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## **NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE**

**28 November, 2025**

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**TITLE:** Transformation and Improvement Programme 2025-26 Update

**AUTHOR:** Alwen Williams, Chief Executive  
Dave Hole, Programme Lead

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. To update Members on the continuing programme of transformation and improvement progress and current challenges.

### **2. DECISION SOUGHT**

- 2.1. The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) to note the progress update and the current challenges with the ongoing transformation and continuous improvement of the CJC during 2025/26.
- 2.2. Directs that a further report be presented in March 2026 to update on 2025/26 programme delivery, including the new proposed programme for 2026/27.

### **3. REASON FOR THE DECISION**

- 3.1. To support good governance and corporate accountability it is important that the CJC is regularly updated of the programme of transformation and continuous improvement delivery. Post transfer the CJC will continue to implement a range of products and projects introducing significant business change as the organisation develops its operating model to meet current and future demand. This will require the ongoing development of a multi-year programme aligned to the CJC's vision and objectives.

### **4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1. The CJC has full operating status, meaning that it can function as a corporate entity, can employ people, and has in place the necessary governance arrangements. This provides the primary framework of governance which will enable the CJC to function as a public authority across all its functions.
- 4.2. Following the transfer of the of the Growth Deal, its funding and staff into the CJC on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 and under the adopted brand of Ambition North Wales (ANW) through a revised programme was created for 2025/26. This included a significant range of projects, products and ongoing continuous improvement carried forward from pre-transfer and new delivery. A report was taken to the CJC in June 2025 to outline the programme, where it was acknowledged that it was ambitious, but necessary to identify in advance of a new CEO being appointed, and to continue momentum of the delivery programme.

- 4.3. The new ANW Chief Executive was appointed in June 2025 and will act as the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) accountable for the programme's ongoing transformation. It was agreed by the Programme Board to rebrand the programme from 'Implementation' to 'Transformation and Improvement' to reflect the current and likely emergent scope of delivery post transfer.
- 4.4. The programme recognises that change is not only constant but important for ANW as a regional public body and reflects the ability to manage specific change/improvement where any focus will be on specific processes and practices. The transformation as a whole programme will redefine the organisation requiring a broader deeper shift, including its culture and operations, over many years reacting to current and future internal and macro environment challenges.
- 4.5. Programmes are temporary organisations established to deliver outcomes often over several years through a range of agreed projects delivering new capability. Temporary programmes of this nature often require a hybrid model of resource to ensure success. This commitment to delivering complex change within a new entity is often a challenge and learning journey for internal resource capacity and should require support from a mix of interim or consultancy support at various stages of its lifecycle.

## 5. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 5.1. The programme post transfer has now been in delivery for 8 months. The programme's board is led by the CEO as the SRO and chaired by the ANW Programme Lead. Delivery is matrix managed and led through several workstream leads from ANW and Cyngor Gwynedd:



- 5.2. The 2025/26 programme has continued to be challenging, complex and human resource dependent from both the ANW and Cyngor Gwynedd. This also includes a level of certainty commencing projects in a complex stakeholder engagement environment. It has been challenging to make significant progress to date with 'key' challenges such as:
- i. Appointment of a new CEO end of Q1 2025/26 confirmation to agree the programmes approach and initial scope
  - ii. HR processes to create a management position to enable recruitment of ANW operational staff
  - iii. Recruitment processes and prioritisation phases to recruit key roles
  - iv. Market conditions have and/or may not attract qualified or sufficiently experienced talent to fulfil key roles.

- v. Service Level Agreement completion and approval by both parties to enable recruitment of resources through ANW committed funding identified by Cyngor Gwynedd to service the agreement
- vi. Capacity of resource to focus on ANW transformation and improvement in addition to BAU operational activity
- vii. Budget constraints
- viii. External delay's such as ANW prospectus and grant allocation
- ix. Partner support to meet deadlines and progress projects

5.3. Despite challenges outlined the programme continues to make progress. Some of these highlights include:

- i. CEO Appointment
- ii. Corporate Plan development phase commenced
- iii. Corporate risk development phase commenced
- iv. 2025/26 Pay Policy published
- v. Pension implementation
- vi. ANW Recruitment process commenced in phases. Process ongoing.
- vii. Year 1 Welsh Government grant funding received to develop capacity and capability for ANW
- viii. ANW website launched
- ix. Staff benefits regional development commenced for out-of-scope SLA offer
- x. New ANW HR policy development commenced
- xi. Ongoing constitutional review
- xii. Building lease arrangements nearing completion
- xiii. Organisational Design independent review commissioned
- xiv. Draft Strategic Equality and Human Rights Plan developed
- xv. Governance and Audit Committee inaugural meeting scheduled for December 2025

