Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

Annual Governance Statement 2025-2026

Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

[Final draft for CJC approval]

Contents

1. Purpose and statutory context

This Annual Governance Statement explains how the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (the CJC), operating under the Ambition North Wales brand, complied with its governance framework during 2025/26 and reports on the effectiveness of those arrangements.

The Statement is prepared having regard to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended), the regulations applying to corporate joint committees in Wales, and the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework.

The CJC is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards; that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively; and that arrangements are in place to manage risk, secure accountability and support the achievement of its statutory and strategic objectives.

The governance framework includes the systems, processes, culture and values through which the CJC is directed and controlled. The system of internal control forms part of that framework and is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve objectives. It therefore provides reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance.

2. About the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee

The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee is a statutory corporate body established by the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021. It comprises the six constituent councils in North Wales and, for relevant strategic planning functions, the Eryri National Park Authority.

The CJC exercises statutory functions relating to regional economic well-being, regional transport planning and strategic development planning. On 1 April 2025, responsibility for delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal transferred from the North Wales Economic Ambition Board arrangements to the CJC. The CJC also supports the governance and delivery arrangements for the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.

The 2025/26 year was therefore the first full financial year in which the CJC combined its statutory functions with responsibility for the Growth Deal and associated organisational, staffing, financial and governance arrangements.

3. Governance framework

The CJC's Constitution is the principal source of its governance framework. It sets out the CJC's decision-making structures, committee and sub-committee arrangements (see Figure 1 of the intended final structure) schemes of delegation, financial and contract procedure rules, access to information arrangements, and member and officer conduct requirements.

The governance framework is supported by the CJC's statutory officers, senior management arrangements, internal and external audit, service-level arrangements, programme and project assurance, risk and performance management and the work of the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee. Approved plans and monitoring arrangements were maintained for individual functions; a single overarching Corporate Plan and a consolidated corporate performance view were not yet in place. For the sake clarity, at the time in question, neither the Standards Sub-Committee or the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee were established.

