the Heads of the Valleys but it would draw on existing academic and professional expertise in Wales. A study will be co-coordinated by the Welsh Assembly Government's Heads of the Valleys programme.
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Task & Finish Group is responsible to the Deputy Minister for Regeneration The Heads of the Valleys programme is responsible for coordination Regeneration Skills Collective Wales will provide the technical secretariat to the Task & Finish Group.
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim Williams (Chair) Professor David Adamson, Director, Programme for Community Regeneration, University of Glamorgan Nick Bennett, Chief Executive, Community Housing Cymru Barbara Castle, Consultant – community regeneration Phil Cooper, Managing Director, Venture Wales Bob Croydon, Princes Foundation for the Built Environment Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive, Design Commission for Wales Sian Diaz, Lovell Partnerships Mark Hallett, Development Director, Igloo Regeneration Phil Jardine, Partner, Morgan Cole Patrick Lewis, Heads of the Valleys Initiative & Welsh Assembly Government. Tim Peppin, Welsh Local Government Association Wyn Prichard, Construction Skills Wales Director, CITB Richard Essex (Secretariat) Regeneration Skills Collective Wales
Role of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide expert advice from their professional, technical and / or sector perspective. To consultant with colleagues, as necessary, to provide

	advice to the Group.
Advisors & Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisors and visitors may be invited to meetings on a one-off basis. Any member can suggest visitors, subject to the agreement of the Chair.
Administration and resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration Skills Collective Wales will provide the Technical Secretariat to the Group. • Agenda for all Group meetings will be prepared in consultation with the Chairperson, and distributed electronically with papers no less than one week prior to the meeting date. • Minutes of the meeting will be produced and distributed within two weeks of meetings
Workload for the Task & Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings will be held as part of an agreed schedule commencing in April, and finishing in September, 2008. • It is anticipated that the Task and Finish Group will be in a position to confirm their final conclusions and recommendations in respect of the proposed establishment of a Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales within six months of the establishment of the Group; and by the end of September 2008 at the latest. • A process and timetable programme will be agreed by the Group at their first meeting.
Critical Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of the cross cutting nature of physical, economic, social, community and environmental regeneration activity, there is a need to maintain links within the Welsh Assembly Government at cross departmental and cross Ministerial portfolio levels. • Maintenance of links between the public, private and 'third' sectors.
Key Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Assembly Government policy and strategy documents, including "One Wales – A progressive agenda for the government of Wales"; "Wales – A Better Country"; "Making the Connections – Building Better Customer Services"; "The Wales Spatial Plan" etc. • U.K. and English focussed research based documents, such as the "Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities"; "Mind the Skills Gap" report to the ASC; "Professional & Cross Professional Skills in England" report to the ASC etc. • "Regeneration – A Simpler Approach for Wales" Wales Audit Office 2004; "Notable practice in Regeneration" Wales Audit Office 2005; "Professional & Cross Professional Sustainable Regeneration Skills in Wales" for RSC Wales;
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information shared at meetings <u>that is identified as confidential, must be treated as strictly confidential at all times, and not shared with any other parties.</u>

APPENDIX 2

RSCW Professional and Cross-Professional Skills in Sustainable Regeneration Final Report

EXTRACT from Executive Summary – full report available on request

Recommendations

The recommendations below have been compiled in response to the issues highlighted ... (in the report). As such, they present evidence-based solutions to various aspects of the creation and maintenance of an excellent Sustainable Regeneration sector in Wales. Given both current and anticipated circumstances in relation to skills capacities at professional and cross- professional levels, the recommendations focus on:

- (1) Skills development & training
- (2) The exchange of notable practice and knowledge
- (3) The need for more progressive and relevant ways of working (a real 'making the connections' agenda)
- (4) A Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales, as the main mechanism for delivering on this agenda.

