

News Release



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Growth Track 360 backs Flintshire's £30 million bid to UK Levelling Up Fund to accelerate transformation of Borderlands railway between Wrexham and Liverpool

Business and local authority leaders from North Wales, the Wirral and Cheshire West and Chester in the Growth Track 360 partnership have endorsed the bid to the UK Levelling Up Fund (LUF) from member authority Flintshire County Council seeking £30 million for investment in the Borderlands railway line between Wrexham and Liverpool via Bidston.

Three investment schemes are contained within the bid to accelerate progress towards higher frequency, faster and more reliable services attracting more passengers:

- **Deeside Parkway station** – a flagship new station located within the Deeside Industrial Park with a large 250-space car park and bus interchange facilities;
- **Padeswood Hanson Cement works connection** – new freight sidings and mainline to eliminate the disruption to passenger services caused by freight trains occupying the mainline for 60 minutes whilst shunting; and
- **Penyffordd station Park & Ride** – development of a local transport hub including increased car parking, a new bus interchange, secure cycle storage including e-bike provision, and safety improvements to the station entrance.

The LUF focuses on capital investment in local infrastructure with the aim of having a visible, tangible impact on people and places and supporting economic recovery. The UK Government has stated that the LUF is intended to create opportunity across the country and that it will prioritise bids that invest in regeneration and growth in places in need and areas of low productivity and connectivity.

Whilst the LUF is focused on investment in projects that require up to £20m of funding, the UK Government created scope for investing in larger high value transport projects such as Flintshire's.

The bid contains a priority letter of support from local Westminster Member of Parliament for Alyn & Deeside, Mark Tami (Labour) and a supporting letter from James Davies MP (Conservative, Vale of Clwyd) on behalf of the Mersey Dee and North Wales All Party Parliamentary Group, as well as additional letters from business organisations and local political leaders across the region.

Growth Track 360 Chair, Councillor Louise Gittins, Leader of Cheshire West & Chester Council, said:

“This route will support the UK and Welsh Governments’ shared desire to take action on climate change, in this case by seamlessly connecting to a new North Wales Metro based on bus and active travel corridors linking rail with key residential and employment centres - connections which are not available currently – as well as with public transport projects planned for the Liverpool City Region. Our aim is to provide people in North Wales and North West England with the best access to job opportunities, skills enhancement and educational facilities regardless of which side of the Wales-England border they live.”

Leader of Flintshire Council and Vice Chair of Growth Track 360, Councillor Ian Roberts, said:

“There is a shared vision for transformation of the Wrexham-Liverpool line across all the local authorities and business organisations in the Growth Track 360 alliance and by the Welsh Government. The rules of the UK Levelling Up Fund placed Flintshire Council in the strongest position to make an application for a package of investments beneficial to all communities on the route. We look forward to a really positive engagement with the UK Government to take this process forward.”

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Notes for Editors:

1. Growth Track 360 is a public-private partnership established in 2016 uniting North Wales, the Wirral and Cheshire West and Chester. Its goal is improving cross-border transport connectivity with specific emphasis on rail.
2. Growth Track 360 works closely with key stakeholders, their policies and objectives including the Welsh Government, Transport for the North, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Mersey Dee Alliance, North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Transport for Wales, the West and Wales Transport Forum and the private sector.

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