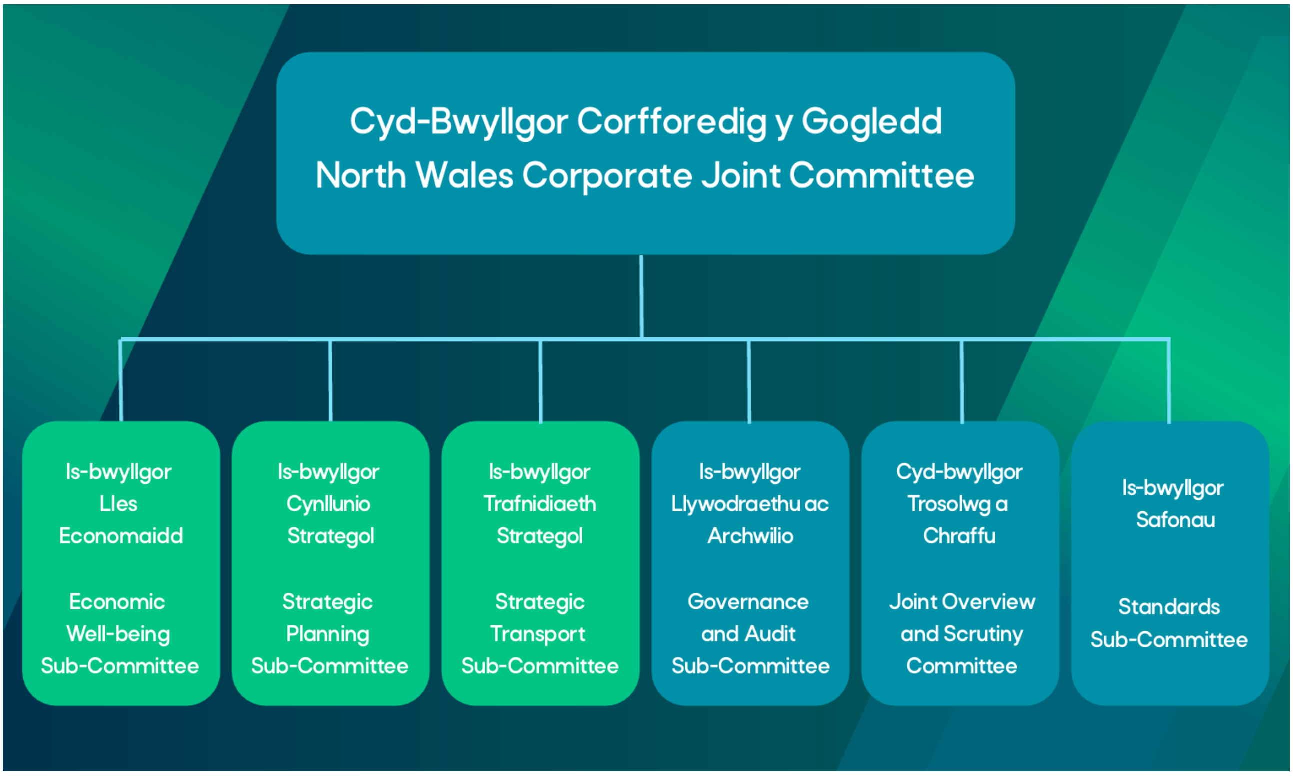

Figure 1: (Intended) North Wales CJC committee and sub-committee structure

4. Scope and methodology of the annual review

The review covers the whole CJC governance framework, including constitutional compliance, ethical standards, member and officer decision-making, financial management, risk and performance management, transparency, information governance, partnership and programme governance, workforce capacity, audit and assurance arrangements.

The Monitoring Officer leads the assessment in consultation with the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer. Responsible officers provide targeted factual information and exception-based assurance for the areas they own. The Operations and Resources Manager coordinates operational evidence and document control. The Chief Finance Officer coordinates corporate risk and audit evidence, while Audit Wales evidence is considered as available. The Monitoring Officer then assesses relevance, reliability and materiality, determines effectiveness against the seven CIPFA/SOLACE principles, settles the improvement actions and drafts the overall assurance conclusion. It is intended that Governance & Audit Sub-Committee will oversee and monitor delivery of the resulting Governance Improvement Plan.

Materiality and evaluation

Evidence should be assessed for relevance, reliability and timeliness. Identified matters should be classified consistently as: (a) a significant governance issue; (b) a material weakness or control issue requiring disclosure; (c) a governance development action; or (d) a routine operational matter not requiring inclusion in the AGS.

5. Sources of assurance and the Three Lines model

The CJC applies a Three Lines approach to distinguish management responsibility from corporate oversight and independent assurance.

Line	Primary responsibility	Examples at ANW	Typical assurance evidence
First line	Management owns and manages risks, controls, performance and delivery.	Chief Executive, Operations and Resources Manager, programme and project leads, budget holders and contract managers.	Targeted management assurance; risk and performance reports; control records; exception reporting.
Second line	Corporate functions set frameworks, advise, challenge and monitor.	Legal and governance, finance, risk, procurement, HR, information governance, democratic services.	Policy compliance; statutory officer comments; monitoring reports; exception logs.
Third line	Independent assurance on governance, risk and control.	Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other independent reviews.	Annual audit opinion and completed audit work within scope; Audit Wales and other independent findings as available.

Sources of assurance

Source of assurance	Role in the review	Evidence considered
Chief Executive	Corporate management, organisational capacity and operational assurance.	Operational evidence, including staffing/hosted-services arrangements; final CEO corporate assurance
Monitoring Officer	Lawfulness, constitutional compliance, ethical governance, decision-making and materiality assessment.	Constitutional/Governance records, committee decisions and governance review.
Chief Finance Officer	Financial management, internal control and corporate risk.	Confirmation received through the Chief Finance Officer that no material Internal Audit issues had been identified. The review also considered relevant prior-year audit findings. 2025/26 corporate-risk evidence; CFO financial assurance
Internal Audit	Independent assurance on governance, risk management and control within the scope of completed work.	Prior-year material for historical context; 2025/26
Audit Wales	External audit and other independent assurance.	Relevant external-audit findings and prior-year assurance where applicable.
Functional and programme leads	First-line factual evidence and exception reporting.	Published CJC and sub-committee papers; Operations reporting map and 2025/26 governance note; Growth Deal programme-governance records; relevant first-line officer evidence and assurances

6. Review of effectiveness against the seven governance principles

The following assessment summarises the governance arrangements reviewed, the evidence-based assessment of effectiveness, material limitations identified and any resulting improvement action.