No	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timescale
Skills Development and Training Issues			
1	Development of a dedicated website as a portal to build awareness, co-ordinate professional activities and enable information exchange for the benefit of the sector as a whole	WAG/CREW	Short
2	Promote cross-professional skills and their development in Wales, to meet the needs of the sector	RSCW / SSCs	Short / Medium
3	Promote careers in Sustainable Regeneration at a number of levels through joint, cross-professional promotional materials, site visits, presentations and other channels	WAG / SSCs / Careers Wales / RSCW	Short / Medium
4	Support the development of core modules in technical and generic skills relating to cross-occupational working.	CREW / WAG / Partners	Medium
5	Develop an action plan to improve links between Employers and Higher Education	WAG / HEFCW	Short
6	Assess the feasibility of developing a practitioners certificate or similar qualification in Sustainable Regeneration	RSCW / WAG / SSCs	Medium
7	Co-ordinate and jointly develop CPD materials and events with a range of institutions and sector organisations	Professions / SSCs / WAG	Short / Medium
8	Investigate new funding opportunities for the delivery of flexible, modular learning to employees in a workplace setting	WAG / HEFCW / WEFO	Medium
The Exchange of Notable Practice and Knowledge			
9	Extend the successful Site Seminar programme as a basis for producing case study materials	RSCW / PSMW	Short
10	Foster better links with the ASC and examine the potential for improving areas of joint working	WAG	Short / Medium
11	Develop the promotion of enlightened procurement as a means of retaining the benefits of investment in deprived communities	WAG / Value Wales	Short / Medium
12	Facilitate a more extensive programme of exchange of notable practice between Wales, the rest of the U.K. and Europe	WAG / WEFO / WLGA	Medium / Long
The Need for More Progressive and Relevant Ways of Working (a real 'making the connections' agenda)			
13	Stimulate cross departmental and inter-institution working amongst education and training providers to	WAG	Medium / Long

	ensure the availability of learning progression at all levels		
	A Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales, as the main mechanism for delivering on this agenda		
14	Investigate the potential for establishing a Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales	WAG / WLGA / Key Stakeholders / Private Sector	Short / Medium
15	Explore the concept of a skills bank database of public sector specialists to stimulate collaboration	WLGA	Medium / Long
16	Create an annual RSCW Award that celebrates Sustainable Regeneration in Wales to highlight successful cross-professional working.	RSCW / Professional Institutions	Short / Medium
17	Develop a rolling programme of future research to keep abreast of developments in the sector and achieve a more detailed understanding of the drivers of Sustainable Regeneration	WAG / WLGA	Short / Medium

APPENDIX 3

Response of the Higher Education Sector in Wales to the Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales proposal

Submission from the HEI Response Group to the Task and Finish Group.

EXTRACTS taken from the report

Background

Following the Deputy Minister's February announcement of his intention to establish a Task and Finish Group to develop the proposal for a Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales (CREW), a group of Higher Education Institutions has been meeting to develop a unified and collaborative response to the proposal and to focus on the ways in which Higher Education in Wales can contribute to its inception and future success. All Welsh HEIs have been invited to participate and this paper is a collective response to the proposal.

Statement of Support

The HEI Response Group wishes to commence this paper with a clear statement of welcome for the proposal and express its support for the potential contribution such a Centre can make to the regeneration process in Wales and beyond. The existence of a Centre and associated network in which models of effective practice can be developed and disseminated can make a critical difference to the quality of regeneration activities and promote the key skills that all those engaged in regeneration require. The Welsh HEIs also believe they can make an important contribution to the development of the Centre and wish to develop a response which is collaborative within the HE sector but also capitalises on the many existing partnerships HE has with the private, public, voluntary and community sectors throughout Wales.

Response to key issues identified by the Task and Finish Group

a) Location

The HEI Response Group supports the location of the Centre in the Heads of the Valleys region. The region has intractable economic, health and social issues which must be overcome if regeneration of the region is to be achieved. The concentration of disadvantaged communities in that region suggests the need for a Centre which can have an immediate impact and contribute significantly to the holistic regeneration of the region.

