Complete Agenda

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Meeting

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Date and Time

1.30 pm, FRIDAY, 20TH NOVEMBER, 2026

Location

Virtual Meeting

For public access to the meeting, please contact us

Contact Point

Sera Jane Whitley

serajanewhitley@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

(DISTRIBUTED 13/11/26)

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Council Members

Cllr. Hugh Evans	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr. Gary Pritchard	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Cllr. Julie Fallon	Conwy County Borough Council
Cllr. Mark Pritchard	Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr. Dave Hughes	Flintshire County Council
Cllr. Nia Jeffreys	Cyngor Gwynedd

Eryri Member

Cllr. Ifor Glyn Lloyd	Eryri National Park Authority

Constituent Council Chief Executives

Dafydd Gibbard	Cyngor Gwynedd
Dylan Williams	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Rhun ap Gareth	Conwy County Borough Council
Neal Cockerton	Flintshire County Council
Helen White	Denbighshire County Council
Alwyn Jones	Wrexham County Borough Council
Jonathan Cawley	Eryri National Park Authority

Statutory Officers

Alwen Williams	Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive
Dewi Aeron Morgan	Chief Finance Officer
Mark Watkins	Interim Head of Legal Services/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 MEETINGS 5 - 18

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 of September, 2026 and 9 October, 2026 be signed as a true record.

5. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND PLAN 2026/27 - 2029/30 19 - 55

Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer) to present the report.

6. DELEGATION TO EWSC REGARDING THE REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN AND LOCAL GROWTH FUND 56 - 58

Alwen Williams, Chief Executive, Ambition North Wales and Iain Taylor, Strategic Programmes, Ambition North Wales to present the report.

7. REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLANNING UPDATE NOVEMBER 2026 59 - 74

Councillor David A Bithell, Chair of the Strategic Transport Sub Committee and Adam Graham, Senior Transport Officer to present the report.

8. STRATEGIC EQUALITIES PLAN 75 - 101

Alwen Williams, Chief Executive and David Hole, Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager to present the report.

9. ANGLESEY FREEPORT - NOMINATION TO THE COMPANY BOARD 102 - 105

Mark Watkins, Monitoring Officer to present the report.

10. CJC GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 106 - 107

Mark Watkins, Monitoring Officer to present the report.

11. POLICY FRAMEWORK 108 - 111

Alwen Williams, Chief Executive and David Hole, Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager to present the report.

12. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 112 - 127

Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer) to present the report.

13. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2026/27: MID-YEAR REVIEW 128 - 133

Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer) and Delyth Jones- Thomas, Investment Manager to present the report.

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
25/09/2026

Present: Chair: Councillor Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Councillors: Dave Hughes (Flintshire County Council), Nia Jeffreys (Cyngor Gwynedd), Nicola Roberts (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Chris Cater (Conwy County Borough Council), Hugh Evans (Denbighshire County Council), and Ifor Glyn Lloyd (Chair of Eryri National Park Authority).

Chief Executives of Constituent Councils: David Fitzsimon (Flintshire County Council), Helen White (Denbighshire County Council), Rhun ap Gareth (Conwy County Borough Council), Alwyn Jones (Wrexham County Borough Council), Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd), and Jonathan Cawley (Eryri National Park Authority).

Other officers present: Alwen Williams (Chief Executive of the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)), Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Portfolio Director – Ambition North Wales), Dewi Morgan (Chief Finance Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd), Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance – Cyngor Gwynedd), Sara Jane Jones (Senior Accountant – Cyngor Gwynedd), Mark Watkins (Head of Legal Services / Interim Monitoring Officer – Ambition North Wales), Helen Edwards (Deputy Monitoring Officer – Ambition North Wales), David Hole (Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager), Adam Graham (Senior Transport Officer – Ambition North Wales), Yvonne Thomas (Audit Manager – Audit Wales), Siwan Glyn (Audit Wales), Elen Wyn Owen (Corporate Support Officer – Ambition North Wales), Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd), and Sera Whitley (Democracy Services Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Julie Fallon (Conwy County Borough Council) with Councillor Chris Cater deputising
- Councillor Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council) with Councillor Nicola Roberts deputising
- Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council) with David Fitzsimon deputising
- Ffion Williams (Senior Operations Officer – Ambition North Wales)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR FOR 2026/27

It was decided to elect Councillor Gary Pritchard as Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee for 2026/27.

4. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on June 19 2026 as a true record.

6. GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26

The report was presented by Mark Watkins, CJC Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 at Appendix 1 was approved as the Corporate Joint Committee's statement on internal control for the purposes of Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended).

The Governance Improvement Plan for 2026/27 contained in the Statement was noted and approved.

To authorise the Chair and Chief Executive to sign the Annual Governance Statement.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, noting that the Annual Governance Statement recorded the outcome of the annual review of Ambition North Wales's governance and internal control arrangements. It was reported that the conclusion confirmed that the governance framework provided a reasonable basis for the lawful, accountable, and effective discharge of the organisation's functions during 2025-26.

It was further explained that the Statement provided reasonable assurance rather than absolute assurance as Ambition North Wales was an organisation that was still maturing, and was intentionally honest about some arrangements that were still being developed. It was explained that these arrangements, which included corporate risk management, constitutional framework and decision-making, ethical governance, and service resilience, were included in the Governance Improvement Plan along with the responsible officers and target dates. It was confirmed that the Governance Improvement Plan's progress would be reported regularly to the CJC.

It was explained that the Annual Governance Statement was due to be presented to the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee on 15 September, but due to quorum issues the meeting had been postponed. It was confirmed that the Annual Governance Statement would be submitted to the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee once a new date had been confirmed, and that any recommendations from the Sub-Committee would be reported to the CJC.

Clarification was sought regarding the reference in the Annual Governance Statement to the CJC's scrutiny arrangements. It was confirmed that the CJC was in the process of assisting the constituent councils in establishing a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, although matters such as the Growth Deal had already been discussed within local authority scrutiny committees. It was clarified that it was a matter for the constituent councils to establish the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee or to establish any formal scrutiny arrangements. Following a recent meeting with the chief executives of the constituent councils, it was explained that they had asked the CJC's Monitoring Officer to provide more

details regarding the specific capacity required by the constituent councils, to better understand how resources could be provided.

It was noted that in the absence of any formal scrutiny committee, the responsibility fell on local scrutiny committees in each constituent council to carry out the scrutiny functions if they wished to do so. However, it was noted that the CJC's Governance and Audit Sub-Committee and the regular reporting mechanisms, which formed part of the performance management framework, were already undertaking some scrutiny work.

In response to a question regarding the timetable for establishing the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was reiterated that it was a matter for the constituent councils to establish any formal scrutiny arrangements. It was noted that while there was no legal obligation to do so, there was an expectation from the Welsh Government that there should a formal scrutiny arrangement in place. It was pointed out that each of the constituent councils already had functioning scrutiny committees, and if they wished to scrutinise a particular matter relating to the CJC's business, they were free to do so. However, it was acknowledged that governance weakness existed because as yet there was no coordinated regional arrangement.

7. NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2025/26 AND RELEVANT AUDIT

The report was presented by Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC Statutory Finance Officer) and Sian Pugh, Assistant Head of Finance.

RESOLVED:

To consider and approve the ISA 260 report by Audit Wales for the CJC.

To consider and approve the CJC's Final Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 (post-audit).

DISCUSSION

The final accounts of the CJC were submitted, together with the ISA260 report, namely the external auditor's report for Ambition North Wales – Audit Wales. It was reported that the annual Statement of Accounts had been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, which was one of matters under scrutiny by Audit Wales.

It was explained that 2025/26 was a key year in the preparation of the statement of accounts as it was the first time that the CJC had been deemed to be a larger relevant body following the handover of the Growth Deal, leading to the requirement to prepare a full set of accounts.

It was highlighted that the information in the Statement of Accounts had already been submitted to the CJC at its June meeting, in the Revenue and Capital out-turn position for 2025/26.

It was explained that the statements had now been reviewed by Audit Wales. It was confirmed that the auditor intended to issue an unconditional audit opinion on this year's accounts once the CJC had provided a Letter of Representation to Audit Wales. It was

clarified that the Chair and Section 151 Officer were required to sign the Letter of Representation.

Attention was drawn to the significant work and preparation that had taken place as part of the audit process, and that the statement of accounts was complex and lengthy. It was noted that the process was more complex than expected as they were the CJC's first set of full accounts, and that additional audit work was required to respond to the risks identified in the report.

Members were informed that when the report was circulated, some elements of the audit were still underway, although it was confirmed that this work had now been completed and that no additional issues arose as a result.

It was noted that Audit Wales had reassessed the basis for material-level accounts following the receipt of the draft accounts, and that they now used growth assets instead of expenditure growth. It was confirmed that this ensured that the approach used was more appropriate to the nature of the organisation.

It was noted that some amendments had been made to the notes on the accounts. It was confirmed that these corrections had been included in the version of the accounts submitted to members at today's meeting, and that they did not affect the overall financial position. It was further explained that there were no significant issues to report to the CJC and it was confirmed that this was a positive outcome and provided robust assurance.

The officers and auditor involved in the process were thanked for their time and efforts.

8. 2026/27 REVENUE AND CAPITAL POSITION – END OF JULY 2026 REVIEW

The report was presented by Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC Statutory Finance Officer) and Sian Pugh, Assistant Head of Finance.

RESOLVED:

Resolved:

- To note and accept the revenue end of July 2026 review for the CJC (Appendix 1), including a maximum of £39,874 to be transferred from the reserve (in addition to the £624,590 that was approved in the 2026/27 budget) to leave a neutral position (with the final figure to be confirmed when the 2026/27 out-turn report is presented).

- To note and accept the revenue and capital end of July 2026 review for the Growth Deal (Appendix 2), including the reserves position (Appendix 3).

- To note and accept the Growth Deal’s revised capital expenditure profile (Appendix 4).

- To note and accept the end of July 2026 review for the Investment Zone (Appendix 5), including the use of the interest on Investment Zone balances to leave a neutral position for 2026/27.

- To note and accept the revenue end of July 2026 review for the RSP (Appendix 6).

- To approve the virements for the CJC, Growth Deal and Investment Zone budgets noted in Appendix 7.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, detailing projections of the CJC's revenue and capital out-turn position for 2026/27.

It was explained that the report detailed a projected out-turn position of the Strategic Planning, Transport and Corporate elements, with an overspend of almost £40,000 forecast by the end of the financial year.

The projected revenue position of the Growth Deal was presented, forecasting an underspend of £288,000 by the end of the financial year. It was noted that this was due to underspending on staff costs, additional governance roles, accountable body support services, and external support in the legal, financial and procurement areas for the projects.

It was highlighted that if the underspend remained at the end of the financial year, the grant contributions drawn from the Growth deal or reserves would be adjusted to achieve a neutral position for the year. It was confirmed that these income sources would then be available to fund future budgets and mitigate any increase in partner contributions. It was further clarified that partner contributions – which accounted for approximately 25% of the budget – were the only permanent sources of funding, while the other sources were only temporary.

The Growth Deal fund balances were presented as at 31 March 2026, the movements during the year, and the forecast balances for 31 March 2027. It was explained that the £5million interest reserve was ringfenced to fund future borrowing costs, covering the period when expenditure on capital schemes was stimulated prior to the receipt of grant funding from the Government. It was further explained that the resources reserve had been allocated to cover government requirements, project development costs, and maintaining the capacity of the Portfolio Management Office.

A revised capital profile for the Growth Deal was presented, noting that while expenditure of £51.26 million had been forecast for 2026/27, this was £15.81 million less than the budget profile approved in January. It was pointed out that this was a result of project slippages, however, the delivery of the Business Gateway project and expenditure on reserve list projects had reduced that delay.

It was further noted that the report set out the projected expenditure and income for the Investment Zone, and the projected financial position for the Regional Skills Partnership. It was confirmed that both projected a neutral position for the year.

9. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND PLAN 2026/27 - 2029/30

The report was presented by Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC Statutory Finance Officer).

RESOLVED:

To provide guidance to officers on the CJC’s appetite towards the use of reserves when preparing the budget for 2026/27.

It was resolved to ask officers to provide a hybrid option using 80% of the estimated usable reserves available on 31 March 2027 as a basis, which would mean presenting an option falling between option 3 and option 4 to Members at the next CJC meeting.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, drawing attention to an error in paragraph 2.1 of the decision sought, where it referred to preparing a budget for 2026/27. It was explained that the budget for 2026/27 had already been set in January 2026 and that the decision sought should refer to setting the budget for 2027/28.

Members were informed that this was the first time the Mid Term Financial Strategy had been presented to the CJC, and it was hoped that they could see that it represented the financial officers' forecast for the CJC's resource requirements for the next three years.

Four strategic principles were presented in relation to Ambition North Wales's financial planning.

- The CJC will assess decisions over the full planning timeline, aligning resources and commitments with statutory responsibilities and agreed regional priorities.
- The CJC will manage income, reserves, cash flow, treasury, borrowing and contingencies as an integrated system of financial resilience.
- The CJC will ensure that organisational capacity, capability, governance arrangements and financial resources develop in step with its expanding statutory responsibilities, programme portfolio and role as a corporate public body.
- The CJC will make assumptions, risks, choices and accountabilities visible, supporting informed Member decisions and early engagement with levy-paying bodies.

It was stressed that this report was not a budget for the 2027/28 financial year, as that would be submitted to the CJC for a final decision at its meeting in January 2027, following consideration by the Governance and Audit Sub-committee in December 2026. It was confirmed that the purpose of this report was to provide members with an outline of the likely budget for 2027/28, and provide an opportunity for members to provide guidance to officers as part of the process of preparing the budget.

Members were reminded that they had requested further information from officials at the CJC meeting in June, regarding: the CJC's staffing levels over the last three years and plans for the future; an analysis of the underspend and use of reserves for the next year, together with the required percentage of reserves; and consider any financial liabilities arising from the deferral of the levy for 2027/28.

It was explained that freezing the levy was not a viable option and, as a result, a levy had to be charged in 2027/28 as otherwise the CJC would be unable to set a legitimate budget for 2027/28. The other three options available to members were acknowledged, and it was emphasised that options 3 and 4 were the realistic options.

A report was provided on the current posts within the CJC, and the anticipated additional posts that would be needed over the next three years. Further detail was given on how the CJC's staffing costs had evolved over the past four financial years.

It was reported that the Medium Term Financial Plan noted the options for dealing with the CJC's reserves. It was clarified that the reserves did not include those of the Growth Deal, the Investment Zone, or the Regional Skills Partnership, and that these had all been

earmarked for specific purposes and funded through separate grants or contractual agreements. It was confirmed that the reserves referred to in the report were those that remained for the CJC, they referred to the CJC's functions, and were supported by the levy. These functions related to the corporate core of the CJC, and included the functions required to run a local authority body, the regional transport function and the strategic planning function.

It was explained that the Medium Term Financial Plan had been developed by taking into account these specific functions and the expected expenditure over the next three financial years. An explanation was provided on how these functions could be funded.

It was reported that the total reserves were approximately £1.6 million as at 31 March 2026, but it was explained that the CJC had already approved the use of around £625,000 of these funds as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27. It was further noted that as part of the July 2026 financial review, it was expected that a further £40,000 of these funds would be used during the current financial year to cope with the expected overspend. It was confirmed that the total reserves of the CJC at the end of the current financial year, excluding those relating to the Growth Deal, the Regional Skills Partnership, and the Investment Zone, were expected to be £971,543.

It was stressed that there was no specific formula for determining the level of general reserves, but as a general rule, 5% of total revenue expenditure was a wise level to be retained as reserves. It was recommended that around £132,000 be held in reserves as general balances, leaving a total of £839,851 available at the start of 2027/28 to be used in setting the budget.

In response to a question as to which option the Section 151 Officer would recommend, it was clarified that options 1 or 2 were not realistic, and that options 3 or 4 were preferable. However, it was noted that option 3 would be the most preferred option, as it would enable the CJC to retain more reserves and would be less likely to affect the levy in the years to come.

It was noted that some members would not support option 3 and would prefer to support option 4, due to the current financial pressures on local authorities. It was asked whether it would be possible for officials to provide an alternative option between option 3 and option 4, and it was proposed that an alternative option be provided, using 80% of the estimated usable reserves available as at 31 March 2027 as a basis. It was noted that this would leave 20% in reserves, in addition to the 5% earmarked in reserves. It was confirmed that this option would be presented at the next meeting of the CJC.

It was also asked whether it would be possible for officers to provide an analysis of the cost of this option to each individual local authority, and whether the impact of a reduction in resources could be considered in order to further reduce the levy. It was noted that the CJC was a growing organisation with an increasing demand for resources, and that it was therefore unlikely that it would be possible to reduce resources.

Clarification was sought regarding the legal requirement for local authorities to support the Corporate Joint Committees. It was confirmed that local councils had a legal obligation to engage with Corporate Joint Committees, and that the Senedd expected local authorities to provide financial support to the Corporate Joint Committees in Wales. It was further explained that the extent of financial support provided by local authorities varied from region to region in Wales, it depended on the financial position of the local authorities, and that the decision was one to be made by the individual councils. Members were informed that if they believed this model to be unfair, that they should submit their observations directly to the Welsh Government.

A question was asked as to whether the recruitment process could be delayed to allow for greater financial flexibility. It was noted that the report showed that the CJC had already considered how best to secure resources and staffing levels over the next three financial years, in order to fulfil its own statutory responsibilities. It was further explained that the CJC was responsible for a significant amount of public money, and that it would not be possible to delay the recruitment of essential staff.

Members were thanked for their discussion, noting that they were not easy options given that all local authorities were operating under difficult circumstances. It was stressed that the CJC did not have a sustainable financing model, and that it relied on fixed-term contracts and temporary or advisory resources, and the Medium Term Financial Strategy was a reflection of this.

The officers were thanked for their work.

10. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DECISION MAKING FOR IN-YEAR MANAGEMENT OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT FUND

The report was presented by Adam Graham, Senior Transport Officer.

RESOLVED:

To approve that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Finance Officer and relevant local authority transport leads, to approve and submit regional change requests to Welsh Government in respect of the in-year management of the Regional Transport Fund programme.

It was noted that the Welsh Government would continue to make the final grant decisions in relation to the Regional Transport Fund.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, and it was highlighted that the Regional Transport Fund was one of the main sources of funding for schemes submitted through the Regional Transport Plan. Members were reminded that the Programme had been approved by the CJC at its meeting in November last year, which had previously been submitted to the Welsh Government. It was reported that the CJC was now responsible for managing the delivery of the schemes and budget expenditure.

It was explained that changes in underspend and changes to the Programme would occur as the schemes progressed, and that the report sought delegated authority to enable more flexible responses to these changes. It was confirmed that this proposal had been submitted to the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee during its July meeting, where it was recommended that it be approved to the CJC, although it was noted that any final decisions regarding changes to the programme sat with the Welsh Government.

11. ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The report was presented by Alwen Williams, Chief Executive.

RESOLVED:

As the meeting was no longer quorate, it was resolved to postpone the decision.

12. TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The report was presented by Alwen Williams, Chief Executive and Senior Responsible Owner of the Programme and Dave Hole, Programme Leader.

RESOLVED:

It was resolved to postpone the decision as the meeting was no longer quorate.

13. NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE PETITION SCHEME

The report was presented by Helen Edwards, Deputy Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

It was resolved to postpone the decision as the meeting was no longer quorate.

14. ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

The report was presented by Helen Edwards, Deputy Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

It was resolved to postpone the decision as the meeting was no longer quorate.

15. CJC SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP CHANGES AND LAY MEMBER APPOINTMENT

The report was presented by Mark Watkins, CJC Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

It was resolved to postpone the decision as the meeting was no longer quorate.

The meeting commenced at 13:30 and concluded at 15:15.

_____

(Chair)

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE 09/10/26

Attendance:

Present: Chair: Councillor Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Councillors: Dave Hughes (Flintshire County Council), Nia Jeffreys (Cyngor Gwynedd), Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Julie Fallon (Conwy County Borough Council), Hugh Evans (Denbighshire County Council), and Ifor Glyn Lloyd (Chair of Eryri National Park Authority).

Chief Executives of Constituent Councils: David Fitzsimon (Flintshire County Council), Gary Williams (Denbighshire County Council), and Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council).

Other officers present: Alwen Williams (Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) Chief Executive), Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance – Cyngor Gwynedd), Mark Watkins (Head of Legal Services / Interim Monitoring Officer – Ambition North Wales), Helen Edwards (Deputy Monitoring Officer – Ambition North Wales), David Hole (Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager), Ffion Williams (Senior Operations Officer – Ambition North Wales), Lowri Evans (Democracy Services Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd), and Sera Whitley (Democracy Services Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Rhun ap Gareth and Jenny Williams (Conwy County Borough Council)
- Helen White (Denbighshire County Council) with Gary Williams deputising
- Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council) with David Fitzsimon deputising
- Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd)
- Jonathan Cawley (Eryri National Park Authority)
- Dewi Morgan (Chief Finance Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd)
- Hedd Vaughan-Evans (Portfolio Director – Ambition North Wales)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The report was presented by Alwen Williams, Chief Executive.

RESOLVED:

The Annual Report for 2025/26 was approved.

DISCUSSION

It was reported that the Annual Report 2025/26 provides an overview of a significant year for the CJC and for Ambition North Wales. It was noted that progress has been made in key functions and it also reported the appointment of a full-time Chief Executive, a Portfolio Director, non-executive advisors, and dedicated Transport and Planning leads.

Progress was highlighted, including: the approval of the Regional Transport Plan; progress of the Strategic Development Plan's Delivery Agreement; the launch of the Flint and Wrexham Investment Zone; continued delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal; the work of the Regional Skills Partnership; the work of the Strategic Energy Team; and delivery of Regional Shared Prosperity Fund projects.

