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**NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**20/03/2026**

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

**Councillors:** Dave Hughes (Flintshire County Council), Medwyn Hughes (Cyngor Gwynedd), Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Jason McLellan (Denbighshire County Council) and Edgar Owen (Chair of the Eryri National Park Authority).

**Chief Executives of Constituent Councils:** Sioned Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd), Neal Cockerton (Flintshire County Council), Helen White (Denbighshire County Council), Alwyn Jones (Wrexham County Borough Council) and Jonathan Cawley (Eryri National Park Authority).

**Other officers present:** Alwen Williams (Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive (CJC)), Dewi Morgan (Chief Finance Officer – Cyngor Gwynedd), Sian Pugh (Assistant Head of Finance – Cyngor Gwynedd), Sara Jane Jones (Senior Accountant - Cyngor Gwynedd), Delyth Wyn Jones-Thomas (Investment Manager - Cyngor Gwynedd), Dylan Rhys Griffiths (Shared Prosperity Fund Manager - Cyngor Gwynedd), Mark Watkins (Monitoring Officer - Ambition North Wales), David Hole (CJC Implementation Programme Lead), Ffion Williams (Senior Operations Officer - Ambition North Wales), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader – Cyngor Gwynedd) and Sera Whitley (Democratic Services Officer - Cyngor Gwynedd).

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Julie Fallon (Conwy County Borough Council)
- Councillor Nia Jeffreys (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Councillor Medwyn Hughes deputising
- Dafydd Gibbard (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Sioned Williams deputising
- Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council)
- Rhun ap Gareth (Conwy County Borough Council)
- Claire Incedon (Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer Cyngor Gwynedd)
- Nia Medi Williams (Operations and Resources Manager – Ambition North Wales)
- Adam Graham (Senior Transportation Officer - Ambition North Wales)
- Andy Roberts (Regional Strategic Development Planning Officer)

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received.

## **3. URGENT ITEMS**

None to note.

## **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meetings held on 23 January 2026, 6 February 2026 and 13 February 2026, as a true record.

## **5. APPOINTMENT OF THE NORTH WALES CJC PORTFOLIO DIRECTOR**

It was reported by Alwen Williams, CJC Chief Executive, that the recruitment process had come to an end and that Hedd Vaughan-Evans had been appointed to the role of North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Portfolio Director. She added that Hedd Vaughan-Evans had accepted the post.

He was congratulated on behalf of the Corporate Joint Committee.

## **6. GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The report was submitted by Mark Watkins, CJC Monitoring Officer.

### **RESOLVED:**

The following changes were approved to the Terms of Reference of the Governance and Audit Sub-committee.

- That the quorum for the Governance and Audit Sub-committee shall be 7 members with at least one Lay Member present.

### **DISCUSSION**

The report was submitted and it was highlighted that the purpose of the proposed revision to the terms of reference was to ensure that the CJC's Governance and Audit Sub-committee was quorate when it met, and that it was able to achieve its statutory duty. It was explained that quoracy had been, and continued to be, a problem at the meetings of this Sub-committee.

It was reported that the revision would keep the legal quorum requirement and would keep quorum as seven members with at least one lay member present. It was added that it would remove the requirement for a representative of every constituent Council to be present. It was explained that the current practice was too restricted.

It was highlighted that the issue of quoracy was already being addressed when appointing deputies for Sub-committee members. Disappointment was expressed that quorum remained a problem, and attention was drawn to the fact that Leaders should ensure that their representatives on this Sub-committee attended the meetings.

Support was expressed to the revision, considering the busy schedules of elected members and lay members. It was acknowledged that the revision was essential to ensure that the Sub-committee could achieve its statutory duty.

## **7. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP DUTY**

The report was presented by Alwen Williams, Chief Executive of the CJC.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Social Partnership Duty Annual Report 2024-25 was approved for submission to the Social Partnership Council.

## **DISCUSSION**

The report was submitted, noting that this was the first annual report of the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) under the Social Partnerships and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023. It was explained that this Act had introduced a new social partnership duty for public bodies since 1 April 2024. It was added that the legislation made it a requirement for the CJC to include recognised trade unions when setting well-being objectives and making strategic decisions, and also to produce, publish and present an annual report, explaining how the duty had been achieved.

It was noted that the report reflected an early transition period in the CJC's development. It was reported that the CJC was operational before staff transfers during the reporting period, and Cyngor Gwynedd, as the host authority, was providing Human Resources support and support regarding engagement with trade unions. As a result, it was noted that the report focused on preparing, aligning and raising awareness, including engagement with the Welsh Government's Social Partnership team and acting in line with the host authority's reporting method.