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

Governance arrangements and evidence	Member declarations and registers of interests have been completed and published. A formal employee Code of Conduct is being developed by the Legal & Governance Team. Legal issues concerning the interpretation of the relevant regulations and eligibility for membership of the Standards Sub-Committee have now been resolved; draft terms of reference have been prepared for approval and adoption by the Corporate Joint Committee. Statutory officer advice is embedded in the decision-making framework, with legal and financial comments required on committee reports. Draft whistleblowing and counter-fraud policies have also been prepared and are awaiting formal adoption.
Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	Overall, the CJC had functioning arrangements to support lawful and ethical decision-making during 2025/26, particularly through embedded statutory officer advice and the collection and publication of members' interests. The ethical-governance framework was, however, not fully mature during the year. Establishment of the Standards Sub-Committee was delayed while legal issues concerning membership eligibility were resolved, and a formal employee Code of Conduct had not yet been adopted. Those matters have since progressed, with the legal issue resolved, draft terms of reference prepared and supporting policy work advanced. On the evidence reviewed, these can best be described as governance-development gaps rather than evidence of a significant failure in integrity, lawfulness or ethical decision-making.
Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	The Standards Sub-Committee was not fully established during 2025/26 and a formal employee Code of Conduct remained outstanding. No evidence has been identified that these gaps resulted in material unlawful decision-making, unmanaged conflicts of interest or a significant ethical-governance failure.
Improvement action	**Action 3** - complete and embed the ethical-governance framework, including approval and establishment of the Standards Sub-Committee arrangements, adoption of the employee Code of Conduct and completion of the supporting whistleblowing and counter-fraud policies.

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Governance arrangements and evidence	Publication of agendas, reports, minutes and decisions; forward work programme; and public participation arrangements; consultation and institutional engagement; scrutiny through constituent councils and development of joint scrutiny arrangements. Growth Deal arrangements also allow participation by members of all six constituent councils in programme scrutiny; although this does not amount to and neither is it intended to be a fully operational CJC-wide joint scrutiny committee.

Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	Democratic Services, provided to the CJC by Cyngor Gwynedd, confirmed that agendas, reports, minutes and decisions were generally published through the usual arrangements during 2025/26. There were, however, a limited number of late agenda publications and recurring internal pressure around meeting-publication timetables. Minutes were generally published with the agenda for the subsequent meeting; earlier publication of draft minutes is an intended service improvement, subject to available resources. Joint overview and scrutiny arrangements were not operational during the year and continued to be developed, while the statutory scrutiny routes available through the constituent councils remained in place. Overall, the transparency framework operated in practice, but publication timeliness, scrutiny development and process resilience require further strengthening.
Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	The evidence identifies a recurring timeliness and resilience weakness in agenda publication and an incomplete joint-scrutiny model, rather than a systemic failure of openness or accountability. The material reviewed does not establish widespread publication non-compliance or a material failure of scrutiny. These matters are governance-development issues requiring completion and more resilient arrangements.
Improvement action	**Actions 2 and 3** - strengthen forward planning and publication controls and complete proportionate joint scrutiny arrangements.