Achievements were reported for the benefit of members. It was noted that seven Growth Deal projects were in delivery for 2025/26, and a further ten projects have been approved and are currently progressing. It was confirmed that the Growth Deal has created 121 jobs and has delivered £34.21 million of investment to the North Wales economy. Strong local procurement outcomes were also highlighted, noting that 86% of Growth Deal procurement had been awarded to companies located in North Wales.

It was confirmed that approval of the report will allow the CJC to demonstrate transparency and accountability in how it has discharged its functions during 2025/26.

It was highlighted that it is crucial to ensure value for money regardless of where in North Wales the procurement is coming from, especially given that public money is being spent.

5. TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The report was presented by Alwen Williams, Chief Executive and Dave Hole, Programme Lead.

RESOLVED:

The progress and challenges of the 2026/27 programme were identified.

In the context of transformation and change, that the CJC should not meet the costs of any additional roles, functions, or responsibilities conferred on it from its own financial resources.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, noting that the Programme continues to support the ongoing development of the CJC as a fully operational body following the transfer of the Growth Deal, its funding and its employees, into the organisation. It is stressed that this is a multi-year programme that is designed to build on the CJC's operating model, governance, capacity, systems, and corporate arrangements in order to deliver its statutory duties and powers.

It was reported that since the last update, positive progress has continued across a wide range of areas including corporate capacity, legal and governance arrangements, finance, IT, HR, operations, policy, procurement, transport, and planning. Key achievements were also highlighted, such as the appointment of a Portfolio Director, appointment of a Head of PMO Delivery, progress of the constitutional review, delivery of audit plans, delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, publication of the Pay Policy, progress of the Service Level Agreement, and the development of a number of key corporate policies and arrangements.

It was noted that the Transformation and Improvement Programme remains a challenging programme. Notably, it was reported that capacity remains limited and the organisation is trying to balance transformation activity alongside day-to-day operational delivery. A number of constraints were listed, including ongoing dependencies on partner support, budget constraints, recruitment constraints, system changes, and the Service Level Agreement not being formally completed.

It was confirmed that a list of priority work is in place for the remainder of the year, alongside a reserve list which may be progressed if capacity allows or otherwise carried forward into 2027/28. It was stressed that this reflects the need to take an agile but realistic approach to delivery whilst continuing to build the foundations of the organisation.

It was noted that should any additional responsibilities, roles or functions arise from any new or emerging legislation, the CJC should ensure that it is not expected to meet the costs from its own financial resources.

6. NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE PETITION SCHEME

The report was presented by Helen Edwards, Deputy Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

The Petition Scheme was approved.

DISCUSSION

It was reported that the CJC is obliged to establish and publish a Petition Scheme, as it sets out how individuals can raise issues with the CJC. It was explained that the Scheme also sets out who can raise a petition, how it will be considered, what it should contain, and the steps the CJC may take in response to a petition.

It was questioned what steps would be taken to promote the Scheme, given that some members of the public are unaware of the existence of the CJC and Ambition North Wales. It was confirmed that the Scheme will be promoted on the Ambition North Wales website, but it was also acknowledged that work is required as to how the public can be made more aware of the organisation as a whole. It was stressed that Ambition North Wales are working hard with the resources they currently have available to raise awareness of the work and responsibilities of the CJC, and this includes daily networking on social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn. However, it was acknowledged that as a relatively new organisation, this work takes time and it is possible that they have been unable to reach every community across North Wales.

It was highlighted that the Leaders of the local authorities have their own media platforms and could offer further support in promoting the work of the CJC. It was confirmed that the Chief Executive of Ambition North Wales would have a discussion with the Chief Executives and Leaders of the local authorities as to how they can offer this support, particularly given how important it is to promote this Scheme.

It was further acknowledged that Ambition North Wales has its own Communications Officer who is in regular contact with the communication teams at each local authority, and that perhaps this existing relationship could be used to expand networking opportunities.

It was confirmed that this would be a positive step, and that consideration should be given to developing a communication plan or communication strategy with regards to publicising the

Petition Scheme. However, it was noted that some members of the public are not on social media platforms and that consideration should be given to reach all individuals.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

The report was presented by Helen Edwards, Deputy Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

The Terms of Reference for the Standards Sub-committee were agreed.

It was agreed that the constituent authorities and the National Park Authority would be asked to nominate members of the sub-committee as set out in paragraph 4.5 below.

It was agreed that the CJC would conduct a public external recruitment campaign as required, and that the constituent authorities would be notified so that they could alert the independent members of their Standards Committees in case any of them are eligible and interested in applying.

The timetable and recruitment process for Independent Members were agreed as set out in paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7 of the report, and the Monitoring Officer was authorised to a) amend it if necessary and b) establish and appoint an appointment panel in accordance with regulation 15 of the Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001, as amended.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, and the layout of the Sub-committee was set out for the members. It was noted that the Sub-committee will be made up of independent members and council members, with independent members making up the majority. It was reported that constituent authorities will be asked to nominate both council members and independent members for the Sub-committee, but that the CJC is also obliged to advertise externally for independent members.

The recruitment timetable and process were set out, and it was noted that the timescales will need to be amended as some of the timescales have already slipped. It was confirmed that the Monitoring Officer will amend these timescales as required.

In response to a question regarding why constituent authorities will offer nominations for independent members in the first instance, it was explained that discussions with the monitoring officer from each constituent council had indicated that nominating independent members from their own constituent council's standards committees would speed up the process and ensure members who had relevant experience. However, it was stressed that the CJC is under obligation to advertise externally for independent members alongside seeking nominations from constituent councils. It was explained that a selection process will be required should the CJC receive more nominations than needed.

It was clarified that a reasonable amount of time, at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, will be allowed for nominations to be received and should no nominations be received, the nomination process will be reconsidered. The importance of advertising as widely as possible was stressed.

8. CJC SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP CHANGES AND LAY MEMBER APPOINTMENT

The report was presented by Mark Watkins, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that Councillor Hugh Evans, as Leader of Denbighshire County Council, was a member of the CJC and its Economic Well-being Sub-committee by virtue of that office.

The appointments of the Monitoring Officer were noted under the delegation dated 21 June 2024, namely Councillor James Elson to the Strategic Transport Sub-committee and Councillor Geraint Lloyd Williams to the Strategic Planning Sub-committee.

Dewi Lewis was appointed as a lay member of the Governance and Audit Sub-committee for a period of four years from the effective date of appointment, subject to completion of the relevant co-option agreement.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, confirming that it relates to recent changes to membership of the CJC itself and its Sub-committees following changes at Denbighshire County Council, as well as the appointment of a replacement lay member to the CJC Governance and Audit Sub-committee.

It was reported that Councillor Hugh Evans is the new leader of Denbighshire County Council and therefore automatically becomes a member of both the CJC and the Economic Wellbeing Sub-committee. It was also confirmed that Councillor James Elson had been appointed to the CJC Strategic Transport Sub-committee and Councillor Geraint Lloyd Williams had been appointed to the CJC Strategic Planning Sub-committee, following portfolio changes at Denbighshire County Council.

It was reported the Dewi Lewis had been nominated by Cyngor Gwynedd's Governance and Audit Committee, following a vacancy arising from the resignation of a previous lay member. Members were informed that, unlike the appointments mentioned above, this appointment requires formal appointment by the CJC. It was also noted that Dewi Lewis's CV had been shared confidentially with members prior to the meeting but that if they wished to discuss the CV the meeting would have to move into part two.

Welcomes were extended to Councillor Hugh Evans, and it was confirmed that members were content with the nomination that had been put forward and did not wish to discuss the CV in further detail.

The meeting commenced at 09:30 and concluded at 10:05

_____

(Chair)

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2026/27-2029/30

AUTHOR: Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. The purpose of this report is to present a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and a related Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee for approval.

1.2. Initial drafts of the Strategy and Plan were considered by the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) on 25 September:
Covering Report
Appendix 1 – Medium-Term Financial Strategy
Appendix 2 – Medium-Term Financial Plan

1.3. Following amendments to the documents requested by the CJC, they were scrutinised by the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee on 15 October:
Covering Report
Appendix 1 – Medium-Term Financial Strategy
Appendix 2 – Medium-Term Financial Plan

1.4. Comments and guidance provided by the Corporate Joint Committee and the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee have been considered in preparing the version presented to this meeting.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. Approve the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in Appendix 1 and Medium-Term Financial Plan in Appendix 2.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy sets out the high-level Strategic Principles of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee under the following headings:

- Sustainable choices
- Resilient funding and balance sheet
- Deliverable portfolio and corporate resources
- Transparent governance and partnership

3.2. The strategy sets out how the CJC will make sustainable financial choices, manage uncertainty and maintain the capacity to deliver its statutory responsibilities and agreed regional programmes over the proposed MTFP period. It sets the strategic framework, risk appetite,

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

decision rules and governance expectations within which the MTFP is prepared, challenged, approved and monitored. The strategy will be reviewed annually and rolled forward in accordance and alignment with the financial plan.

3.3. The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the financial outlook for the 3-year period commencing on 1 April 2027.

3.4. These estimates are based on the latest available forecasts about the change in income the CJC will receive over the period (mainly through levy and Government Grant), and the additional spending requirements over the same period.

3.5. The Corporate Joint Committee's adoption of the Medium-Term Financial Plan will allow the CJC to consider the work needed to create detailed plans to address the funding requirements for 2027/28 – 2029/30. Following the adoption of an MTFP, the draft budget for 2027/2028 will be presented to the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee on 15 December 2026 and then to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee on 29 January 2027, as required by statute.

Summary

3.6. The previous reports noted:

- No underspend is envisaged on CJC activities for the 2026/27 financial year.
- Using all of the CJC's reserves (apart from 5% of the gross budget to be held as general reserve) would not be sufficient to allow a freeze on the levy increase, let alone delaying the levy for 2027-28.
- Delaying the levy for 2027-28 would mean a funding gap of over £1m which would lead to the CJC being unable to fulfil its statutory duties or set a lawful budget.

3.7. There is, therefore, a significant risk of severe financial instability from not taking early and decisive action to consider the situation and take remedial action.

Reserves Strategy

3.8. Like any other organisation, it is a requirement of fiscal responsibility that the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee should hold general reserves. Although there is no specific formula for the level of general reserves that should be held, as a rule a level of approximately 5% of gross revenue expenditure is deemed to be a prudent level, subject to any specific local circumstances. The MTFP proposes that the General Reserves should represent 5% of the 2027/28 gross revenue budget of the CJC.

Use of Reserves

3.9. The MTFP as presented to the Corporate Joint Committee on 25 September set out four scenarios for the use of the reserves that are expected to have accrued by the start of the 2027/28 financial year. Each of these options would have a consequential effect on the levy on the constituent authorities.

3.10. Following discussion, the decision of the Corporate Joint Committee was to ask officers to provide a hybrid option using 80% of the estimated usable reserves available as at 31 March 2027 as a basis, which would mean presenting an option that falls between option 3 and option 4 to Members at the next meeting of the CJC.

3.11. Part 7.2 of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (Appendix 2) reflects this option and the financial implications of that. As can be seen, it would mean an increase in levy on the constituent authorities of 42% in 2027/28 compared to 2026/27.

4. COMMENTS OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

4.1. The draft Strategy and the revised version of the draft Plan, following comments by the CJC, were submitted to the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee on 15 October 2026. The comments expressed by members can be found below.

The Risk of failure to set a Budget

4.2. A question was asked about the risk of local authorities refusing to pay a levy in 2027/28. The Section 151 Officer explained that evidence showed that a balanced budget could not be set without a levy, and while it was highly unlikely that local authorities would refuse to raise any form of levy, if that were to happen the Corporate Joint Committee would be spending illegally from 1 April 2027. In such circumstances the Section 151 Officer would have no choice but to issue a Section 114 notice.

Impact of lack of agreement on the levy

4.3. The sub-committee enquired about the impact on the CJC should the local authorities fail to reach an agreement on the levy. It was explained that there are two elements that will require a decision from the CJC when the budget is presented in January 2027. The first decision required is agreement on the total amount raised through the levy, and the second decision required is the allocation by each local authority. It was emphasised that both require a unanimous decision, which is challenging and will require prior discussion. It was explained that this is why the Medium-Term Financial Plan is being submitted to the CJC earlier in the planning cycle, in order to give local authorities and members sufficient time to discuss and consider the options available.

4.4. In response to a further question regarding the theoretical possibility that the CJC would not be able to agree on the levy, it was confirmed that once a decision has been made and the levy has been agreed, all local authorities have a legal obligation to pay. It was emphasised that the Government has established the Corporate Joint Committees in such a way that the leader of each local authority sits on them as members, to allow them to decide on a reasonable cost of running the CJC.

4.5. Whist an increase of 42% in the levy was clearly seen by members of the Sub-Committee as being very challenging to explain, it was explained that the CJC was in an early stage of its development, with ever increasing statutory duties and insufficient money to fund it – for example strategic planning responsibilities. Whilst the percentage is significant, it is a reflection of the CJC's current position on its development curve.

Value for Money

4.6. Concern was expressed that the reports do not refer to value for money, and that there are no options to cut costs rather than increase spending. It was confirmed that this had been considered and that all costs had been challenged by Finance when developing the MTFP, but it was emphasised that the CJC was at a different stage in its development compared to the six local authorities and the National Park Authority. It was explained that the Government had also placed a number of statutory responsibilities on the CJC without providing appropriate

sources of funding. It was further emphasised that the CJC has a significant responsibility in the distribution of public finances and investment in the north Wales economy, and any cost cuts for this stage would affect economic growth and the opportunities they provide.

4.7. Further information with regards to value for money was provided by the Chief Executive with reference to the extent of investment into the local economy. A small team was providing value for money, with £400m investment into the north Wales economy and around an additional 10,000 net new jobs into the local economy and around £2bn of investment over the next 10 years. She explained that the team always aimed to decrease operating costs and deliver efficiently, but to make cuts meant stopping or pausing the investment.

Funds Strategy

4.8. It was expressed by some members of the Sub-Committee that the option involving the least risk to the CJC would be to retain as many of the reserves as possible, given that elections are on the horizon and that the composition of the leaders on the CJC may be different thereafter. The officials acknowledged that the options had been prepared on the basis of the discussion held at the CJC meetings in June and September, and on the basis of the guidance given by the members at the time. The advice of officers was that the proposal provides an appropriate balance between maintaining reserves and keeping the levy increase as low as possible.

Interest

4.9. In response to a question regarding the reference to interest in the report, it was clarified that the interest relates to cases where borrowing will be required to fund certain projects, and where sponsors will be required to contribute to the borrowing costs should costs increase.

Conclusion

4.10. As members were satisfied with the report, and without any fundamental changes being proposed by them, it was recommended that a report be drawn up based on the discussion held at this meeting and presented to the CJC at its next meeting to reflect the views of the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1:	Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 – 2029/30
Appendix 2:	Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 – 2029/30

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"Subject to the Statutory Finance Officer being satisfied that the proposed virements and use of reserves are consistent with those arrangements and with any applicable conditions attaching to the relevant funding streams, there are no specific legal or governance issues arising from the recommendations in the report."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

Report author.

Appendix 1

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27-2029/30

1. Introduction

Growth Deal and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) was established as a joint committee in 2018 as agreed in a first stage Governance Agreement, which was approved by all partners (6 local authorities and 4 education partners) in June and July 2018.

The UK Government confirmed an allocation of £120 million for the Growth Deal in the Chancellor's Budget held on the 29 October 2018. Confirmation was received from the Welsh Government that they would match this sum on the 21 December 2018. This meant that a budget of £240 million was in place to deliver projects within the Growth Deal. The Joint Committee was to be the key body to oversee the Growth Deal and to represent the interests of the parties and its stakeholders. NWEAB was also responsible for monitoring project progress and managing the political dimensions of the Growth Deal.

In addition, NWEAB would also oversee the Regional Growth Strategy and take all necessary decisions to facilitate and implement its delivery.

A Proposition Document, which set out a package of bold measures and interventions to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth in North Wales, was approved by all partners in September and October 2018. This document identified 16 projects to be funded through the Growth Deal, with details on costs, outcomes and timeline for delivery included. At that time, the total sum that was targeted from the Growth Deal was £334m of capital funding and £8m of revenue funding.

The Portfolio Management Officer (PMO) was set up to manage the Growth Deal on behalf of the partners, led by the Portfolio Director.

Corporate Joint Committee

Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Collaborative Working by Principal Councils, sets out the Welsh Government's powers to make regulations with regards to Corporate Joint Committees in Wales. In particular, regulations 11 to 14 of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (Wales) Regulations 2021 outline the following as functions of the North Wales CJC:

Economic Well-being. The economic well-being function is granted to the North Wales CJC as set out in section 76 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. A corporate joint committee which has been granted the economic well-being function may do anything which it considers is likely to promote or improve the economic well-being of its area.

Developing transport policies. The function of developing policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within their area and to develop policies for the implementation in their area of the Wales Transport Strategy, in respect of the area of each constituent council, to be exercised by the North Wales CJC, and not by the constituent council.

Strategic planning functions. The North Wales CJC has the function of preparing a strategic development plan.

Regulation 14 states that – (1) the North Wales CJC may do anything (a) to facilitate, or (b) which is incidental or conducive to, the exercise of its functions under these Regulations or any other enactment. This includes (a) incurring expenditure; (b) charging fees; (c) acquiring or disposing of property or rights.

Growth Deal Transfer

On 1 April 2025, the functions of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board were transferred to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee under the CJC's statutory duty for economic well-being.

Funding of the Corporate Joint Committee

The Corporate Joint Committee has no tax-raising powers.

Growth Deal revenue costs are funded by a combination of a top-slice of the capital grant and partner contributions. Similarly, revenue costs associated with Investment Zones are grant-funded.

For all functions except the Growth Deal and Investment Zones, for each financial year the North Wales CJC must calculate its net revenue requirement attributable to—

(a) its strategic planning functions and

(b) its other functions.

The net revenue requirements relating to the strategic planning functions (including an appropriate proportion of administration costs and other overheads) is apportioned to the Constituent Councils and Eryri National Park Authority, whilst the net revenue requirement for all other functions (except strategic planning, the Growth Deal and Investment Zones) are apportioned to the Constituent Councils. Apportionments must be agreed unanimously.

Therefore, the budget is set on an annual basis and, apart from the specific matters described above, there is no long-term sustainable funding mechanism whereby Ambition North Wales is funded directly the Welsh Government.

Why the MTFS is needed now

As an organisation whose functions continue to be developed and guided by Welsh Government, Ambition North Wales must ensure that it has the necessary resources in place to fulfil its statutory duties and functions. Whilst the budget is set annually, no later than the end of January, there must be a strategic approach to considering the ability of the organisation to continue to operate as required. This not only

allows Ambition North Wales to be clear about it direction but also is transparent and open with the constituent council and national park authority.

2. Purpose of the MTFS

Welsh Government CJC guidance states that CJCs are public bodies and part of the local government family and should demonstrate good governance from the outset. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) proposes principles established on CIPFA and Welsh Government expectations regarding good governance, financial sustainability, risk management, stewardship and accountability.

The strategy sets out how the CJC will make sustainable financial choices, manage uncertainty and maintain the capacity to deliver its statutory responsibilities and agreed regional programmes over the current Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) period. It sets the strategic framework, risk appetite, decision rules and governance expectations within which the MTFP is prepared, challenged, approved and monitored. The strategy will be reviewed annually and rolled forward in accordance and alignment with the financial plan.

The Strategy is intended to:

- support sustainable financial decision-making;
- integrate finance, workforce, risk and performance planning;
- distinguish clearly between levy-funded activity and programme-funded activity;
- support transparent decision-making by Members and levy-paying bodies.

Relationship with the MTFP

MTFS: strategic framework	MTFP: quantified financial plan
Sets principles, objectives, risk appetite, decision rules and governance.	Shows income, expenditure, levy, reserves, cash flow, capital and borrowing forecasts across 2026/27-2029/30.
Explains how the CJC will assess resilience and make choices.	Shows the financial consequences of current assumptions and proposed choices.
Should remain relatively stable, subject to annual review.	Should be refreshed annually and rolled forward in accordance with financial planning processes.

3. Strategic principles

1. Sustainable choices

Principle: The CJC will assess decisions over the full planning timeline, aligning resources and commitments with statutory responsibilities and agreed regional priorities.

It is a fundamental principle that any statutory local authority organisation such as Ambition North Wales must be able to set a balanced budget. As such, significant local government finance legislation is as relevant to the CJC as it is to a principal council, in particular Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, amongst others. As a Corporate Joint Committee, Ambition North Wales is a levying body and has no tax-raising powers of its own.

The primary sources of revenue income for the Portfolio Management Office, which administers the North Wales Growth Deal, is a 2.15% "top slice" of the £240 million capital grants provided by the UK and Welsh Governments, and agreed partner contributions from six constituent councils and four further and higher education establishments.

Similarly, revenue costs associated with Investment Zones are grant-funded through an agreed administration "top slice".

Other functions of the Corporate Joint Committee are primarily funded through raising a levy on the six constituent councils and Eryri National Park Authority. By statute, the budget and its apportionment to the levy-paying bodies must be agreed by 31 January before the start of the relevant financial year. As part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, Ambition North Wales will be transparent with the levy-paying bodies and will hold discussions on both member and officer level on its funding requirements.

Developing the budget will be an iterative process, with both the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee and the Corporate Joint Committee being informed regularly during the budgeting process on the likely level of the levy, and any new financial commitments that will need to be considered.

The strategy will be openness on the expenditure requirements, and of the consequences of not agreeing funding.

As part of the statutory duties, if all else fails, the Section 151 Officer must produce a report under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (a "Section 114 Notice" if he is of the opinion that the Corporate Joint Committee or a person holding any office or employment under the CJC —

(a) has made or is about to make a decision which involves or would involve the authority incurring expenditure which is unlawful,

(b) has taken or is about to take a course of action which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency on the part of the CJC, or

(c) is about to enter an item of account the entry of which is unlawful.