5.4. Due to resource challenges and a requirement to prioritise delivery some of the programme lowlights include:

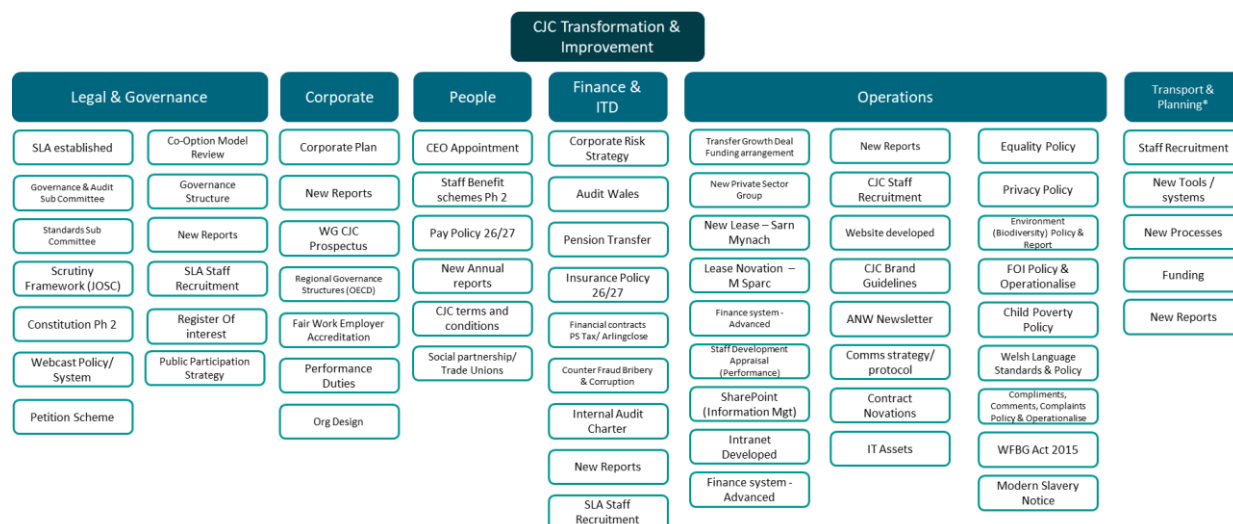
- i. Welsh Government CJC prospectus review delays
- ii. Policy development (currently recruiting)
- iii. SLA agreement completion to enable additional resource capacity to be recruited and support moving de-prioritised projects/ products forward
- iv. ANW recruitment to enable additional resource capacity to be recruited and support moving de-prioritised projects/ products forward
- v. Committee Management System procurement and implementation delayed subject to points iii and iv readiness
- vi. Webcasting procurement and implementation delayed subject to points iii, iv and v readiness
- vii. Remaining Committee's implemented aligned to resource capacity and wider stakeholder agreement. Standards and Joint Overview and Scrutiny delayed until 2026.
- viii. Unsuccessful initial recruitment campaigns currently delaying progress such as Senior Procurement Officer attraction.

5.5. The development of a new ANW programme for 2026/27 and roadmap for subsequent years is likely to carry forward several projects including:

- i. CJC Prospectus development

- ii. Several of policy area development and deployments
- iii. Remaining recruitment of ANW staff
- iv. Cyngor Gwynedd remaining recruitment to support ANW (subject to SLA approval)
- v. Committee Management System
- vi. Webcasting
- vii. Constitutional improvements
- viii. Transport and Planning functional change

5.6. Our 2025/26 programme of projects, product development and continuous improvement continues to develop and is outlined below:



**Note:** Programme scope remains under review and subject to change control

5.7. Next steps for the programme team will be to make further delivery progress during this financial year, develop the programme for 2026/27 aligned to the corporate vision and objectives. We will also look to fully utilise recently received grant funding from Welsh Government to drive forward development of capacity and capability for the ANW.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The ANW transformation and improvement as outlined is a temporary programme. It is currently supported through ANW programme management lead and Cyngor Gwynedd legal contract resource targeted at supporting programme outcomes. This capacity will be required until resources are recruited and can drive forward delivery without this support. Budgets and any grant funding have been identified to support the programme, but as further organisational change is understood there may be requests for further funding not committed if additional capability is required.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are no known legal implications within this report.

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**APPENDICES:**

None

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**STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:****i. Monitoring Officer:**

“The report reflects the real challenges and work involved in establishing the CJC as a local authority. In addition to delivering significant regional and sub regional programmes, strategies and plans there is ongoing work to create the policy and governance framework for the body. This represents a significant challenge by any measure. These are driven to a significant extent by statutory and regulatory requirements.”

**ii. Statutory Finance Officer:**

“I can confirm the accuracy of the financial information contained in the report. As noted in paragraph 6.1 above, the capacity required is under constant review due to the nature of the transformation project.

Should additional funding be required in this area, in the first instance we will look for underspends in other budget heading and recommend any virements as necessary. Any additional resource requirements identified before the 2026/27 budget is set will be reported to the CJC as part of this process.”