It was highlighted that the CJC was now establishing direct and formal relationships with trade unions following staff transfer in 2025, and future reports would show this practical change.

It was confirmed that the CJC would receive feedback on the report from the Social Partnership Council, although the nature and scale of the feedback was to be confirmed.

It was further noted that the Social Partnership was unique to Wales and the importance of having a good relationship with trade unions was emphasised. Members noted that they were looking forwards to more detailed reports on these relationships in the future.

## **8. UPDATE ON THE TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

The report was submitted by Alwen Williams, Chief Executive of the CJC and Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Programme, and Dave Hole, Programme Lead.

### **RESOLVED:**

Members were updated on progress at the end of the existing programme for 2025/26 and the ongoing amended programme for 2026/27.

## **DISCUSSION**

It was noted that the report submitted the latest information to the CJC on the progress made on the Transformation Programme.

It was explained that the report provided a chronological summary since the Economic Ambition Board and Growth Deal were transferred to the CJC on 1 April 2025, and that it had been submitted to the CJC meeting in June 2025 where the ambitious nature of the programme for 2025/26 was acknowledged. The report was taken again to the CJC in

November 2025 to provide the latest information on progress and challenges, and these were explained in section 4 of the report.

It was noted that section 5 provided the latest information on progress for 2025/26. Members were reminded that the programme was complex and was reliant on human resources for its delivery.

Attention was drawn to some of the challenges currently faced, including recruiting resources and the ability to attract staff from within the current market, and procurement. It was also explained that the discussion regarding the Service Level Agreement between Ambition North Wales and Cyngor Gwynedd continued. However, an update was provided that a Policy Lead had been appointed to Ambition North Wales to mitigate some of these challenges.

It was explained that the plan for 2026/27 was currently being completed and anything that was not achieved in 2025/26 would transfer into the new programme. It was explained that the priorities of this work were essential and that delivering the programme was based on compliance, finance and staff capacity.

It was highlighted that contract resources were being monitored regularly. A financial implication was noted, where there could be a requirement for further funding for projects from the CJC where funding had not yet been secured in the budgets or where the grant funding from the Welsh Government had already been spent.

Officers were thanked for the report, and Members were reminded that problems regarding staff recruitment and retention would remain a problem across every local authority in Wales and across the country.

## **9. LOCAL GROWTH FUND IN WALES - TRANSITION YEAR (2026/27) PLANNING IN NORTH WALES**

The report was submitted by Dylan Griffiths, Manager, North Wales Shared Prosperity Fund (Manager, Economic Development Service) Cyngor Gwynedd.

### **RESOLVED:**

- To authorise the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Wellbeing Sub-Committee to monitor the delivery of the Local Growth Fund's transition year (2026/27) and guide preparations for the transition of the Fund to the Corporate Joint Committee from 2027/28.
- To endorse the intention to maintain the approach and governance arrangements of the Shared Prosperity Fund in North Wales - including Cyngor Gwynedd's role as lead local authority - for the Local Growth Fund's transition year in 2026/27 and the submission of a plan to this end to Welsh Government.
- To authorise utilisation of funding provided to the Corporate Joint Committee to prepare for delivery of the Local Growth Fund beyond 2026/27, working collectively with local authorities and partners to co-produce the region's proposals.

## DISCUSSION

The report was submitted highlighting that 2025/26 was the final year of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). It was noted that the SPF had provided almost £169 million to support the economic and social development of North Wales since 2022, but from 1 April 2026 the Local Growth Fund (LGF) would replace it. It was explained that the LGF would be funded for a period of three years, with the hope from Welsh Government, that it would continue beyond that.

It was explained that the shift from SPF to LGF included many changes to the purpose and process for the funding, including the UK Government giving LGF funding to the Welsh Government, which, in turn, intended to transfer the funding to the regions in Wales. It was added that there would be an intention to focus more on securing growth.

It was explained that the Welsh Government wished for lead local authorities, namely Cyngor Gwynedd in north Wales, to continue in their role for the short-term. It was elaborated that the Welsh Government intended to allocate most of the funding to the CJC from 2027/28 onwards, and additional money would come to the CJC in 2026/27 in order to plan and prepare.