However, it is also important that the CREW has an all-Wales impact and reaches out to the many other communities in other areas where disadvantage is a primary characteristic. Môn a Menai has been specifically identified by the HE Group as a region with critical regeneration requirements which the Centre will need to address through effective regional relationships. The Centre must be perceived as an asset for Wales as a whole and its outcomes must be accessible and relevant throughout Wales. A well-developed Centre with a network of partners working in other regions of Wales will maximise the impact of the Centre and ensure that models of good practice are developed collaboratively. It will be essential that the Centre capitalises on the experience of regeneration which has developed in all the regions of Wales. In particular experience in rural development issues and the role of the Welsh language must play an important role in models of good practice for Wales.

(...)

b) Structure

The creation of a physical Centre will be a central feature and provides opportunity for a number of critical roles and functions to be developed which will be discussed in the following sections. The HE Response Group believes there is value in an element of residential provision to support delivery of learning to all sectors engaged in the regeneration process. The opportunity to attend provision at a flagship building with excellent resources can in itself motivate learning and promote excellence. Part of this dynamic is the creation of an exemplary building with key design features and a significant contribution by example to sustainability and low environmental impact building design.

As important as the quality of the Centre itself is the structure of the network it establishes throughout Wales. Current thinking in such structures emphasises a 'hub and spoke' approach with the Centre playing a key role in partnership with identified regional delivery models. This model implies a hierarchical relationship and the HE group would like to point to the advantages of an alternative structure which recognises the leading role of the Centre but which ensures that the regional partners also contribute equally to the development of the activities associated with the Centre. A centre with a core group of regional partners collaboratively developing the activities associated with the Centre will ensure diversity and innovation in the emerging activities of the Centre and its network.

(...)

c) Key Functions

A Centre can acquire a wide range of functions and it will be important to retain a focus and develop functions which 'add value' to the practice of regeneration in Wales. Replication and duplication of existing organisational roles and functions will not provide the Centre with the leading role it requires. Three key functional areas have emerged from the HEIs Response group discussions and these are proposed as offering high added value. (...)

Research, Teaching/Learning, Information and dissemination function.

d) Primary roles

The identification of the three key functions above points to a number of overarching roles that the CREW will need to perform. Firstly, we would suggest a **strategic role** which enables the CREW to ensure that regeneration excellence is effectively developed in Wales. Building on the research function, which will identify good practice and gaps in provision, the Centre will need to promote and encourage other institutions to follow that practice. It will also need to ensure that gaps are being filled either by its own activities or by encouraging appropriate agencies, including HEIs, to develop relevant provision. This suggests a **co-ordinating** role to ensure that all actors in the regeneration sector are working effectively together to develop unified and integrated solutions. This will require more cross-professional practice and inter-disciplinary development than is currently evident. This also suggests a **commissioning role** where the CREW will work with relevant partners to apply their expertise to specific activities. This may be resourced by external funding processes but the HE Group suggests that some funding should be at the disposal of the Centre to promote rapid

response to need where external funding sources have excessive lead-in times, and also to offer matched funding opportunities which might lever in external funding more effectively.

(...)

The potential support from HEIs in Wales.

In responding to these specific issues the HEI Response Group would like to emphasise the potential contribution of HEIs in Wales to achieving a Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales. Reference has been made at appropriate points in the text above to the possible role of HEIs and these will be further developed in this section where necessary. The following contributions have been identified:

- The ability to access funding from a range of funding sources specific to academic activity including research councils, KTP funds, consultancy income, European Union research funding (e.g. FP7), private sector sponsors and trust funds
- The HEIs as pools of expertise in a wide range of activities associated with the regeneration process
- The applied nature of current research in regenerated related areas throughout the HE sector
- Engagement with key stakeholders through current research and consultancy activities
- The experience derived from evaluation of major regeneration programmes, past and present
- The long-term engagement of academics with practice based organisations including professional bodies, umbrella organisations, local government, Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies and government departments in Wales and beyond
- Experience of direct community engagement in education and learning but also in direct support for regeneration programmes such as Communities First and Housing Renewal Areas
- The long-term stability of research activity able to provide longitudinal perspectives on key issues within the regeneration agenda
- The sharing of international experience through research networks and partnerships
- The use of action-based research methods to acquire detailed experiential perspectives on key public values which impact on regeneration
- The independence and objectivity of academic practice
- The physical presence of HEIs in all regions of Wales and the existence of pan-Wales collaborations including WISERD which will generate Wales specific economic and social data to inform the regeneration process.

