



**MINUTES OF THE
MID WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 29TH JANUARY 2024
9.30 am to 11 am via Zoom Webinar**

PRESENT

Powys County Council

County Councillor James Gibson-Watt, Leader / Chair of the Mid Wales CJC
Diane Reynolds, Interim Director, Economy & Community Services (DR)
Clive Pinney, Head of Legal and Democratic Services / CJC Monitoring Officer
Nicola Williams, Strategic Programme Delivery Manager (NW)
Julie Williams, CJC Programme Support Officer (*taking notes*)

In attendance:

Paul Griffiths, Consultant (PG)
Jason Blewitt, Audit Wales (JB)

Ceredigion County Council

County Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader / Vice Chair of Mid Wales CJC
Barry Rees, Corporate Director (BR)
Duncan Hall, Section 151 Officer and Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement (DH)
Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer-Legal & Governance Services (& Monitoring Officer) (EP)

In attendance:

Sarah Groves-Phillips, Planning Policy Manager, Economy & Regeneration (SGP)
Rhidian Jones, Translator
Llinos Williams, Translator

Bannau Brycheiniog

County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe, Vice Chair of BBNPA (GR)
Gareth Jones, Director of Planning and Place (GJ)

1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
----	---------------------------

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee Formal Meeting.

2.	APOLOGIES
----	-----------

Apologies received -

Powys County Council
Emma Palmer, Chief Executive

Ceredigion County Council
Eifion Evans, Chief Executive (due to joining/technical issues)
Ann Elias, Regional Transport Lead (due to joining/technical issues)

3.	DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST
----	-------------------------

There were no disclosures of interests to declare relating to matters to be considered on the agenda.

4.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
----	---------------------------------

To approve the minutes of the last Mid Wales CJC & AGM Meeting held on Thursday, 12th October 2023.

County Councillor Bryan Davies proposed that the minutes of the CJC meeting held on 12th October 2023 be signed as a true record and seconded by County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe.

5.	CJC FINANCE OUTTURN ON THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR 2022/23
----	--

To approve the Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee Finance Outturn Report on the Annual Return for 2022-23 presented by Duncan Hall, Justin Davies and Auditors.

- Annual Return for the financial year ending 31st March 2023.
- Outturn position for 2022-23 in the October meeting total expenditure of just over £76,000 split between General and Strategic Development Planning.
- Showing an underspend, allowing a carry forward into reserves total just over £83,000.
- That outturn position is reflected in the annual return which is in Appendix 2.

- Appendix 1 - Audit Wales, there are no adjustments, fully unqualified opinion which means a clean bill of health in terms of the annual return. A recommendation on the report is to approve the annual return as stated.
- Jason Blewitt, Audit Wales, confirms a positive report received and completed on a reasonable basis with no underlying issues. Auditor General to sign off on 7th February 2024.
- Thanks to the Ceredigion Finance team for assistance during the Audit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

County Councillor Bryan Davies proposed that the Annual Return is agreed and approved for 2022/23 and seconded by County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe.

6.	AUDIT WALES – CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
----	---

The CJC is asked to consider how it may take forward the recommendations made in the final Summary Report from Audit Wales.

- The Audit Report is for information as it has been discussed at a CJC meeting and now received in final format, so today that CJC are asked to accept the report and five recommendations for taking forward and reporting back periodically to the CJC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **As set out on page 14 of the Audit Wales Report –**
 - 1) **Governance arrangements**
 - 2) **Delivering the Strategic Planning functions**
 - 3) **Meeting Public Sector duties**
 - 4) **Partnership working and involving the National Park Authorities**
 - 5) **Meeting duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act**

County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe proposed that the Audit Wales Report and the five recommendations are accepted and this was seconded by County Councillor Bryan Davies.

7.	CJC BUDGET 2024-25
----	--------------------

To receive a report from Duncan Hall, Section 151 Officer on the proposed budget for the Mid Wales CJC 2024-25.

- The CJC has a legal duty to set the budget by the 31st January preceding the next financial year.