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Governance arrangements and evidence	The CJC's statutory and programme outcomes were set out in approved function-specific plans rather than a single overarching Corporate Plan. The Operations reporting map identifies the Growth Deal's Final Deal Agreement, Delivery and Funding Agreement and Portfolio Business Case; the Investment Zone's agreed programme and annual delivery plan; regional skills and energy plans; the Regional Transport Plan and Year 1 Delivery Plan; the Strategic Development Plan Delivery Agreement; and a Transformation Plan. Reporting routes differed by function. Growth Deal performance was reported quarterly to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee and to government and local-authority scrutiny channels; Investment Zone delivery was reported through its advisory and economic well-being arrangements; and transport and strategic planning progress was reported through their sub-committees. Further monitoring included reporting to Welsh Government on skills and energy and six-monthly CJC reporting on transformation. The Growth Deal also had a benefits-realisation framework and a carbon-emissions and biodiversity statement and methodology.
Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	The Operations evidence confirms that the CJC had approved plans and identifiable monitoring routes across its principal functions during 2025/26. The Growth Deal had an established quarterly reporting framework, supplemented by annual portfolio/programme/project assessment and meetings with the UK and Welsh Governments. The published transport and strategic planning papers demonstrate progress through the relevant consultation, planning and member-decision stages; the Investment Zone used annual delivery planning and programme reporting. The Growth Deal's benefits-realisation and carbon/biodiversity arrangements provided a framework for assessing intended benefits; their existence is not, of itself, evidence that all benefits had been achieved. The Strategic Transport I& Strategic Planning Leads consider that the published papers contain the important information for their respective areas. Taken together, these sources demonstrate defined outcomes and active programme-level oversight, while not establishing a single organisation-wide assessment of delivery against all outcomes.

Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	The CJC did not have an overarching Corporate Plan or a single consolidated performance view across its functions. This did not mean that outcomes or reporting were absent: approved programme plans and reporting existed, but the frequency, recipients and maturity of monitoring differed. Operations' reporting map also indicates that some future reporting routes remained to be confirmed. The absence of a consolidated corporate view is a proportionate governance-development matter, not evidence in itself of significant underperformance or a material failure.
Improvement action	**Action 4** – draw existing programme returns into a short, proportionate CJC-wide view of strategic outcomes, performance and material exceptions. This need not entail a new corporate planning framework or duplicate established programme reporting.

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise achievement of intended outcomes

Governance arrangements and evidence	Formal CJC and sub-committee decision-making; statutory officer advice; the Growth Deal Delivery and Funding Agreement, Portfolio Board and programme/project boards; business-case and gateway processes; named portfolio, programme and project Senior Responsible Officers; and the existing procurement, contract and funding arrangements. Operations reports that Growth Deal business cases follow the Five Case model and relevant Better Business Cases/Green Book guidance and are subject to independent gateway review at key decision points. Funding agreements with main project sponsors address conflicts of interest and transparent, competitive and sustainable procurement.
Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	Operations' account of Growth Deal governance provides first-line evidence of defined decision routes: Portfolio Board consideration before reports are submitted to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee, engagement with programme/project boards and governments where appropriate, and business-case/gateway review. A portfolio Senior Responsible Officer and programme/project Senior Responsible Officers support accountability. The transport programme used the CJC's decision route when Welsh Government Regional Transport Funding timetables did not align with local governance, leading to an additional CJC meeting; a later delegated-authority proposal addressed the in-year change process after guidance was delayed. These are examples of adaptation to new arrangements rather than evidence that proper decision routes were bypassed. The Contract Procedure Rules remained in operation, though their review and replacement of inherited contract templates were incomplete.
Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	The Contract Procedure Rules and inherited contract templates require modernisation, and in-year transport-funding decision arrangements were not settled as early as planned. The Operations note does not independently establish that every project gateway, sponsor procurement or control operated without exception; no such blanket assurance is inferred. No material failure is demonstrated by the material reviewed.
Improvement action	**Action 2** - complete the constitutional, delegation and procurement-framework review, including updated Contract Procedure Rules, appropriate contract templates and clear decision routes for in-year programme changes.

