South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

09.30am – 11.30am on Friday 26 July 2024 at the Council Chamber, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Members	Constituent Authority	Attendance
Councillor Dimitri Batrouni	Leader, Newport City Council	Microsoft Teams
Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby (Chair)	Leader, Monmouthshire County Council	In Person
Councillor Lis Burnett	Leader, Vale of Glamorgan Council	In Person
Councillor Joanne Gauden	Executive Member for Economy, Skills & Regeneration, Torfaen County Borough Council (Substitute Member)	Microsoft Teams
Councillor Sarah Merry	Deputy Leader, Cardiff Council (Substitute Member)	Microsoft Teams
Councillor Sean Morgan	Leader, Caerphilly County Borough Council	Microsoft Teams
Councillor John Spanswick	Leader, Bridgend County Borough Council	Microsoft Teams
Mr Julian Stedman	Chair of Planning Committee, Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority	Microsoft Teams
Councillor Geraint Thomas	Leader, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	Microsoft Teams
Councillor Stephen Thomas	Leader, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Microsoft Teams
CCR Officers		
Kellie Beirne	Chief Executive	In Person
Rhys Thomas	Deputy Chief Executive	In Person
Jayne La Grua	Strategic Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer	In Person
Colan Mehaffey	Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships	In Person
Liam Hull	Strategic Director of Resources and S151 Officer	Microsoft Teams
Hrjinder Singh	Head of Finance, Risk and Assurance and Deputy S151 Officer	Microsoft Teams

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Anthony Hunt (Leader, Torfaen County Borough Council & Deputy Chair, CCR) and Councillor Huw Thomas (Leader, Cardiff Council & Deputy Chair, CCR). Councillor Hunt was substituted by Councillor Joanne Gauden, Executive Member for Economy, Skills & Regeneration at Torfaen County Borough Council at the meeting and Councillor Thomas was substituted by Councillor Sarah Merry, Deputy Leader, Cardiff Council.

2. Declarations of Interests

2.1 There were none.

3. Minutes

3.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Joint Committee held on 3 June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

4. Chief Officer Appointments

4.1 Colan Mehaffey and Jayne La Grua, who were in attendance at Council Chamber, Caerphilly County Borough Council for the meeting, left the room for the duration of the consideration of this item.

4.2 Kellie Beirne, in introducing the item, advised that a purpose of the report was to complete the line-up of the CJC's Senior Executive Team, supporting the recommendations of the Appointments Sub-Committee to appoint to the two remaining vacant posts in the CCR Senior Executive Team, namely those of Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships and Strategic Director of Legal and Governance. The report also sought to provide greater resilience in the Senior Executive Team in confirming the appointments for the Deputy S.151 Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer statutory roles. Finally, the Committee were being asked to note the decision of the Board of CCR Energy Ltd to appoint Christian Cadwallader to the post of Managing Director of the Company on a fixed term basis for a two-year period, with the option to extend this by one year.

4.3 On a motion from Councillor Sean Morgan, seconded by Councillor Stephen Thomas, it was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee:

1) Appointed Colan Mehaffey to the post of CCR Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships;
2) Appointed Jayne La Grua to the post of CCR Strategic Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer;
3) Approved Hrjinder Singh's appointment as Deputy S.151 Officer;
4) Approved Thomas Maguire's appointment as Deputy Monitoring Officer; and,
5) Noted the decision of the Board of CCR Energy Ltd to appoint Christian Cadwallader to the post of Managing Director of the Company on a fixed term basis.

5. Appointments to Sub-Committees and Advisory Boards

5.1 Members received a report setting out appointments made by the Monitoring Officer to vacancies on the CJC's sub-committees, and of appointments made by the Appointments Sub-Committee to the Regional Growth Board for the 2024-25 municipal year. Kellie Beirne, in addition to referring to the membership of the sub-committees, stated that there had been a number of meetings held of the CJC's committees and sub-committees in the last fortnight, including the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Strategic Development Sub-Committee, the Standards Committee and also the first public meetings of the Governance and Audit Sub-Committee and the Regional Transport Sub-Committee. It was anticipated that the first meeting of the Regional Growth Board would take place in September. This would complete the full complement of meetings in the governance structure. The Chair commented that it was particularly important that there was clear communication between all the committees/sub-committees.