It was noted that the composition of the money was changing substantially, moving from being mainly revenue money in nature, to mainly capital money. Members were informed that a change had been made to the sum submitted in section 4.12 of the report, following an error by the Welsh Government. It was noted that the report stated a sum of £35.69 million, but the Welsh Government had confirmed that £33.78 million was the correct amount, noting a reduction of around £1.9 million.

It was reported that the Welsh Government made it a requirement to prepare an action plan for the Fund's first year, by working jointly with Cyngor Gwynedd, officers from the local authorities across the region, officers from the CJC and officers from the Welsh Government. It was emphasised that Cyngor Gwynedd's intention was to have a process that was as consistent as possible to the method followed for the SPF. It was highlighted that Cyngor Gwynedd's suggestion was to continue to give decisions to local authorities, ensure that local authorities benefited from the resources available to them, and that any choice relating to the regional work was being made based on the regions' choices.

It was added that when the action plan would be accepted by the Welsh Government, a new agreement would have to be established between the counties.

Concern was expressed about the Welsh Government's decision to allocate funding through the CJC from 2027/28 onwards. It was noted that this was not a reflection on the CJC; but rather a strong belief in devolution and the belief that sending money to the CJC instead of local authorities took decision-making powers away from local authorities. The Monitoring Officer's opinion was sought on the rights that the Welsh Government had to make financial decisions for the future, considering the Senedd Election in May 2026.

It was explained that as the funding came from the Welsh Government, it was the Government's choice to decide how the money was allocated. It was noted that were there a change in administration following the Senedd Election in May, the funding method could also possibly change, which may not include regional bodies such as the CJC in the

process, or it could change the extent to which the CJC was involved in statutory functions relating to economic well-being.

Frustration and disappointment was expressed regarding the financial difficulties that local authorities were already facing. It was asked how an error on the Welsh Government's part in terms of the significant reduction in the LGF indicative allocation for 2026/27 was made, and whether it was possible to defer the decision until after the Senedd Election in May.

The members were informed that there was no obligation to accept the funding, but as a regional body with a legal mandate to ensure the economic well-being which had been offered the resource to achieve its statutory duty, it was likely that the CJC would face implications should it refuse the funding. It was noted that it was a matter for the CJC whether the decision could be deferred or not.

It was highlighted, despite the funding reduction, that the CJC would need to approve the decision sought in order to avoid any potential implications. In addition, it was noted that the CJC had to be mindful of how the current Welsh Government operated, and the CJC's responsibility was to do the best they could with the resources they had.

It was reported that Cyngor Gwynedd had been directly informed by the Welsh Government that the wrong sum in section 4.12 of the report was a simple error, as the Welsh Government had calculated the distribution amongst the Welsh regions on the wrong basis.

Members were reminded that the Welsh Government intended to give £200,000 to the CJC in 2026/27 to press on with this work. It was suggested that the CJC should look for a way to engage with the local authorities individually to co-develop and collaborate.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

## **10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2026/27**

The report was presented by Dewi A. Morgan, Head of Finance (CJC Statutory Officer) and Delyth Jones-Thomas, Investment Manager.

### **RESOLVED:**

To accept and approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2026/27.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was explained that the purpose of the report was to provide and approve the CJC's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2026/27.

It was elaborated that treasury management decisions were made daily and they were delegated to the staff of the Finance Department in Cyngor Gwynedd. It was noted that there was a requirement to act in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.

It was noted that the Treasury Management Strategy Statement included the CJC, Growth Deal and Investment Zone cash balances for 2026/27.

It was elaborated that the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27 was based on the CIPFA Code and Guidance on Local Government Investments by Welsh Government and therefore undertook the CJC's legal responsibility under the CJC under the Local Government Act 2003.

It was noted that treasury management related to keeping sufficient, but not excessive cash to meet the CJC's spending needs, managing the associated risks and striking the correct balance between risk and returns. It was explained that the Finance Department had received specialist advice from the treasury management advisers, Arlingclose, in order to formulate this Strategy, and that the type of investments approved by the strategy were noted in table 2. It was acknowledged that these were consistent with the type of investments that Cyngor Gwynedd made, and there were restrictions on the amount approved for every organisation in order to spread the risk.

It was confirmed that this Strategy had been based on the CJC being an investor and borrowing internally between schemes, if needed. It was explained that should the Finance Department identify the need to borrow externally, and if plans began spending before the government grant funding arrived, they would prepare an amended strategy, but this was unlikely.

The meeting commenced at 13:30 and concluded at 14:20.

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(Chair)