



Meeting

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.00 am, FRIDAY, 22ND JULY, 2022

Location

Virtual Meeting / Cyfarfod Rhithiol

Contact Point

Annes Siôn

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(DISTRIBUTED Friday, 15 July 2022)

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Council Members

Cllr. Jason McLellan - Denbighshire County Council
Cllr. Llinos Medi Huws - Isle of Anglesey County Council
Cllr. Charlie McCoubury - Conwy County Borough Council
Cllr. Mark Pritchard - Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr. Ian Roberts - Flintshire County Council
Cllr. Dyfrig L Siencyn - Cyngor Gwynedd

Snowdonia Member

Cllr. Annwen Hughes – Snowdonia National Park Authority

Chief Officers

Dafydd Gibbard - Cyngor Gwynedd – Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive
Dylan Williams - Isle of Anglesey County Council
Iwan Davies - Conwy County Borough Council
Neal Cockerton - Flintshire County Council
Graham Boase - Denbighshire County Council
Ian Bancroft - Wrexham County Borough Council
Emyr Williams – Snowdonia National Park Authority

Statutory Officers

Dewi Aeron Morgan – Chief Finance Officer
Iwan G Evans – Monitoring Officer

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of Personal Interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4 - 6

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 of June, 2022 be signed as a true record.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

7 - 9

Dafydd Gibbard, the CJC's Chief Executive, and Dafydd L Edwards, CJC Project Lead Officer to present a report that deals with the appointment of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee's acting Chief Executive, and postpone any movement to employ staff to carry out the Planning and Transport duties for now.

6. CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR 2022/23

10

To agree on the dates for the North Wales corporate Joint Committee for 2022/23.

7. ADOPT WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

11 - 13

Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive, Gwynedd Council to present report on adopting the Welsh Language Standards.

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
28/01/2022

Present:

Voting Members - Councillors:- Jason McLellan (Denbighshire Council), Llinos Medi Huws (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy County Borough Council), Mark Pritchard (Wrexham County Borough Council) and Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd Council).

Snowdonia Member: Councillor Annwen Hughes (Snowdonia National Park Authority)

Chief Officers - Iwan Jones (Snowdonia National Park Authority), Dylan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Iwan Davies (Conwy County Borough Council), Neal Cockerton (Flintshire Council), Ian Bancroft (Wrexham County Borough Council), Richard Weigh (Wrexham County Borough Council), Graham Boase (Denbighshire Council) and Dafydd Gibbard (Gwynedd Council).

Officers in attendance -Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dafydd L. Edwards (Lead Officer Joint Committee Project, and representing the Statutory Finance Officer), Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department) and Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Resolved to elect Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn as Chair of the Joint Committee for 2022/23.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Resolved to elect Cllr Mark Pritchard as Vice-chair of the Joint Committee for 2022/23.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Ian Roberts (Flintshire Council), Emyr Williams (Chief Executive, Snowdonia National Park) but it was noted that Iwan Jones was deputising on his behalf, and Dewi Morgan (Section 151 Officer).

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Iwan Evans and Dafydd Gibbard for Item 9: Organisational Structure and Staffing

5. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Chair signed the minutes of the meetings held on 14 and 28 January 2022, as a true record.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

The report was presented by Dafydd L Edwards (Lead Officer Joint Committee Project).

DECISION

1. To establish a Strategic Planning Sub-Committee and a Strategic Transport Sub-Committee, and to approve the membership and voting rights as follows -
 - i. The Strategic Planning Sub-Committee with 7 voting members, one from each of the constituent authorities (6 Councils and SNPA).
 - ii. The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee with 6 voting members, one from each of the 6 Councils.
 - iii. Membership of the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee to be comprised of the relevant Cabinet member from each constituent Council who holds the portfolio for Planning Policy, and the SNPA representative.
 - iv. That the membership of the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee to be comprised of the relevant Cabinet member from each constituent Council who holds the portfolio for Transport Policy.

2. To confirm 22 July as the next CJC meeting date, and to confirm that all CJC meetings shall be held as virtually for the time being.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting the decision namely to establish two sub-committee for Strategic Planning and Transport, and to request a further report on the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-committees to the next meeting. It was also noted that the Standards and Governance and Audit Sub-committees be deferred until such time as confirmation of the statutory requirements has been received.