Principle E: Developing the CJC's capacity, including leadership and individual capability

Governance arrangements and evidence	Organisation structure and statutory officer capacity; recruitment and vacancies; induction and capability; performance management; succession and business continuity; hosted support arrangements and service-level agreements.
Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	The CJC continued to develop its organisational capacity during 2025/26 as its statutory and programme responsibilities expanded. Capacity has been increased through regular recruitment exercises, and the organisation has continued to draw on hosted support from Cyngor Gwynedd, including HR, finance and Democratic Services. Those hosted services continued to operate during the year. Agreement of a comprehensive service-level agreement covering the hosted arrangements took longer than intended, but the agreement is now close to conclusion and signature. On the information used for this draft, no material service-continuity or operational-control failure resulted from the delay. The overall position is therefore one of an organisation continuing to build capacity and formalise supporting arrangements rather than one lacking the capability to discharge its functions.
Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	The delayed completion of the hosted-services SLA reduced formal clarity over service standards, accountability, performance and escalation arrangements during part of the period. Continued recruitment also reflects the need to build resilience as the CJC's operating model expands. No material failure of service delivery or organisational capacity has been identified.
Improvement action	**Action 4** - conclude and embed the hosted-services SLA and continue proportionate review of capacity, resilience and key-person dependencies as the CJC operating model develops.

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Governance arrangements and evidence	The CJC's financial management arrangements are overseen by the Chief Finance Officer, with budgetary control, financial monitoring and reporting undertaken through the established financial management framework. Financial performance and reserves are reported to the CJC and relevant sub-committees. During 2025/26, a draft corporate risk register was developed but had not been formally approved. The Growth Deal maintained a comprehensive programme risk register, which was kept under review and reported regularly to the Economic Well-being Sub-Committee. The review also drew upon the audit assurance information provided through the Chief Finance Officer and relevant Audit Wales reports.
Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	Financial monitoring and programme-level risk management arrangements operated during the year. In particular, the Growth Deal maintained an established risk reporting framework, with regular reporting to members. The CJC-wide corporate risk management framework was less developed. Although work progressed on a corporate risk register, the absence of a formally approved and embedded framework limited the consistency of corporate risk identification, ownership and escalation across the organisation. The review has taken account of the Chief Finance Officer's assurance and the relevant Internal Audit findings (if any) in assessing the effectiveness of financial management and internal control.
Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	The principal weakness was the absence of a formally approved and embedded corporate risk management framework. Existing programme-level arrangements provided important controls but did not constitute a comprehensive CJC-wide risk management system.

Improvement action	**Actions 1, 2 and 5** - approve and embed the corporate risk framework; complete the procurement/constitutional review; and strengthen integrated audit and assurance follow-up.

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

Governance arrangements and evidence	Published CJC and sub-committee reports and decisions; functional and programme performance reporting; scrutiny participation by members of the six constituent councils in the Growth Deal arrangements; the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee; Internal Audit, Audit Wales and action follow-up. The Operations reporting map identifies reporting to the Economic Well-being, Strategic Transport and Strategic Planning Sub-Committees, the CJC and external funders, with frequency differing by programme.
Assessment of effectiveness during 2025/26	The Operations Team's reporting map and Growth Deal governance note demonstrate established routes through which programme activity was reported to members, funders and other oversight bodies. Growth Deal arrangements allow the six councils' members to participate in scrutiny; that programme-specific arrangement should not be conflated with a fully operational CJC-wide joint overview and scrutiny committee. Democratic Services confirmed that routine publication generally operated but identified agenda-timetable pressure and GASC quoracy problems. Prior-year audit materials offer useful background, not a substitute for the 2025/26 audit position.
Weaknesses, exceptions or limitations	Two scheduled GASC meetings were not quorate and a further difficulty arose in September 2026. Some agenda publication was late; programme reporting has not yet been consolidated into a CJC-wide picture. No material unaddressed control failure has been demonstrated as a consequence of the quoracy problems, but oversight resilience and the completeness of assurance remain live issues.
Improvement action	**Action 5** - strengthen GASC attendance/quorum resilience, annual work planning and integrated assurance/action tracking, including escalation of overdue or high-risk actions.

7. Governance developments, issues and materiality assessment

The review distinguishes significant governance issues from material weaknesses, governance-development actions and routine operational matters. In assessing materiality, regard has been had to actual effect, the risk created, whether a weakness is isolated or systemic, and the effectiveness of compensating controls.