2. Resilient funding and balance sheet

Principle: The CJC will manage income, reserves, cash flow, treasury, borrowing and contingencies as an integrated system of financial resilience.

The financial strategy for the Growth Deal will continue to take a whole life view up to the end of the Deal in 2034/35., and the financial forecasts of the capital expenditure up to the end of the Deal in 2034/35 will be continuously reviewed. As has been the case since the inception of the growth deal, this whole life overview will include an overview of capital expenditure profiles, expected reserves, cash flow and any related borrowing requirements, the timing of grant payments, NDR retention, and the related revenue requirements to support the Portfolio Management Office. There will be clear arrangements in place for dealing with the end of the Growth Deal, which will be demonstrated in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Similarly, the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone will be funded through specific government grant, with a clear revenue expenditure envelope. This funding will also be kept under constant review to ensure that the total revenue expenditure does not exceed the resources available.

In terms of the other functions of Ambition North Wales, these are matters primarily funded by the levy raised on constituent authorities. In line with a commitment to transparency, the use of the levy will be communicated clearly to the constituent authorities, and the reasoning behind the budget requirements of Ambition North Wales should be demonstrable.

3. Deliverable portfolio and corporate resources

Principle: The CJC will ensure that organisational capacity, capability, governance arrangements and financial resources develop in step with its expanding statutory responsibilities, programme portfolio and role as a corporate public body.

Ambition North Wales continues to develop as it is given additional duties and responsibilities by both Welsh Government and UK Government. As a result, there will be a constant review of the capacity requirements of the organisation to ensure that it can continue to deliver these functions. This includes a need for the Medium-Term Financial Plan to include an honest and clear overview of the need to develop Ambition North Wales as a statutory local authority body. These resources will include the need for sufficient and justifiable staffing structures and the setting-up of the governance structures required for such an organisation, both in terms of good practice and as required by statute.

This includes ensuring sufficient support for the statutory officers and their teams.

Regular reviews of the Medium-Term Financial Plan will therefore include as assessment of staffing structures moving forwards for the next three years.

4. Transparent governance and partnership

Principle: The CJC will make assumptions, risks, choices and accountabilities visible, supporting informed Member decisions and early engagement with levy-paying bodies.

As Ambition North Wales matures as an organisation over the term of this Financial Strategy, the budgeting process will also develop. Regular reviews of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, with formal consideration by both the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee (for independent overview) and the full Corporate Joint Committee (for formal adoption) every autumn, will allow the budgeting process to be a truly iterative process, with the developing picture being clear to all members by the time of setting the formal budget in January.

This includes being clear within the MTFP of the assumptions made in developing the budget requirements.

4. Financial Planning Architecture

The MTFS is supported by a Medium-Term Financial Plan covering the period 2026/27-2029/30.

The MTFP presents an overview of the following into a single view of the CJC's medium-term financial position:

- core levy-funded activity;
- statutory functions;
- programme expenditure;
- reserves;
- cash flow;
- borrowing requirements;
- workforce implications.

5. Assumptions and Scenarios

The MTFS will be supported by the development of a controlled assumption register during 2026/27.

In developing the MTFP, a number of assumptions have been made which are explained in the document. These key assumptions should include inflation, pay awards, grant funding, borrowing costs, programme delivery profiles and new CJC responsibilities.

6. Risk Appetite and Decision Rules

The CJC has a low appetite for:

- expenditure that may be *ultra vires;*
- unsupported recurring expenditure;
- depletion of general reserves below the threshold recommended by the Statutory Finance Officer without a replenishment strategy;
- committing to new expenditure after the budget has been approved, leading to the need of an in-year supplementary budget;
- financial decisions that threaten statutory delivery.

The CJC has a moderate appetite for:

- investment without sufficient due diligence
- externally funded programme delivery risk;
- managed borrowing where affordability can be demonstrated.

7. Governance and Accountability

The Strategy recognises all levy-paying bodies and relevant statutory partners and seeks to support transparent and informed decision-making.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The MTFS will be monitored through:

- quarterly budget monitoring;
- quarterly resilience reporting;
- risk reporting;
- programme performance reporting.

9. Annual Financial Resilience Assessment

The Statutory Finance Officer will provide an annual assessment of financial resilience alongside the MTFP.

This assessment should consider:

- sustainability of the revenue position;
- adequacy of reserves;
- affordability of borrowing;
- funding and grant dependency;
- workforce sustainability;
- programme affordability and delivery risk;
- effectiveness of governance and financial controls.

10. Conclusion

- The MTFS will be reviewed annually alongside the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- The financial planning period will be rolled forward as part of the annual budget-setting and financial planning process.
- The Strategy may be reviewed earlier where there is a significant change in funding arrangements, statutory responsibilities, governance arrangements or financial risk exposure.
- The Statutory Finance Officer will advise on any amendments required to ensure continued alignment with the MTFP and relevant legislation, guidance and professional standards.

Appendix 2

Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 – 2029/30

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Purpose of the MTFP

This Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will provide a framework for planning and managing the financial resources of Ambition North Wales over the medium term. Its purpose is to ensure that we plan effectively for its statutory obligations, maintain financial sustainability and support the achievement of its strategic objectives.

1.2 Plan Period

The period of this plan is 2027/28 to 2029/30. This plan will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect on the latest information.

1.3 Key Assumptions

The financial forecasts contained within the plan follow the application of a number of key assumptions, including:

- Expected inflation levels.
- National salary awards.
- Welsh Government funding and grants.
- Contributions of the constituent authorities.
- Changes in demand and service activity.
- Impact of new policies and legislation.

To ensure the accuracy of these assumptions we will review them regularly as new information becomes available

1.4 Overall Financial Position

By the end of the 2025/26 period, Ambition North Wales, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) was in a stable financial position, with a funding model based on a combination of constituent authority levies, partner contributions, grants and other sources of income. During 2025/26, the CJC (including Growth Deal) used grants and contributions worth £18.2m and received £2.2m of interest income. The organisation also managed a prudent level of reserves and significant investments to support the delivery of key regional programmes, including the Growth Deal, the Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Planning work.

However, it was noted that the CJC held more reserves than was necessary to remain prudent and the 2026/27 included significant use of reserves in order to minimise the increase in the levy.

The financial outlook over the period of this plan reflects employment cost pressures, inflation and grant funding risks, but also shows significant opportunities to secure further investment in the region.

1.5 Main Risks and Opportunities

Risks

- Inflation and cost pressures higher than forecasts.
- Salary awards and employment costs exceed the provision in the budget.
- Changes to constituent authority, Welsh Government and UK Government funding levels or grant arrangements
- Reliance on grant funding and fixed-term funding sources for strategic programmes.
- Risks of recruiting and retaining staff in specialist areas and key functions.
- Delays in securing or delivering externally funded projects.
- Changes to national and regional legislation, policies or priorities.
- Unnecessary cost of borrowing
- NDR income on Growth Deal projects not received or lower than forecast
- Investment Zone grant funding not available to fund project expenditure
- Investment Zone administration expenditure higher that the funding available

Opportunities

- Securing grant funding and additional investment for regional programs.
- Develop and deliver the North Wales Growth Deal and the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.
- Strengthen regional collaboration arrangements and shared services.
- Improve operational efficiency and achieve greater value for money.
- Increase investment income and develop new sources of income where appropriate.
- Develop organisational capacity and strategic financial planning to support growth and deliver on the CJC's priorities.

1.6 Summary of the Budget Gap

Whilst there are clear opportunities arising from the increase in the statutory duties on Ambition North Wales to improve regional working and attract significant investment into the region, there remains the challenge of securing funding. The CJC is reliant on the levy that is paid by the 6 constituent councils (plus Eryri National Park Authority for Strategic Planning matters), and the statutory process of setting the annual budget involves agreement on the amount of levy to charge, and its apportionment amongst the authorities.

Work on developing the Medium-Term Financial Plan shows that the following amounts will need to be funded by a combination of levy and use of reserves for the relevant expenditure headings.

	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Total Non-levy Income	(470,000)	(470,000)	(470,000)
Total Expenditure	2,633,830	2,593,000	2,682,080
Deficit to be funded by levy and reserves	**2,163,830**	**2,123,000**	**2,212,080**

2. Strategic Context

2.1 Objectives, Priorities and Programmes

The statutory duties of Ambition North Wales, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee are set out in regulations made in accordance with the Welsh Government's powers as outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. In particular, regulations 11 to 14 of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 outline the statutory functions of Ambition North Wales:

- Economic Well-being
- Development of Regional Transport Policy
- Strategic Planning

A significant factor in fulfilling the Economic Well-being duty was the transfer of the North Wales Growth Deal from the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, a standalone Joint Committee (pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972) with Cyngor Gwynedd as the host authority, to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, Ambition North Wales, a standalone corporate body on 1 April 2025.

In order to fulfil these statutory powers, Ambition North Wales is responsible for carrying out strategic and regional functions across North Wales, working in partnership with the constituent authorities, Welsh Government, UK Government and other key stakeholders. The Medium-Term Financial Plan provides the financial framework that supports the delivery of these priorities in a sustainable and affordable manner.

Throughout the scheme period, we will continue to focus on fulfilling our statutory functions and developing programmes that contribute to the economic growth, connectivity and sustainability of the region. The main strategic priorities include:

- Develop and implement the Strategic Development Plan for North Wales.
- Delivering the Regional Transport Plan and supporting better connectivity across the region.
- Lead and deliver the North Wales Growth Deal and its portfolio of programmes and projects.
- To support the development and operation of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.
- Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce through the work of the Regional Skills Partnership.
- Ensure sound governance, performance and financial management arrangements.
- To develop the organisational and operational capacity of the CJC to meet the organisation's growing responsibilities.

We seek to ensure that financial resources are directed to these priorities whilst maintaining financial resilience and effective risk management. In developing the plan, consideration will be given to the resources available, the financial pressures facing the public sector, and the need to deliver value for money while delivering outcomes for communities, businesses and stakeholders across North Wales.

This plan also reflects the importance of regional working and ensuring that the CJC's investments contribute to achieving the vision of a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy for North Wales, supporting economic growth, skills development and strategic infrastructure improvements across the region.

2.2 External Factors Affecting the Financial Situation

The financial position of the CJC will be influenced by a number of external factors that may affect the organisation's funding levels, costs and priorities. These factors will be monitored and taken into account in the development and updating of the plan.

Factor	Potential Impact
Funding from the Partners	A reluctance to continue to support Ambition North Wales financially, leading to insufficient levy.
Government Funding	Changes to funding levels, grant arrangements or grant profile.
Inflation	Increase in employment, contract, and service costs.
Economic Conditions	Impact on operating costs, investment and funding opportunities.
Policy Developments and Legislation	New requirements or changes to the priorities of the CJC.
Stakeholder Expectations	Pressure to deliver regional outcomes and achieve value for money.

We will regularly review the impact of these factors as part of our financial planning, risk management and budget-setting arrangements.

3. Planning Assumptions

The financial forecasts in this plan are based on a number of assumptions regarding income, expenditure and economic conditions. These assumptions are used as a basis for the development of the financial forecasts over the period of the plan.

3.1 Income Assumptions

The following table summarises the main income assumptions used in the preparation of the plan.

Area	Assumption
Partner Contributions (Growth Deal)	Contribution from 6 councils and 4 education bodies to fund the implementation of the Growth Deal. This is a contractually agreed amount, and its implementation is not dependent on wider levy decisions. This MTFP assumes that the partner contributions will continue as agreed between the partners.
Levy Income	In accordance with statutory requirements, the levy will continue to be levied on the 6 constituent councils and Eryri National Park Authority. The amount to be collected by levy, and its allocation to the constituent members, must be determined before the end of January for the following financial year.
Project Funding	It is envisaged that 2.15% of the Growth Deal grant can continue to be used towards the Portfolio Management Office revenue costs
Interest Income	Based on cash levels and interest rates forecast by the Bank of England and the appointed treasury management consultants.
Partner Interest Contributions	Based on NDR income, capital expenditure profile, grant profile and forecasted interest rate

3.2 Expenditure Assumptions

The following table summarises the main expenditure assumptions used in the preparation of the plan.

Area	Assumption
Staffing structure	That the staffing structure of the CJC will need to reflect current and emerging duties placed on the organisation.
Salary Awards	In line with the latest national forecasts and the information available.
Salary Increases	Includes contractual costs where applicable.
National Insurance	Reflects any known changes to contribution rates.
Pension Contributions	Based on expected employer rates and will reflect any known changes to contribution rates.
Inflation	Includes provision for employment costs, contracts and services. Assumptions are made in accordance with the latest forecast information available from the Bank of England and the appointed treasury management consultants.
Third party costs	Will include prudent assumptions of the costs of the support services provided by Cyngor Gwynedd and other third-party providers, as set out in contracts and service level agreements.
Property Costs	Includes utility charges, rents and associated costs where applicable.

3.3 Reviewing Assumptions

As already stated, the assumptions used in the plan will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that they reflect the most recent information and circumstances. This will need to be undertaken at least annually, but in practice it will need to be undertaken during the year as emerging data and information is received. Any material changes to funding levels, inflation, employment costs or economic conditions will be taken into account when updating the financial forecasts.

4. Financial Base

4.1 Base Budget for the Current Year

The following is the 2026/27 base budget for the Corporate Joint Committee, as approved on 23 January 2026. It does not include costs relating to the North Wales Growth Deal, Investment Zone or the Regional Skills Partnership which are not funded through the levy, but by a separate contractual agreement and grant.

Category	2026/27 Budget (£)
Employees	956,920
Travel	3,110
Supplies and Services	654,630
Support services	273,220
Set-up Costs	71,890
Income (non-levy, including contributions from reserves)	(944,590)
Total Net Expenditure	**1,015,180**

4.2 Financial Forecast Starting Point

The baseline budget is used as the basis for the development of the financial forecasts over the period of this plan. The forecasts take into account the impact of the planning assumptions, including:

- Inflation.
- Salary awards.
- Changes in finance.
- Service pressures and programs.
- Changes to the responsibilities of the CJC.

This approach enables the Corporate Joint Committee to assess financial sustainability, identify potential budget gaps and support decisions regarding priorities and resource utilisation.

4.3 Changes to the Base

The biggest change in the financial base was the transfer of the North Wales Growth Deal and the Portfolio Management Office, together with the Regional Skills Partnership, to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee on the 1st of April 2025. This transfer resulted in the transfer of significant assets, liabilities, reserves and operational responsibilities to the CJC, increasing the size and complexity of the organisation's activity.

5. Three-Year Financial Outlook

This section presents the projected income, expenditure and overall financial position forecasts for the CJC over the period of this plan. The forecasts are based on the assumptions set out in Section 3.

5.1 Income Forecasts

The following table summarises the projected income over the period of the scheme.

Source of Income	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Interest on Balances	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Regional Transport Plan Grant	(450,000)	(450,000)	(450,000)
Total non-levy Income	**(470,000)**	**(470,000)**	**(470,000)**

The income forecasts reflect current funding arrangements, known grants and assumptions regarding other sources of income.

5.2 Expenditure Forecasts

The following table summarises the projected expenditure over the period of the MTFP.

Forecast Expenditure	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Corporate Joint Committee	1,220,090	1,354,100	1,446,490
Strategic Development Plan	814,210	634,690	625,910
Regional Transport Plan	599,530	604,210	609,680
Total Expenditure Budget	**2,633,830**	**2,593,000**	**2,682,080**

The expenditure forecasts include the impact of salary awards, inflation, contractual commitments and other projected cost pressures over the plan period.

5.3 General Financial Position

A comparison of the anticipated income and expenditure provides an overview of the CJC's financial position over the period of the MTFP.

These are the amounts that will need to be funded by a combination of the use of reserves and charging a levy on the constituent authorities.

	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Total Non-levy Income	(470,000)	(470,000)	(470,000)
Total Expenditure	2,633,830	2,593,000	2,682,080
Deficit	**2,163,830**	**2,123,000**	**2,212,080**

There is some limited scope for varying the exact combination and proportion of levy / reserves to be used over the period of the MTFP. These are set out below.

6. Areas of Expenditure

6.1 Growth Deal

The Growth Deal is subject to separate funding arrangements and is not funded through the levy. It also has separate reserves which cannot be used to fund the wider activities of the Corporate Joint Committee.

Although the CJC has to date received more grant income than it has spent on Growth Deal projects, a medium-term temporary funding gap is forecasted between the expenditure profile of the Growth Deal and the expected profile of government funding received from UK and Welsh Governments. In 2020, the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, commissioned an independent treasury advisory company to model the cost of borrowing and the corresponding annual partner contributions required to meet this cost of which have been included in the budgets since 2021/22. There are numerous variables (NDR income, capital expenditure profile, grant profile and forecasted interest rate) that can affect these costs, and the partner contributions are re-calculated annually to reflect the most up to date information.

A specific interest reserve has been created and it is ringfenced to fund these costs and includes the partner contributions as well as the interest on Growth Deal balances (except for 2024/25 and 2025/26 where a Board decision was made for the interest to be transferred to the resources reserve to fund additional government requirements, project development and the retention of Portfolio Management Office's capacity for an additional two years beyond March 2026).

In 2023/24 and 2024/25, both Governments withheld their funding and although a revised grant profile has been received by UK Government, Welsh Government have not yet confirmed their revised grant profile to include the £16m funding that was withheld. We are currently forecasting that in 2027/28, the CJC will need to borrow to fund the capital expenditure. Another factor that will increase the cost of borrowing unnecessarily is the timing of the grant received from governments, with grant payments received at the end of the financial year and on some occasions have slipped to the following financial year.

6.2 Investment Zone

Over the ten-year duration of the Investment Zone, a total of £6.4m is available to support the programme's administration. From this allocation, £200,000 per annum is allocated to the CJC and £220,000 each to Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council. The end of July 2026 review identified that the administration allocation alone will not be sufficient to fund the CJC's costs for 2026/27, therefore the interest on Investment Zone balances will be used for this funding gap. The use of interest is a temporary arrangement as interest receivable on balances will decrease as the cash outflows of the

Investment Zone grant increases, and the CJC will need measures in place to ensure that the expenditure remains within the funding envelope in future years.

6.3 Regional Skills Partnership

The Regional Skills Partnership ensures skills development is embedded in major investment programmes including the Growth Deal and the Investment Zone. It's funded by an annual grant from Welsh Government with most of the expenditure made on employees, events and meetings, marketing and communication and the skills portal.

6.4 Local Growth Fund

The Local Growth Fund (LGF) is an investment programme supporting productivity growth and tackling economic inequalities across Wales between 2026 and 2029. It supports investment in productive and competitive businesses, skills and support to help people into work and regional infrastructure.

During 2027–29 (and thereafter subject to any extension), responsibility for planning and oversight of delivery of the LGF will transfer from Cyngor Gwynedd to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, who will lead regional planning, prioritisation, and portfolio selection.

The administration costs are capped at 4% of total LGF allocations in each financial year and therefore the CJC will need to work within their financial envelope.

6.5 Corporate Joint Committee

This budget group contains the net costs of fulfilling the statutory duties of Ambition North Wales other than the Growth Deal, Investment Zone, Regional Skills Partnership, Strategic Development Plan and Regional Transport Plan. In addition to the operational costs, this group also includes the corporate core of the organisation, and the costs attached to running a local authority body including statutory functions such as the Chief Executive, S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, and a range of other corporate functions such as policy, procurement and other support services. Whilst some of these costs are payable to Cyngor Gwynedd as a provider of support services through service level agreements, the MTFP addresses the current capacity issues within some of the core functions of Ambition North Wales.

Corporate Joint Commitee	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Employees	875,560	1,000,980	1,079,000
External Consultants	37,260	38,560	39,900
Travel	3,110	3,750	4,430
Supplies and Services	191,780	194,490	202,760
Support services	149,640	154,880	160,300
Income - Interest on balances	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Total Net Expenditure	**1,200,090**	**1,334,100**	**1,426,490**

6.6 Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

A report to the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee on 4th September 2025 highlighted that the Regulations relating to developing the SDP clearly set out that the production of an SDP is a statutory duty for the CJC, and implicit with that is the responsibility to meet the full costs of doing so. Apart from some early modest start-up grant funding, there is no identified funding for the SDP from Welsh Government, unlike a published commitment to support Regional Transport Plan work. As things stand, it is therefore up to the CJC to meet the full costs of the SDP.

Work undertaken since September 2025 have allowed the CJC to develop and refine its financial forecasts, and as can be seen from the table below, expenditure is expected to fall after 2027/28 as the need for external consultants (shown under Supplies and Services) reduces significantly, with responsibilities bought in-house.

Strategic Development Plan	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Employees	232,040	300,440	375,160
Travel	950	980	1,010
Supplies and Services	531,380	281,680	196,340
Support services	49,840	51,590	53,400
Total Net Expenditure	**814,210**	**634,690**	**625,910**

6.7 Regional Transport Plan

The function of developing policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within their area and to develop policies for the implementation in their area of the Wales Transport Strategy, in respect of the area of each constituent council, is to be exercised by the North Wales CJC, and not by the constituent council.

In practice, this means that Ambition North Wales must carry out the function of developing and producing a Regional Transport Plan and related regional policies in collaboration with Local Authorities and partners. Through the Strategic Transport Sub-committee, Ambition North Wales has responsibilities to manage projects and programmes. This role is achieved by co-ordinating, planning and developing the relevant project programmes and making recommendations to the Corporate Joint Committee. The responsibility to monitor and review the level and use of resources including staff is undertaken by Strategic Transport Sub-committee.

Regional Transport Plan	2027/28 (£)	2028/29 (£)	2029/30 (£)
Employees	207,740	215,020	222,550
Travel	520	540	560
Supplies and Services	341,940	337,590	333,720
Support services	49,330	51,060	52,850
Income - Regional Transport Plan Grant	(450,000)	(450,000)	(450,000)
Total Net Expenditure	**149,530**	**154,210**	**159,680**

Indicative funding for the grant has been received for 2027/28 and 2028/29. In developing this MTFP there is an assumption that funding will remain constant in 2029/30, but this is yet to be confirmed. The situation will be kept under review.