It was explained that the picture in terms of the structure of the Sub-committees has remained the same since the standard report submitted to the six Councils and the Park in December 2021. It was outlined that the structure was a matter for the future and that at this meeting, the Joint Committee only needed to decide on establishing two of the sub-committees. It was noted that, in doing so, the Joint Committee set a framework for delivering its initial duties.

The Monitoring Officer added that this was the first time for the Joint Committee to agree on the framework for sub-committee together with the membership.

It was explained that the position of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board was an item to be discussed in the autumn.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Members gave thanks for the work and the proposal made was supported.
- Support was expressed for the meetings to continue as virtual for the time being.

8. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

The report was submitted by Geraint Owen (Head of the Corporate Support Department, Gwynedd Council).

DECISION

To adopt the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee pay policy statement for 2022/23.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that it was self-explanatory. It was expressed that it was a duty on the Joint Committee to adopt a pay policy annually. It was explained that it was the Gwynedd Council pay policy that had been adopted in order to employ the "Ambition North Wales" staff and that another report on the agenda recommended extending the current arrangements for Gwynedd Council to provide the support services for the Joint Committee for a temporary period, and for this reason it was proposed to use an adaptation of the Gwynedd Council pay policy for 2022/23.

9. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

The report was presented by Dafydd L Edwards (Lead Officer Joint Committee Project).

DECISION

To re-appoint Dafydd Gibbard as the Joint Committee's Chief Executive, on an acting basis until the position is reviewed again.

To re-appoint Dewi Morgan as the Joint Committee's Chief Finance Officer and Iwan Evans as the Joint Committee's Monitoring Officer and Proper Officer.

To approve the ongoing arrangements for Gwynedd Council to provide support services for the CJC, at least until the date of transfer of the EAB to the CJC, or when the Partners to the EAB's "GA2" agree to an alternative model.

To adopt the Terms and Conditions of employment of Gwynedd Council, in effect at the date of this report, as its terms and conditions of employment for staff.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that although it recommended deciding on three Planning roles together with two Transport roles, it was explained that further discussions were needed before making a decision on these roles and, therefore, the relevant part of the recommendation was withdrawn to be discussed at the next meeting.

Consequently, it was noted that the report requested to re-appoint Gwynedd officers on a temporary basis, namely the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer and Proper Officer together with providing support services to the Joint Committee.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The proposal to withdraw the recommendation regarding the roles was supported.
- Gwynedd Council staff were thanked for taking on the role of leading on the work of establishing the Joint Committee, as it was a considerable workload to create a bureaucratic body.

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and concluded at 9:55am.

MEETING: **North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (the CJC)**
DATE: **22 July 2022**
SUBJECT: **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STAFFING**
CONTACT OFFICER: **Dafydd Gibbard, the CJC's Chief Executive, and Dafydd L Edwards, CJC Project Lead Officer**

DECISIONS SOUGHT:

To submit a request to the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to release part of their Portfolio Director's time to fulfil the role of the CJC's Chief Executive, on a temporary basis.

1. Introduction

This report deals with appointment of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee's acting Chief Executive (CJC), and postpone any movement to employ staff to carry out the Planning and Transport duties for now.

2. Options Appraisal for the CJC's Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

At its meeting on 17 June 2022, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee re-appointed Dafydd Gibbard as the CJC's Chief Executive, on an acting basis effective until the position is reviewed again by the CJC.

The CJC's Chief Finance Officer (s151) and the CJC's Monitoring Officer (MO) role are also being provided by Gwynedd Council. This, of course, ensures alignment with the EAB arrangements and there is a clear argument for the s151 and MO role to continue in this way (as it is probable that the NW Economic Ambition Board will transition into the NW CJC, possibly on 01/04/2023).

However, those arguments don't apply to the Chief Executive role, and the options for filling that role on a temporary basis include –

Option A - Creating a stand-alone post as Chief Executive of the CJC –

CJC members have sought to deliver value for money in establishing the CJC, when agreeing on a minimum budget approach to the whole CJC set-up in 2022/23. That has effectively led to this option being disregarded.

Option B - Formally appointing one of the 6 local authority Chief Executives as the CJC's Chief Executive.

This has proven to be difficult, given insufficient availability of time required to oversee the organisational (establishing systems and identity), political (post-election leadership) and staffing (line management for Strategic Planning and Regional Transport posts) developments.

Reappointment of Dafydd Gibbard (Gwynedd's Chief Executive) as the CJC's Chief Executive on a temporary basis was the only pragmatic solution for the interim period between June and September 2022.

