

Meeting

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Date and Time

2.00 pm, FRIDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2024

Location

Virtual Meeting

(For public access to the meeting, please contact us)

Contact Point

Eirian Roberts

01286 679018

eirianroberts3@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

(DISTRIBUTED 19/01/24)

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Council Members

Cllr. Jason McLellan - Denbighshire County Council
Cllr. Llinos Medi Huws - Isle of Anglesey County Council
Cllr. Charlie McCoubrey - Conwy County Borough Council
Cllr. Mark Pritchard - Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr. Ian Roberts - Flintshire County Council
Cllr. Dyfrig L Siencyn - Cyngor Gwynedd

Eryri Member

Cllr. Annwen Hughes – Eryri National Park Authority

Chief Officers

Dafydd Gibbard - Cyngor Gwynedd – Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive
Dylan Williams - Isle of Anglesey County Council
Rhun ap Iarnd - Conwy County Borough Council
Neal Cockerton - Flintshire County Council
Graham Boase - Denbighshire County Council
Ian Bancroft - Wrexham County Borough Council
Emyr Williams – Eryri National Park Authority

Statutory Officers

Dewi Aeron Morgan – Chief Finance Officer
Iwan G Evans – Monitoring Officer

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of Personal Interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4 - 6

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 of November 2023 be signed as a true record.

5. NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE'S 2024/25 BUDGET AND LEVY ON CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES

7 - 13

To approve the Budget for 2024/25 for the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE 24/11/23

Present: Chair: Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn (Cyngor Gwynedd)

Councillors: Jason McLellan (Denbighshire County Council), David Bithell (Wrexham County Borough Council), Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Christine Jones (Flintshire County Council) and Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy County Borough Council).

Observer: Councillor Barry Mellor (Denbighshire Council).

Chief Officers: Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd), Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Rhun ap Iaroth (Conwy County Borough Council), Neal Cockerton (Flintshire Council), Linda Roberts (Wrexham County Borough Council), Gary Williams (Denbighshire Council) and Emyr Williams (Eryri National Park Authority).

Statutory Officer

Iwan G Evans (Monitoring Officer)

Other officers present

Alwen Williams (Interim Chief Executive of the CJC), Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Service Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

- Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Isle of Anglesey County Council) with Councillor Gary Pritchard deputising;
- Councillor Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council) with Councillor David Bithell deputising;
- Councillor Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council) with Councillor Christine Jones deputising;
- Councillor Annwen Hughes (Eryri National Park Authority);
- Graham Boase (Denbighshire Council) with Gary Williams deputising;
- Ian Bancroft (Wrexham County Borough Council) with Linda Roberts deputising;
- Dewi Morgan (Chief Finance Officer).

The Board's best wishes were sent to Councillor Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council) who was in hospital.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 27 October 2023, as a true record.

5. STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

The report was presented by Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

1. To adopt amendments to the Standards Sub-committee's Terms of Reference as noted in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. To adopt the criteria for appointing independent members to the Standards Committee and establish an Interview Panel in line with Appendix 2.
3. To delegate the appointment process to the Monitoring Officer.

DISCUSSION

The Monitoring Officer noted that he was disappointed about the change in appointing independent members via the statutory process since that meant going through an advertising process, interviewing, and appointing, and that it was not an easy process to get applicants.

The observation was reiterated, and it was noted that the legislative changes would mean extra costs and an extra workload.

In response to a question, the Monitoring Officer noted that it would be possible to adapt the criteria so that it would be possible for the Chair or Vice Chair to nominate another member of the Joint Committee to deputise for them on the Interviewing Panel.

It was suggested to omit the sentence '*Only an independent member (Lay) of the Standards Committee would be able to be Chair or Vice Chair*' from the Terms of Reference since all the members of the standard committee members would be lay members already.

6. DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN FOR NORTH WALES

The report was submitted by Alwen Williams, Interim CJC Chief Executive.

RESOLVED to approve the proposed draft Action Plan to be submitted to the Welsh Government.