APPENDIX 4: DRAFT POLICY MATRIX.

Economy

- Wales – A Better Country
- WAVE – Strategic Framework for Economic Development
- Regional Innovative Broadband Support Scheme
- Public Sector Broadband Aggregation
- FibreSpeed Initiative
- Business Support Services Network (Department of the Economy & Transport)

Social / Community

- Communities First
- Good Practice in Communities First
- Communities@One
- National Strategic Framework for Community Development in Wales
- Strategy for Social Enterprise
- Strategy for Older People in Wales
- Empowering Active Citizens to Contribute to Wales. A strategic action plan for the Voluntary Sector
- Local Vision - Statutory Guidance on developing and delivering Community Strategies 2008
- People, Plans and Partnerships - A National Evaluation of Community Strategies in Wales
- Extending Entitlement - Creating Visions of Effective Practice for Young People in Wales (August 2004)
- Children and Young People: Rights to Action – Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes

Housing

- Better Homes Strategy – Welsh Assembly Government
- National Housing Strategy (currently in the process of being updated 2008)
- National Tenant Participation Strategy for Wales
- National Homelessness Strategy for Wales, 2006 – 2008
- Code for Sustainable Homes (Wales) May 2008
- Welsh Housing Quality Standard
- Stock Transfer legislation & guidance

Skills & Training

- Skills That Work for Wales (A Skills & Employment Strategy)
- A Framework for Intervention in Further Education Institutions
- Proposals for Learning & Skills (Wales) Measure 2008
- Skills that Work for Wales Strategy & Action Plan 2008
- Delivering Skills That Work For Wales: Transforming the Education and Training Provision in Wales 2008
- The 14 -18 Strategy

Health

- Designed for Life

Environmental / Sustainability

- Environment Strategy for Wales

- The Sustainable Development Scheme of the National Assembly for Wales; Indicators for Sustainable Development for Wales: Recommendations of the Sustainable Development Indicators Working Group
- Starting to Live Differently: The Sustainable Development Scheme of the National Assembly for Wales
- Sustainable Development Action Plan 2004 -2007

Physical / planning based

- Planning Policy Wales
- Planning Technical Advice Notes (TANs)
- People, Places & Futures (The Wales Spatial Plan)

Regeneration

- “Turning Heads” A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020
- Mon a Menai Initiative
- Rhyl City Strategy
- Regeneration: A simpler approach for Wales (Wales Audit Office)

Governance

- Making the Connections: Building Better Customer Service
- A Shared Responsibility policy statement

APPENDIX 5

Regeneration Centre of Excellence Wales: Draft Business Model / Work Programme proposal 2009/10 – 2011/12.

The Business Model and associated Business Plan reflect the need for momentum to be maintained following the response of the Deputy Minister for Regeneration and the Welsh Assembly Government to the Task and Finish Group's recommendations. The timeline for this decision making process needs to be confirmed.

Critical to the whole process of establishing a Centre for Regeneration Excellence in Wales is securing the longer term financial sustainability of the proposal. A structured and systematic incremental approach to the provision of services & facilities that serve the whole of Wales will be adopted to achieve this objective. This approach will also assist in the establishment of a facility that meets identifiable need and will be unique to Wales in an international context.

It is critical that essential preliminary tasks are completed between November 2008 & March 2009, to enable facilities and services provided by the Centre of Excellence to be operational as soon as possible in 2009/10 financial year. It is likely that the Regeneration Skills Collective could assist in this respect. A very pragmatic approach needs to be taken regarding the scale and nature of the facilities and services established; and these must be properly resourced & capable of CREW branded delivery during the Spring / Summer / Autumn of 2009. This will require the delivery of measurable outputs.