- Budget proposed £317,000 for next financial year split into three components
 - - General Budget
 - Regional Transport Plan Budget
 - Strategic Development Planning Budget
- There are seven recommendations in total, four which cover the general budget and the RTP which Ceredigion and Powys members to vote on.
- Three recommendations covering the Strategic Development Planning budget which is for all three Authorities to vote on.
- Appendix 1 has the detail of the proposed budget –
 - General Budget - £144,000 proposed as a budget requirement, split 50/50 between Powys and Ceredigion County Councils mainly made up of a small number of employee costs and overhead costs of running the CJC, be that audit fees, insurance, translation and democratic support, legal input and finance support.
 - Regional Transport Plan (RTP) bringing a grant received and accepted from the Welsh Government for 23/24 £125,000 and then for next financial year a grant of £100,000 to progress the work on the RTP.
 - RTP is 100% grant funded and no need for anyone to contribute towards that.
 - Strategic Development Planning (SDP) has a small number of employee costs and small number of overheads, Audit Wales insurance, etc.
 - That budget of nearly £73,000 is proposed to be funded by Bannau Brycheiniog in terms of 11.45% which is the historic population share, agreed previously, still based on 2018 population.
 - 11.45% for Bannau Brycheiniog and then balance split 50/50 between Powys and Ceredigion County Councils.
 - A small number of reserves have been brought in to balance off that budget.
 - Key to remember on the SDP budget is there will be a much greater requirement once the delivery agreements are advanced, budget will need to be revised once clearer on direction of travel for the 25/26 budget, may need to be an in-year revision.

Summary –

Total budget of overall £317,000 split as above which means -

- Ceredigion CC - £100,000 contribution
- Powys CC - £100,000 contribution
- Bannau Brycheiniog - £17,193 contribution to the SDP element.



CJC%20Budget%20r
epor



CJC%20Budget%202024%

RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Ceredigion and Powys Council MWCJC Members approve the following regarding the General Budget:

- (a) To approve the General Expenditure Budget for the MWCJC for 2024/25 of £144,370 and £100,000 for the Regional Transport Plan Budget as outlined in Appendix A.
- (b) To approve if by the end of 2024/25 there is an underspend against the General Budget that the underspend will be held in an earmarked reserve specifically ring fenced for future years General Budget expenditure.
- (c) To approve a levy chargeable against Powys and Ceredigion County Councils of £72,185 each in respect of the General Expenditure Budget for the MWCJC for 2024/25.
- (d) To approve an increase in the budget for 2023/24 of £125,000 expenditure in relation to the Regional Transport Plan which will be funded by a grant received from Welsh Government.

RECOMMENDATION

Proposals 10.1 agreed and accepted by Councillor Bryan Davies and seconded by Councillor James Gibson Watt.

10.2 It is recommended that all MWCJC Members approve the following regarding the Strategic Planning Budget:

- (e) To approve the Strategic Planning Expenditure Budget for the MWCJC for 2024/25 of £72,823 as outlined in Appendix A.
- (f) To approve if by the end of 2024/25 there is an underspend against the Strategic Planning Budget that the underspend will be held in an earmarked reserve specifically ring fenced for future years Strategic Planning expenditure.
- (g) To approve a levy chargeable against Powys and Ceredigion County Councils of £27,815 each and a levy of £7,193 chargeable against the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in respect of the Strategic Planning Expenditure Budget for the MWCJC for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATION

Proposals 10.2 are agreed and accepted by Councillor Bryan Davies and seconded by Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe.

8.	DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN CONSULTATION UPDATE
----	--

To consider and approve the Draft Corporate Plan following the consultation period presented by Paul Griffiths, Consultant.

- Last Autumn, approval to go out to consultation on the draft CJC Corporate Plan after a scheduled workshop in the Summer.
- Attached to the report is an appendices list of organisations and bodies that were consulted.
- Responses are attached as Appendix 2.
- Two documents being asked for approval today –
 - 1) CJC Corporate Strategies
 - 2) Corporate Impact Assessment Plan
- Over the next year more clarity received from Welsh Government on expectations from the CJC and expectation that the document will emerge as a strategy and be reviewed and revised on at least an annual basis.
- Welcome any questions or comments and subject to approval and the document is finalised, publication on the website for wider public information.