DISCUSSION

It was questioned whether it would be practically possible to present the final version of the Regional Transport Plan to the Welsh Government by the end of March 2025, considering the amount of work needing to be completed and the expertise needed to complete a project of this size and type, especially in light of the UK Government's announcement regarding the work of electrifying the North Wales Coast railway, which was also a huge amount of work. In response, the interim CJC Chief Executive noted:-

- That other regions had also expressed concern regarding the timetables, and although he had not seen the final report, the Transport Commission had achieved a great deal of the work in North Wales over the last 18 months and that there would be a great deal of data as the basis for the report's conclusions that would be useful, especially in regard to creating the case for change.
- She believed that work must be commissioned for advisors with expertise, especially surrounding the Environmental Impact Assessment, as well as maintaining an individual review of the plans in North Wales. Obviously, that would depend on availability and timetables within the agencies that could respond to this kind of work.

- She believed that the timetables would have to be adapted as the work went on and as we reached milestones, but at this moment in time he was optimistic that the requirements would be achieved by March 2025.
- She would report back to the Joint Committee regularly regarding progress, highlighting any risks, and in regard to approving the Action Plan, the Transport Sub-committee would be established to lead the work.
- She believed that it would also be a critical element as well as ensuring that we kept to the timetable and to the budget and reported back to the CJC as required.

In response to the series of questions, the Interim CJC Chief Executive explained:-

- That the Transport Sub-committee would guide the plan and guide the officers to lead on creating the plan and preparing the work.
- That the Government had been through the process of internal approval of draft plans for 4 regions and that they would award, and inform us, hopefully within the coming weeks regarding the funding that would come forward.
- Up to £125,000 was expected to help with the work of developing the plan.
- A portion of the money would be spent on advisors. A public consultation would need to be held, and therefore associated costs would be likely. There would also be costs associated with the work of creating the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- She had been in liaison with officers from every authority in the North to create the draft plan in the first place, and she foresaw that once the Transport Sub-committee had been established and was operational, that there would also be a committee of officers available to help.
- That there was transport expertise within the councils and that it was important that they felt they had ownership as well as the ability to lead the plan.

The meeting commenced at 14:00 and concluded at 14:30.

(Chair)

REPORT TO THE NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

26/01/2024

Title: North Wales Corporate Joint Committee's 2024/25 Budget and Levy on Constituent Authorities

Authors: Dewi A Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Chief Finance Officer)
Sian Pugh, Assistant Head of Finance

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 It is a statutory requirement for the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) to approve its budget at a meeting of the CJC by 31 January annually.
- 1.2 The budget, which is included in the appendix, has been divided to reflect the structure of the CJC, namely the Strategic Planning, Transport, Investment Zones and corporate functions, and has been analysed per expenditure heading. This allows the constituent authorities' contributions to be levied separately for 'Planning' and 'Other' functions.

2. DECISIONS SOUGHT

- 2.1 To approve the Budget for 2024/25 for the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) as presented in the appendix. To approve the budget as noted below:-
 - Strategic Planning (6 Leaders and Chair of the Park - simple majority, quorum = 5)
 - Other Functions of the CJC including Transport (6 Leaders - simple majority, quorum = 5).

Strategic Planning	Transport	Corporate Joint Committee	Budget Total
£	£	£	£
371,250	182,750	210,820	764,820

2.2 To approve the levy on the constituent authorities, as noted below:

- **Strategic Planning (Unanimity, quorum = 7)**
- **Other Functions (Unanimity, quorum = 6)**

	Strategic Planning	Other functions	Total Levy
	£	£	£
Conwy County Borough Council	(58,510)	(65,370)	(123,880)
Denbighshire County Council	(52,080)	(55,220)	(107,300)
Flintshire County Council	(83,780)	(88,830)	(172,610)
Cyngor Gwynedd	(53,870)	(67,260)	(121,130)
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(37,230)	(39,480)	(76,710)
Wrexham County Borough Council	(73,010)	(77,410)	(150,420)
Eryri National Park Authority	(12,770)		(12,770)
Total Levy	(371,250)	(393,570)	(764,820)

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1 Regulations 16 and 17 of The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 set out the details of the process to be used to agree and fund the costs.
- 3.2 Again for 2024/25, it is recommended that the budget is funded by means of a levy apportioned between the constituent authorities based on the population relevant to the field of work.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The budget is based on the CJC's 'initial functions', namely preparing, monitoring, reviewing and amending the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and developing a Regional Transport Plan (RTP).
- 4.2 The total net budget for 2024/25 has remained at the 2023/24 level of £764,820, but the population figures have been updated.
- 4.3 Work is currently underway to transfer Ambition North Wales (ANW) to the economic well-being power of the CJC, but as the transfer will not take place until mid-year, a separate budget will be established and then transferred during the year.

