

MEETING: **North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (the CJC)**

DATE: **27 October 2023**

SUBJECT: **Extending the Secondment to the CJC Chief Executive role**

CONTACT OFFICER: **Geraint Owen, Corporate Director, Cyngor Gwynedd**

DECISION SOUGHT:

To extend the appointment of Alwen Williams as the CJC's part-time Chief Executive, on a temporary secondment basis, up to the end of March, 2024.

1. Introduction / Background

At its meeting on 22 July 2022, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee reviewed the role of its Chief Executive and, after considering the options, resolved to submit a request to the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to release part of their Portfolio Director's time to fulfil the role of the Corporate Joint Committee's Chief Executive at least until 31 March 2023.

The option to submit this request to the Ambition Board was selected as it was likely that the Ambition Board will be incorporated into the CJC, that there would be a substantially higher cost if a stand-alone Chief Executive post was created, and as there was insufficient availability of time required for one of the 6 local authority Chief Executives to oversee the CJC's development.

It was reported at the time that the decision in principle, to transfer the Ambition Board to the CJC, had already been taken by the Councils and that following the legislative changes, it would be possible to undertake this process over the following months. As part of any transfer, the status of all Portfolio Staff would be addressed.

You will recall that the North Wales Economic Ambition Board was required to approve the release of the Portfolio Director prior to the CJC making the decision to appoint a Temporary Chief Executive.

This was done at the Ambition Board's meeting on the 30 September, 2022 when it was agreed to release part of the Portfolio Director's time in order to fulfil the role of the CJC's Chief Executive on a secondment basis.

Consequently, the CJC, at its meeting on the 7 October, 2022, approved the appointment of Alwen Williams, the Economic Ambition Board's Portfolio Director, as part-time Chief Executive, on the basis of a secondment, until the post would be reviewed by the CJC prior to the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

This temporary arrangement, whereby Alwen Williams fulfilled the role of the CJC's Chief Executive for two days per week became effective as from the 10 October, 2022.

In light of the fact that a number of critical matters still required further attention before the CJC was able to appoint a permanent Chief Executive e.g. the likely transfer of staff to the CJC's employment, the decision taken at the meeting on the 7 October, 2022 was re-visited at the Joint Committee's meeting on the 24 March this year since the secondment period needed to be reviewed prior to the 31 March, 2023.

At that meeting, and with the agreement of the Ambition Board to extend the secondment, an extension to Alwen Williams' appointment as Temporary Chief Executive until the 30 September, 2023 was approved.

2. Post September 2023 Interim Situation

As members of the Joint Committee will be aware, there still remains some work to be completed before it will be possible to appoint a Chief Executive on a permanent basis. In light of that fact the CJC needs to ensure a Chief Executive on a temporary basis for one further period until the 31 March, 2024.

In an attempt to ensure that every possible support is provided to the Temporary Chief Executive in order to formally and finally establish the Corporate Joint Committee by the 1 April, 2024, additional resource has been identified. The Temporary Chief Executive's report, which is another item on this meeting's agenda, provides further details in relation to that support.

A report will be submitted to a meeting of the Ambition Board earlier in the day on the 27 October, 2023 requesting its agreement to extend the period for which it is prepared to release its Portfolio Director. The Ambition Board's response to that request can be reported verbally at the CJC's meeting prior to considering this item.

You are reminded that the Ambition Board, via Cyngor Gwynedd as the host Authority, remains as Alwen Williams' contractual employer whilst the CJC recompenses the Ambition Board for both direct and indirect costs associated with the secondment. Cyngor Gwynedd's Chief Executive was given authority to make the necessary arrangements within the flexibility of the CJC's budget.

RECOMMENDATION

The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee is asked to agree the extension of Alwen Williams' part-time secondment to the CJC Chief Executive role up to the end of March, 2024, in accordance with the decision sought (and dependent on the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's agreement to release her for the said period).

VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer

I have had an input into the report and I am satisfied with the propriety of the recommendation.

Statutory Finance Officer

The Corporate Joint Committee's Budget for 2023/24, approved in January 2023, includes the Chief Executive's time for two days a week. I have no objection to the decision sought from the perspective of financial propriety.