Governance matter	Evidence / position	Materiality judgment	Final treatment
Corporate risk and assurance framework	A draft CJC corporate risk register was developed but not formally approved. Growth Deal risks were managed through a comprehensive register under continuous review and regular member reporting.	Governance development/control weakness. The corporate gap requires action, but compensating programme-level controls operated and no significant governance failure is identified.	Principle F; Action 1.

Governance matter	Evidence / position	Materiality judgment	Final treatment
Democratic transparency, scrutiny and publication	Publication arrangements generally operated, but some agenda publication was late and timetable pressure recurred. Joint scrutiny arrangements remained in development; constituent-council scrutiny routes remained available.	Governance development/control weakness rather than systemic failure of openness or accountability.	Principle B; Actions 2 and 3.
Standards and ethical governance	Members' interests were collected and published and statutory-officer advice was embedded. Standards Sub-Committee establishment was delayed while membership-eligibility issues were resolved. Employee Code of Conduct and supporting policies remained to be completed.	Governance development requiring completion and embedding; no material ethical or lawfulness failure identified.	Principle A; Action 3.
Constitution, delegations, procurement and decision routes	The operating model continued to evolve after Growth Deal transfer. Operations reports a Delivery and Funding Agreement, Portfolio Board, programme/project Senior Responsible Officers and Five Case business-case/gateway reviews. Contract Procedure Rules and inherited templates need updating; transport-funding timetables/guidance occasionally required additional or later CJC decisions.	Governance development. No material unlawful decision or procurement failure identified.	Principle D; Action 2.
GASC assurance and resilience	Two scheduled GASC meetings were not quorate and a further quoracy difficulty arose after adjustments to quorum arrangements.	Assurance-resilience weakness requiring action, but no significant unaddressed control failure has been shown to result.	Principle G; Action 5.
Hosted services, capacity and corporate performance	The Operations Team's note records key appointments and interim specialist support, and reports that hosted services were received in line with proposed SLAs pending formal agreement. Approved function-specific plans and reporting routes operated, but no overarching Corporate Plan or consolidated CJC-wide performance view existed.	Governance development. Formal service standards and corporate performance oversight need strengthening. The evidence does not establish a material service interruption or systemic delivery failure.	Principles C and E; Action 4.
Audit, policy and other control matters	Prior-year internal/external audit evidence provides context only. Relevant audit assurance, corporate policy development and other control matters have been considered as part of the review. No additional significant governance issue has been identified from the information provided. Outstanding policy-development matters are addressed through the Governance Improvement Plan	No significant failure is demonstrated by the evidence presently reviewed.	Principles A, F and G; Actions 2, 3 and 5.

Materiality assessment

On the information reviewed to date, no significant governance failure has been demonstrated during 2025/26. The CJC-wide corporate risk framework remained in development, and there was no overarching Corporate Plan or single consolidated view of performance across the CJC's functions. Approved programme plans and regular reporting nevertheless operated in individual areas, particularly the Growth Deal. Other matters requiring completion include the constitutional/procurement framework, democratic and ethical governance, hosted-services SLAs and organisational resilience, and GASC quoracy and assurance follow-up. The materiality assessment takes account of the functioning programme-level arrangements without treating them as proof that every corporate control was effective.

Overall materiality conclusion: no significant governance failure has been identified. The matters above are treated as governance-development or control-improvement issues and are carried into the Governance Improvement Plan.

8. Governance improvement action plan 2026/27

The Governance Improvement Plan contains the small number of specific, owned and measurable actions arising from the evidence and materiality assessment. It is intended to focus corporate attention on the governance arrangements that require completion, strengthening or further embedding during 2026/27.