- 4.4 Regular budget monitoring reports will be presented to the CJC during the year, and any issues will be highlighted and appropriate steps will be taken.

5. BUDGET HEADINGS

Employees

- 5.1 A report on “Resourcing of Statutory Functions” was presented to the CJC in its meeting on 24 March 2023, and the budget for 2024/25 is based on this staffing structure. It includes an interim Chief Executive (2 days a week), Personal Assistant (1 day a week), Manager (Statutory Functions), Project Manager (1 day a week), three Planning posts and one Transport post. An inflation estimate of 6% has been applied for 2024/25.
- 5.2 The cost of allowance for lay members is based on three members for the Governance and Audit Committee and seven members for the Standards Committee.

Travel

- 5.3 The staff travel budget is based on an estimate of essential travel allowance and subsistence allowances.

Supplies and services

- 5.4 This heading includes budgets for tools and equipment, various supplies, engagement and meetings, audit fees, external consultants and insurance.
- 5.5 The CJC currently has a shadow insurance cover as part of Cyngor Gwynedd’s insurance policy, but this interim arrangement will cease once Ambition North Wales is transferred, and the CJC will require its own insurance cover. The increased insurance budget is an initial estimate that we have received from Cyngor Gwynedd’s internal insurance advisor.

Support Services

- 5.6 Support services are needed to facilitate the work of the Joint Committee, and the budget for 2024/25 includes the support of Finance, Legal (including the Monitoring Officer and legal input to Planning and Transport), Corporate Support (Committees, Translation and Human Resources) and Information Technology (one-off costs as well as support and licences) services.
- 5.7 The range of services and the cost estimates will be discussed again as the Service Level Agreements are formed.

Set-up costs

- 5.8 The set-up costs heading has been added for 2024/25 and includes a budget for the legal costs associated with transferring ANW to the CJC as well as a budget for the Investment Zones. The commissioning of work related to the Investment Zones heading will need to be discussed further during the year as more information becomes available.

Income

- 5.9 The CJC has been successful in their bid to Welsh Government for funding towards the Regional Transport Plan, and their 2024/25 allocation of £100,000 is shown in the budget and will contribute towards staff and external consultant costs during the year.
- 5.10 A contribution from reserve of £198,420 is also used to fund the budget, and the reserve balance will be reviewed during the year.

6. PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS

- 6.1 Partners' contributions have been divided based on the population figures used in the 2024/25 settlement calculation, and although the total net budget used to calculate the levy remains at the 2023/24 level of £764,820, changes in these population figures means that four of the authorities (Denbighshire, Flintshire, Isle of Anglesey and Wrexham) will see a slight increase in their levy, while three authorities (Conwy, Gwynedd and Eryri National Park) will see a slight reduction in their levy.

6.2 In accordance with the legislation, the CJC's general budget and the Transport budget will be funded by the six North Wales authorities, while the Eryri National Park Authority will also contribute towards the Strategic Planning budget (where they will have a vote).

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 The Corporate Joint Committee is subject to duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

7.2 In accordance with the legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, the Corporate Joint Committee must give due attention to the need (1) to eliminate unlawful discrimination (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) encourage good relations based on the protected characteristics. As setting a budget falls within the decisions which can be considered strategically, there is a duty to give due attention to operating in a way which is designed to minimise inequalities which stem from socio-economic disadvantage. As the Corporate Joint Committee is still in its early years, it is not considered that any specific impacts stem from the decisions submitted.