RECOMMENDATION for the CJC Corporate Plan on Appendix 3 and the Corporate Impact Assessment Plan in Appendix 4 be agreed and accepted.

Councillor Bryan Davies proposed that the Draft CJC Corporate Plan/Appendix 3 and the Corporate Impact Assessment Plan in Appendix 4 is agreed and accepted and seconded by County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe.

9.	REPORT FROM THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE
----	---

To receive the report on the update of the Regional Transport Planning Sub Committee, together with the associated appendices presented by Ann Elias.

- Report will be summarised by Carwyn Jones-Evans as Ann Elias unable to join today due to technical difficulties.
- There are three decisions to be considered today –
 - 1) To note the contents of the report
 - 2) To note the Terms of Reference of the Regional Transport Planning Sub Committee
 - 3) To note acceptance of funding and next steps.
- Officers and Elected Members conversations have been taking place since last Autumn 2023. During the last CJC before Christmas it was to effectively submit an implementation plan and request funding to deliver.

- Funding approved and received from Welsh Government to deliver the Regional Transport Plan.
- In terms of the Terms of Reference, having had Tracc previously the TOR have been updated to acknowledge the withdrawal from Tracc and to remove any references to the word Tracc. See Appendix 1.
- The Implementation Plan was submitted to Welsh Government by the deadline of 31st October 2023 and received confirmation just after Christmas and this has been reflected in the Grants Award in the Budget also.
- The principal amount of the funding is to obtain Consultancy support to develop and deliver the plan for the region. The tender exercise is currently out and deadline is 5th February 2024 and hopefully appoint by the 1st March 2024.
- The funding has been received late in the financial year and challenging to meet original deadlines. We are unlikely to meet some of the early deadlines but the requirement is to deliver a Regional Transport Plan by 31st March 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

- **To ratify the amended Terms of Reference being proposed by the Sub Committee in Appendix 1.**

County Councillor Bryan Davies proposes acceptance of the amended Terms of Reference in Appendix 1 and seconded by County Councillor James Gibson Watt.

10.	REPORT ON THE PROGRESS IN RELATION TO ESTABLISHING THE ECONOMIC WELLBEING SUB COMMITTEE
-----	---

To receive a report on the progress in relation to establishing the Economic Wellbeing Sub Committee presented by Carwyn Jones-Evans.

- The Sub Committee has been established but is not yet operational.
- This is a narrative update of progress re developing the scope and purpose of the Economic Wellbeing Sub Committee.
- Building on previous reports that the CJC have received in July and October last year.
 - 1) In relation to the first item, the refresh of the vision of Growing Mid Wales which is largely completed but not in time for this CJC meeting., this will be brought back to a future meeting.
 - 2) OECD Workshop held in October 2023 and draft Action Plan received just after Christmas.
 - 3) Conversations need to be had around the Growing Mid Wales and what additional functions need to be looked at but any implications and operationally of delivering those functions.
 - 4) Work in progress on existing governance and membership of the sub committee.

- In terms of the Forward Work Plan bringing all that together is we need to have a conversation on the scope and function of the Economic Well Being Sub Committee. OEC Report will need to be considered.
- This needs to be mapped out with the existing functions of the Mid Wales Growth Deal, looking to take place around February/March this year.

RECOMMENDATION

County Councillor Bryan Davies proposes to accept the recommendation that further conversations need to take place on the scope and functions of the Economic Well Being Sub Committee considering the OECD Report and this was seconded by County Councillor James Gibson Watt.

11.	REPORT FROM STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE
-----	--

To receive a report from the Strategic Development Planning (SDP) Sub Committee presented by Sarah Groves-Phillips.