7. Funding

The CJC's funding model relies on a combination of constituent authority contributions, grants and other sources of funding. Managing these sources effectively is essential to ensure financial sustainability and achieve our priorities.

7.1 Use of reserves

The table below shows the reserves situation of NWCJC (not including any Growth Deal and Regional Skills Partnership reserves, which are ring-fenced).

	£
Total reserve at 31 March 2026	(1,636,007)
Usage in 2026/27 (approved in budget)	624,590
Usage in 2026/27 (estimated as part of July 2026 financial review)	39,874
Repayment of Investment Zone 2024/25 expenditure into the reserve in 2026/27	(62,405)
Total reserve at 31 March 2027	(1,033,948)
5% of 2027/28 gross revenue budget in reserve	131,692
Total available reserve for 2027/28	**(902,256)**

As can be seen, in addition to the £624.6k approved to fund the 2026/27 budget, the end of July 2026 review estimates that an additional £40k will be needed during the year to deal with a forecast overspend. The Investment Zone's expenditure for 2024/25 was £83k and this was initially funded by the CJC reserve. £21k has been repaid to the reserve in 2025/26 and the remaining £62k will be repaid in 2026/27.

In line with generally accepted good practice, there is a need to keep approximately 5% of Gross Revenue Expenditure as a General Reserve. This would leave approximately £902k to be used as part of the budgeting for forthcoming years.

7.2 Partner Authorities' levy contributions

The levy contributions of the constituent local authorities are a key source of funding for the CJC. The level of contributions is reviewed annually taking into account the financial requirements, regional priorities and affordability for the partners.

Following the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee meeting on 25 September 2026, the proposed option is presented below.

Increase the levy and use 80% of the available reserves in 2027/28

	Total Levy 2027/28	(Increase) / Decrease	%
Authority	(£)	(£)	
Conwy County Borough Council	(233,570)	(68,790)	42%
Denbighshire County Council	(203,770)	(60,730)	42%
Flintshire County Council	(323,300)	(96,310)	42%
Cyngor Gwynedd	(233,950)	(69,160)	42%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	(142,190)	(41,580)	41%
Wrexham County Borough Council	(286,090)	(84,780)	42%
Eryri National Park Authority	(19,160)	(5,500)	40%
Total Levy	**(1,442,030)**		
Use of reserves	(721,800)		

Available reserve remaining (after the 5% general reserve allocation) at 31 March 2028: £180,456.

This option involves using 80% of the available reserves at the start of each financial year for 2027/28, 2028/29 and 2029/30. This would provide a balance of being able to use some of the reserves in each of three financial years in order to dampen the levy increases. With this option, the levy would need to increase by approximately 42% in 2027/28, but with lower increases of approximately 37% in 2028/29 and 10% in 2029/30.

7.3 Funding of Regional Programmes

Many of the CJC's activities depend on grants and external funding. We will monitor funding levels, new opportunities, grant expiry dates and long-term funding risks.

7.4 Shared Service Arrangements

Where appropriate, Ambition North Wales uses shared services to ensure efficiency and value for money. These arrangements currently include financial services, human resources, democratic support services, ICT and other corporate services.

7.5 Analysis of Grant Dependency

Reliance on grant funding poses financial risk, particularly where grants are fixed-term. We will monitor the level of reliance on grants, funding expiration dates and opportunities to vary sources of income.

Application	Grant Source
North Wales Growth Deal	Welsh Government / UK Government
Investment Zone	Welsh Government / UK Government
Strategic Development Plan	No current grant
Regional Transport Plan	Welsh Government
Regional Skills Partnership	Welsh Government

Ambition North Wales remains dependent on grant funding to support a number of its strategic programmes. Any reduction or change in grant arrangements will be a significant risk to the achievement of the organisation's priorities.

8. Reserve Strategy

Reserves are a key part of the CJC's financial management and provide financial resilience to manage risks, respond to unforeseen events and support one-off costs. The table below shows the forecast overall reserves position for the period of this MTFP.

Reserve Category	As at 1/4/2027	As at 31/3/2030
	(£)	(£)
General Reserves	131,692	131,692
Earmarked Reserves	902,256	7,218
Total Amount	**1,033,948**	**138,908**

The General Reserves represents 5% of the 2027/28 gross revenue budget with the remaining reserves balance earmarked.

8.2 Proposed Use of Reserves

Where appropriate, reserves may be used for:

- One-time cost financing.
- Managing short-term financial risks or pressures.
- Supporting the CJC's projects and priorities.
- Mitigate the impact of fluctuations in income or expenditure.
- Assist with organisational changes or transformation.

Any use of reserves will be thoroughly considered in the context of longer-term financial sustainability, and the position will be reported regularly to the Corporate Joint Committee and the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee as part of the financial reviews.

The Growth Deal and Regional Skills Partnership reserves are ring-fenced and are not considered as part of the reserves position shown above.

8.3 Minimum Level of Reserves

The CJC maintains an appropriate level of overall reserves in order to protect the organisation from unexpected risks and costs. General reserves will initially be approximately 5% of the estimated Gross Revenue Expenditure for 2027/28, and will be reviewed annually, taking into account the key financial risks, funding uncertainty, and the level of earmarked reserves.

8.4 Earmarked Reserves

Reserves are held earmarked for specific purposes, such as:

- Growth Deal Reserve
- Growth Deal Project Reserve
- Growth Deal Interest Reserve
- Growth Deal Resources Reserve
- Growth Deal Interest Holding Account
- Regional Skills Partnership Reserve

Growth Deal nor the Regional Skills Partnership reserves cannot be used to fund or subsidise other activities of Ambition North Wales.

We will review these reserves regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and relevant.

8.5 Reserve Forecasts

Reserve levels will be monitored throughout the plan period to ensure that they remain adequate to support the financial resilience of the organisation. Any material changes will be reflected in the financial forecasts and the annual budgeting process.

9. Risk Assessment

The plan includes an assessment of the main risks that could affect the financial position of the CJC over its lifetime. These risks are regularly monitored and reviewed as part of the organisation's governance and financial management arrangements.

9.1 Key Financial Risks

The following table summarises the main risks facing the CJC and the relevant mitigation measures.

Risk	Effect	Probability	Mitigation Actions
Reduction in grant funding	High	Medium	Varying funding sources and monitoring new grant opportunities
Inflation higher than forecast	High	Medium	Appropriate contingency provision and regular review of assumptions
Pressure to recruit and retain staff	Medium	Medium	Workforce planning and labour market monitoring
Higher salary awards than assumptions	High	Medium	Reviewing pay budgets and monitoring national negotiations
Delay or failure to secure external funding	High	Medium	Strengthening project planning and development processes
Changes in legislation or policy	Medium	Medium	Monitoring policy developments and planning ahead
Increase in contract and service costs	Medium	Medium	Managing contracts effectively and reviewing procurement arrangements
Reliance on a small number of funding sources	High	Low/Medium	The CJC can explore alternative sources of funding, but the options are extremely limited.
Unnecessary cost of borrowing	High	High	Negotiations with both UK and Welsh Governments on the profile and timing of Growth Deal Grant Funding.
NDR income on Growth Deal projects not received or lower than forecast	Medium	Medium	Welsh Government minister approval required on NDR income as well as agreements on NDR income split between the Growth Deal, Freeport and Investment Zone schemes are required.
Investment Zone grant funding not available to fund project expenditure	High	Low/Medium	Negotiations with both UK and Welsh Governments on the profile and timing of Investment Zone Grant Funding.

Investment Zone administration expenditure higher that the funding available	Medium	Medium	Interest income used in the short-term, but measures need to be put in place to ensure that the expenditure remains within the funding envelope in future years.

9.2 Financial Risk Management

Ambition North Wales manages financial risks by:

- Reviewing the plan annually.
- Regularly monitoring financial performance.
- Maintain an appropriate level of reserves.
- Update forecasts and assumptions as new information becomes available.
- Integrate risk management into planning and decision-making processes.

9.3 Conclusion

Risk management is an integral part of Ambition North Wales's financial sustainability. The risks identified in the plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the organisation is able to respond effectively to changes in funding, costs and the wider operating environment.

Appendix – Staffing Establishment Analysis

Current Posts, excluding those wholly funded by Growth Deal and/or Investment Zone

Job title	Budget Apportionment			Notes
	Corporate Joint Committee	Strategic Planning	Transport	
Chief Executive	100%			
PA to the Chief Executive	100%			
Funding Project Manager	50%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Strategic Communication and Engagement Lead	50%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Operations and Resources Manager	25%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Procurement and Social Value Manager	25%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Senior Procurement Officer	75%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Corporate Support Officer	100%			
Senior Operations Officer	75%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Senior Policy Officer	100%			
Programme Manager	25%			Until mid Year 1, funded by IZ and LGF
Monitoring Officer	40%	5%	10%	Remainder funded through Growth Deal and IZ
Deputy Monitoring Officer	75%	5%	5%	Remainder funded through Growth Deal and IZ
Lawyer	15%	5%		Remainder funded through Growth Deal and IZ

Job title	Budget Apportionment			Notes
	Corporate Joint Committee	Strategic Planning	Transport	
Commercial Manager	33%			Remainder funded through Growth Deal and IZ
Regional Strategic Development Planning Manager		100%		
Senior Planner		100%		
Senior Transport Officer			100%	
Transport Officer			100%	
Transport Officer			100%	

All posts which are already filled are fixed term, apart from the Chief Executive and PA to the CEO who are permanent appointments

Additional Posts included in MTFP and subject to budgetary approval

Job title	Budget Apportionment			Notes
	Corporate Joint Committee	Strategic Planning	Transport	
Communications Officer	50%			From Year 1. Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Corporate Director (Resources)	100%			From Year 1
Senior Planner		100%		From Year 1
Operations Officer	25%			From Year 2. Remainder funded through Growth Deal
Policy Officer	100%			From Year 2
Technical Support Officer		100%		From Year 2
Programme Officer		100%		From Year 3
Systems/ Data Analyst	33%			From Year 3. Remainder funded through Growth Deal and IZ

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: Delegation to EWSC regarding the Regional Growth Plan and Local Growth Fund

AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Chief Executive, Ambition North Wales
Iain Taylor, Strategic Programmes, Ambition North Wales

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. The core purpose of this report is to note the scope of work and role required for the CJC and to delegate decisions set out in Section 2 below. Funding for Years 2 and 3 of the Local Growth Fund Programme requires agreement to both a Local Growth Fund Delivery Plan and a Regional Growth Plan.

1.2. The CJC is required to make decision at the 20th November 2026 meeting to allow submission of key documents to Welsh Government such that approvals and confirmations can be in place in February that allows the continuation of key revenue resources (c£1.3m) to the CJC and North Wales Local Authority delivery partners from April 2027.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. To delegate responsibility to the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to consider and approve the submission of a draft Local Growth Fund Delivery Plan for Year 2 and 3 (2027 – 2029) and to put in place any required further delegations to ANW officers to confirm the final Delivery Plan with Welsh Government such that it allows a LGF Grant Offer Letter to be issued in February 2027.

2.2. To delegate responsibility to the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to consider and approve the submission of a draft Regional Growth Plan and to put in place any required further delegations to ANW officers to confirm the basis of the Regional Growth Plan such that it allows for a LGF Grant Offer Letter to be issued in February 2027.

2.3. To delegate responsibility to the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to agree with Cyngor Gwynedd the regional administration arrangements for Local Growth Fund delivery in Years 2 and 3, building on the arrangements that exist in Year 1 (the current financial year) including the terms of a Partnership Agreement or Inter Authority Agreement.

2.4. To delegate responsibility to the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to agree with the six local authorities the arrangements for Local Growth Fund delivery in Years 2 and 3, building on the arrangements that exist in Year 1 (the current financial year) including the terms of a Partnership Agreement, Grant Funding Agreement or Inter Authority Agreement.

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

2.5. To delegate responsibility to the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to govern and manage the delivery of Local Growth Funding in Years 2 and 3, including all decisions relating to administration arrangements, funding, programmes and projects, and the completion of a Regional Growth Plan in 2027.

2.6. To approve ongoing efforts to secure delivery flexibility, including transfer of funds between years and between priority allocations to allow effective management of resources.

2.7. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer to commission additional work to inform, supplement and strengthen the North Wales Regional Growth Plan and its delivery, including joint work with the other Corporate Joint Committees to share best practice, strengthen regional delivery capability and improve outcomes for communities, within approved budgets and in accordance with applicable procurement requirements.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. Welsh Government require that responsibility for the LGF transfers to the CJC for the second and third years of the programme (2027/28 and 2028/29).

3.2. The request of Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to support the management of the Local Growth Fund from 2027/28 aligns with the Sub-Committee's responsibilities in exercising the CJCs economic well-being function.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The Government's Local Growth Fund (LGF) is a three year fund, administered by Welsh Government through its LGF Investment Plan. Year 1 is the current financial year with Year 2 (April 2027-March 2028) and Year 3 (April 2028-March 2029). Any funding after that depends on future Spending Reviews.

4.2. From 2027–28, Welsh Government will award funding directly to the four Corporate Joint Committees through annual grant offer letters. Each Corporate Joint Committee will then lead regional planning and portfolio selection. The indicative North Wales allocation is £41.44m in 2027–28 and £39.92m in 2028–29. Each year includes a pan-Wales capital ringfence of £5.37m for North Wales. This funding is conditional on Welsh Government sign-off.

4.3. At the 2 October Sub-Committee it was agreed that Ambition North Wales would run a 4 week 'call for evidence' from partner organisations, asking each partner to set out their strategic priorities for reducing productivity gaps, tackling inequalities in areas of deprivation and rurality across the region, and how their proposals for intervention fit within the Welsh Government's framework. The Corporate Joint Committee is bringing the outputs from this initial phase of work to the Sub Committee on the 13th November for initial review.

4.4. Further research work will support the development and delivery of the Regional Growth Plan, including collaboration with the other Corporate Joint Committees to strengthen the evidence base, share best practice and consider the roles, responsibilities and capabilities needed for effective regional economic development.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Use of the £200,000 LGF/RGP development funding awarded to the CJC to develop the necessary documents (including the 10 Year Regional Growth Plan) and approach to managing the LGF funds in Years 2 and 3.

5.2. Further development work is required to identify and agree the precise allocations of the 4% administration resources to be split between the CJC, Cyngor Gwynedd to support programme administration and the 6 partner Councils.

5.3. The CJC is financially responsible for the programme. The expectation is that payments will be made directly from the CJC to delivery partners, with the schedule of payments and backup to be provided by Cyngor Gwynedd.

5.4. The scale of LGF funding for North Wales for the second two years of the programme c£40m in year of the two years, an increase of c£10m on Year 1.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The CJC will be required to enter into a Grant Offer Letter with Welsh Government, the terms of which we understand to be consistent with previously received Grant Offer Letters from Welsh Government.

6.2. The CJC will enter into a Partnership Agreement (or Inter Authority Agreement) with Cyngor Gwynedd for the regional administration and coordination functions and the necessary agreements with each of the 6 part Councils, which could be in for form of Partnership Agreement, Inter Authority Agreement or Grant Funding Agreement.

6.3. The CJC will enter into Grant Funding Agreements for programmes and projects and undertake relevant assurance and Subsidy Control processes.

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The proposed delegation to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee is consistent with the CJC's economic well-being function and provides an appropriate governance route for progressing the Local Growth Fund and Regional Growth Plan within the required timetable. Members should note the breadth of the proposed delegation being sought, in particular the governance and management delegation contained in paragraph 2.4."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"Whilst there are clear financial implications for Ambition North Wales from the Local Growth Fund programme, the decision sought through this report is to delegate key decisions to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee. There are no reasons from a financial perspective to oppose this proposal."

CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
20th NOVEMBER 2026

TITLE: REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLANNING UPDATE NOVEMBER 2026

AUTHOR: Councillor David A Bithell, Chair of the Strategic Transport Sub Committee
Adam Graham, Senior Transport Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Seek approval from the CJC for the draft programme of schemes for funding from the Regional Transport Fund for the 2027/28 financial year
- Inform the CJC of the work of the Strategic Transport Sub Committee noted in the Bi-Annual Report

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1 The Corporate Joint Committee is asked to approve the draft Programme of Schemes to be funded through the Regional Transport Fund in 2027/28 for submission to Welsh Government.

2.2 No decision is sought regarding the Bi-Annual Report, the committee is asked to note the report.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

3.1 Further to Welsh Government Regional Transport funding guidance the Corporate Joint Committee has responsibility for developing a five-year Programme of Schemes to be funded by the Regional Transport Fund and to undertake in-year management of the grant spend.

3.2 The Terms of Reference for the Strategic Transport Sub Committee require that an update report is produced on a bi-annual basis for the CJC.

4. REGIONAL TRANSPORT FUND PROGRAMME OF SCHEMES

4.1 Through its responsibility for Regional Transport Planning, the CJC is responsible for prioritising and managing the programme of schemes that will be delivered through funding from the Regional Transport Fund in North Wales in 2027/28.

4.2 The proposed list of schemes to be funded was presented to the Strategic Transport Sub Committee on 2nd November 2026.

4.3 Ambition North Wales, with consultancy support from Arup, has worked closely with local authority officers and Member portfolio holders across the region to identify a programme of schemes for 2027/28. Welsh Government and TfW officers have also been engaged during this process.

4.4 The programme has been designed to fit within an indicative budget provided by Welsh Government that is shown in Table 1. This is the same capital budget that was provided to North Wales for the current financial year, and does not include any increase for inflation or any other variables. The indicative budget does not represent an agreed Welsh Government allocation or funding commitment, and both the final programme and individual schemes remain subject to Welsh Government approval.

CJC region	Capital (£)	Revenue (£) (Road Safety and Behaviour Change)	Revenue (£) CJC Admin	Total (£)
North Wales	28.3m	384k	0.1m	28.784m

Table 1

4.5. In putting together the programme of schemes, the following variables were amongst the key considerations:

- Prioritising continuation of schemes funded this year that are being delivered across multiple years
- RTP policies and aspirations
- RTDP and local authority priorities
- Deliverability of schemes

4.6. The draft programme of schemes for 2027/28, for which approval is sought, is shown in Appendix A.

5. REGIONAL TRANSPORT FUND NEXT STEPS

5.1. To ensure compliance with Welsh Government timescales, a draft programme in line with Appendix 1 has been submitted to Welsh Government on 30th October.

5.2 Welsh Government and TfW will then review the draft and provide comments back by 18th December. Ambition North Wales and Arup will then work with the local authorities to respond to comments before submitting a final version by 30th January 2027.

5.3. Welsh Government will approve the programme and send offer letters to local authorities by the end of March 2027, and local authorities will commence scheme delivery from April 2027. Scheme funding will be awarded directly to local authorities from Welsh Government.

6. STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB COMMITTEE BI-ANNUAL REPORT

6.1. The Terms of Reference of the Strategic Transport Sub Committee state that the "Strategic Transport Sub-Committee will prepare a bi-annual report on its work for the Corporate Joint Committee.

6.2. The context for such a report is to ensure that the work of the Sub-Committee is open and transparent and that its functions are being clearly communicated.

6.3. The Terms of Reference provide that bi-annual reports shall form part of an agreed scrutiny protocol and shall be in a format which will facilitate its submission into Scrutiny or other governance arrangements as determined by the Corporate Joint Committee.

6.4. The Bi-Annual Report is appended as Appendix B. It includes detail on:

- Regional Transport Fund 2025/26
- Consultation Responses sent to partner organisations
- Financial performance
- Resource Management.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Funding from the Regional Transport Fund for the delivery of schemes will be awarded directly to local authorities so has no direct financial impact on the CJC.

7.2. In order to support and resource this co-ordination and administrative role for the CJC, the Welsh Government guidance allows the CJC to claim a programme management support cost from the Regional Transport Fund budget annually. This is to avoid apportioning costs for overall programme management by the CJC to each project and to enable economies of scale. This will also allow each authority to focus on scheme design and delivery. The amount of funding that it is proposed to be claimed by the CJC is shown in the figures in Appendix A.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1. The Corporate Joint Committee has a statutory duty to prepare a Regional Transport Plan. Welsh Government have issued CJCs with a set of Guidance and Desk Instructions to develop their Programme of Schemes for 2027/28. The programme shown in appendix 1 has been developed in line with that guidance.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Draft Programme of Schemes for Regional Transport Fund Funding
Appendix B – Strategic Transport Sub Committee Bi-Annual Report

---

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

The proposed Programme of Schemes has been developed within the CJC's regional transport planning responsibilities and in accordance with the relevant Welsh Government guidance and desk instructions.

Approval of the draft programme is for submission to Welsh Government and does not itself constitute final approval of the individual schemes or funding allocations, which remain subject to Welsh Government approval and the applicable grant and assurance arrangements. No specific legal issues arise from the recommendation sought.

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"Whilst there are no direct financial implications to the decision sought, the Corporate Joint Committee will note the programme of work, and the allocation of revenue and capital funding to the schemes therein. I have no objections to the decision sought; funding for the individual schemes will be awarded directly to the local authorities and the Finance Service will continue to support Ambition North Wales as necessary in administering the retained programme management support costs."