7.3 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 involves improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The act places a well-being duty on public bodies which is aimed at delivering the seven well-being goals, namely a prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal Wales with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture with a thriving Welsh language and which is globally responsible. Given the context, the recommendations are in accordance with these duties.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Regulations 16 and 17 of The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 set out the details of the process to be used to agree and fund the costs. These regulations place specific requirements regarding the calculation and approval of the budget requirement (Regulation 16) and then, as a second step, agreeing the levy contributions of the constituent authorities (Regulation 17). According to statute, the Corporate Joint Committee must adopt the Budget by 31 January 2024. **If the Corporate Joint Committee fails to agree on the contributions, Welsh Ministers have statutory powers to instruct the distribution of contributions.**
- 8.2 It is noted in the decisions sought that there are specific requirements regarding quorum and voting in relation to these decisions. Therefore, it must be ensured that voting is arranged in a way which reflects on the one hand the specific voting rights involved with setting the budget and on the other hand the need for unanimity on the decisions on the levy, again while separating both elements.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – North Wales Corporate Joint Committee’s 2024/25 Revenue Budget

RESPONSE OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS:

i. Monitoring Officer:

The report summarises the technical requirements involved with these decisions together with the statutory duties involved with establishing the budget and levy.

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

Author of this report.

North Wales Corporate Joint Committee's 2024/25 revenue budget.

Appendix A

	Strategic Planning	Transport	Investment Zones	Corporate Joint Committee	Total Budget
Expenditure	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Employees					
Employee expenditure (Pay, N.I. & Superannuation)	222,440	111,540	0	95,380	429,360
Lay members allowance	0	0	0	4,880	4,880
Employees Total	222,440	111,540	0	100,260	434,240
Travel					
Travel and subsistence	3,000	2,000	0	1,000	6,000
Travel Total	3,000	2,000	0	1,000	6,000
Supplies and services					
Tools and equipment	4,500	3,000	0	0	7,500
Miscellaneous supplies	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	3,000
Engagement and meetings	770	770	0	3,830	5,370
Audit Wales' fees	0	0	0	21,100	21,100
External consultants	132,500	132,670	0	10,000	275,170
Insurance	15,000	15,000	0	30,000	60,000
Supplies and services Total	153,770	152,440	0	65,930	372,140
Support Services					
Finance Services Support	0	0	0	28,210	28,210
Legal (includes Monitoring Officer)	7,500	7,500	0	15,000	30,000
Corporate Support	8,330	7,730	0	19,620	35,680
Information Technology	2,310	1,540	0	3,120	6,970
Support Services Total	18,140	16,770	0	65,950	100,860
Set-up costs					
Legal	0	0	0	50,000	50,000
Investment Zones	0	0	100,000	0	100,000
Set-up costs Total	0	0	100,000	50,000	150,000
Total Expenditure Budget	397,350	282,750	100,000	283,140	1,063,240
Welsh Government - Regional Transport Plan Grant	0	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)
Contribution from reserve	(26,100)	0	(100,000)	(72,320)	(198,420)
Total Net Expenditure Budget	371,250	182,750	0	210,820	764,820

	Strategic Planning	Other functions	Total Levy	2023/24 Levy	(Increase) / Decrease
Income	(£)	(£)	(£)		
Partners Contributions through a levy					
Conwy County Borough Council	(58,510)	(65,370)	(123,880)	(126,730)	2,850
Denbighshire County Council	(52,080)	(55,220)	(107,300)	(104,630)	(2,670)
Flintshire County Council	(83,780)	(88,830)	(172,610)	(171,460)	(1,150)
Cyngor Gwynedd	(53,870)	(67,260)	(121,130)	(125,680)	4,550
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(37,230)	(39,480)	(76,710)	(75,950)	(760)
Wrexham County Borough Council	(73,010)	(77,410)	(150,420)	(147,150)	(3,270)
Eryri National Park Authority	(12,770)		(12,770)	(13,220)	450
Total Income Budget	(371,250)	(393,570)	(764,820)	(764,820)	

Relevant population		
Conwy County Borough Council	108,381	114,290
Denbighshire County Council	96,558	96,558
Flintshire County Council	155,319	155,319
Cyngor Gwynedd	99,825	117,591
Isle of Anglesey County Council	69,049	69,049
Wrexham County Borough Council	135,394	135,394
Eryri National Park Authority	23,675	
Total population	688,201	688,201