
NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
21/06/24

Present: Chair: Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn (Cyngor Gwynedd)

Councillors: Jason McLellan (Denbighshire County Council), Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council), Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy County Borough Council) and Edgar Owen (Eryri National Park Authority).

Chief Officers: Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd), Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Fran Lewis (Conwy County Borough Council), Andrew Farrow (Flintshire Council), Ian Bancroft (Wrexham County Borough Council), Gary Williams (Denbighshire Council) and Iwan Jones (Eryri National Park Authority).

Statutory Officers

Dewi Morgan (Chief Finance Officer) and Iwan G Evans (Monitoring Officer).

Other officers present

Alwen Williams (Interim Chief Executive of the CJC), Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance), Delyth Jones Thomas (Investment Manager), Claire Incedon (Solicitor) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Service Officer).

1. CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn as Chair for 2024/25.

2. VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Mark Pritchard as Vice-chair for 2024/25.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:-

- Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Isle of Anglesey County Council) with Councillor Gary Pritchard deputising;
- Councillor Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council)
- Rhun ap Gareth (Conwy County Borough Council) with Fran Lewis deputising;
- Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council) with Andrew Farrow deputising;
- Graham Boase (Denbighshire Council) with Gary Williams deputising;
- Emyr Williams (Eryri National Park Authority) with Iwan Jones deputising.

Councillor Edgar Owen was welcomed to his first meeting of the Joint-committee following his appointment as the new Chair of the Eryri National Park Authority.

It was noted that Emyr Williams (Eryri National Park Authority) would be retiring soon. He was thanked for his contribution to the work of the Joint-committee and they wished him every happiness for the future.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Alwen Williams, Interim Chief Executive of the CJC declared a personal interest in item 9, but as it was important that she was part of the general discussion on the transfer of the functions of the Ambition Board to the CJC, and that there had been no discussion on the part of the report relating specifically to the extension of her secondment in the Interim Chief Executive role, she did not leave the meeting.

5. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 22 March 2024, as a true record.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT FOR 2024/25

The report was submitted by Dewi Morgan, Chief Finance Officer.

RESOLVED to accept and approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2024/25.

8. 2023/24 OUT-TURN REPORT AND ANNUAL RETURN

The report was presented by Sian Pugh, Assistant Head of Finance.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To note and accept the Corporate Joint Committee's actual expenditure and income for 2023/24 as submitted in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- 2. To approve the transfer of the underspend in 2023/24 to a reserve fund to be earmarked to fund future one-off costs.**
- 3. To approve the Joint Committee's Official Annual Return for 2023/24 (subject to External Audit), in line with the statutory deadline of 30 June 2024. (It has been duly completed and certified by Cyngor Gwynedd's Head of Finance, as the Statutory Finance Officer for the Joint Committee (Appendix 2 of the report)).**

9. UPDATE: FUNCTIONS OF THE NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD – TRANSFER TO THE CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

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

RESOLVED:

- 1. To accept the report on the progress update on work to establish the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and respond to the tasks that are required by its statutory functions (Appendix 1 to the report).**
- 2. To accept the updated plan and the revised date of 1 November for transferring the North Wales Growth Deal to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.**
- 3. To approve the interim arrangements to release the Portfolio Director's time for two days per week to undertake the Interim Chief Executive role until 31 October 2024. (All employment and associated costs would continue to be covered by the North Wales CJC).**
- 4. To ask for a further report on progress in the transfer process and monitoring of the timetable.**

DISCUSSION

It was questioned whether the resources and funding of the Corporate Joint Committee went into the procurement work for progressing the Investment Zone for Wrexham and Flintshire. In response, it was noted: -

- That an agreement had already been reached to set aside £100,000 of the Joint-committee's budget to facilitate the work of going through the Gateways to deliver the Investment Zone.
- As we faced a General Election on 4 July, there was an additional arrangement in place and an agreement by Flintshire Council and Wrexham Council to provide up to £25,000 each of funding for any work directed towards the development of the scheme should the new government not follow through on the Investment Zones process.

It was further questioned whether there was any doubt about the future of these policies. In response, it was noted: -

- No government had given an indication that there would be a new arrangement in place, but assurances were needed on this once the government was in place.
- As a result of following the process of going through the Gateways to prepare the application to confirm the Investment Zone, a proportion of the £160 million being provided for the Investment Zone would be a proportion that could be used for administrative costs, so it would be possible to apply for the development costs from those funds once the Investment Zone was approved.

The Leader of Flintshire Council noted that he was disappointed that the Investment Zone was coming through the Corporate Joint Committee and would prefer that there was a body set up between Flintshire and Wrexham and their partners, such as Airbus, to manage the project. He further noted that it had been asked at two meetings of the Joint-committee where the resources would come from, as this was an Investment Zone for Flintshire and Wrexham, and he suggested to perhaps look at the costs of various projects located in specific geographical areas.

It was noted that it was understood that the operating resource for the Joint Committee by secondment from the Welsh Government had now come to an end, and it was questioned how much of a blow this was to our ability to proceed with the establishment of the Joint Committee. In response, it was noted:-

- That the secondment was terminated earlier than planned due to a personal decision to return to the Welsh Government which was why they were now revisiting the structures to have a more sustainable structure in place to support the transition work.
- That the Executive Project Board met every Monday and the different work streams met separately as well, and this had set some structure around the work and the tasks that needed to be accomplished.
- That work was underway to see if either permanent or additional temporary resources could be obtained to fill the operational gap.

The Monitoring Officer explained that any decisions regarding the transfer of staff to the Corporate Joint Committee were entirely subject to the date of transfer of the Growth Plan to the CJC. As such, if the transfer date progressed to the 1st of November, that was the first date the staff could also transfer.

10. APPOINTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS TO THE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEES

The report was presented by Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer.

The Monitoring Officer thanked Claire Incedon (Solicitor) for her work in getting the agreements in place and signed.

RESOLVED:

1. **To appoint as co-opted members to the Corporate Joint Committee as follows:**
 - (i) **strategic planning sub-committee**
 - (ii) **strategic transportation sub-committee**
2. **To authorise the Monitoring Officer to accept (and appoint as co-opted members) changes to the membership of these sub-committees that were notified in writing to the Monitoring Officer, on the condition that these appointments be declared to the Corporate Joint Committee in the next meeting.**

11. WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS DRAFT COMPLIANCE NOTICE REGULATIONS NUMBER 1

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

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the standards were very similar to the standards imposed on the 6 authorities individually, and that it was also likely that the standards to be imposed on all the joint committees across Wales would resemble each other.

RESOLVED to authorise the Chief Executive to respond to the consultation in consultation with the Chair.

12. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The report was presented by Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that nothing in the Pay Policy Statement was unusual or different from the pay policy of any other bodies.

RESOLVED to adopt the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee pay policy statement for 2024/25.

13. PROPOSED DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The report was presented by Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED to approve the draft calendar for the period up to May 2025.

The meeting commenced at 13:30 and concluded at 14:20.

(Chair)