		RTP Year 2 FY2027-28		
		Capital	Revenue	TOTAL
Corporate Joint Committee				
Programme Management & Monitoring		£250.0k	£100.0k	£350.0k
TOTAL		**£250.0k**	**£100.0k**	**£350.0k**
Conwy				
Road Safey Education, Training & Publicity				
Kerb Craft	*279a*		£45.0k	£45.0k
National Cycle Training	*279b*		£13.5k	£13.5k
Older Driver	*279c*		£2.0k	£2.0k
Pass Plus	*279d*		£2.0k	£2.0k
Bike Safe	*279e*		£2.0k	£2.0k
Active Travel: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling				
Penrhyn Bay (Toll Bar) Active Travel Phase 1	*175*	£1.0m		£1.0m
Towyn to Rhyl Strategic Active Travel Route	*176*	£10.0k		£10.0k
Dolgarrog Active Travel route	*177*	£50.0k		£50.0k
Mor i'r Mynydd/ Coast to Valley Strategic Active Travel route	*178*	£100.0k		£100.0k
Colwyn Bay Town Centre Active Travel and placemaking	*180*	£100.0k		£100.0k
Active Travel Core	*ATC1*	£260.0k		£260.0k
Ultra Low Emission Vehicles				
Public EV charger infrastructure	*166*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Highways				
A470 Overline Bridge Llandudno Junction	*193a*	£750.0k		£750.0k
Colwyn Bay Promenade - Rotary Way to Porth Eirias	*196*	£1.0m		£1.0m
A470 route improvements	*193b*	£100.0k		£100.0k
TOTAL		**£3.67m**	**£64.5k**	**£3.73m**
Denbighshire				
Road Safey Education, Training & Publicity				
Capacity and safety enhancements/pinch point improvements: Collisior	*125*	£100.0k		£100.0k
Road Safety Revenue: Educational Interventions	*279f*		£80.0k	£80.0k
Active Travel: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling				
Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn	*81*	£500.0k		£500.0k
H-Bridge, Rhyl	*87*	£400.0k		£400.0k
Lenten Pool, Denbigh	*89*	£100.0k		£100.0k
B4501 to St David's Lane, Denbigh	*275*	£100.0k		£100.0k
Hylas Lane/Castle Street, Rhuddlan	*83*	£400.0k		£400.0k
River Clwyd Railway Bridge, Rhyl/Kinmel Bay	*86*	£800.0k		£800.0k
A539 Mill Street, Llangollen (new scheme)	*NS1*	£100.0k		£100.0k
Active Travel Core Funding	*ATC2*	£500.0k		£500.0k
Public Transport				
Ongoing bus infrastructure improvements, including bus priority measu	*15*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Ultra Low Emission Vehicles				
Public EV charging in public car parks and information coordination, De	*167*	£85.0k		£0.0
Highways				
Unadopted Roads Scheme – Green Lanes Estate, Prestatyn (new sche	*NS4*	£250.0k		£250.0k
A548 Foryd Bridge, Rhyl/Kinmel Bay (new scheme)	*NS5*	£100.0k		£100.0k
TOTAL		**£3.5m**	**£80.0k**	**£3.6m**
Flintshire				
Road Safey Education, Training & Publicity				

	RTP Year 2 FY2027-28		
	Capital	Revenue	Total
Local Authority			
Conwy	£3.67m	£64.5k	£3.7m
Denbighshire	£3.50m	£80.0k	£3.6m
Flintshire	£4.18m	£86.0k	£4.3m
Gwynedd	£6.74m	£73.8k	£6.8m
Ynys Mon	£4.88m	£44.9k	£4.9m
Wrexham	£9.75m	£74.3k	£9.8m
NW CJC	£350.0k	£100.0k	£450.0k
Total	**£32.7m**	**£523.4k**	**£33.2m**
Available total:	£28.7m	£384.0k	£29.1m

Road Safety Revenue interventions – Older Driver training	*279g*		£6.0k	£6.0k
Road Safety Revenue interventions – National Standards Cycle Trainin	*279h*		£72.0k	£72.0k
Road Safety revenue interventions - Bikesafe	*279i*		£8.0k	£8.0k
Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements: Collisio	*120a*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements: Collisio	*120b*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Active Travel: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling				
Safe Routes in communities/ home to school transport, Flintshire – Tre	*72*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Active Travel - Bagillt to Flint Active Travel Route Improvements	*200*	£750.0k		£750.0k
Active Travel links to A494 River Dee Bridge	*198*	£660.0k		£660.0k
Active Travel Core	*ATC3*	£710.0k		£710.0k
Public Transport				
Regional rural bus and coach network, Flintshire	*103*	£100.0k		£100.0k
North Wales Bus Infrastructure Enhancements - bus priority measures	*170*	£30.0k		£30.0k
Ultra Low Emission Vehicles				
Public EV charging and information coordination, Flintshire	*163*	£400.0k		£400.0k
Highways				
Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements: street l	*126*	£80.0k		£80.0k
Highway maintenance and improvements, Flintshire	*157*	£550.0k		£550.0k
TOTAL		**£4.18m**	**£86.0k**	**£4.3m**
Gwynedd				
Road Safey Education, Training & Publicity				
Capacity and safety enhancements/pinch point improvements: Collisio	*122*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Road Safety Revenue: Educational Interventions	*279j*		£73.8k	£73.8k
Active Travel: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling				
Local Active Travel improvement in main settlements (Bangor, Porthma	*207*	£200.0k		£200.0k
Tywyn to Aberdyfi Active Travel Route	*250*	£800.0k		£800.0k
Active Travel minor works and scheme development (Active Travel Co	*ATC4*	£500.0k		£500.0k
Bethel to Caernarfon Active Travel Route	*219*	£200.0k		£200.0k
Lon Las Improvement. Improving and enhancing existing off road cycle	*218*	£350.0k		£350.0k
Safe Routes in communities/ home to school transport, Gwynedd	*74*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Public Transport				
Implement the bus transformation network Gwynedd (bus infrastructure	*12*	£500.0k		£500.0k
Regional rural bus and coach network Gwynedd (Sherpa'r Wyddfa, G2	*105*	£1.1m		£1.1m
Ultra Low Emission Vehicles				
Enhance Public EV charging and information coordination, Gwynedd	*165*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Highways				
Llanbedr Transport Improvements	*147*	£1.8m		£1.8m
Transport Network Resilience Improvements: A499 Penrhos Road floo	*151*	£120.0k		£120.0k
Highway maintenance and improvements, Gwynedd	*162*	£500.0k		£500.0k
Porth Caernarfon (Gateway) Project	*154*	£120.0k		£120.0k
TOTAL		**£6.74m**	**£73.8k**	**£6.8m**
Ynys Mon				
Road Safey Education, Training & Publicity				
Road Safety Capital: Highway Incident Improvements	*280*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Road Safety Revenue - Kerbcraft	*279k*		£27.9k	£27.9k
Road Safety Revenue - Pass Plus Cymru	*279l*		£4.5k	£4.5k
Road Safety Revenue - Cycling	*279m*		£10.9k	£10.9k
Road Safety Revenue - Older Driver Training	*279n*		£1.6k	£1.6k
Active Travel: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling				
Safe Routes in communities/ home to school transport, Ynys Mon	*73*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Active Travel Llanfairpwll (Lon Refail to Lon Graig)	*256*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Active Travel Benllech	*258*	£1.9m		£1.9m

Active Travel Gaerwen	*259*	£130.0k		£130.0k
Active Travel Amlwch (Phase 1 and Phase 2 on B5111)	*261*	£75.0k		£75.0k
London Road AT Scheme to connect to Holyhead Train Station (Phase	*NS2?*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Active Travel Core: minor works and scheme development	*ATC5*	£500.0k		£500.0k
Public Transport				
Integration with strategic public transport services: Public transport infra	*11*	£250.0k		£250.0k
Subsidised taxi / community transport in rural areas to fill "gaps" in pub	*112*	£65.0k		£65.0k
Ultra Low Emission Vehicles				
Public EV charging in public car parks and information coordination, Yr	*164*	£180.0k		£180.0k
Highways				
Encouraging sustainable travel: A5025/ B5420 Four Crosses Roundab	*49*	£150.0k		£150.0k
Resilience Lairds Sites Beaumaris Road (B5109) & A545 Beaumaris R	*156*	£75.0k		£75.0k
A5 Resilience Road Project (Pentre Berw)	*253*	£80.0k		£80.0k
Transport Interchange Newborough	*254*	£250.0k		£250.0k
Highway Maintenance and Improvements, Ynys Mon: Innovative maint	*158*	£350.0k		£350.0k
Regional Programme Development				
Project Management (new scheme)	*NS6*	£123.0k		£123.0k
TOTAL		**£4.88m**	**£44.9k**	**£4.92m**
Wrexham				
Road Safey Education, Training & Publicity				
Bike Safe	*279o*		£2.0k	£2.0k
Bike Safe Lite	*279p*		£2.0k	£2.0k
Older Driver Assessments	*279q*		£400.0	£400.0
Child Pedestrian Skills	*279r*		£9.9k	£9.9k
National Standards Cycle Training	*279s*		£60.0k	£60.0k
Active Travel: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling				
Home to School Active Travel	*71*	£200.0k		£200.0k
Active Travel Core	*ATC6*	£450.0k		£450.0k
Gwersyllt Mold Road route improvements	*61*	£300.0k		£300.0k
Mold Road Wrexham City Centre	*52a*	£5.0m		£5.0m
Mold Road Wrexham City Centre Active Travel route	*52b*	£250.0k		£250.0k
Rhostyllen Active Travel – Phase 2b	*58*	£600.0k		£600.0k
Gwersyllt – Wrexham via Rhosrobin Active Travel route	*67*	£200.0k		£200.0k
Public Transport				
Bus infrastructure improvements	*13*	£50.0k		£50.0k
Wrexham Bus Station (new scheme)	*NS3*	£200.0k		£200.0k
Ultra Low Emission Vehicles				
Public EV charging in public car parks and information coordination, W	*268*	£1.0m		£1.0m
Highways				
Innovative maintenance	*159*	£1.5m		£1.5m
TOTAL		**£9.75m**	**£74.3k**	**£9.8m**

Reserve List

Lead Local Authority	Scheme	RTF Scheme Theme	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total Capital allocation from RTF
Gwynedd							
Llanberis to Caernarfon Active Travel Route	**220**	Active Travel	£220.0k	£220.0k	£220.0k	£220.0k	£880.0k
Conwy							

Llysfaen Active Travel pathway	**182**	Active travel	£162.5k	£162.5k	£162.5k	£162.5k	£650.0k
B5106 route improvement	**186**	Highways	£187.5k	£187.5k	£187.5k	£187.5k	£750.0k

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

Appendix B

Bi-Annual Report November 2026

REPORT TO THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE
2nd November 2026

TITLE: The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee Bi-Annual Report

AUTHOR: Adam Graham, Senior Transport Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. To consider the bi-annual report as required further to the Terms of Reference.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. To consider the report and make recommendations if necessary to the Corporate Joint Committee.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. The Terms of Reference for the Sub Committee require that an update report is produced on a bi-annual basis.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The Terms of Reference state that the "Strategic Transport Sub-Committee will prepare a bi-annual report on its work for the Corporate Joint Committee.

4.2. The context for such a report is to ensure that the work of the Sub-Committee is open and transparent and that its functions are being clearly communicated.

4.3. The Terms of Reference provide that bi-annual reports shall form part of an agreed scrutiny protocol and shall be in a format which will facilitate its submission into Scrutiny or other governance arrangements as determined by the Corporate Joint Committee.

5. REGIONAL TRANSPORT FUND 2026/27

5.1. At the start of the 2026/27 financial year, Welsh Government's Regional Transport Fund became an important source of funding for the transport interventions identified in the Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP). Ambition North Wales, supported by external consultants, worked closely with officers from local authorities to identify a Programme of Schemes for funding in 2026/27, which was reflective of the RTDP prioritised schemes, local authority aspirations, and the indicative budget provided by Wesh Government. The programme was agreed by the Sub Committee and then the CJC in autumn 2025 before being approved by Welsh Government.

5.2. Funding for the delivery of schemes is awarded to local authorities. The total funding amount awarded to North Wales authorities was £28.3m capital, and £0.48m revenue. Scheme delivery commenced on the 1st April 2026.

5.3. Work has since commenced on developing the RTF programme of schemes for the 2027/28 financial year. This is subject to more detailed consideration in another agenda item.

6 RESPONSES SENT TO CONSULTATION RUN BY PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

6.1. Since the last bi-annual report, a consultation response has been sent to Transport for Wales to ensure that the region's Regional Transport Plan aspirations are considered as part of the bus franchise consultation. The response is shown in Appendix 1.

7. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

7.1. Through the Regional Transport Fund, the CJC secured funding of £370k capital and £100k revenue from Welsh Government for programme management of the Regional Transport Fund programme. Reporting at the end of Quarter 2 included the spend shown in Appendix 2.

7.2. This funding allocation is, in part, being used to fund a team of three staff working on the strategic transport remit of the CJC.

7.3. Financial spend from that funding has been used to cover consultancy support to continue the commission with Arup that has provided technical support and delivery with finalising the RTP and RTDP, and the coordination of the Regional Transport Fund Programme of Schemes. The spend also covers officer time for those CJC officers who have worked on RTP development.

7.4. Ambition North Wales buys-in support from Cyngor Gwynedd. This provides officer time for support on Legal services, Democratic Services, and finance support.

8. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

8.1. The CJC's transport responsibilities have grown as we have moved into the delivery of the Regional Transport Plan schemes this Financial Year. Alongside regional coordination, strategic transport issues that impact the region, and contributing to the wider work of Ambition North Wales; the CJC is responsible for working with local authorities to support and monitor progress and spend of ongoing Year 1 RTF schemes, and to identify and prioritise the Year 2 programme. This has necessitated the recruitment of additional staff to support the Senior Transport Officer. The team of three now consists of:

- Senior Transport Officer (secondment from Transport for Wales)
- Transport Officer (fixed term employment)
- Transport Officer (secondment from Wrexham County Borough Council)

8.2. As noted in section 7, funding for these staff resources is through the Regional Transport Fund allocation.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report, but Members are advised to note the financial performance update in Section 7.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The legal and governance implications are addressed in the body of the report.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Bus consultation response
Appendix 2 – Financial Reporting

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The bi-annual report and that it is being presented in accordance with the Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference and wider governance arrangements. I have no additional legal or governance observations."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"The report outlines the situation over recent months and approving the decision sought will not create new financial commitments. I have no objections to the contents of the report."

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

Appendix 1 – Bus Franchise Consultation Response

By e-mail
To engagement@tfw.wales
Rebecca.Colmer@tfw.wales

Dyddiad / Date: October 2026

Dear TfW Engagement Team,

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE RESPONSE TO BUS REFORM PROPOSALS CONSULTATION

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on bus reform proposals. The below sets out the response from the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. It is intended to complement the responses from the six local authorities in North Wales, and we would be supportive of any specific changes to or concerns about the proposals that are raised by individual authorities from the region in their responses.

Opportunity to Engage

Senior officers from Transport for Wales have attended a number of meetings of the CJC's Strategic Transport Sub Committee to update Members as the proposals for the franchise bus network have been developed. Franchising presented a real opportunity to improve bus services for communities in North Wales so this engagement with Members has been welcomed and we would like to invite TfW to future meetings as the consultation findings emerge and final proposals for implementation are developed.

Similarly, the close working with officers at the local authority level on the base network has allowed local knowledge to shape the proposals, and this has been welcomed.

However, as the body responsible for strategic transport planning across the region, it is disappointing that Ambition North Wales have not been engaged at officer level in the development of the proposals before they were out for public consultation.

Finally on engagement, it has been pleasing to see the number and geographic spread of the public drop in events that have been held as part of this process, as well as the amount of information that has been provided on-line. This has allowed people from communities across North Wales to engage in this important consultation.

Regional Transport Plan Aspirations

In the North Wales Regional Transport Plan (RTP) we recognised the importance of the change to franchising and, through Policy PT1, committed to "work with Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government to support the roll-out of bus franchising in North Wales, which should include multi-year funding that would provide certainty for the travelling public, authorities, and operators."

In the RTP we set out our aspiration for the bus network in North Wales that we would like to see delivered through the opportunities that franchising provides:

- **Policy PT2:** All new buses introduced in North Wales should be Zero Emission. Where new buses are a long-term improvement, opportunity should be sought to re-power the existing fleet.

- Policy PT4: The Bus Service Transformation Network will be rolled out in North Wales. This will include a core network of services between and within major settlements and employment sites with a frequency of two to four buses an hour extending into the evenings.
- Policy PT5: Future bus services in North Wales will:
    - Have a high frequency and long operating hours
    - Have consistent/regular departure times
    - Have Sunday timetables as close as possible to weekday frequency to support commuting, leisure and visitor economy demand
    - Be coordinated to provide a well-spaced timetable
    - Minimise journey times between the origins and destinations with the most demand
    - Take direct routes that remain the same throughout the day
    - Be routed via transport interchanges and railway stations
    - Be integrated with local bus services and dynamic demand responsive transport
    - Be comfortable for long journeys

The proposals set out in the current consultation do not go as far as achieving those ambitions, with the proposals consulted on being very similar, if not identical, to the current network in much of North Wales. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed network and service patterns are reflective of the funding that is available, there is a need to manage public expectations with regard to the extent of improvements that are possible through franchising currently.

We would like to see proposals from TfW and Welsh Government that will enhance the network and service provision across North Wales in the future. Alongside this, we would like assurances that funding from Welsh Government will be available in the future to support an enhanced network after franchising is in place.

On the issue of funding, it should be noted that as some routes currently are operated commercially, they do not require any funding at the moment. This will change when those routes are contained within franchise packages, and there needs to be recognition by Welsh Government and TfW that it may not be possible to deliver a like for like bus network in the future within the funding regime that currently exists. To address this, Welsh Government should seek to commit to further and multi-year funding for public transport going forward.

The Proposed Network and Service Patterns

Some of the proposed service changes will involve a change for journeys that are currently direct. Where these changes create an inconvenience such as cost, delay, or uncertainty for the passenger, these inconveniences should be minimised. For example, the F19 and F18 services currently connect villages in Flintshire to Rhyl. Under the new proposals, this would require a change at Prestatyn to a service which is currently run by a different operator. There should not be financial penalty for passengers required to make that change. This could obviously be addressed through the integrated ticketing proposals being progressed by TfW.

On Ynys Mon, the Council have run a pilot using Local Transport Fund of a Demand Responsive Transport Service in a number of small communities adjacent to the A5. This was after the commercial operator stopped serving these communities on a commercial basis citing delays, low passenger numbers and

issues with parked cars or narrow roads. It Is disappointing that the proposed franchise network does not serve these communities.

Cross-border bus services into England are a crucial part of the transport network in North Wales, particularly from Flintshire and Wrexham. This reflects the large numbers of people who move across the border for work, leisure, family, and access to services. These cross-border bus services should not be disadvantaged when they cross the border into Wales in a way that causes inadvertent change to the English part of the journey.

There appear to be some errors or inconsistencies in the materials that have been published. For example:

- In Prestatyn on the interactive map, the routes shown for the 11 and 35/36 services reflect the previous routing before these were swapped around. If these are being swapped back after franchising, this is not reflected in the proposed service changes section.
- Also for the same 11F service, the map site suggests a frequency of 1 minute intervals
- There is a very small Fflecsi area shown in Saltney Ferry on the map.

We would also encourage a review of the Fflecsi areas to allow cross-boundary movement for some services where the communities do not necessarily look to towns in their own local authority area, but to closer towns in a neighbouring authority area. Both franchising and regional working via the CJC should provide the opportunity to ensure that services reflect the journeys that people want to make and are not restricted by political boundaries.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to these proposals, and for the regional engagement to date. If you require any further information on the contents of this response, or to engage in further discussion, please contact Adam Graham, the Senior Transport Officer at Ambition North Wales on AdamGraham@uchelgaisgogledd.cymru

Yours sincerely,

Cllr David A Bithell
Strategic Transport Sub-Committee Chair

Appendix 2									
Scheme name	RTF 2026/27 allocation (£)	Actual spend on ledger in 2026/27	Funding committed in 2026/27	Estimated value[1] of works/ activities delivered in 2026/27 (£)	Key activities in period covered by report	Key activities planned next quarter (50 words max)	RTF 2026/27 forecast outturn (£)	Q1 RTF claim[3] (£)	Q2 RTF claim[3] (£)
Revenue- RTP Admin	£100,000.00	£26,206.83	£81,188.49	£100,000.00	Ongoing consultancy support for development of Year 2 RTF programme, and for monitoring work	Ongoing support to finalise proposed Year 2 programme for submission to Welsh Gov in Quarter 3. Increased focus on monitoring and evaluation to meet Welsh Gov requirements and our own governance processes.	£100,000.00	£19,694.27	£6,512.56
Capital- RTP Management & Monitoring	£370,000.00	£30,951.58	£152,649.38	£370,000.00	Transport Team recruitment- two new Transport	Retention of staff, allowing more resilience and a growing role for the CJC in regional working and supporting	£370,000.00	£0.00	£30,951.58

					Officers recruited in Q2, creating a team of three. Engagement with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust on Walking and Cycling Index involvement.	local authorities on RTF programme. Completion of procurement process for Walking Wheeling and Cycling Trust ahead of Walking and Cycling Index commencement. Full team recruitment- and better understanding of cost for that- will provide a clearer picture on available budget to progress any commitments register schemes from RTP			

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: Strategic Equalities Plan

AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Chief Executive
David Hole, Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report is brought to the CJC for members to consider the draft Strategic Equalities Plan.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

That the Corporate Joint Committee **approves** the draft Strategic Equalities Plan set out at Appendix A for consultation, with the final draft to be brought back to the CJC for decision in March 2027.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

The CJC is required by legislation to adopt certain policies, including a Strategic Equalities Plan. The CJC itself remains the decision maker, unless it chooses to delegate a decision in respect of a policy.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

CJC's established under Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. Officers have prepared a draft Strategic Equalities Plan as set out at Appendix A and are ready to consult on this with constituent councils, people with protected characteristics or their representatives and relevant stakeholders. Members are asked to approve the draft for consultation, following which the final version will be brought back to the CJC for agreement at its meeting in March 2027.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There is no significant resource implication to the decision sought in this report. Officer time will be incurred in progressing the plan, but this can be undertaken as business as usual.

6. CONSULTATION

There will be consultation with constituent authorities in respect of the draft Strategic Equalities Plan.