It is proposed that the Centre of Excellence will be established on an incremental basis, with annual programmes being taken forward in relation to available resources and funding packages. These annual programmes will be based on a build up in capacity and resources. It is accepted that the Centre will be based in temporary accommodation, preferably close to the site / premises of the permanent Centre, which should be established as soon as possible. The prospect of utilising complementary facilities that will enhance the role & functions of the CREW, will need to be investigated in the interim.

This incremental approach will enable a realistic appraisal to be undertaken of location within the Heads of the Valleys area (probably either Merthyr Tydfil or Ebbw Vale); and the development of effective 'Hubs' at regional locations in Wales.

Year Zero (2008 – 2009): November 2008 - March 2009.

1. Prepare a detailed Business Plan, initially covering a five year period, but embracing the objective of longer term sustainability of the Centre.
2. Scope out and agree the legal entity & organisational structure for the Centre for Regeneration Excellence, taking into account the need for longer term financial sustainability.
3. Identification of funding sources and submission of applications for funding for at least to period 2009/10 to 2011/12.
4. Identification of a physical base in the Heads of the Valleys Area from which a Centre of Regeneration Excellence in Wales can be organised and coordinated.
5. Identification of Hubs in North West, Mid and South West Wales from which regional activities can be developed & coordinated.
6. Establish a dedicated web site, with information, news of events, a facility for the exchange of information / views etc.

7. Consultation with ICT providers in respect of the establishment of a 'virtual' service.
8. Secure international partners, building on relationships already established with Wales.
9. Establish the possibilities and the basis for co-location with other similar initiatives and with other functional service providers

Year 1 (2009 – 2010)

1. Skills development & training.

- 1.1 Re-establish all Wales Site Seminar programme, focused on the dissemination of notable practice; securing links between different professional / technical skills; and ensuring participation by public, private and third sector practitioners. A provisional programme could include Site Seminars in Bridgend (focus Stock Transfer & regeneration); Butetown in the Bay (link between community regeneration & major physical / economic regeneration); a Heads of the Valleys series - Merthyr Tydfil (town centre renewal as a catalyst for sustainable regeneration), Ebbw Vale - key site development a driver of change? & Tower Colliery – using a community asset for regeneration; Mon a Menai (a strategic approach to sustainable regeneration); Rhyl (Sustainable Regeneration delivered through strategic partnership) Narbeth (rural regeneration at the local level); Cardigan (physical improvements as a catalyst for sustainable regeneration).
- 1.2 Organise a seminar programme that focuses on key themes (e.g. Two on Rural Regeneration at the National Botanic Gardens & Menter Menai, North Wales; two on Urban Regeneration in South Wales & North Wales based on the results of the JESSICA Programme assessment of Wales; two on a Design and Sustainability theme), ensuring cross sector / professional delivery.
- 1.3 Convene the first all Wales / cross sector National Regeneration Conference (a follow up to the Regeneration Summit, combining all interests including RSCW annual 'Delivering Regeneration' Conference).
- 1.4 Pilot three generic training courses on an all Wales basis (e.g. Leadership for regeneration – links with HE providers is being secured; Project Management for regeneration; Sustainability skills & regeneration).
- 1.5 Pilot a professional development programme for managers & others involved in delivering the sustainable regeneration in Wales. This may require links with the Academy for Sustainable Communities / and the Homes and Communities Directorate.
- 1.6 Rationalise community regeneration / community development training courses within different parts of Wales, with links between the different approaches taken. This should be linked to the research activity outlined in 3.2 below.
- 1.7 Establish a basis for taking forward integrated careers advice & promotion programmes, with a possible pilot programme.
- 1.8 Work closely with the HE Response Group in relation to the accreditation of graduate / post graduate degree courses leading to professional qualification; links between FE / HE qualifications (e.g. Foundation degrees) related to

professional qualification; and the brokerage of cross professional / generic skills courses.

1.9 Engage with private sector training providers & private sector funders of training / skills development events (e.g. BURA; Regeneration & Renewal etc).