- SDP Sub Committee met several times and decision taken to dedicate some resource to 0.5 full time equivalent to undertake preparatory work until March 2024.
- As shown in Budget earlier position agreed going forward to 2024/25.
- No formal decision can be made on a delivery agreement until decisions have been made regionally of how best to progress the SDP.
- SDP Workshop scheduled for 29th February 2024.
- Powys seeking Monitoring Officer advice re how to move forward re replacement plan preparation, then decided to seek formal legal advice.
- Further discussions to take place in upcoming SDP Workshop, a paper will be presented at next CJC in May 2024.
- In terms of BBNPA, decisions to be made in Spring 2024 and presented at a CJC meeting appropriately.
- The Ceredigion replacement LDP still remains on formal pause due to phosphates issues and the impending Marine sac data release with County wide implications.
- On a more National update, attention drawn to paragraph number 7 in the report regarding a meeting attended by SGP “The Planning Officer Society for Wales” (POSW).



Agenda%20item%20no.%

- Further to the report, setting up Working Groups and a draft budget report has been undertaken, not presented today as need SDP Workshop to discuss and understand requirements to progress.

- Skills mapping is slightly on hold as need to understand areas of specialism across the planning policy and development teams across the region.
- Ceredigion have undertaken the mapping; Powys have been busy on LDP 2 replacement and BBNPA have not had capacity to undertake.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) **For Members to note the progress and narrative update on the actions undertaken to date.**
- 2) **For Members to consider and comment on the proposed Forward Work Plan set out in paragraph 10 and that the Members support the proposal.**

County Councillor Bryan Davies would welcome some more information on ‘skills mapping’ and SGP clarified further.

County Councillor Bryan Davies also queried the possibility of more funding from the Welsh Government. SGP explained that WG are not providing any resource support to the SDP unlike the Regional Transport Planning (RTP) where there is a grant available.

The expectation is that the CJC will provide the budget for the SDP work, SGP clarified further.

County Councillor Bryan Davies proposed that recommendations 1) and 2) above are agreed and accepted and the motion was carried unanimously.

12.	REPORT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS FOR THE MID WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE
-----	--

To receive a report on the Compliance of the Mid Wales CJC with the Welsh Language Standards.

- The purpose of the Report is to update the Mid Wales CJC Members and Officers with a proposed way forward for the draft Compliance Notice, which is being served by the Welsh Language Commissioner, currently out for consultation.
- NW gave a brief background of the meetings that have been held with the Commissioners Office and the Mid Wales CJC.
- The Commissioners Office served a compliance notice on the Mid Wales CJC to adopt the Ceredigion Welsh Language Standards which are considerably higher than Powys CC standards. If Powys would have to comply it would mean a huge financial burden.
- Meeting with Commissioners Office on 14th December 2023 to propose way forward and NW needs to respond to the consultation where Mid Wales CJC has been given an extension so that the recommendations could be considered and approved.

- Recommendations to ensure the MWCJC satisfies with the requirements of the Welsh Language Commission and is compliant with the Welsh Language Requirements 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The MWCJC adopts Powys County Council's Welsh Language standards as a baseline for compliance with the Welsh Language Regulations 2021.
- 2) The MWCJC will work to progress to improve on its adopted Welsh Language standards.
- 3) The annual reporting requirements for the MWCJC will be in line with the existing arrangements for the two Local Authorities. The first report will be due by the end of June 2025.
- 4) The extent to which the MWCJC's promotional activities could be incorporated into the existing strategies of the relevant local authorities when they are next up for review.

County Councillor Bryan Davies proposes to agree and accept the above recommendations 1) to 4) and this was seconded by County Councillor James Gibson Watt.

13.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
-----	--------------------

To receive any other business.

- County Councillor Bryan Davies raised concerns with the ICT issues encountered today and previously. The Monitoring Officer confirms he has contacted Powys ICT to set up a priority meeting with Ceredigion ICT to resolve these issues.

14.	DATES OF NEXT MID WALES CJC MEETINGS
-----	--------------------------------------

Thursday, 9th May 2024 at 2 pm to 3 pm

(AGM) Thursday, 18th July 2024 at 10 am to 11.30 am

Tuesday, 22nd October 2024 at 2 pm to 3.30 pm

January 2025 to be arranged