The specific duties that apply in Wales, as listed in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 includes 'engagement provisions', which means Ambition North Wales must involve people with protected characteristics or their representatives who have an interest in the way you carry out your functions while setting equality objectives and drafting a strategic equality plan.

Engagement with Ambition North Wales team members and partners has informed the current draft plan.

Ambition North Wales has recently joined the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network to collaborate with regional partners to advance the equality agenda and to tackle issues on inequality that cut across the public sector throughout North Wales.

An Equality page has been published on the website which includes an engagement form to gather insight and evidence from individuals and groups about the barriers facing people with protected characteristics in relation to Ambition North Wales's functions and potential opportunities to further promote equality throughout our work.

A summary of consultation and engagement around setting equality objectives and creating a strategic equality plan will be included in the final draft of the Plan.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The CJC has a statutory responsibility to adopt a Strategic Equalities Plan. The decision sought in this report is compliant with the CJC's legal obligations. The Strategic Equality Plan will set out how Ambition North Wales will have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty while carrying out its functions, as well as the specific duties that apply in Wales, as listed in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific financial implications arising from the decisions sought in this report.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Draft Strategic Equality Plan

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Equality page on Ambition North Wales website:
https://ambitionnorth.wales/governance/policies/equality/

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

The preparation and consultation on a Strategic Equality Plan forms part of the CJC's statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

The proposed consultation process provides an appropriate opportunity to obtain evidence and views from constituent authorities, people with protected characteristics and other relevant stakeholders before the Plan and equality objectives are finalised. The outcome of that engagement should inform the final Plan brought back to the CJC for adoption.

ii. Section 151 Officer:

I am satisfied that approving the Strategic Equality Plan for consultation will not create additional spending commitments. I support the report, and I do not have further comments from the perspective of financial propriety.

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

Strategic Equality Plan

2027 - 2031



Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Regional Context	8
Ambition North Wales's commitment to equality	10
Equality Objectives and action plan	11
Monitoring and reporting framework	21

Foreword – to follow

1. Introduction

Context and Legal Framework

Ambition North Wales operates as the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) – a statutory regional body established under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to strengthen collaboration across North Wales.

Ambition North Wales recognises the key role we must play in promoting equality and delivering a more equal Wales.

North Wales CJC is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Section 149 of the Equality Act sets out the PSED which, in summary, places a duty on public bodies to have due regard in exercising their functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against those with a protected characteristic. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership.

In line with the additional specific duties for Wales, as listed in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, Ambition North Wales is required to:

- Undertake equality impact assessments
- Identify and collect relevant information about equality
- Setting equality objectives and outlining steps to meet the objectives
- Providing annual reports
- Conducting engagement
- Collating employment data
- Publish a Strategic Equality Plan
- Consider the general duty in procurement processes

DRAFT

- Implement the socio-economic duty within existing impact assessments

The Equality Act, 2010 Socio-economic Duty requires that North Wales CJC as a 'relevant public body', when taking strategic decisions such as 'deciding priorities and setting objectives', to consider how its decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage - driving better outcomes for people's lives and experiences through better decision making and further contributing towards our shared goal of becoming a more equal Wales.

Aim of the Strategic Equality Plan

This plan meets our duties under regulation 14(2)(c) of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulation 2011 and reflects Ambition North Wales's commitment to make equality an integral part of how Ambition North Wales works. The equality objectives set out in the plan will provide a framework which brings the equality work across our functions together and guides future action where it can make the most difference. It will also support individual programmes and projects and ensure they contribute to our wider goals, focusing effort where it will have the greatest impact.

Alignment with national frameworks and policy

This plan aligns with the Welsh Government's *Strategic Equality and Human Rights Plan 2025–2029* and contributes to its *National Equality Objectives (NEOs)*, ensuring consistency with national priorities for a fairer, more inclusive and rights-based Wales.

It also aligns with the Well-being of Future Generations Act's goal of 'A More Equal Wales' introduced through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and complements our regional Well-being and Economic Growth Plans, recognising without having a more equal North Wales we will not achieve other well-being goals.

'A More Equal Wales' is defined as: 'A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances)'.

Within the 50 **national indicators** that measure progress against the seven well-being goals, many of these measure aspects relating to a more equal Wales.

DRAFT

Welsh Language and Policy Integration

Ambition North Wales and CJC members are committed to promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language in line with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and applicable Welsh Language Standards.

Ambition North Wales's equality objectives will be delivered in tandem with our Welsh Language standards, recognising that language is a key part of identity, inclusion, and participation. The Corporate Joint Committee published its Welsh Language Standards in February 2024 and an annual report around implementing the Welsh Language Standards is published annually.

Developing this Plan

As a new Local Government entity, Ambition North Wales will build on this inaugural to ensure that actions are in place to fully embed equality, diversity and inclusivity within its ways of working.

Ambition North Wales will invite relevant groups, partners and stakeholders to engage in the consultation process in relation to:

- considering and designing the equality objectives;
- assessing how things done (or things that could be done) contribute to compliance with the general duty;
- assessing the impact of policies and practices on complying with the general duty.

Ambition North Wales acknowledges that engagement should not be a one-off event but an ongoing dialogue with people who are considered representative of those with different protected characteristics and those who have an interest in how the CJC carries out its functions.

DRAFT

Timeline

September – October 2026: Engagement with key stakeholders.

November: Decision sought by CJC to start public consultation.

November – December: Engagement with protected characteristics groups and Ambition North Wales partners and stakeholders.

March: amendments and final draft presented to CJC for consideration.

DRAFT

2. Regional Context

North Wales is a diverse region of almost 700,000 people, encompassing urban centres, coastal communities, market towns and extensive rural areas. The population is older than the Welsh average, with a growing proportion of residents aged over 65 and a declining working-age population in some areas. The region is home to people from a range of ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds.[1]

This is an exciting time for North Wales. With significant investment, growth opportunities and a strong pipeline of projects across a range of sectors, there is great potential to create high-quality jobs and drive sustainable economic growth. At the same time, persistent inequality such as young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), and unequal access to career progression continue to present challenges for the region.

For people with protected characteristics, these barriers can be particularly acute. Addressing these inequalities is essential if all communities are to benefit from economic well-being.

The Welsh language is central to the identity, culture and heritage of North Wales. Around 29% of residents report being able to speak Welsh, with much higher levels in Gwynedd and Anglesey. Protecting and promoting Welsh language use is linked to supporting vibrant, resilient and inclusive communities.

Evidence from the Equality in North Wales: Data and Evidence Report 2023 published by the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network shows that, while experiences differ across the region, significant inequalities remain in education, employment, health, housing, personal safety and access to services. Socio-economic disadvantage is a key factor and often intersects with protected characteristics to create additional barriers.

Disabled people experience some of the most significant disparities. In 2021/22, the employment rate for disabled people in North Wales was 47%, compared with 82% for non-disabled people. Disabled people were also more than twice as likely to live in households without access to a car or van, creating particular challenges in rural communities.

Gender inequalities also persist. Although women generally are more likely to hold degree-level qualifications, women earned less than men across all six North Wales local authority areas and are more likely to provide unpaid care.

DRAFT

[1] Equality and diversity statistics (Census data produced by North Wales Regional Partnership Board).

Global majority people had a lower overall employment rate than White people, while substantial differences exist in home ownership and overcrowding. Race was also the most common motivating factor for recorded hate crime in North Wales. Recorded hate crime relating to sexual orientation and transgender identity also increased significantly, although under-reporting means the figures are unlikely to reflect the full experiences of LGBTQ+ communities.

Ambition North Wales believes that creating a more equal North Wales will contribute to a healthier and more prosperous region. Access to good, secure employment can play an important role in addressing long-term health inequalities, while coordinated employability and health interventions can help more people participate in the labour market.

Employability and health interventions must be coordinated to increase levels of productivity in North Wales. Long-term sickness is the largest reason for inactivity (30,800 people, 32.1% of the inactive), and 29.7% of the working-age population are disabled under the Equality Act or have a work-limiting condition. Earnings also remain below the UK average, highlighting the importance not only of supporting people into employment, but of increasing access to fair, sustainable and good-quality work.

Young people face particular challenges. 15.1% of 16–24 year olds in North Wales were NEET in the three years to December 2025, the highest of the Welsh regions.[2] Across Wales the rate reached 17.0% in 2025, up 5.5 points in a year, against about 12.7% for the UK. This links to wider participation: inactivity rose 2.0 points to 22.9%, long-term sickness is 32.1% of it, and 5.6% of the economically active have no qualifications (8.6% in Conwy, 7.5% in Denbighshire).

Improving health equity is therefore a long-term aim across our responsibilities. We will seek to reduce barriers to employment, widen access to good-quality work and ensure that economic opportunities are accessible to people from all backgrounds, helping to prevent existing health inequalities from widening further.

Overall, the evidence demonstrates the importance of addressing socio-economic inequality, accessibility, discrimination and barriers to participation, while recognising that people's experiences are shaped by multiple and overlapping characteristics.

DRAFT

[2] Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): 2025 [HTML] | GOV.WALES

3. Ambition North Wales's Commitment to Equality

Vision:

Our vision is a fairer, more equal North Wales—one where every person can thrive. We are committed to building a region where innovation drives opportunity, where investment strengthens communities, and where prosperity is shared by all, irrespective of protected characteristic or socio-economic circumstance.

Values:

We are Ambitious - We strive to deliver the best for North Wales. We are leaders in our fields, opinion formers and influencers, and we challenge conventional thinking. We pursue high standards, aim to be our best, and continuously develop ourselves professionally.

We work Collaboratively - We share knowledge, skills, information and support and ensure to keep colleagues informed. We always help each other, facilitate opportunities for North Wales and recognise that our collective impact is more significant than our individual impact.

We do the right thing - We do the right thing, not what is easy. We challenge unethical behaviour and speak out when things don't feel right. We are respectful, fair and considerate and can be trusted to deliver agreed commitments on time.

We make a difference - We pursue opportunities to make a difference in North Wales. We champion the Welsh language, heritage and culture and support regional charities. We protect the environment and seek opportunities to reduce our footprint.

DRAFT

4. Our Strategic Equality Objectives (2027–2031)

The equality objectives set out in this plan represent Ambition North Wales's commitments to strengthen governance, decision making, workforce practice and compliance with equality legislation.

1. Equality and the socio-economic duty are embedded across all our ways of working to support equitable outcomes across North Wales.
2. An inclusive organisational culture is strengthened through the development of our people, improved workforce information and policies that value diversity, address barriers and enable everyone to thrive.
3. Our regional partnerships are used to advance equality and improve access to skills development and opportunities across North Wales.

For each objective there will be a set of actions, outcomes, measures/indicators and a proposed timeframe which will be monitored and reported annually.

Local authorities across North Wales will be preparing to review and revise their equality objectives as their current four-year Strategic Equality Plans come to an end. The latest equality data and evidence for North Wales will be collected and analysed as part of this process in 2027-28, helping to identify emerging inequalities and inform the development of future objectives. Public Services Boards will also be publishing their well-being assessments, which will consider the 'A More Equal Wales' well-being goal and provide further evidence of emerging trends and inequalities across the region.

Ambition North Wales will be mindful of this regional timetable and will consider whether its published equality objectives and associated timescales should be reviewed to better align with regional partners. This would provide opportunities for a more coordinated and collaborative approach to identifying and addressing shared equality priorities across North Wales.

DRAFT

Objective 1: Equality and the socio-economic duty are embedded across all our ways of working to support equitable outcomes across North Wales.

Why?

As a Corporate Joint Committee, Ambition North Wales has statutory responsibilities for regional transport and strategic development planning, alongside a role in promoting the economic well-being of North Wales. These functions provide significant opportunities to address inequality, improve social mobility and widen access to employment, services and other opportunities. The Socio-economic Duty recognises that decisions made by public bodies should consider how to reduce inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage and improve outcomes for those who face the greatest barriers.

Engagement with the Ambition North Wales team identified the need to review the current Integrated Impact Assessment process ensure a consistent approach across strategies, policies, projects and decisions. Training and guidance will support its effective use, including preparation for mandatory Health Impact Assessment from April 2027 and recognition of the links between health, socio-economic circumstances and inequality.[3]

Equality will be embedded in our approach to regional transport and strategic development planning. Accessible and effective transport can help connect people to employment, education, services and support as demonstrated by the Integrated Well-being Appraisal prepared to support the North Wales Regional Transport Plan. The Strategic Development Plan provides an opportunity to consider the needs of diverse communities and address inequalities at a regional level.

Meaningful engagement with the diverse communities of North Wales will help ensure that lived experience informs our work, so will explore ways of building relationships and networks which will guide our understanding about the barriers and challenges faced by people with protected characteristics. Recently, Ambition North Wales has joined the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network, and we will work with partners to improve equality outcomes, particularly by increasing participation and diversity in decision-making and tackling socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome.

Embedding equality and the socio-economic duty throughout our governance, evidence gathering, engagement, impact assessment and decision-making will help us identify unequal impacts, understand lived experience, maximise positive outcomes and take action to reduce disadvantage.

[3] Marmot Review – 10 years on

DRAFT

Action		Outcome	Proposed Measures and Indicators	Timescale
1 (i)	Review and embed a consistent Integrated Impact Assessment process across key strategies, policies, projects and decisions, supported by training and guidance.	Equality and wider impacts are considered consistently and at an early stage of decision-making and systematically monitored, whilst capturing and sharing best practice to encourage further improvements.	• Percentage of relevant strategies, policies and projects completing an Integrated Impact Assessment. • Percentage of relevant staff completing impact assessment training. • Evidence from periodic reviews that assessments are influencing decisions.	Revised Integrated Impact Assessment to be implemented 2027-28.
1 (ii)	Deliver the North Wales Regional Transport Plan (2025–2030) to improve access to jobs, services and opportunities across North Wales, ensuring equality remains a core pillar of transport planning, supported by the Integrated Well-being Appraisal.	Improved access to transport for people with protected characteristics, rural communities and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.	The Monitoring and Evaluation for the North Wales Regional Transport Plan (2025–2030) includes a set of measures based on the National Wales Transport Strategy Monitoring Framework: • Percentage of buses used as public service vehicles in Wales with audio visual information and trains operated by Transport for Wales with a public address system and visual information screens. • Affordability of public transport - Measures the percentage of people who feel they can't afford to travel by public transport, breakdowns by protected characteristics, including age, gender and some socio-economic factors.	Reporting will occur at three year intervals for Welsh Government guidance.

DRAFT

			• Cost per km - Measures average cost per kilometre travelled on all public transport modes with breakdowns likely be available by some protected characteristics, including age, gender and some socioeconomic factor.	
1 (iii)	Equality considerations will be embedded throughout the Strategic Development Plan, with an Integrated Impact Assessment informing the development and delivery of the Plan by identifying opportunities to maximise positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts.	Strategic development planning is a key mechanism for advancing equality by influencing the spatial distribution of housing, employment, infrastructure and services. Through evidence gathering, engagement, impact assessment and policy development, the planning process can help reduce inequalities, improve accessibility and ensure that growth benefits all sections of society.	• Integrated Impact Assessment scoping exercise completed. • Scoping exercise identifies how people with protected characteristics or their representatives will be involved. • Evidence from engagement is reflected in the Integrated Impact Assessment and informs development of the Strategic Development Plan.	Consultation on IIA scoping document by the end of Q1 2027.
1 (iv)	Work with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network to improve understanding of the experiences of people with protected characteristics across North Wales.	Improved shared understanding of the experiences and inequalities faced by people with protected characteristics across North Wales, informing more inclusive policies, plans and decisions.	• Active participation in the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network. • Evidence of how insight from the Network has informed Ambition North Wales' policies, plans or decisions. • Evidence of Ambition North Wales' contribution to relevant shared regional equality objectives and actions.	2026-27 and reviewed annually.

DRAFT

Objective 2: An inclusive organisational culture is strengthened through the development of our people, improved workforce information and policies that value diversity, address barriers and enable everyone to thrive.

Why?

Ambition North Wales is committed to inclusive and sustainable growth, and our values must be reflected in our own workforce and organisational culture. We aim to provide equal employment opportunities and an inclusive working environment where all staff are supported to reach their potential.

This includes working towards a workforce that reflects the diversity of North Wales and identifying and addressing workplace inequalities, including any gender pay gap. Embedding equality and inclusion within our employment practices is fundamental to achieving our wider equality ambitions and fulfilling our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

DRAFT

Action		Outcome	Proposed Measures and Indicators	Timescale
2 (i)	Deliver equality, diversity and inclusion professional learning to the Ambition North Wales team, ensuring the Strategy's principles, actions and related policies and procedures are understood and applied in practice.	Increased staff knowledge and confidence to embed equality, diversity and inclusion consistently in their roles and across the work of Ambition North Wales.	• Percentage of staff completing relevant professional learning around equality, diversity and inclusion. • Staff feedback demonstrating increased knowledge and confidence following learning. • Evidence that learning is applied in practice, for example through impact assessments, engagement, policy development and decision-making. • Equality, diversity and inclusion learning requirements reviewed periodically and incorporated into induction and ongoing professional development.	Professional learning framework to be developed in 2027-28.
2 (ii)	Adopt and communicate an Equality and Diversity Policy that promotes equality, diversity and wellbeing and reinforces a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying and harassment.	A positive and inclusive workplace culture where staff understand expected standards of behaviour and feel respected, valued and supported, and where diversity is embraced and celebrated.	• Equality and Diversity Policy formally adopted and communicated to all staff. • Percentage of staff confirming awareness and understanding of the policy and expected standards of behaviour.	Policy to be developed in 2027-28 with implementation to be developed and built upon throughout the life of this plan.

DRAFT

			• Staff survey results relating to inclusion, respect, wellbeing and confidence in raising concerns.	
2 (iii)	Review HR policies as they are developed to ensure they are inclusive and accessible and support fair and inclusive recruitment.	Inclusive and accessible HR policies and recruitment practices that help remove barriers and support a diverse workforce.	• Percentage of new or revised HR policies reviewed for equality and accessibility. • Recruitment information and processes reviewed for accessibility and inclusive practice. • Workforce and recruitment diversity data monitored, where appropriate and sufficient data is available, to identify trends or potential barriers.	Key HR policies reviewed and adopted in 2027. Baseline data collected in 2028-29.
2 (iv)	Collect and review workforce equality information to identify gaps and inform organisational action, including a pay gap report. .	Improved understanding of workforce equality and pay disparities, enabling evidence-based action to address identified inequalities.	• Workforce equality information collected and reviewed annually, subject to data availability. • Pay gap analysis/report completed and reviewed at agreed intervals. • Evidence of actions taken in response to significant findings or inequalities identified.	Data will start to be collected in 2027-28.

DRAFT

Objective 3: Our regional partnerships are used to advance equality and improve access to skills development and opportunities across North Wales.

Why?

This is an exciting time for North Wales. With significant investment, growth opportunities and a strong pipeline of projects across a range of sectors, there is great potential to create high-quality jobs and drive sustainable economic growth. At the same time, the world of work is changing rapidly. Skills shortages, demographic change, advances in technology, the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and the transition to a greener economy are all reshaping the labour market. NEET figures (Not in Education, Employment and Training) in North Wales are currently the highest in Wales, with 14.8% of young people aged 16 – 24 not currently engaging with education or training, with health and wellbeing reported as the biggest barriers for young people.

A robust evidence base will help identify where intervention can have the greatest impact, while embedding equality considerations within procurement provides an opportunity to extend this influence through Ambition North Wales' supply chains and investment activity. At the same time, stronger and more consistent monitoring of equality outcomes across projects will help demonstrate who is benefiting from investment, identify where inequalities or gaps remain, and provide evidence of progress against Ambition North Wales' equality duties and wider strategic ambitions.

Thes Regional Skills Partnership has produced a plan which highlights the need for a skills system that is responsive to both current and future workforce needs. The plan supports employers to adopt inclusive recruitment practices helping to widen access to job opportunities, address skills shortages, and to ensure that those furthest from the labour market are not left behind. The plan also aims to help people facing barriers to access opportunities, training and skills development through programmes such as Connect to Work and wider Welsh Government employability programmes which provide flexible, person centred pathways into training and employment.

Trends show that apprenticeships remain more desirable to males than females. Research has highlighted those existing inequalities for women, ethnic minorities will likely be replicated in the shift to a digital economy and expansion of green jobs without intervention.[4] The Regional Skills Partnership Skills Plan will seek to promote inclusive career pathways that challenge stereotypes.

[4] Dr Sara MacBride-Stewart & Dr Alison Parken, 'Inequality in a Future Wales: Areas for action in work, climate and demographic change' (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Cardiff University, Public Health Wales: 2021), p. 9.

Action		Outcome	Proposed Measures and Indicators	Timescale
3 (i)	Develop and maintain an evidence base for North Wales to identify key and emerging inequalities and inform where Ambition North Wales can use its influence and investment to achieve the greatest impact.	Improved understanding of inequalities across North Wales, enabling evidence-informed priorities, investment and action to support improved equality outcomes.	• Key and emerging inequalities, trends and evidence gaps identified and monitored. • Evidence and data considered across protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantage, where robust data is available. • Evidence shared and developed with regional partners and representative networks, where appropriate.	Throughout the life of the plan.
3 (ii)	Promote and embed the general duty in the procurement processes led by Ambition North Wales.	Equality is included as a key component of North Wales Procurement Objectives developed in line with Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act.	• Equality considerations are explicitly reflected in the North Wales Procurement Objectives. • Relevant procurement guidance, templates and processes reviewed to ensure equality considerations are embedded.	Procurement Objectives to be published 2027-28.
3 (iii)	Review the Growth Deal and Investment Zone benefits framework to strengthen reporting on DEI indicators, equality outcomes and project impact, ensuring that indicators identified through project Integrated Impact Assessments are defined, monitored and evidenced	Improved understanding and evidence of the equality impact of Growth Deal and Investment Zone projects, enabling progress against DEI outcomes to be consistently monitored and reported.	• Benefits framework reviewed to include appropriate equality indicators. • Percentage of relevant projects reporting against agreed equality indicators at appropriate stages of the project lifecycle.	2027-2030

DRAFT

	consistently throughout the project lifecycle and reflect Ambition North Wales' statutory duties and strategic aims.		• Evidence that project-level equality data and outcomes are monitored consistently and used to identify progress, gaps and areas requiring further action.	
3 (iv)	Ambition North Wales will support The Regional Skills Partnership's Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2028 to ensure the benefits of investment are realised across North Wales, including: • Supporting employers to adopt inclusive and adaptable workplace practices that enables successful transition into and retention in employment; • Improving gender balance across the sector through targeted outreach and promotion of inclusive career pathways that challenge stereotypes and encourage greater participation of women in construction roles.	Increase in the number of employers engaged with inclusive recruitment, retention and workforce participation initiatives	• Monitoring will be aligned to the reporting on The Regional Skills Partnership's Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2028.	2026-2028.