1.10 Establish a formal basis for engagement with the appropriate Sector Skills Councils

2. Exchange of experience / practice

2.1 Re-establish closer working relationships between Centre of Excellence initiatives in the U.K., and seek to establish contact through the Council of the Isles (Wales, England, Scotland & Northern Ireland)

2.2 Prepare proposal(s) for EU funding support through the Territorial Cooperation objective (2007 – 2013). This could include the Wales – Ireland programme; the Atlantic Area programme; the North West Europe programme; &/or the Trans-national strands (INTERREG IVC / UBERACT). Links are being established through the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO).

2.3 Identify European & international partner regions / nations, focussing on establish MoUs established by the Welsh Assembly Government; and international 'best' practice exemplars. Contact has commenced with WEFO.

3. Research

3.1 Take forward additional research topics generated from the RSCW Professional & Cross-Professional Sustainable Regeneration Skills research report:

- Detailed research to obtain robust evidence of labour (and importantly professional) supply shortages in the short, medium and long term building on the research report data.
- Research to identify material that is available in Universities and F.E. Colleges that could form the material for core shared modules as identified in the research report; and to identify where there are gaps in the provision of such material.
- Research to determine the demand for a practitioner's Certificate in Regeneration.

3.2 Follow through on the Welsh Assembly Government's research programmes relating to community regeneration / community development. This will require a more 'cross departmental' approach to research funding.

3.3 Integrate with Welsh HE institution's research programmes relating to regeneration, working with the HE Response Group. In particular, assess the scope for accessing HEFCW funding.

4. Virtual component of the Centre for Regeneration Excellence

4.1 Establish the capacity of the existing ICT network in Wales to serve the needs of a Centre for regeneration Excellence.

4.2 Prepare the elements of the virtual services and facilities required to meet the needs of Wales in the delivery of skills, training and information programmes.

4.3 Prepare an inventory of library based information required for a physical Centre of Excellence.

5. A base for effective and genuine partnership

5.1 Ensure synergy with complementary initiatives relating to construction, the built environment, design, sustainable development and social enterprise, including potential Centre of Excellence proposals

5.2 Establish working relationships with organisations and agencies in Wales dealing with related areas of activity (e.g. Design Commission for Wales; Princes Foundation for the Built Environment; Constructing Excellence; Venture Wales, Wales Cooperative Centre; Community Housing Cymru etc.)

5.3 Contribute towards initiatives that encourage cross sector working in sustainable regeneration, in particular by securing more direct engagement with Public Private Partnerships, and the E.U. JESSICA initiative agenda in Wales etc.

6. Project manage the development of the Centre and Regional Hubs

6.1 Take forward the proposal for establishing a physical base in the Heads of the Valleys Area, including design, cost and implementation stages.

6.2 Take forward organisational proposals for Regional Hubs in North West, Mid and South West Wales

Years 2 (2010 - 2011) and 3 (2011 – 2012)

Note: Years 2 & 3 should seek to establish some key income generators from activities and services provided through the Centre. This is critical to the Centre achieving a level of longer term financial viability, ensuring that there is a balance between funding from public sector sources and that which is externally generated. This process should also be supported by the establishment of partnership networks through the Centre based on Service Level Agreements.

1. Skills development & training.

1.1 Develop the Wales Site Seminar programme, by using exemplar sites/ projects on a regular basis to assess process & progress); and to focus on the links between economic, physical, social, environmental & community regeneration.

1.2 Organise a seminar programme that focuses on key themes that relate to the Regional Hubs, but ensuring cross sector / professional delivery.

1.3 Continue the annual national Sustainable Regeneration Conference, seeking commercial support & focusing on exchange of experience from within Wales; and the exchange of 'best' practice between Wales and elsewhere.

1.4 Mainstream selected generic training courses on an all Wales basis; this could include a particular generic skills programme over 12 months in different parts of Wales. Also continue to roll out other generic skills training programmes in relation to need / demand (e.g. negotiating skills / 'planning gain' etc.)