Option C - Extending the role of Ambition North Wales' Portfolio Director (the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's chief officer) to include (part time) the CJC Chief Executive role as well.

Bearing in mind the likelihood that the EAB will soon be incorporated as part of the CJC, this is the 6 local authorities Chief Executives' preferred option, following consideration over a period of time.

The 6 North Wales local authority Leaders sit on both the Ambition Board and the CJC, and the model of drawing on the expertise of the Portfolio Director is being adopted in the Cardiff Capital Region for their CJC.

Also, the CJC Chief Executive could effectively be the 'client' for Gwynedd Council's support services, building on the excellent working relationship that already exists.

This Option would require approval by the Ambition Board. A number of aspects would need to be addressed from the perspective of the Ambition Board, such as 'back-filling' part of the Portfolio Director's role to create the necessary capacity.

The CJC will need to provide a temporary financial contribution to the EAB in order to give them the flexibility to make whatever internal adjustments they may need in order to continue to deliver the Growth Program effectively.

The Welsh Government is still engaging with HM Treasury on the timing of Orders which will solve the CJC's VAT status (the ability to claim a refund of VAT incurred), and the CJC's access to borrowing (from the PWLB at a low interest rate), but it is expected that there will be clarity "later in 2022, possibly in the autumn".

This means that possible transfer of the Ambition Board's functions to the CJC is by now much more likely, as the Westminster Government's agencies begin to move on the tax and borrowing issues. All of this supports the rationale for bringing the Ambition Board's leader more central to discussions establishing the CJC.

RECOMMENDATION

Recognising the implications of the developing CJC for Ambition North Wales, that the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee submit a request to the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to release part of their Portfolio Director's time to fulfil the role of the CJC's Chief Executive, on a temporary basis.

3. Arrangements for Planning and Transport Staff

The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee will need to consider arrangements for commissioning the Planning and Transport duties prescribed to be discharged by CJs – i.e. to prepare, develop, produce, monitor, review and revise both a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and a Regional Transport Plan (RTP).

The CJC has budget provision for the cost of employing 3 Strategic Planning posts and 2 Regional Transport posts for part of the 2022/23 year.

However, employing staff directly is not the only option to carry out these functions. Other options also need to be considered, such as appointing specialist consultants, or commissioning local authorities to lead on Strategic Planning and/or Regional Transport.

Since at the last meeting of the CJC, the timetable from the Government for carrying out the Strategic Transport Plan has been extended and it's now likely to be 2024 at the earliest when this work has to be completed. That means that there is less urgency to reach a decision.

Therefore, **it is recommended to wait for now, and defer establishing any regional Planning and Transport posts** to give the new temporary Chief Executive of the CBC an opportunity to influence the way forward.

VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer

I have worked with the author to prepare this report and confirm the contents.

Statutory Finance Officer

I have worked with the author to prepare this report and confirm the contents.

Agenda Item 6

MEETING: **North Wales Corporate Joint Committee**
DATE: **22 July 2022**
SUBJECT: **Meeting dates for 2022/23**

DECISIONS SOUGHT:

To agree on the following dates for the North Wales Corporate Joint Committees for 2022/23.

In order to make the arrangements for the Corporate Joint Committee meetings for the 2022/23 financial year, the Members are asked to accept the following dates for the meetings:

- 16 September (pm)
- 18 November (pm)
- 13 January (am)
- 31 March (am)

Please note that these are the dates we are currently scheduling; however, situations could arise where additional meetings will need to be arranged in order to meet the needs of the Joint Committee.

COMMENTS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer

I have worked with the author in the preparation of this report and confirm its contents.

Statutory Finance Officer

I have worked with the author to prepare this report and I support the dates proposed for the meetings.

MEETING: **North Wales Corporate Joint Committee**
DATE: **22 July 2022**
SUBJECT: **ADOPT WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS**
CONTACT OFFICER: **Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive, Gwynedd Council**

DECISION SOUGHT:

- Agree for the Joint Committee to adopt temporary Language Standards until specific standards are set on the Joint Committee by the Welsh Language Commissioner
 - Commissioning support to conduct impact assessments and providing translation services (meetings and written) as required from Cyngor Gwynedd as the authority which currently supports the Corporate Joint Committee
 - Commissioning the resource for the Standard setting process with the Commissioner, together with monitoring the implementation of the Standards and producing any progress reports as required from Cyngor Gwynedd as the authority which currently supports the Corporate Joint Committee
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1. Statutory Requirements and Expectations

Welsh Language Standards are set as statutory requirements on public bodies in Wales under Section 4 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Welsh Language Commissioner's office has advised that there is an intention to set language standards and the Joint Committees have added them to Regulation Number 1 of the Measure, which are the regulations that the Local Authorities and the National Park are already part of.