Ref	Action	Lead	Target	Assurance / reporting	Status
1	Approve and embed a CJC corporate Risk Management Strategy and corporate risk register, with clear links to operational, programme and project risk and proportionate reporting/escalation.	Chief Finance Officer	31 December 2026	Senior officers; GASC; CJC	In progress
2	Complete the constitutional and decision-making framework review, including officer delegations, Contract Procedure Rules, updated contract templates, forward-work arrangements and strengthened controls for timely publication of member and officer decisions and meeting papers.	Monitoring Officer / Procurement / Democratic Services	31 January 2027	GASC / CJC	In progress

Ref	Action	Lead	Target	Assurance / reporting	Status
3	Complete and embed proportionate democratic and ethical governance arrangements. Work with the six constituent councils to facilitate the establishment and implementation of proportionate joint overview and scrutiny arrangements, including agreement of the necessary administrative and professional support; establishment and work planning of the Standards Sub-Committee, adoption of the employee Code of Conduct, completion of whistleblowing and counter-fraud policies, and continued maintenance of interests arrangements.	Monitoring Officer / Democratic Services	31 March 2027	Relevant committee(s); CJC	In progress
4	Conclude and embed the hosted-services SLA with clear ownership, service standards and escalation arrangements; continue a proportionate capacity/resilience review; and provide a concise CJC-wide summary of strategic outcomes, performance and material exceptions using existing programme reporting.	Chief Executive / Operations and Resources Manager	SLA by 31 October 2026; integrated reporting and resilience review by 31 March 2027	Senior officers; GASC/CJC	In progress

Ref	Action	Lead	Target	Assurance / reporting	Status
5	Strengthen Governance & Audit Sub-Committee resilience, including attendance/quorum planning and proportionate annual work planning, and implement integrated tracking of Internal Audit, Audit Wales and AGS actions with escalation of overdue/high-risk items.	Monitoring Officer / Chief Finance Officer	31 December 2026	GASC / CJC	In progress

The Monitoring Officer will keep the Governance Improvement Plan under review and may consolidate, amend or close actions where evidence demonstrates that the intended governance outcome has been achieved.

9. Assurance conclusion and sign-off

Chief Executive's statement on governance

As Chief Executive, I recognise my responsibility for ensuring that the Corporate Joint Committee has appropriate management arrangements, organisational capacity and internal controls to support the delivery of its statutory and strategic functions.

During 2025/26, the CJC continued to develop its corporate governance arrangements following the transfer of Growth Deal responsibilities and the expansion of its operating model. Established programme-level controls and reporting arrangements continued to operate, while work progressed to strengthen corporate risk management, organisational capacity and the formalisation of hosted-service arrangements.

I acknowledge the governance improvements identified in this Statement, including the need to complete and embed the corporate risk management framework, strengthen democratic and assurance arrangements, and further develop corporate performance reporting.

I support the Governance Improvement Plan and will ensure that the necessary management arrangements are in place to oversee its delivery and report progress to the appropriate member bodies.

Alwen Williams, CEO, Ambition North Wales, 16th September 2026

Overall assurance conclusion

Having considered the evidence provided and sought for the purposes of this exercise, together with assurances provided by the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer, the overall conclusion is that the CJC governance framework provided reasonable assurance that its functions were discharged lawfully, effectively and accountably during 2025/26. The review has not identified any significant governance failure that would materially undermine that conclusion.

The review has, however, identified a number of areas where governance arrangements require further development, formalisation or embedding, reflecting the CJC's evolving operating model and the transfer of additional responsibilities during the year. These include (to a greater or lesser degree) corporate risk management, constitutional and decision-making arrangements, ethical governance, hosted-service arrangements and the resilience of the CJC's audit and assurance arrangements.

The CJC recognises that, while these matters do not individually or collectively undermine the overall assurance conclusion, a structured Governance Improvement Plan is necessary to ensure that identified weaknesses are addressed, responsibilities are clearly assigned and improvements are delivered within agreed timescales. The Plan therefore forms an integral part of the CJC's commitment to strengthening its governance arrangements and ensuring that they remain proportionate and effective as the organisation develops.

Following CJC approval, delivery of the Governance Improvement Plan will be monitored through the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee, with material progress, delays and exceptions reported to the CJC at appropriate intervals.

Mark Watkins, Monitoring Officer, Ambition North Wales, 16th September 2026

Signatures

Chair of the North Wales CJC	Chief Executive
Signature:	Signature: ....
Cllr. Mark Pritchard, Corporate Joint Committee Chair	Alwen Williams, Chief Executive
Date:	Date: ....