DRAFT

5. Monitoring and Reporting Framework

Progress on the Strategic Equality Plan will be overseen by Ambition North Wales's Leadership Team, supported by the Senior Corporate Policy Officer.

Reporting will include:

- Publishing an Annual Report – assessing progress against objectives and respond to emerging developments such as Local Authority revised equality objectives.
- Four-yearly review (2031) – to revise objectives and publish a new plan. This is subject to review to align with the timeline of constituent authorities of the CJC revising their respective equality objectives in 2028.
- Integration with Ambition North Wales strategic documents to ensure equality outcomes are embedded across all functions.
- Monitoring framework to shows how change has occurred. We will use this evidence to identify areas for improvement, celebrate good practice and monitor progress on achieving objectives.

Governance and Accountability

The CJC will maintain clear governance arrangements for equality through:

- CJC-level oversight, led by the Chair and Vice Chair;
- Chief Executive Officer accountability for Ambition North Wales supported by Senior Corporate Policy Officer.
- Annual and periodic reports to the CJC and Leadership Team.

Ambition North Wales will also ensure that all team members receive professional development opportunities around equality and that learning informs organisational development.

When making strategic decisions, such as deciding priorities and setting objectives, consider how decisions can reduce inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Relevant public bodies are encouraged to be able to evidence a clear audit trail for all decisions made under the duty.

DRAFT

Resources and Review

Ambition North Wales will ensure appropriate resources are in place to deliver the actions set out in this Plan, including:

- Monitoring of progress and actions and annual reports led by Senior Corporate Policy Officer, supported by Operations and Resources Manager;
- Ongoing training and awareness programmes;
- Integration of equality objectives into project and budget planning processes.

The Plan will be reviewed annually to reflect learning, policy developments, and stakeholder feedback.

References

- The Well-being Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015
- Equalities and Human Rights Commission Guidance
- Welsh Government Strategic Equalities and Human Rights Plan 2025-2029
- The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023
- Advancing Gender equality action plan: Advancing gender equality: action plan | GOV.WALES
- Anit-racist Wales action plan: Anti-racist Wales Action Plan [HTML] | GOV.WALES
- LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales | GOV.WALES
- Welsh Government workforce equality, diversity and inclusion strategy: 2021 to 2026 | GOV.WALES
- North Wales Skills and Employment Plan 2026-2028
- Dr Sara MacBride-Stewart & Dr Alison Parken, 'Inequality in a Future Wales: Areas for action in work, climate and demographic change' (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Cardiff University, Public Health Wales: 2021)
- Future Generations Report 2025

DRAFT

Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy

We believe in a pro-active approach to advancing equality and we have outlined our commitment to achieving this goal by publishing this plan. Any compliments, comments and complaints received in relation to this plan will be handled in accordance with our Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy which can be found on Ambition North Wales website. Alternatively, contact us directly: feedback@ambitionnorth.wales

How to contact us

We welcome comments and suggestions to help us improve as a body committed to promoting equality can be submitted at any time to the Ambition North Wales Team: info@ambitionnorth.wales

Accessible formats

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us: info@ambitionnorth.wales

DRAFT

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: Anglesey Freeport – nomination to the company board

AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Chief Executive Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. To seek approval in principle to nominate Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Portfolio Director, as a non-executive director of Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn Limited (company number 16100612), the company identified by its legal advisers as the Anglesey Freeport company.

1.2. The report explains the proposed regional benefits, the responsibilities of the role and the safeguards required before the nomination is formally communicated for appointment. It is based on the correspondence and documents supplied to date; outstanding assurances are identified below.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. To approve in principle the nomination of Hedd Vaughan-Evans, Portfolio Director, as a non-executive director of Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn Limited (company number 16100612), subject to the conditions and implementation arrangements below.

2.2. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer to communicate the formal nomination only after the Monitoring Officer has confirmed in writing, in consultation with the s.151 Officer, that the essential legal, governance and financial safeguards described in paragraphs 4.8-4.11 have been satisfactorily addressed. This authority is to implement the CJC's decision and does not authorise officers to select another nominee or waive those safeguards.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. Participation offers an opportunity to strengthen alignment between the Freeport's activity with the CJC's regional economic wellbeing responsibilities and its work on investment, transport and strategic planning. Hedd's portfolio responsibilities provide a relevant connection with that work. The intended benefit is better coordination across North Wales, informed engagement and appropriate reporting, rather than a commitment to support any individual Freeport project.

3.2. A decision in principle allows that strategic choice to be made now while preserving proper scrutiny of the appointment arrangements. The outstanding enquiries do not, in themselves, prevent such a decision, provided members understand the remaining risks and the nomination is not released until the specified safeguards have been met.

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. Anglesey Freeport is a place-based economic development initiative. The proposal before the CJC concerns participation in its company governance, not the conferral of Freeport status or approval of tax, customs, planning or funding arrangements. The CJC's economic wellbeing role provides the principal rationale for engagement; its regional responsibilities must continue to be exercised independently.

4.2. The company identity has been expressly confirmed by Burges Salmon, acting for Isle of Anglesey County Council: Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn Limited, company number 16100612. It is a company limited by guarantee. The decision must relate to this entity and should not be confused with another company or organisation using the Anglesey Freeport name.

4.3. On 22 September 2026, Quod on behalf of the Anglesey Freeport sought confirmation of Ambition North Wales' board representative ahead of a proposed first board meeting on 16 October. On 23 September, the Chief Executive identified Hedd as the proposed representative. Subsequent correspondence on 7 and 8 October clarified that a formal company directorship was intended, involving consent to act and Companies House identity verification.

4.4. The proposed role is non-executive: scrutiny, strategy, oversight and collective board responsibility, rather than day-to-day executive management. It is nevertheless a formal directorship. Hedd would need to understand the business, prepare for meetings, question proposals and financial information, and act independently in the interests of the company and in accordance with its purposes. His position as a CJC nominee would not allow him simply to follow CJC instructions when exercising company powers.

4.5. The anticipated regional benefits include better coordination of investment opportunities, infrastructure, skills and supply chains, and earlier identification of overlaps or competing priorities. These are reasons for participation, not guaranteed outcomes. The appointment must leave the CJC free to assess funding, investment and delivery proposals on their merits and in the interests of the whole region.

4.6. In response to the conflict enquiries, Quod (for the Company) supplied the Freeport Code of Conduct and Register of Interests, both version 1.0. These provide a useful framework for registering and declaring interests and withdrawing from conflicted business. They address part of the concern, but the existence of a register does not itself resolve a conflict between Hedd's responsibilities to the CJC and his duties to the company.

4.7. Conflicts may arise where the CJC considers funding, project monitoring, enforcement of grant conditions or competing investment priorities involving the Freeport. The existing procedures should be applied to Hedd's particular role, with any company-law authorisation properly recorded, clear rules on papers and participation, and an alternative officer handling conflicted CJC business. A proportionate documented arrangement is required; a wholly new conflicts policy is not necessarily needed.

4.8. Before formal nomination is released, the Monitoring Officer must be satisfied with the adopted articles, relevant Members' Agreement provisions and appointment terms, including the appointment route, term, resignation and position on leaving the CJC. The documents must be consistent with the CJC remaining a non-member and must not impose an unapproved commitment on the CJC. Hedd must have sufficient information about the company's activities, financial position and expected time commitment to give informed consent.

4.9. The conflict arrangements must be confirmed as applicable to Hedd, including any necessary authorisation, withdrawal from decisions and access to information. There must also be an agreed basis for reporting to the Chief Executive and relevant CJC officers. This is required as Company confidential information cannot automatically be shared because Hedd is a CJC officer; permitted reporting, restrictions and any necessary consents must be clear enough to deliver the intended coordination benefit lawfully.

4.10. Appropriate directors' and officers' insurance should be evidenced as covering Hedd from appointment, with its scope, limits, and material exclusions being clearly understood.

4.11. The Chief Executive and s.151 Officer must be satisfied that the expected officer time, expenses and any other resource implications can be accommodated within authorised arrangements.

4.12. The alternative to a directorship would be to seek an observer or advisory role, which may support engagement with less exposure to company director responsibilities but would not normally carry a director's vote or equivalent access and influence. Such a role would require agreement with the company. Deferring or declining participation would avoid the directorship but reduce the opportunity for engagement. Conditional nomination is recommended as the proportionate approach, provided the safeguards can be achieved.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. No contribution to the company, shareholding, membership guarantee or funding commitment is sought through this report. Nomination of an individual director does not, of itself, make the CJC responsible for the company's debts or grant liabilities.

5.2. There will be a commitment of officer time for preparation, attendance, training and reporting. The precise time requirement, any remuneration and expenses arrangements remain to be confirmed. The proposal assumes that participation can be accommodated within existing authorised resources; this must be checked before implementation, rather than treated as a confirmed nil-cost appointment.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The CJC's statutory economic wellbeing function is the principal basis for the proposed engagement. The recommendation seeks an express CJC decision on this particular nomination and a limited implementation authority.

6.2. A company directorship carries duties under the Companies Act 2006, including acting within powers, promoting the company's success in accordance with its purposes, exercising independent judgement and reasonable care, skill and diligence, avoiding or properly managing conflicts, and declaring relevant interests. Non-executive status does not remove those duties. Hedd would not ordinarily be liable for the company's debts solely because he is a director, but breaches of duty or other statutory wrongdoing can expose a director to personal liability or sanctions.

6.3. The nomination and the company appointment are separate steps. Following satisfaction of the conditions, Hedd's consent and the required identity verification, the Council's approval and the company's appointment decision must be completed under the adopted articles.

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

The report distinguishes the CJC's nomination from the company appointment and identifies the essential safeguards which must precede implementation. A conditional decision can be taken on that basis. The proposed delegation is limited to confirming compliance and implementing the decision; it does not permit a different nominee or an unapproved financial commitment.

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

The report sets out clearly the obligations to both the individual and to the CJC of the decision sought. Whilst I do not expect the direct financial costs to be significant, assessment will continue as noted. I do not have objections to the decision sought as I am satisfied that the Corporate Joint Committee is aware, through this report, of the safeguards that need to be put in place before the final decision, but a conditional decision will allow the matter to proceed.

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: CJC Governance & Audit Sub-Committee membership changes

AUTHOR: Mark Watkins, Monitoring Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report records changes to representation by constituent councils on the CJC's Governance and Audit Sub-Committee (GASC)

2. DECISION SOUGHT

That the Corporate Joint Committee is asked to appoint the following members as substitute members of its Governance and Audit Sub-Committee:

2.1 Cllr Austin Roberts as the substitute member for Conwy Council

2.2 Cllr Gwyneth Elis as the substitute member for Denbighshire Council

2.3 Cllr Carolyn Preece as the substitute member for Flintshire Council

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Changes in nominations of substitute members by constituent councils require the CJC's approval, and for its membership records to be updated.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Substitute members are nominated by the constituent councils to attend sub-committees when the nominated member is unable to attend, to ensure that the meeting remains quorate, wherever possible. The nominations are subject to approval by the CJC

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None, this is business as usual

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Section 5.11.3 of the Constitution and the Governance and Audit Committee's Terms of reference provide for six elected and three lay members, with appointments made by the CJC. These are substitute members being appointed, to attend if the nominated member cannot.

6.2 Democratic Services will retain the full membership register separarately; it need not be appended to this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"I am satisfied that the recommendations are consistent with the CJC's Constitution and the relevant statutory framework."

ii. Section 151 Officer:

" No comments from the perspective of financial propriety."

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20th November 2026

TITLE: Policy Framework

AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Chief Executive
David Hole, Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report is brought to the CJC to advise members of the proposals and timetable for adoption of the various policies that it is required to adopt.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

That the Corporate Joint Committee is asked
to approve:

2.1 that operational HR employment policies be dealt with under the existing Chief Executive delegation, subject to the safeguards in paragraph 4.3;

2.2 the delegation of all operational Welsh language and information policies implementing existing statutory obligations and approved CJC policy to the Chief Executive subject to the consultation requirements in section 6. This excludes decisions reserved by legislation or the Constitution and policies involving significant strategic or corporate choices, which must be referred to the CJC.

to note:

2.3 that the remaining policies set out in Appendix 1 will be brought to subsequent CJC meetings for approval, as set out in the appendix.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

The CJC is required by legislation to adopt certain policies. The CJC itself remains the decisionmaker, unless it chooses to delegate a decision in respect of a policy. The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 prevent the CJC delegating the responsibility for making decisions in respect of:

- Approving a transport policy, or revision of such a policy
- Prescribed actions in connection with the development or revision of a strategic development plan
- Agreeing calculations, or revised calculations of budget requirements.

These examples are not exhaustive. Other decisions may be delegated only where legislation and the Constitution permit, subject to the scope and conditions of the relevant delegation.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 It is considered that routine policy decisions are suitable for decision by the Chief Executive, but only within the limits in paragraph 2.2 and the existing Scheme of Delegation.

4.2 The policies listed in Appendix 1 are either reserved to the CJC for decision or considered appropriate for decision by the CJC. They are still under development by officers, and members are asked to note that these policies will be brought back to the subsequent CJC meetings. The meeting at which it is intended the policy will be brought for approval is shown in the appendix, but this timetable may vary depending on various factors, including the May elections.

4.3 The existing Scheme of Delegation (section 8(1), paragraph 7) authorises the Chief Executive to approve new operational HR employment policies and changes to existing policies as required. No fresh blanket delegation of all HR policies is proposed. That authority remains subject to legislation, the Constitution and approved budgets and policies. Matters reserved to members, or requiring member determination because of their strategic significance, must be referred to the appropriate member body. The HR policies being adopted will be broadly based on, if not identical to, those adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There is no significant resource implication to the decisions sought in this report. Officer time will be incurred in progressing the policies, but this can be undertaken as business as usual.

6. CONSULTATION

Consultation requirements will be assessed for each policy before adoption, having regard to legislation, applicable standards, existing commitments and the persons affected. Where the content materially engages its responsibilities for risk management, internal control or corporate governance, the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee will be consulted before adoption of the Data Protection Policy and the Freedom of Information (FOI) Policy, and any other policies engaging that remit. Its advice will inform the decision of the CJC or the officer with the relevant delegated authority. For HR policies, staff and recognised trade unions will be consulted as required by law and applicable employment and consultation arrangements.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Each policy will be assessed as it is developed and before adoption for its equality, Welsh language, well-being, biodiversity and other relevant impacts, proportionately to its content and as required by the applicable duties and standards. The assessment, consultation findings and any mitigation will be presented to the decision-maker and will inform the policy. Approval of this framework does not determine the impacts of policies still under development.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The CJC has a statutory responsibility to adopt various policies. Subject to the restrictions summarised in section 3 of this report, the CJC may delegate the decision to adopt policies to either a sub-committee or officers. Any delegation remains subject to all statutory restrictions, the Constitution and the CJC's approved budgets and policies. Each policy must be adopted by the body or officer with lawful authority, following the consultation and impact assessment required for that policy.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific financial implications arising from the decisions sought in this report.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: A list of policies to be brought to subsequent CJC meetings for approval.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:
"The report appropriately distinguishes between operational policies capable of officer determination and matters requiring member approval. The proposed arrangements are subject to legislation, the Constitution and the relevant consultation and impact-assessment requirements. I am content with the recommendations on that basis."

ii. Section 151 Officer:
"I am satisfied that there are no financial commitments arising from the decision sought and that the proposed arrangements provide efficient working arrangements whilst maintaining an appropriate level of delegation".

APPENDIX 1: A list of policies to be brought to subsequent CJC meetings for approval.

NAME	TYPE OF POLICY	APPROVAL ROUTE
Modern Slavery Statement and Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains	Welsh Government expects public sector organisations to sign up to its Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains. Signatories commit to producing and publishing an annual statement explaining the steps taken to address modern slavery within their organisation and supply chains.	CJC meeting January or March 2027
Well-being statement and objectives	CJCs established under Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, are bodies which are liable to comply with Part 2 and 3 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.	CJC meeting March 2027
Biodiversity and Resilience of Eco-Systems Duty Compliance Plan	The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Public Authorities subject to the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty) Regulations 2021 amend section 6 the 2016 Act to include CJCs within the definition of 'public authority' in section 6(9) which are subject to the biodiversity duty.	CJC meeting in January or March 2027
Child Poverty Strategy	The Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2021 sets out the requirements in terms of preparation, review, renewal, publication and inspection of a child poverty strategy prepared by Corporate Joint Committees under section 2 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.	CJC meeting – to be determined

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: Risk Management Strategy

AUTHOR: Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the draft Risk Management Strategy, which is contained in Appendix 1, to the Corporate Joint Committee for consideration an approval.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. That the Corporate Joint Committee considers the contents of the attached draft Risk Management Strategy and offers comments thereon.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. The development and adoption of a Risk Management Strategy is a high priority in the Corporate Joint Committee's Transformation Programme. This is due to the fact that:

- Risk Management enhances strategic planning and prioritisation
- Risk Management assists in achieving objectives
- Risk Management strengthens the ability to be agile

(UK Government 'Orange Book')

3.2 The 'Orange Book', *Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts*, has been developed by HM Treasury to provide guidance on risk management, and in particular on developing a structured methodology for identifying, assessing, managing and mitigating both strategic and operational risks. Although primarily developed for Central Government, the principles are as relevant to local government organisations, including Corporate Joint Committees.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The development of comprehensive risk management arrangements will allow the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee to adopt a structured approach to dealing with the opportunities and risks that the organisation faces. Risk management needs to be an essential part of governance and leadership, and fundamental to how the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee is directed, managed and controlled at all levels.

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

4.2. It is worth noting the following key quotation from the CIPFA and HM Treasury:

> Risk Management is not about being 'risk averse' but is about being 'risk aware'
>
> *(CIPFA: Risk Management in Public Services)*
>
> Public Sector organisations cannot be risk averse and be successful.
>
> *(HM Treasury 'Orange Book')*

4.3 The corporate governance arrangements of the CJC remain in development, with a comprehensive Transformation Programme in place with regular reviews, and fortnightly meetings of key officers to ensure progress. The draft proposed risk management strategy contained in Appendix 1 is a significant part of this programme and is due for implementation during the 2026/27 financial year.

4.4 The draft Strategy was presented to the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee at its meeting on 4 June:

Covering report

Draft Strategy

Whilst there was discussion at the Sub-Committee about some of the risks that Ambition North Wales faces, no amendments were suggested to the Strategy.

4.5 Following this, and in accordance with the trail approved by the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee, a report was presented to the Ambition North Wales Leadership Team where there was discussion on refining some aspects of the paper. These amendments have been incorporated in the Strategy.

4.6 Further information of roles and responsibilities is provided in Part 5 below. Here, the responsibilities of the Corporate Joint Committee are outlined as:

- Provides challenge and input to the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register
- Approves the Risk Management Strategy and register including and any material changes as required
- Monitors progress in the management of Corporate Risks
- Holds the Leadership Team accountable for the effective management of risk

4.7 There is already a comprehensive risk register in place for the North Wales Growth deal which has been kept under review since the inception of the growth deal. This was last considered by the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee at its meeting on 15 May 2026: Growth Deal Risk Register May 2026.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. Further to the role of the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee as described in Part 4 above, the draft Risk Management Strategy outlines the roles of different individuals and group within the risk management process:

Role	Responsibility
CJC	➢ Provides challenge and input to the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register ➢ Approves the Risk Management Strategy and register including and any material changes as required ➢ Monitors progress in the management of Corporate Risks ➢ Holds the Leadership Team accountable for the effective management of risk
Governance & Audit Sub-Committee	➢ Review and assess the risk management strategy and register ➢ Provide recommendations to the CJC ➢ Support and promote effective risk management. ➢ Monitors adherence
Leadership Team	➢ Contribute and approve the Risk Management Strategy and register for consideration by the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee ➢ Deliver the CJC's Risk Management Strategy ➢ Effective management action of the Corporate Risk Register ➢ Support and promote effective risk management.
Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)	➢ Prepare and promote the CJC's Risk Management Strategy ➢ Develop risk management controls in conjunction with the leadership ➢ Active involvement in all material business decisions to ensure short, medium and long-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered ➢ Foster and embed a culture of risk management across the organisation.
Internal Audit	➢ Assess the effectiveness of the Risk Management Strategy and the system of internal control. ➢ Support and promote effective risk management. ➢ Provides independent assurance
Risk Owners	➢ Accountable for the management action and control of all assigned risks ➢ Support the identification and management of risks. ➢ Ensure effective risk management arrangements are in place for their area. ➢ Promote risk-based decision making across the department.
All staff	➢ Support the identification of risks and contribute to their management, as appropriate.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the Risk Management Strategy itself.

6.2. The Strategy will, however, provide clear guidance to the organisation on the procedures to be followed in prioritising its activities in view of the risks and opportunities that will arise, allowing Ambition North Wales to make informed decisions on the use of its resources.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The legal requirements on the Corporate Joint Committee with regards to risk are addressed in the body of the report. In particular, it notes the statutory requirements on the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee under Section 81 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 with regards to risk management.

