NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

25 September, 2026

TITLE: Annual Report 2025/26

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the Annual Report for 2025/26.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. That the Corporate Joint Committee approve the Annual Report for 2025/26.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1. As stated in the report.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The Annual Report looks back on the progress made over the last year by Ambition North Wales. The report focusses on the Corporate Joint Committee, and its functions including Strategic Transport, Strategic Planning and Economic Well-being which includes the North Wales Growth Deal, Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, Regional Skills Partnership, and other funding streams including Shared Prosperity and Strategic Energy.

4.2. The report provides an overview of the progress made by the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. During the year where the Portfolio Management Office, Growth Deal and Regional Skills Partnership transferred into the Corporate Joint Committee, a number of milestones were achieved:

- The appointment of a full-time Chief Executive and Portfolio Director.
- The appointment of Non-Executive Advisors to strengthen the connection with the private sector. Providing an independent voice and constructive challenge.
- The appointment of Transport and Planning leads to drive forward our Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan.
- Continued agreement with Cyngor Gwynedd to provide a range of support services.
- Recruitment of officers to drive forward operations and programme delivery.
- The establishment of new committees.
- A Welsh Standards compliance review completed and submitted.
- The submission of our first Social Partnerships Duty Report 2024/25.

4.3. Within the report there is information on the progress made against the statutory duties on Regional Transport and Planning:

- A public consultation on the Regional Transport Plan was completed in April 2025.
- The Regional Transport Plan was approved by the Corporate Joint Committee in July 2025 and it became policy following approval by Welsh Government in September 2025.
- The Regional Transport Plan includes a Delivery Plan that sets out the schemes that could be delivered in North Wales if funding is available. Ambition North Wales worked closely with the local authorities in the region to prioritise which of these schemes to fund with Regional Transport funding in 2026/27.
- Work commenced on the Strategic Development Plan Delivery Agreement in April 2025, with a draft document published for public consultation during July and August 2025. Following consideration of the consultation feedback received, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee approved the draft Delivery Agreement in September 2025 for submission to Welsh Government.

4.4. For the first time, we are reporting on the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone as part of the Annual Report:

- The Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone was launched officially during the year.
- The Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone Skills Strategy was approved by the Skills Partnership.
- An initial £12 million of skills funding has been allocated to Wrexham University and Coleg Cambria over five years.
- Small Business Grants programmes were launched by both Flintshire and Wrexham councils.
- Work is underway with Transport for Wales to develop the business cases for a number of rail and bus projects.
- An Investment Zone Advisory Board has been established to oversee delivery and progress.

4.5. The report provides an overview of the Growth Deal and the progress made in carrying out the projects along with other key milestones achieved during the year, including:

- 7 projects in delivery. And a further 10 projects approved with funding allocated and the work progressing towards delivery.
- To date the Growth Deal has created 121 jobs, this includes 63 new jobs and 58 construction jobs.
- The Growth Deal has delivered a total investment of £34.21m in the North Wales economy.
- 86% of growth deal procurements have been awarded to companies located in North Wales and 79% of contracts awarded have been to suppliers who are registered / recognised as SMEs.

4.6. The Regional Skills Partnership has played a key part in supporting the work across Ambition North Wales.

- Supporting the development of the Growth Deal with workforce planning, providing labour market information, and engaging with project sponsors.
- Supporting skills planning for opportunities in the region.
- Working closely with employers to access skills support, inform training provision, and develop the workforce needed for growth and productivity.
- Ongoing development of the Skills Portal.

4.7. Work on Strategic Energy continued, including launching the North Wales Energy Advice Hub, development of the Energy dashboard, mapping of Renewable Energy and decarbonisation projects, and producing a Strategic Energy prospectus.

4.8. Successful delivery and completion of the projects funded by Shared Prosperity Fund, with highlights including hosting labour market workshops for 70 young people, supporting 16 farms to trial the latest Digital Technology, and supporting 7 organisations with feasibility studies for the Energy and decarbonisation projects.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from approving the decision sought in this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Annual Report 2025/26

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The Annual Report provides an important opportunity for the CJC to demonstrate transparency and accountability in the discharge of its functions and to report publicly on its activities and achievements during 2025/26.

Following approval, appropriate arrangements should be made for publication of the Annual Report."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"The report summarises the whole range of activities undertaken by Ambition North Wales during 2025/26 and the decision sought does not create a new spending commitment."