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**NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE**

**20 March, 2025**

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**TITLE:** Transformation and Improvement Programme Update

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

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. To update Members on progress at the conclusion of the current programme for 2025/26 and the ongoing revised programme for 2026/27.

**2. DECISION SOUGHT**

- 2.1. To note the progress and challenges of the 2025/26 programme for year 1 post transfer.
- 2.2. To note the programme for 2026/27.
- 2.3. Directs that a further report be presented at the 6-month stage of the 2026/27 programme subject to confirmation of the Municipal Calendar committee dates being agreed at the CJC in June 2026.

**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. The CJC continues 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 CJs required 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) 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. An update was provided to members at the CJC in November 2025 by the Chief Executive and Programme SRO outlining the challenges but also recognising progress being made despite these challenges.
- 4.4. The programme recognises that change is not only constant but important for ANW as a regional public body to meet statutory guidance and legislation. The programme 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. 2025/26 PROGRAMME PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 5.1. The 2025/26 programme will conclude at the end of March 2026. Any delivery not completed will move to the 2026/27 programme. The 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 as well as operating within financial constraints. It has continued to be challenging to make significant progress. Key challenges since the November 2025 report include:
  - i. Ongoing recruitment of CJC resource within challenging market conditions in particular procurement as an example
  - ii. Service Level Agreement completion and approval by both parties remains a matter for formal agreement albeit services are being provided and budget was agreed by the CJC in January 2026
  - iii. Ongoing capacity of resource to focus on ANW transformation and improvement in addition to BAU operational activity remains a challenge whilst we await further recruitment
  - iv. Workstream (functional) leads are primarily 'non-technical' project managers
  - v. Delays through Workstream lead(s) leaving Cyngor Gwynedd
  - vi. Budget constraints are managed carefully and influence any prioritisation of projects within the programme
  - vii. External factors affecting organisational change such as the findings of the CJC prospectus and governance review

viii. Partner support to meet deadlines and progress projects

5.3. Despite the current challenges outlined the programme has continued to make progress. Below is a summary of achievements which have or are expected to have started or have been completed by the end of this year:

- i. CEO appointed
- ii. CJC Interim Monitoring Officer appointed
- iii. Portfolio Director appointment process being finalised
- iv. Appointment of operational resources
- v. Governance and Audit Committee established
- vi. Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee development
- vii. Social Partnership Duty Annual Report 2024/25 published
- viii. 2025/26 Pay Policy published
- ix. Pension implementation completed
- x. Year 1 Welsh Government grant funding received to develop capacity and capability for ANW
- xi. ANW website launched
- xii. Staff benefits regional development commenced
- xiii. New ANW HR policy development commenced
- xiv. Ongoing constitutional review
- xv. Sarn Mynach building lease arrangements for CJC being finalised
- xvi. Procurement contract novation's completed
- xvii. Internal Audit Charter published
- xviii. Transfer of existing Growth Deal funding agreements being finalised
- xix. Welsh Language Standards Review being finalised
- xx. Register of Interest being finalised for publication
- xxi. Financial contract – PS Tax being finalised
- xxii. Banking – Corporate cards being finalised

## 6. 2026/27 PROGRAMME SUMMARY

6.1 The programme has been shaped following prioritisation and assessment of risk exposure. Key prioritisation and decision principles included:

- i. Compliance
- ii. Finance
- iii. Staff capacity and capability readiness (including recruitment)

6.2 A summary of 'priority' delivery of the new ANW programme delivery for 2026/27:

### **Organisation & culture**

- i. Portfolio Director appointed and onboarded to ANW
- ii. Monitoring Officer and legal resource appointments
- iii. Section 151 and finance resource appointments
- iv. Comms team resource and consultancy appointments
- v. Key Officer appointments to support delivery of the transport and SDP programmes
- vi. Service Level Agreement (SLA) formally established with Cyngor Gwynedd
- vii. Service Level Agreement CJC funded resource recruited by Cyngor Gwynedd

### **Strategy & Policy**

- i. Corporate Policies delivered
- ii. Corporate Policies operationalised
- iii. Corporate Plan development
- iv. Vision Statement
- v. Well-being statement (including objectives)
- vi. Welsh Language Standards Annual report
- vii. Social Partnership Duty Annual Report 2025/26
- viii. Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan
- ix. Communications Strategy and Protocol

#### **Technology, Information & Data**

- i. Committee Management System
- ii. Webcasting
- iii. ANW time recording system replacement
- iv. Procurement system replacement
- v. SharePoint (Document Management) Upgrade
- vi. Cyngor Gwynedd deployment of new systems – ANW business readiness
- vii. Legal Case Management solution

#### **Processes**

- i. Communications Plan
- ii. Staff benefits regional offer
- iii. Business Continuity Plan
- iv. Regional Transport Plan Monitoring & Evaluation

#### **People & Skills**

- i. Staff performance management (staff appraisal)

#### **Governance**

- ii. Welsh Government Governance Review - CJs
- iii. Private Sector Advisory Board
- iv. Standards Sub- Committee
- v. Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- vi. Petition Scheme
- vii. Public Participation Scheme
- viii. Annual Self-Assessment (Part 6)
- ix. Audit plans (Internal/External)
- x. Audit Wales – Accounts/ Organisational Performance
- xi. Corporate Risk Strategy & Register

6.3 In addition to priority delivery for 2026/27 a ‘reserve’ list of further delivery is available to be considered should the prioritisation principles enable this delivery. If not, this would be moved to 2027/28. A summary of reserve list items include:

- i. Organisational design review
- ii. Welsh Government CJC Prospectus – Change impact
- iii. Public Affairs plan
- iv. Fair work employer accreditation
- v. Information Management and retention
- vi. IT releases and upgrades
- vii. Business process management

- viii. People strategy and plans
- ix. Committee continuous improvement reviews
- x. Investment Strategy
- xi. Commercial Strategy

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The ANW transformation and improvement as outlined is a multiyear programme. It is currently supported through external Programme Management and Monitoring Officer contract specialist resource targeted at supporting organisational outcomes. This capability will be required until an organisational design assessment is completed, budgeted for and specialist senior technical resources are recruited who can drive forward delivery without this specialist support. CJC budget and grant funding have mostly been identified to support the programme, but as further development of projects starts or further organisational change is understood there may be requests for further funding not committed to date if additional capability is required.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. 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:**

No specific legal matters arising from the recommendations in this report, which are for noting. For completeness, Members are reminded that individual elements of the programme may in due course require separate legal and governance consideration, depending on the nature of the proposal and the decision required

**ii. Statutory Finance Officer:**

"I can confirm the accuracy of the financial information contained in the report. As noted in paragraph 7.1 above, the capacity required is under constant review due to the nature of the transformation project.

The approved budget for 2026/27 has included additional resources to provide for the further delivery of the matters outlined in this report. 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 to the CJC as necessary. Since this is a multi-year project, the requirements will be considered in the Medium-Term Financial Plan

that is currently under development, and subsequently in the budgets for future years.”