



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

BPA Conference 2018

Putting Ports At The Heart of Wales' Economic Future

Simon Jones, Director, Economic Infrastructure

Introduction to Economic Infrastructure Directorate

Within Welsh Government's Economy, Skills, and Natural Resources Group and under the portfolio of Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Transport.

Directorate covers:

- **Transport Policy**
- **Ports and Freight**
- **Active Travel**
- **Aviation**
- **Public Transport**
- **Trunk Road Infrastructure Delivery and Network Maintenance**
- **ICT Infrastructure**
- **Town and Country Planning**
- **Business Solutions**
- **Property**
- **International Trade & Investment**

Cross-cutting nature of Directorate means we're well-placed to identify and maximise support for joined-up outcomes that support our goals under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015.

Devolution

- Responsibility for ports policy and regulatory functions was largely devolved to the Welsh Government from April this year.
- Devolution signals a new relationship between the sector and the Welsh Government.
- An enhanced relationship which allows us to work together more effectively to exploit the opportunities and tackle the challenges that lie ahead to deliver a prosperous, secure united and connected Wales.
- A crucial aspect for us to get right from day one was the regulatory framework and processes to ensure a seamless transfer for the sector.
- Indebted to the Welsh Ports Group and colleagues from the Department of Transport, the MMO and Transport Scotland, whose knowledge and expertise we continue to mine.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- Welsh Government recognises that ports in Wales have achieved great success within a commercial and market led environment
- We are committed to maintaining that environment, and
- Continuing to work in partnership with the sector to ensure the right conditions are in place to enable ports to achieve even more success.

Ports Development Fund

- We ran a £2 million Ports Development Fund last year on a competitive bidding basis.
- Available to all ports in Wales, its aim was to help maximise the sector's contribution to the Welsh Government's 'Prosperity for All' programme for government.
- A range of ports and projects have benefitted from the fund – from seaside tourist and leisure ports such as Saundersfoot, to major ports such as Milford Haven; and from small scale infrastructure enhancements to feasibility studies for large scale potential developments, which we are now discussing with individual ports.
- We collaborated very closely with the Welsh Ports Group to develop a fair and transparent framework for the fund.
- This partnership approach demonstrates how much can be achieved with a relatively small injection of funding and a large dose of goodwill and creativity.

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

- The Welsh Government's Economic Action Plan sets out a fresh approach for ensuring that all parts of Wales prosper in line with our programme for government 'Prosperity for All'.
- It introduces two fundamental themes - a **Call to Action** and an **Economic Contract**
- Welsh Ports are in a very strong position to support and benefit from this approach as they are uniquely placed to be a driving force for sustainable economic wealth at a national, regional and local level

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Economic Contract

- Businesses seeking our support need to enter into an ongoing dialogue with us through the Economic Contract
- We will expect businesses to commit to:
 - growth potential
 - fair work
 - promotion of health, skills and learning in the workplace
 - progress in lowering carbon footprint

Calls to Action

- The Calls to Action identify areas where we want to work with businesses.
- To qualify for business finance in the future, businesses will need to develop proposals that align to at least one of the following
 - decarbonisation
 - innovation, entrepreneurship and headquarters
 - exports and trade
 - high quality employment, skills development and fair work
 - Research & Development, automation and digitalisation.

CONNECTIVITY

- We know that ports are reliant on key infrastructure connections.
- We are committed to ensuring that these connections are put in place to help ports grow and diversify in the future - recognising budgetary constraints, as well as market priorities.
- We are already making good progress on major trunk road improvements and through the interventions set out in our National Transport Finance Plan.
- We would like to see rail connectivity for ports improved - for both freight and passengers - and will continue to press the UK Government for infrastructure improvements, such as electrification of the Great Western Main Line beyond Cardiff.

Planning and Consenting

- We recognise the key importance to the sector of a strategic and streamlined approach to planning and consenting.
- Welsh Government is currently engaging with a range of stakeholders to inform our National Development Framework – a new spatial strategic plan for Wales - and our review of planning consenting for land and sea.
- We are in close dialogue with the sector on these developments via the Welsh Ports Group and individual ports.

BREXIT

- We are acutely aware of the risks of No-Deal and are working pro-actively with the UK Government, Welsh ports, industry associations, local government, and other stakeholders on preparations for EU exit.
- We continue to have constructive, regular discussions around how we can together ensure our ports continue to thrive and support our status as an outward-looking, globally trading nation.
- However urgent clarity on decisions are needed before effective mitigations can be deployed. Otherwise there is the significant risk of investing both public and private resource into solutions which are not needed.
- If significant change is required, we have made it clear that the UK Government must take responsibility for the pressures being put on the sector, and make funding available to assist in the transition to a post-EU Exit environment.

TO CONCLUDE:

- Welsh Government is committed to supporting the sector in tackling the challenges of Brexit and taking advantage of opportunities it might bring.
- Our shared goal is for Welsh ports to remain an international gateway to Wales, supporting jobs, bringing added value to local communities, and exploiting their significant potential to diversify and co-locate a range of activities.