Cyd-Bwyllgor Corfforedig
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Corporate Joint Committee

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

25 September, 2026

TITLE: Transformation and Improvement Programme Update

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

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. To update Members on progress of the ongoing programme of transformation and improvement for 2026/27.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. To note the progress and challenges of the 2026/27 programme.

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 CJCs required vision and objectives.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The CJC has full operating status, meaning that it functions as a corporate entity, employs people, and has in place the necessary governance arrangements. This provides the primary framework of governance which, enables the CJC to function as a public authority across all of its functions.

4.2. Following the transfer of the Growth Deal, its funding and staff into the CJC on the 1st April 2025 and under the adopted brand of Ambition North Wales (ANW) is now 18 months into an ongoing multiyear programme of establishing the operating model for a new public body.

4.3. The programme continues to provide updates since transfer to the CJC outlining the breadth of organisational change through the programme covering progress and challenges. These reports, including decisions and minutes, are included below for ease of reference:

i. North Wales Corporate Joint Committee 13th June, 2025
ii. North Wales Corporate Joint Committee 28th November, 2025
iii. North Wales Corporate Joint Committee 20th March, 2026

4.4. 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 and 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 and embedding complex change within a new entity is challenging and requires flexible and specialist capacity from a mix of interim or consultancy support at various stages of its lifecycle.

5. 2026/27 PROGRAMME PROGRESS TO DATE

5.1. As outlined in previous reports the 2025/26 programme celebrated success but also outlined its challenges and concluded at the end of March 2026. The team were able to deliver approximately 35% of deliverables with 35% carried forward under development and 30% not started and moved into the new 2026/27 programme.

The current 2026/27 programme has continued to make positive progress despite challenging financial and human resource dependencies. Delivery has required an iterative 'agile' prioritisation approach to manage a range of simple to complex change for the year. This is regularly reviewed by the programme board and SRO (CEO) supported by a change control process. Key challenges since the previous report include:

i. Balancing capacity of resource to focus on ANW transformation and improvement in addition to BAU operational activity remains a challenge as further demand and requirements increase.
ii. Developing capabilities within a very small 'corporate' team to manage the requirements of a public body.
iii. Service Level Agreement completion and approval by both parties has been a challenging matter for formal agreement although services are currently being provided with funding. Recruitment of CJC approved funded resources can commence once agreements are signed.
iv. Appointments of new Cyngor Gwynedd HR and IT Service Managers to lead workstream delivery.
v. Workstream (functional) leads continue to be 'non-technical' project managers supported by the programme lead.
vi. Budget constraints are managed carefully and affordability aligned to prioritisation of projects within the programme
vii. External factors affecting planned organisational change
viii. Partner support to meet deadlines and progress projects
ix. Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee partner agreement

5.2. Despite the current challenges outlined the programme has continued to make a positive step change. A summary of positive progress and/or achievements include:

CEO's Office (Corporate)

i. Year 2 Welsh Government grant funding received to develop capacity and capability for ANW
ii. Portfolio Director appointed
iii. Head of PMO Delivery appointed
iv. Change Leadership development – Senior Leadership Team
v. Digital Transformation Data Learning – discovery stage
vi. Regional Culture, Digital and Creative Industry enquiry – discovery stage
vii. Business sector customer journey mapping – Welsh Gov/ANW joint working
viii. LGF – preparation for Year 2 and Year 3

Legal & Governance

i. Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer appointed
ii. Full constitutional review completed for approvals
iii. Register of Interest published
iv. Governance structure development
v. Standards sub-committee readiness for early 2027 launch
vi. Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee development
vii. Appointments Committee development
viii. Petition Scheme development
ix. Legal Case Management System supplier engagement

Finance

i. External audit plan delivered
ii. Internal Audit Plan delivered
iii. Inaugural Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan delivered
iv. Corporate risk strategy delivered

IT

i. Cyngor Gwynedd Head of IT appointed – supports ongoing IT workstream delivery
ii. Initial iTrent readiness
iii. Co-Pilot development

HR

i. Cyngor Gwynedd HR Service Manager appointed – supports ongoing HR workstream delivery
ii. 2026/27 Pay Policy published

Operations (General)

i. Business Advisory Board established
ii. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report delivered
iii. Team capability development including data protection, social partnerships
iv. Data Protection Officer trained and appointed
v. Service Level Agreement progress has taken a step change towards sign off
vi. Staff benefits procurement being finalised
vii. Annual staff survey – draft stage
viii. Brand guidelines – draft stage
ix. Communications Strategy and Protocol – draft stage

x. Social Partnership Duty Annual Report 2026/27 – draft stage
xi. Trade Union Recognition Agreement – draft stage
xii. Business Continuity Plan – draft stage

Operations (Policy)

i. Senior Policy Officer appointed
ii. Compliments, Comments, Complaints policy delivered
iii. Maternity Absence and Pay policy delivered
iv. Policy engagement with partners and commissioners ongoing
v. Well-being statement (including objectives) – draft stage
vi. Strategic Equalities and Human Rights Plan at draft stage including interim website notice of intent
vii. Freedom of Information – draft stage
viii. Data Protection and Privacy – draft stage
ix. Biodiversity and Resilience – draft stage
x. Policy on Awarding Grants (Welsh Language Standards) – draft stage

Procurement:

i. Successful appointment of a procurement officer following difficult market conditions
ii. Contracts review and upgrade under review
iii. Contracts register – draft stage
iv. E tendering platform review
v. Impact procurement platform replacement review

Transport

i. Audit Wales organisational performance audit completed for transport
ii. Transport officers recruited
iii. Regional Transport Plan Monitoring & Evaluation development

Planning

i. Preparations to recruit Senior Planner and Planning Officer roles

5.3. Prioritised delivery yet to start includes:

i. Appointment of permanent legal resource
ii. Section 151 and finance resource appointments
iii. Comms team resource and consultancy appointments
iv. Corporate Plan and Vision Statement development
v. Committee Management System
vi. Webcasting
vii. ANW time recording system replacement
viii. SharePoint (Document Management) Upgrade
ix. Cyngor Gwynedd deployment of new systems – ANW business readiness
x. Communications Plan
xi. Staff performance management (staff appraisal)
xii. Welsh Government Governance Review - CJCs
xiii. Public Participation Scheme
xiv. Annual Self-Assessment (Part 6)

5.4. The 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
xii. Public Sector Net Zero

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The ANW transformation and improvement as outlined is a multi-year programme. All known planned assumptions for funding are included within the current Medium term Financial Plan to enable the ongoing establishment of the organisation, the ongoing change and improvement requirements. This will enable the right people, process and technology capabilities to meet current and any known or unknown short to medium term demand. The CJC is currently in receipt of its year 2 of a 3 year grant funding agreement which contributes to capacity and capability building.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

APPENDICES:

None

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"The Transformation and Improvement Programme is an important mechanism for strengthening the CJC's corporate governance arrangements and supporting the continued development of the organisation.

A number of the workstreams involved will undoubtedly have direct legal and governance significance, and it will be important to ensure that statutory requirements and essential governance arrangements are observed.

At this time, the recommendation is to note progress only and does not itself authorise any changes. Any matters requiring formal approval would be brought forward through the appropriate decision-making processes in the normal way."

ii. Statutory Finance Officer:

"I can confirm the accuracy of the financial information contained in the report. As the report explains, 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 are considered in the Medium-Term Financial Plan which is a separate item on the meeting agenda, and subsequently in the budgets for future years."