



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT

BY

THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

Title: City Regions

Date: 5 March 2012

By: Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science

This statement updates Members on the work of the City Regions Task and Finish Group and is to inform you about the launch of a 'call for evidence'.

I am keen to examine if the Welsh economy could benefit from identifying and nurturing potential Welsh city regions and whether they could become drivers for future economic growth across Wales. I established a Task and Finish Group in October 2011, chaired by Dr Elizabeth Haywood, director of the South East Wales Economic Forum and former director of CBI Wales.

I have asked the Group to:

- consider the evidence for supporting city regions, identifying specific areas that might be appropriate to support in Wales and their characteristics;
- establish the likely key economic development opportunities and benefits offered by each of the identified city regions and any potential from working together;
- identify the strategic and high-level issues associated with each of the areas as part of a consistent approach to supporting city regions in Wales;
- suggest how the proposed city regions might best benefit from opportunities in the short, medium and long-term, such as future EU funding, rail electrification and Local Development Plans;
- outline the distinguishing propositions offered by each of the identified city region areas; and

- establish whether, and if so what, policy and institutional changes will be required in Wales to deliver an effective approach to supporting city regions.

The work of the Group is continuing, however, it is important that wider views and contributions form part of their analysis and findings. Today, a call for evidence and a supporting report will be launched online and I urge members to contribute to this and raise awareness of this exercise.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/businessandconomy/policydev/cityregions/?lang=en>

The Group have set out the evidence gathered to date for supporting city regions and the key issues that need to be addressed if this approach is to be successful in Wales. A series of questions are included to assist respondents in providing evidence. Responses will be considered in preparing the final report which will contain recommendations for the Welsh Government.

This evidence gathering exercise will continue until Wednesday 18 April 2012 and will be supported by focus groups held around Wales. Therefore, I have asked Dr Haywood to issue the Group's final report in summer 2012.