7.2. In a wider context, the adoption of a systematic approach, as detailed in the draft Risk Management Strategy and informed by the 'Orange Book' (HM Treasury), fulfils the requirement to make the best use of the resources available, allows the organisation to prioritise activities and mitigate the risks associated with its activities in an informed manner.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS

8.1. The report supports the sustainable development principle by strengthening arrangements for long-term governance, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement. In particular, a structured risk management procedures assists the CJC in maintaining robust arrangements for risk, finance, performance and corporate governance.

9. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no direct equality, diversity or Welsh language implications arising from approval of the Risk Management Strategy.

10. APPENDICES

10.1. Appendix 1 – Draft Risk Management Strategy.

STATUTORY OFFICERS COMMENTS:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The adoption of a formal Risk Management Strategy supports the CJC's wider governance, assurance and decision-making framework. The proposed arrangements appropriately recognise the respective roles of the Corporate Joint Committee, the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee, the Leadership Team and statutory officers in identifying, reviewing and managing corporate risk.

Subject to the Strategy being implemented and kept under regular review, no specific legal issues arise from the recommendation other than those mentioned."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

Author of the report.

Ambition North Wales

Corporate Risk Management Strategy (Draft)



Corporate Risk Management Strategy

Contents

Introduction....1

Effective Risk Management....1

Defining Risk Management....2

Risk Appetite....3

Risk Management Approach....5

Risk Management Responsibilities....9

Introduction

Risk management is a critical process for identifying, assessing, and mitigating potential risks that could impact an organisation's operations, objectives, and reputation. This strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to managing risks effectively and ensuring organisational resilience.

The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) under the brand of Ambition North Wales leadership team recognises that effective risk management is an integral part of good corporate governance and as such should be a part of everyday management processes across the organisation. Ambition North Wales is committed to ensuring robust risk management arrangements are in place and operating effectively at all times.

The Leadership Team will champion risk management by ensuring that appropriate arrangements are maintained, monitored and controlled.

This strategy clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of the day-to-day management of the risks affecting Ambition North Wales.

Ambition North Wales will ensure risk management is:

- Structured and consistent to focus decisions, prioritise resources and enable justified risk-taking.
- Applied in a proportionate way.
- Utilising of the right management information to create a complete picture of the key risks and issues to enable effective performance management.
- Regularly reviewed following feedback to ensure our risk management processes remain fit-for-purpose.
- Managed at the most effective and pragmatic managerial level.

Effective Risk Management

This will be achieved by adopting effective systems of internal control through:

- Embedding clear risk management roles and responsibilities and formal risk reporting lines.
- Integrating a process for continuous review of risks, including proactive management and monitoring of mitigating actions.
- Incorporating risk management into the decision-making arrangements.
- Applying principles of risk management to budget and project planning processes.
- Actively involving elected members in the risk management process.

- Regularly monitoring and reviewing our risk management arrangements to ensure they remain effective and comply with risk management standards, legislation and good practice.
- Establishing best practice across the organisation to promote the Corporate Risk Strategy.
- Embedding risk management into the business planning process and incorporating risk actions into individual performance reviews.
- Providing relevant and easy-to-use risk management guidance and information, based on industry best practice.
- Production of the Annual Governance Statement and in consultation with the Internal Audit Team.

Defining Risk Management

What is a risk?

A risk is the possibility that an event or condition will occur that could have a negative (or sometimes positive) impact on objectives, operations, or outcomes.

HM Treasury Orange Book describes a risk as:

“Risk is most commonly held to mean "hazard" and something to be avoided. But it has another face - that of opportunity. Improving public services requires innovation - seizing new opportunities and managing the risks involved.” – HM Treasury

“Risk management covers all the processes involved in identifying, assessing and judging risks, assigning ownership, taking actions to mitigate or anticipate them, and 3 monitoring and reviewing progress. Good risk management helps reduce hazard and builds confidence to innovate.” – HM Treasury

Key Elements of Risk:

- Uncertainty: Risk involves unknowns—something may or may not happen.
- Impact: If the event occurs, it could affect goals, performance, finances, reputation, or safety.
- Likelihood: The probability that the risk event will occur.

What is the difference between a risk and issue?

The difference between a risk and an issue lies mainly in timing and certainty:

Aspect	Risk	Issue
Definition	A potential event that *might* happen and could impact objectives.	A current event or problem that *has already happened* and is impacting objectives.
Timing	Future-oriented (uncertain).	Present or past (certain).
Certainty	Uncertain – may or may not occur.	Certain – it has occurred.
Management	Managed through risk identification, assessment, and mitigation plans.	Managed through issue resolution and corrective actions.
Example	"There is a chance the supplier may delay delivery."	"The supplier has delayed delivery."

Risk Appetite

Risk appetite refers to the amount and type of risk that an organisation is willing to accept in pursuit of its objectives.

It reflects the organisation's strategic goals, values, and capacity to manage risk, and it helps guide decision-making by setting boundaries for acceptable risk-taking.

Risk Appetite Framework

Ambition North Wales has a low appetite for risks that could compromise statutory legal compliance, reputational, financial, or service continuity. However, the appetite will vary for a range of risks categories as outlined below; where appropriate these will be managed risks that enable strategic (innovation), transformation, technology and efficiency within legal/ethical boundaries.

Risk Category	Appetite	Rationale
Strategic	Moderate	We support controlled innovation to improve service delivery and efficiency.
Operational (Service Continuity)	Low	Reliable services and resilience are prioritised; accept limited risk with strong controls.
Financial management	Low	Protecting financial sustainability and stewardship of public funds outweighs potential upside
Financial investment	Moderate-High	Occasionally the CJC will be provided with opportunities for investment. While there will be a clear need for mitigation, the CJC will explore and evaluate the opportunity as appropriate.
Legal	Very Low	Zero tolerance for unlawful activity; cautious approach to areas with regulatory exposure.
Reputational	Very Low	Maintain public trust and transparency; avoid actions likely to erode confidence.
Projects/Programmes (Change/Transformation)	High	Accept higher risk to deliver transformational benefits, with stage-gate assurance
Governance	Very Low	Clear accountabilities, strong oversight, and compliance with codes/regulations.
Commercial (partnerships)	Moderate-High	Seek value from commercial arrangements and partnerships where benefits justify risk
People (Culture)	High	Support change and capability building while safeguarding wellbeing and compliance.
People (Workforce)	Low	Risks to the well-bring of staff will be monitored carefully with clear mitigations put in place where necessary
Technology & Information (incl. Cyber Security)	Moderate	Embrace digital improvements with robust security and data protection.

Risk Management Approach

Risk Registers

Completion of all risk registers requires effective management. Regular risk discussions should occur as a formality to ensure corrective action before live issues happen. This will reduce time, costs and use of resources. Raising risks does not mean ownership. This will be owned by the appropriate manager who can provide the necessary mitigating action. All staff involved in risk management have a responsibility to raise risks.

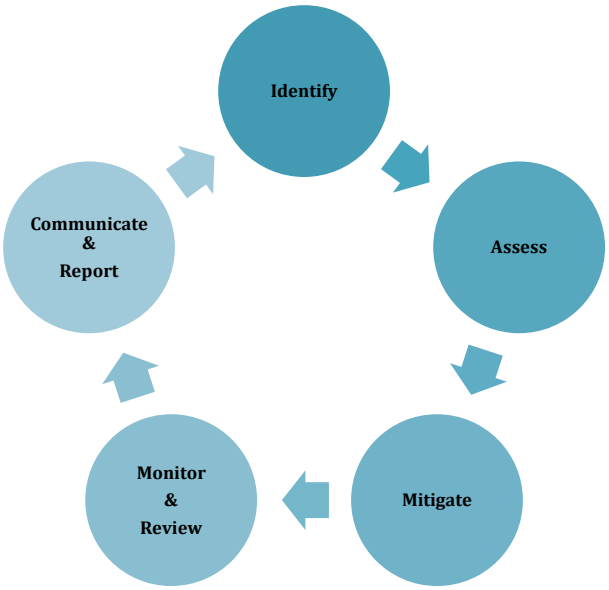
Register	Lead Officer	Purpose
Corporate	Chief Finance Officer (Section 151)	The Corporate Risk Register is used to record, monitor, and manage risks that could impact its strategic objectives, operations, or reputation at the 'enterprise' level. It provides a centralised view of all 'significant' risks and enables 'risk-informed' decision making be leadership and governance bodies. These risks are owned and managed by the Leadership Team. The Corporate Risk register is reviewed at every meeting of the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee
Growth Deal Portfolio	Portfolio Director	The Portfolio Management Risk Register is used to record, track, and manage risks across the Growth Deal portfolio of programmes and projects. It helps the Portfolio Management Office and stakeholders maintain visibility over potential threats that could impact the achievement of Portfolio objectives. These risks are owned and managed by the Economic Wellbeing Sub Committee (Members) and supported by a Portfolio Board (Officers). The register is updated and reported on by the Portfolio Management Office. Risks within the Portfolio Risk Register can be escalated to the Economic Wellbeing Sub Committee by the Portfolio Board.
Investment Zone	IZ Lead Officer	Similar to the Growth Deal Portfolio, the Investment Zone Risk Register is used to record, track and manage risks across the Investment Zone's portfolio of programmes and projects. This will involve working closely with two local authorities – Wrexham CBC and Flintshire CC.
All Programme(s)/ Projects	Senior Responsible Owners/ programme Managers	A Programme Management Risk Register is used to identify, assess, and manage risks across all programmes, which is a coordinated group of related projects managed in a way that delivers

		benefits not achievable if managed individually. It provides a centralised view of all risks that could affect the programme's ability to deliver its intended outcomes, ensuring proactive risk management. Programme Managers are responsible for the day-to-day management of their risk registers. Risks within these registers can be escalated to the to the relevant boards/committee's.

All risk registers must be stored in line with our information governance policies and made available to Legal, Governance & Compliance or Internal Audit on request.

Risk Management Stages

Ambition North Wales will adopt a standard approach to the management of risk lifecycle stages:



- Risk Identification - The first step in risk management is identifying potential risks that may affect the organisation. This includes internal and external risks such as financial uncertainties, legal liabilities, strategic management errors, accidents, and natural disasters. Risk identification involves gathering information from various sources including stakeholder input, historical data, and industry analysis.
- Risk Assessment - Once risks are identified, they must be assessed to determine their potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. This involves qualitative and quantitative analysis to prioritize risks based on severity and probability. Tools such as risk matrices and impact assessments are used to evaluate and rank risks.
- Risk Mitigation - Risk mitigation strategies are developed to reduce or eliminate the impact of identified risks. This includes implementing controls, developing contingency plans, transferring risk through insurance, and avoiding risk through strategic decisions. Effective mitigation requires collaboration across departments and continuous improvement of risk controls.
- Monitoring and Review - Risk management is an ongoing process that requires regular monitoring and review. This ensures that risk mitigation measures are effective and that new risks are identified promptly. Periodic audits, performance reviews, and feedback mechanisms are essential for maintaining an up-to-date risk management strategy.
- Communication & Reporting - Communication and reporting requires effective stakeholder engagement about risks and responses. It should promote a risk aware culture across the organisation.

Risk Assessment

Once a risk has been identified it needs to be assessed. The assessment process considers the likelihood that the risk may occur and its potential impact. This allows for risks to be ranked and prioritised as not all risks are of equal significance.

Using a risk scoring matrix to work out the inherent risk score (probability multiplied by the 'impact') will give an inherent risk score. This will help to make decisions about the significance of the risk, how it will be managed, the controls required and the treatment of the risk

	Impact				
	1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
5 Highly likley	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**
4 Likely	**4**	**8**	**12**	**16**	**20**
3 Possible	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**
2 Unlikely	**2**	**4**	**6**	**8**	**10**
1 Highly unlikely	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Score	How the risk should be managed
16-25	Risk requires active management to manage down and maintain the exposure at an acceptable level. Escalate upwards
10-15	A robust contingency plan may suffice together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from the profile
1-9	May require some risk mitigation to rescue the likelihood if this can be done costs effectively but good housekeeping to ensure that the impact remains low should be adequate. Reassess frequently to ensure conditions remain the same.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Governance & Audit Sub-Committee has responsibility which includes oversight of the risk management arrangements. This is set out in the sub-committee's Terms of Reference, which in reference to functions states risk management must:

"Review and assess the CJC's risk management, internal control, performance management assessment and corporate governance arrangements"

"Make reports and recommendations to the CJC regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements"

To support the sub-committee in the performance of its duties, the Corporate Risk Register will be taken to each meeting of the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee for review and comment. The Leadership Team review the Corporate Risk Register on at least a quarterly basis.

The Risk Management Strategy and any amendments will be reviewed by the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee ahead of being taken to the CJC for approval.

Risk Management Responsibilities

Risk management is everyone's responsibility, but there are clearly defined, specific roles and responsibilities for different individuals and groups. These are set out below:

Role	Responsibility
CJC	➢ Provides challenge and input to the Risk Management Strategy and Corporate Risk Register ➢ Approves the Risk Management Strategy and register including any material changes as required ➢ Monitors progress in the management of Corporate Risks ➢ Holds the Leadership Team accountable for the effective management of risk
Governance & Audit Sub-Committee	➢ Review and assess the risk management strategy and register ➢ Provide recommendations to the CJC ➢ Support and promote effective risk management.
Other Sub-Committees (Economic Well-being, Regional Transport, Strategic Planning)	➢ Taking responsibility for mitigating risks in their areas of work in accordance with the powers delegated by the CJC ➢ Challenge officers as appropriate on risk mitigations in their areas of work
Leadership Team	➢ Contribute to the Risk Management Strategy ➢ Review the Corporate Risk Register for consideration by the Corporate Joint Committee (annually) and the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee (quarterly) ➢ Deliver the CJC's Risk Management Strategy ➢ Effective management action of the Corporate Risk Register ➢ Support and promote effective risk management.

Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)*	➢ Prepare and promote the CJC's Risk Management Strategy ➢ Develop risk management controls in conjunction with the leadership ➢ Active involvement in all material business decisions to ensure short, medium and long-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered ➢ Foster and embed a culture of risk management across the organisation.
Operations Team	➢ Develop and deploy systems and processes that allow for the ongoing capturing and monitoring of all risks across the organisation.
Internal Audit*	➢ Assess the effectiveness of the Risk Management Strategy and the system of internal control. ➢ Support and promote effective risk management. ➢ Provides independent assurance
Risk Owners	➢ Accountable for the management action and control of all assigned risks ➢ Support the identification and management of risks. ➢ Ensure effective risk management arrangements are in place for their area. ➢ Promote risk-based decision making across the department.
All staff	➢ Support the identification of risks and contribute to their management, as appropriate.

* via Service Level Agreement

Risks are managed at their appropriate level, with an escalation pathway in place, to a higher level in the table shown above.

Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

20 November 2026

TITLE: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27: Mid- Year Review

AUTHOR: Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC's Statutory Finance Officer)
Delyth Jones- Thomas, Investment Manager

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Corporate Joint Committee's (CJC) with an overview of the Treasury Management activity for the period to 30 September 20256.

2. DECISIONS SOUGHT

2.1. To accept the report.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Treasury management decisions are made daily by the Head of Finance and staff at Cyngor Gwynedd and they are required to act in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the CJC's spending needs, while managing the risks involved.

4.2 The strategy for 2026/27 was approved by the CJC on 20 March 2026. This report compares the actual performance against the strategy for the period to 30 September 2026.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27 is based on the CIPFA Code and the Welsh Government's Guidance on Local Authority Investments and therefore fulfils the legal responsibility of the CJC under the Local Government Act 2003.

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Treasury Management Activity 2026/27: Mid- Year Review

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

I note the report and the confirmation that treasury management activity has been undertaken in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy. I have no additional legal or governance observations.

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

Report author.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Committee has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Cod of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Joint Commitee to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi- annual and annual outturn reports.

The Joint Committee's treasury management strategy for 2026/27 was approved at its meeting on 20 March 2026. The Joint Committee has invested significant amounts of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks, including the loss of invested money and the revenue impact of changing interest rates. Successful identification, monitoring, and risk management are central to the Joint Committee's treasury management strategy.

2. EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Economic background: The key story remained the conflict in the Middle East and its impact on global energy prices and inflation, while on the UK politics side, Andy Burham became the new Prime Minister. Although energy prices had shown signs of moderating towards the end of (calendar) Q2, the continuing conflict pushed oil and gas up sharply once again in Q3. Around mid-September, Brent oil and UK gas prices were over 30% and 70% higher respectively compared to the period preceding the Bank of England's (BoE) July Monetary Policy Report (MPR).

Given the inflationary impact of the previous energy shock from the Russia/Ukraine war, central bank policymakers remained alert to higher energy prices feeding into wider price and wage-setting behaviour ('second-round effects'). In the UK, higher fuel and energy prices were evident in headline inflation, but there was limited evidence of material second-round effects. At the same time, underlying wage pressures continued to moderate, and the labour market remained relatively loose.

The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) maintained Bank Rate at 3.75% throughout the period. In April the MPC voted by 8-1 to leave rates unchanged, with one member wanting a 0.25% increase. The voting moved to 7-2 in June and 6-3 in both July and September, with all dissenters preferring to increase Bank Rate to 4.00%. The change in voting patterns reflected increasing policymaker concern over the persistence of the energy shock and the risk that higher headline inflation could become embedded in domestic prices and wages.

At the September MPC meeting, the Committee judged the inflation risks were further to the upside compared to its July MPR. Energy prices had risen again and borrowing costs were materially higher than before the US/Iran conflict. Despite expecting inflation would rise further in the near-term, most members believed that a soft labour market, spare capacity and restrictive monetary conditions would reduce inflation over time. Moreover, the data showed there was still little evidence of material second-

round effects, although the MPC emphasised that the risk of these effects would increase the longer elevated and volatile energy prices persisted.

UK headline consumer price inflation (CPI) initially declined, suggesting the initial energy shock was not spreading into a wider range of goods and services. However, later in the period inflation picked up again, with CPI rising from 2.6% in June to 3.1% in August due largely to higher transport costs. Core CPI was 2.6% in July and August, suggesting the divergence between that and headline inflation was due to energy rather than a broad increase in underlying inflation.

UK economic activity was somewhat stronger than initially anticipated over the period. GDP expanded by 0.6% in the first quarter of the calendar year and 0.5% in the second quarter, slightly stronger than the initial estimate of 0.4%. Monthly activity was more volatile, with a contraction of -0.1% in April, followed by gains of 0%, 0.3% and 0.4% in May, June and July respectively.

Labour market data continued to show softening employment conditions. The unemployment rate fell to 4.9% in April and remained at that level to July, against expectations it would tick up. Job vacancies also continued to decline, to 702,000 in the three months to July. Earnings growth moderated, with regular earnings at 3.5% in the three months to July and total earnings at 3.9%, suggesting weaker labour demand was continuing to restrain domestic wage pressures.

Arlingclose, the CJC's treasury adviser, expects Bank Rate will stay at 3.75%. However, higher energy prices due to the ongoing conflict(s) and uncertainty around the government's upcoming Budget have increased the near-term upside risks. Moreover, stronger inflation projections, which accompanied the September MPC decision, shifted market expectations for Bank Rate higher. In addition, despite little evidence of second-round effects to date, the changing tone of the MPC minutes suggests it may not need something seismic to tip the Committee to increase Bank Rate.

Credit review: Arlingclose maintained its advised recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on the majority of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.

3. LOCAL CONTEXT

At 30 September 2026 the Joint Committee had investments of £73.6m mainly due to unspent Growth Scheme and Investment Zone grant money.

Treasury Management Summary

	31.3.26 Balance £m	Movement 6 Months £m	30.9.26 Balance £m
Short-term investments	34.1	14.4	48.5
Cash and cash equivalents	22.3	2.8	25.1
Total Investments	**56.4**	**17.2**	**73.6**

4. TREASURY INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

The revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code defines treasury management investments as those arising from the cash flow of the Joint Committee or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represent balances that need to be invested until the cash is needed to be used in the course of a business.

The Joint Committee has invested funds, which represent income received before expenditure along with balances and reserves. During the 6 months, the Joint Committee's investment balance ranged between £52.9 and £76.0 million. The position of investments during the period is shown in the table below.

Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.26 Balance £m	Movement 6 Months £m	30.9.26 Balance £m	30.9.26 Income %
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	2.3	-2.2	0.1	3.15
Local authorities	31.1	13.9	45.0	4.11
Money Market Funds	20.0	5.0	25.0	3.92
Debt Management Office	3.0	0.5	3.5	3.74
Total Investments	**56.1**	**17.2**	**73.6**	

The CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Joint Committee to invest its money prudently, taking into account the safety and liquidity of its investments before striving for the highest rate of return, or the highest yield. The objective of the Joint Committee in investing money is to strike the right balance between risk and return, reducing the risk of losses from defaulting investments and the risk of receiving unsuitably low income on investments.

Bank Rate remained at 3.75% during the period. The rates on DMADF deposits ranged between 3.70% and 3.76% and Money Market Funds Rates between 3.74% and 3.97%.

5. COMPLIANCE

The Head of Finance can confirm that treasury management activities undertaken during the period are in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the approved Joint Committee Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with certain investment limits is shown in the table below.

Investment Limits

	Counterparty Maximum during period	**Counterparty 30.9.26 Actual**	**Counterparty 2026/27 Limit**	**Complied**
The UK Government	£19m	£3.5m	Unlimited	✓
Local authorities and other government entities	£5m	£5m	£5m	✓
Secured investments	£0m	£0m	£5m	✓
Banks (unsecured)	£2.5m	£0.1m	£3m	✓
Building societies (unsecured)	£0m	£0m	£3m	✓
Registered providers (unsecured)	£0m	£0m	£3m	✓
Money market funds	£5m	£5m	£8m	✓

6. INVESTMENT TRAINING

During the time, officers have attended investment training with Arlingclose that is relevant to their jobs.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Accept the report for information.