1.5 Continue the professional development programme for managers & others involved in delivering the sustainable regeneration in Wales.

1.6 Support community regeneration / community development training courses within different parts of Wales, possibly through the establishment of a strategic programme that is recognised nationally.

- 1.7 Roll out integrated careers advice & promotion programmes, building on the pilot programme.
- 1.8 Continue to work closely with the HE Response Group in relation to the accreditation of graduate / post graduate degree courses leading to professional qualification; links between FE / HE qualifications (e.g. Foundation degrees) related to professional qualification; and the brokerage of cross professional / generic skills courses.
- 1.9 Investigate potential training & qualification programmes with the support of appropriate Sector Skills Councils (e.g. Apprenticeships linked to the sustainable regeneration agenda)
- 1.10 Continue to engage with private sector training providers & private sector funders of training / skills development events.

2. Exchange of experience / practice

- 2.1 Maintain working relationships between Centre of Excellence in the U.K., with a possible reference point in the Council of the Isles.
- 2.2 Take forward & implement Territorial Cooperation projects through the 2007 – 2013 programmes, seeking to establish long term relationships between Wales and exemplar sustainable regeneration regions & nations. This should include building stronger relationships with those regions / nations already having formal links with Wales; and bringing other best practice regions / nations forward.
- 2.3 Ensure that at least two Territorial Cooperation projects are taken through to approval stage, generating funding support from the E.U.

3. Research

- 3.1 Establish an annual research programme for sustainable regeneration in Wales, in cooperation with the HE Response Group and the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 3.2 Take forward the first two years of the proposed research programme

4. Virtual component of the Centre for Regeneration Excellence

- 4.1 Implement the virtual component of the Centre's facilities using the highest quality of ICT available in Wales. This programme may have to be phased in relation to the regions of Wales, and interaction may be required with the Regional Hubs.
- 4.2 Commence the establishment of library based information for the Centre of Regeneration Excellence, in anticipation of a physical base in the Heads of the Valleys area.

5. A base for effective and genuine partnership

- 5.1 Establish working links with initiatives relating to construction, the built environment, design, sustainable development and social enterprise. Ensure added value by working together to achieve mutual benefits (e.g. linked training programmes and exchange of best practice etc.)
- 5.2 Formalise working relationships with organisations and agencies in Wales dealing with related areas of activity (e.g. Design Commission for Wales; Princes Foundation for the Built Environment; Constructing Excellence; Venture Wales, Wales Cooperative Centre; Community Housing Cymru etc.) through parent funding bodies, where appropriate.

6. Project manage the development of the Centre and Regional Hubs

- 6.1 Take forward a specific proposal for a physical base in the Heads of the Valleys Area, following approval of an outline proposal. This will include securing funding and management of site / property development
- 6.2 Establish Regional Hubs in North West, Mid and South West Wales.

APPENDIX 6

Design Principles for CREW location – Design Commission for Wales

1. Overview of the Role of the Design Commission for Wales

The Design Commission for Wales (DCFW), as the nation's champion for great buildings, places and spaces and independent adviser on design and the built environment to the Welsh Assembly Government, was established in 2002 as a key pillar working to support aspirations and help Wales deliver on its potential. The ambition expressed in the coalition manifesto **One Wales** is for:

“... a programme which builds a strong and confident nation, which will create a healthy future, and which creates prosperity... in living communities including measures to support the Welsh language.... ensure learning for life, ...create a fair and just society and...ensure a sustainable environment.”

One Wales, Coalition Manifesto 2007

This ambition is underpinned by the Wales Spatial Plan, Planning Policy Wales and its Technical Advice Notes and is woven throughout government strategies. This is the strategic framework within which the Commission works and provides practical, expert advice and support, to help deliver on the stated ambitions and ensure that Wales is not left behind in the drive to deliver equivalent or better standards than its UK counterparts.

With strong planning policy in place, and good design at the heart of that policy, good practice must follow and there can be no barriers to delivering well designed sustainable buildings, places and spaces, of international quality.