It is therefore expected that the Standards that will be imposed on the CJsCs will follow the same pattern as the Standards that have already been imposed on the individual authorities.

There is a specific process for setting standards on any body and it is currently uncertain how long this will take (the process can take up to 2 years). The Commissioner has therefore suggested that the CJC adopt the standards of one of the local authorities, as a temporary measure, and to ensure that the CJsCs operate in accordance with the principles of the Measure from the outset. Some of the other CJsCs across Wales have already acted on this, and have agreed to adopt the Standards of one of the connecting authorities.

In the North, there are not many differences between the Standards that have been imposed on the different Councils. The basic standards are all the same, with occasional variations or exceptions from some Councils in terms of the context where they need to be implemented. Therefore, if a Standard has already been set for all the authorities that are part of the Joint Committee it will be expected that the Joint Committee itself implements them as well. The Commissioner intends to carry out a mapping exercise over the next few weeks, which will look at highlighting the common standards between the different authorities and they will share that information with the Joint-Committee when it is ready.

2. Setting the Standards

The process outlined by the Commissioner's office for setting the Standards is slightly different from normal. They do not anticipate that an initial consultation stage will have to take place as usually happens, as the CJs have been added to Regulation No 1

The Commissioner will be formally contacting each CJC in the coming months, asking to attend a meeting of the CJC to hold a briefing session and outline the steps to follow. This meeting will be followed by a consultation process, with proposals submitted about the Standards that should be set.

It is understood that the Commissioner looks to be ambitious and to impose as many standards as possible on the joint committees, depending on the exact operational and structural nature of those joint committees.

3. Next steps – implementing the requirements of the standards

Members of the CJC are asked to discuss and consider adopting Standards that are in line with the Ambition Board's linguistic implementation principles as an interim measure until purposeful standards are placed on the Joint Corporate Committee by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

It is recommended in the first instance that focus is placed on those standards that are most relevant to the current structure and approach of the CJC, ensuring that any public services are delivered bilingually. The ability to provide services effectively and to be able to respect the linguistic choice and the need of the public should be prioritised.

This would also entail undertaking an assessment of the linguistic skills required for each new post that could be established by the CJC, in line with the expectation of the Standards. When advertising, a post will need to be categorised and indicate whether it is Essential or Desirable for the appointee to have those skills, or that there is an opportunity to learn having accepted the post.

The language officers of the relevant bodies are supportive of this idea of adopting the recommended standards as an interim measure, but it is believed that some practical issues also need clarity going forward, and in

particular who will be responsible for some aspects of the implementation of the Standards.

Some elements of the standards require a specific operational resource. That is, specific steps will need to be taken to ensure compliance which is more than asking staff to act bilingually. These areas include:

- Monitoring compliance and dealing with complaints
- Translation – written and simultaneous translation
- Assess the impact of policy decisions
- Recruitment arrangements

RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Joint Committee;

- **Agrees to adopt the Standards on the basis of what is currently relevant to the Ambition Board as an interim step, until the Commissioner has set certain standards.**
- **Commissioning support to conduct impact assessments and providing translation services (meetings and written) from Cyngor Gwynedd, as the authority which currently supports the Corporate Joint Committee**
- **Commissioning the resource for the Standard setting process with the Commissioner, together with monitoring the implementation of the Standards and producing any progress reports from Cyngor Gwynedd, as the authority which currently supports the Corporate Joint Committee**

COMMENTS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer

These steps would be in line with the Language Commissioner Office's suggestion and would ensure that suitable temporary arrangements are in place. It is therefore a sensible and appropriate way to move forward.

Statutory Finance Officer

We need to respond to the Welsh Language Commissioner's office on this, and the recommendation to adopt the Standards based on those relevant to the Ambition Board is a pragmatic solution. Regarding resources for the Standards setting process with the Commissioner, the option of purchasing this service from a supporting authority would be consistent with the members' intention to adhere to a minimum budget for this year.