



PRESS NOTICE:

The Mersey Dee Alliance welcomes the UK Government's vote of confidence in the Mersey Dee-based HyNet Consortium with the award of Track 1 Cluster Sequencing Funding for Carbon Capture and Underground Storage (CCUS) infrastructure. The implementation of CCUS from 2025 will safeguard the future of thousands of high value manufacturing jobs in the Mersey Dee and connected economic areas in North Wales and the North West of England.

Cllr. Mark Pritchard, Chair of the Mersey Dee Alliance said,

"The award of Track 1 Industrial Cluster status is fantastic news for the integrated cross border economy of the Mersey Dee area.

The MDA formed a strategic partnership with HyNet to ensure that the Mersey Dee area becomes the cradle of the UK's green industrial revolution. Track 1 funding sets us on the road of early adoption of net zero industrial processes. It will secure thousands of existing well-paid jobs in advanced manufacturing and tackle the climate emergency by beginning the process of cutting carbon emissions to zero through CCUS and industrial fuel switching to hydrogen.

The Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) will work with HyNet to develop a leading-edge hydrogen and CCUS supply chain in the Mersey Dee area. HyNet estimates that it's investment in CCUS and hydrogen infrastructure will create 6000 new jobs. Track 1 Cluster status will add momentum to our plans to develop a hydrogen equipment demonstrator facility at Thornton Science Park with "start-up" finance from the proposed MDA Cross Border Recovery Deal.

I believe that this announcement strengthens the union because HyNet will be a cross border project that will benefit both North Wales and the North West of England."

Cllr. Stuart Whittingham, vice chair of the Mersey Dee Alliance said,

"The award of Track 1 Cluster Funding is evidence of how cross border and cross-party partnership working brings results. The MDA has worked closely with HyNet, Liverpool City Region, Business Leaders, Welsh Government and local Members of Parliament across North Wales and the Mersey Dee area to advocate for the early implementation of CCUS and hydrogen supply in the North West of England and North Wales by HyNet."

Cllr. Louise Gittins, Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council said,

“I am delighted with HyNet obtaining Track 1 Cluster funding. This news is a fantastic way for us to go into COP26 and begin the process of addressing the climate emergency in a practical way that retains traditional jobs and creates new ones in new energy supply chains. We only have one planet. This announcement gives the Mersey Dee area the opportunity to radically reduce carbon emissions to avert climate disaster.

The Mersey Dee area will reap huge environmental benefits from being a leader in the development of CCUS and hydrogen energy production. The decision recognises the needs of businesses for new fuels and carbon capture infrastructure in our area, where per head carbon emissions are four times the UK average”

Cllr. Ian Roberts, Leader of Flintshire Council said,

“This is great news for Wales and North Wales in particular. HyNet will provide CCUS and hydrogen energy for industrial fuel switching and domestic energy in North Wales. Local companies like Hanson and Essar will be huge beneficiaries of the early adoption of CCUS in the Mersey Dee economy.

HyNet will be able to make a significant contribution to Welsh Government plans for a “hydrogen economy” in Wales. There will be benefits for decarbonising heavy goods transport by using hydrogen fuel and complementing local projects like the Deeside Hydrogen Hub.”

Ashley Rogers, Commercial Director of the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council said,

“This is truly an excellent piece of news for the cross-border area and wider North Wales and North West of England. Low carbon hydrogen is an essential element in the journey to net zero for our businesses, large and small. With this UK Government HyNet will play a leading role in helping to decarbonise energy production, heating, transport and the Private Sector estate in our area for the benefit of our economy, communities and environment.”

Dr. James Davies MP, (Vale of Clwyd) Chair of the Westminster Mersey-Dee and North Wales All Party Parliamentary Group said,

“I am delighted that HyNet has been announced as a Track 1 cluster and will be in line for UK Government funding. The sustainable development of this project will create thousands of jobs and help promote North Wales as a hub for clean energy innovation. From as soon as 2025, the project will enable our manufacturing sector across the region to decarbonise, as well as providing the opportunity to transition the way we travel and how we heat our homes. I will continue to support HyNet in their negotiations with the UK Government and look forward to further positive news in the years ahead.”

Justin Madders MP (Ellesmere Port), Vice Chair of the Mersey Dee and North Wales All Party Parliamentary Group said: -

This is great news for Ellesmere Port and the surrounding region. The certainty of early investment will contribute hugely towards our ambition to reduce carbon emissions, to safeguard those highly skilled jobs in local industry but also to create new jobs in clean energy production.”

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Notes for Editors

DOWNLOAD: [News – Mersey Dee Alliance](#) for details of the MDA-Hynet partnership.

Introducing the Mersey Dee Alliance

The Mersey Dee Alliance is partnership of local authorities in Northeast Wales and the Northwest of England supported by Universities, FE Colleges and Transport Bodies: -

England	Wales
Cheshire West and Chester Council Wirral Council	Flintshire County Council Wrexham County Borough Council
University of Chester	Wrexham Glyndwr University Coleg Cambria
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Transport for Wales Welsh Government

The MDA has a close working relationship with the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. We enjoy cross-party support from the Mersey Dee and North Wales APPG chaired by Dr. James Davies MP. Other Officers include: - David Jones MP, Justin Madders MP and Lord Barry Jones. Lord Barry Jones is the Honorary President of the MDA

The Purpose of the MDA

The purpose of the MDA is to represent the interests of the cross border, integrated functional economy which operates on both sides of the border in the MDA area. The workforce and supply chains of major employers in the area are taken from both sides of the border. Therefore, there are unintended consequences from the administrative boundary splitting the economic area: -

- Disjointed economic and transport planning
- Different policy frameworks for supporting business and enterprise, innovation, education and training

The MDA Matters

The MDA area overlaps with three local growth/city region areas (Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and Warrington LEP and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board). However, these bodies welcome the work of the MDA which adds value to their work by representing the interests of an integrated cross border economy with real economic clout of UK wide significance with: -

- 1m population, £22bn GVA, substantial cross border commuting and a high proportion of people living and working in the cross-border area
- A Manufacturing Powerhouse with GVA and employment from manufacturing far higher than the national average
- A Strong and diverse economy contributing to Wales and England's GVA

Currently none of the economic partnerships with which we overlap is able (or willing) to spend money outside of their administrative boundaries. The MDA seeks the status of a Local Growth Partnership able to make investments as a delivery body on a cross border basis and thereby better able to meet the needs of the cross border functional economy. The MDA believes that this innovation will strengthen the union and aligns with the Levelling Up agenda.

The integrated economy demands integrated transport and economic development planning and investment by national and local governments.

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