The effects of climate change present the greatest challenge of our age. The built environment is a large contributor to the causes of climate change and wasted resources, but it is also one of the greatest opportunities for tangible, positive change. The Commission uses its knowledge and expertise to help tackle the impact of climate change and promote good quality, environmentally sound, resource efficient design and developments.

2. General principles and expectations for the CREW project

The Design Commission for Wales expects that a Centre for Regeneration in Wales (CREW) should be exemplary in terms of sustainable design and a model for regeneration activity in itself.

The Commission will seek evidence (as it does on all schemes in Wales) that in the CREW project, urban and landscape design considerations have been fully explored alongside questions of building design, in order to ensure that the development makes a positive contribution to the community and its environment.

The Commission will seek to evaluate the CREW project to ensure that it is:

- **sustainable** in terms of promoting best practice in energy and resource efficiency, waste minimisation and recycling, bio-diversity protection and access to public transport;

- **socially inclusive** in terms of accessibility for all and equality of opportunity.

The Commission will exercise its remit, set down by the Welsh Assembly Government, to promote excellence in **day to day environments** as well as **prestige projects**.

The Commission will expect the CREW project to meet the expectations of the existing Planning Policy Wales (2002) and Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2002) and to ensure that it meets the requirements of the MIPPS on Planning for Climate Change and the requirement of the revised TAN 12 and PPW, which are due in Spring 2009.

Current requirements emphasise the need to achieve development that is:

- **sustainable** with regard to its overall impact, including location, land use, mix of end uses, energy efficiency, resource consumption and community impact;
- **responds positively to site, context** and local distinctiveness reinforcing a sense of place;
- **creates a high quality public realm** of streets and spaces that is accessible, safe, comfortable, attractive, continuous and easy for all users to find their way around;
- **accommodates a variety of uses and tenures with a compactness** that can foster necessary services, facilities and public transport;
- **includes flexible and adaptable buildings and spaces** which stand the test of time and create fine architecture, rich townscapes and landscapes that are well detailed, with good quality materials, craftsmanship and art.

The Design Commission for Wales will also expect the project to maximise “whole life” value by promoting sustainable development and design that minimises negative environmental impacts and reinforces social cohesion while contributing to economic prosperity.

The Commission will seek evidence that the project incorporates environmentally efficient construction methods and building services, and the use of natural daylight and ventilation and high quality, genuinely locally-derived, sustainable and renewable materials wherever possible and by encouraging and supporting public engagement in the design process.

3. Specific elements to be considered in the briefing and procurement stages:

The Commission expects the CREW project to:

- Seek opportunities to deliver the project through a sustainable refurbishment within or certainly within in easy reach (by foot or by public transport) of a town centre location;
- Seek opportunities for the CREW project to act as a catalyst for wider town centre regeneration initiatives such as the reinstatement or use of established/historic pedestrian routes and walkways and/or civic/public space;
- Work with the Design Commission for Wales at the earliest opportunity to establish principles and requirements in comprehensive concept (and subsequently detailed) briefing documents;
- In the event of the reuse of a historic site, ensure early engagement with Cadw, HLF and any conservation team members who will bring valuable skills to the

table and allow for contemporary interventions to form fully integrated solutions and allow for bespoke tools to be used in any assessment of environmental performance;

- Secure a realistic budget commitment for the physical project and its operational needs, based on detailed analysis to be carried out with key stakeholders, the CREW project initiation team and the design and delivery team;
- Seek early opportunities to establish key criteria, endorsed by the Commission which signal the highest aspiration for the project and its capacity to transform negative perceptions;
- Use this aspiration to attract, and retain throughout the life of the project, the highest quality design and delivery partnership with the relevant skills, experience and demonstrable track record, and secure this through genuinely collaborative team and form of procurement.

The Commission will expect the WAG and CREW set-up team, from outset to completion to establish and adhere to the ambition of the project and avoid reducing its quality by cost-cutting measures resulting from failure to allow adequate timescales to facilitate the most innovative design solution possible.