

MEETING: North Wales Corporate Joint Committee
DATE: 14 January 2022
SUBJECT: Appointment of the CJC's Statutory Officers
CONTACT OFFICER: Dafydd L Edwards, CJC Project Lead Officer

DECISION SOUGHT

Appointment of the following Statutory Officers for the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, effective from 14 January 2022 at least until arrangements are revised in June 2022:

- a) Chief Executive**
 - b) Chief Finance Officer ('Section 151 Officer')**
 - c) Monitoring Officer and Proper Officer**
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BACKGROUND

- 1.** Further to Welsh Government legislation establishing the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, the Joint Committee must make appropriate arrangements at its first meeting, then approve its 2022/23 budget by 31 January 2022, before initial CJC functions 'go live' on 30 June 2022.
- 2.** Amongst the first appropriate arrangements, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee must appoint its Statutory Officers.
- 3.** The Corporate Joint Committees (General) (No. 2) (Wales) Regulations 2021 require the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) to appoint three statutory officers, comprising a Chief Executive, a Chief Finance Officer ('Section 151 Officer'), and a Monitoring Officer.
- 4.** The Establishment Regulations allow flexibility how the CJC may employ staff, including statutory officers. The CJC may employ them directly, or it may enter into arrangements with constituent authorities for their staff to be placed at the disposal of the CJC. Hence, these key statutory officer posts could be provided by a constituent authority (i.e. seconded part-time from one of the 6 Councils).
- 5.** There is also a requirement to designate a 'Proper Officer' for the CJC under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This is a procedural but essential designation under local government legislation. The most obvious example is designating a matter as an exempt matter for meeting agendas. It is recommended that the Monitoring Officer is designated the Proper Officer in order to ensure that there is no ambiguity about the role.

6. In theory there are some potential risks of conflict of interest, but in practice this has not been an issue where a constituent authority (Gwynedd Council) has provided statutory officers for hosted Joint Committee arrangements, such as the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (EAB) and the North Wales regional school improvement service (GwE).
7. There may also be potential risks regarding capacity and resilience, where statutory officers provided by constituent authorities must carry the additional responsibility and workload. There is substantial ongoing workload in establishing the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. However, prior to clarity on any transfer of the functions of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, etc, uncertainties regarding the scale of budgets and functions make it difficult to appoint the CJC's statutory officers permanently or full-time now.
8. Establishing the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee is a legal requirement, and the timetable is challenging, particularly the need to set the budget and levy charges in January 2022.
9. Gwynedd Council already provides the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, whose functions could transfer to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee during 2022/23. Gwynedd Council also already provides the CJC Project Lead Officer for the region, Dafydd Edwards.
10. In order to enable the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee to proceed, it is recommended that the statutory officers should be provided by Gwynedd Council for now, while the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee is being established (at least until initial CJC functions 'go live' on 30 June 2022). These temporary arrangements may be revised thereafter, and the intention is to present a further report on the possible options for appointment to these roles on a permanent basis.

RECOMMENDATION

11. **The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee is asked to appoint:**
 - a. **Dafydd Gibbard as the CJC's Chief Executive**
 - b. **Dewi Aeron Morgan as the CJC's Chief Finance Officer**
 - c. **Iwan G Evans as the CJC's Monitoring Officer and Proper Officer**

(each being the respective postholder at Gwynedd Council)