5.2 In response to a question from Councillor Batrouni as to whether CCR also looked to academic expertise from outside Wales, Kellie Beirne confirmed that was the case as and when required and cited examples related to the UKCI. This further included links with the UK Research and Innovation network. Kellie Beirne had also until recently sat on the board at Research England. The work that CCR had done in relation to the UK Competitiveness Index involved Cardiff University in partnership with Nottingham Trent University. Beyond the UK, there were knowledge transfer partnerships being established and subject to a recent bid, including with universities in the Basque region.

5.3 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee:

1) Noted the appointments made by the Monitoring Officer following the CJC's annual meeting on 3 June 2024 to vacancies on sub-committees for the 2024/25 municipal year; and,
2) Noted the appointments made by Appointments Sub-Committee on 11 July 2024 of Independent Members to the Regional Growth Board for 2024/25.

6. Western Gateway

6.1 The CJC received a report providing an update on CCR's partnership working with the Western Gateway and to seek approval for in principle funding of collaborative activities. Kellie Beirne referred to the Western Gateway covering South Wales and South West England, a population of just under five million people. CCR had a strong partnership with Western Gateway which was evolving and had found particular value in working together on projects such as the hydrogen corridor through South Wales, sub national transport planning, the independent Severn Estuary Commission and also amplifying the impact of super clusters such as cyber.

6.2 Kellie Beirne stated that CCR was unlikely to have a spending review before late Autumn this year. Western Gateway had funding until March 2025. Whilst Western Gateway would normally be seeking an annual subscription from CCR of £10k, Western Gateway were requesting an additional £12k to underwrite the potential risk in the event they did not receive continuity funding.

6.3 In relation to event partnership with Western Gateway, Kellie Beirne mentioned their second convention taking place in October. Western Gateway had asked

CCR to be sponsor partners for the event to the value of £15k. She recommended that CCR commit to the sponsorship as it was likely to be a large showcase event with the UK Government and key stakeholders invited. She also recommended that CCR commit to UKREiiF in 2025 with Western Gateway. All the stands had been sold out and it was very difficult to get space at the Convention Centre in Leeds. CCR would be an equal partner with Western Gateway rather than there being purely a sponsorship arrangement.

6.4 In relation to the Severn Estuary Tidal Commission, Western Gateway was seeking a financial contribution from CCR of £75k to contribute to the secretariat. Members were being asked to note this request at this stage until more was known about the future of pan regional partnerships and the future funding of Western Gateway.

6.5 Kellie Beirne also asked Members to be aware that Aberthaw Power Station, owned by CCR Energy Ltd, had status as a previously sponsored demonstrator as the prospective forerunner to a tidal lagoon project. This was potentially an area that CCR would want to promote in the future as attention turned to tidal demonstrators and other forms of renewable energy under the banner of GB Energy. There was a potential conflict and was a contributory reason why Members were being asked to note the request for a financial contribution in relation to the Severn Estuary Tidal Commission at this time.

6.6 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (including a motion for approval of recommendation 2 below from Councillor Stephen Thomas, seconded by Councillor John Spanswick):

1) Noted the progress being made in the development of a strategic partnership with the Western Gateway;
2) Approved the approach to partnership working and funding of collaborative activities, these being:
   i. £15,000 commitment for event partnership in 2024/25 from the CJC's existing Marketing, Communications and Events budget;
   ii. An additional £12,000 in respect of the CJC's 2025/26 annual partnership contribution to the Western Gateway, increasing the overall sum to £22,000 in 2025/26; and
   iii. An in-principle £75,000 funding commitment to the Severn Estuary Tidal Commission in 2025/26, subject to further investigation.
3) Noted that all requests for 2025-26 are subject to the confirmation of UK Government funding for Western Gateway beyond the current financial year.

7. Real Living Wage

7.1 Kellie Beirne presented a report proposing that CCR become a Real Living Wage accredited employer. This had been highlighted as a priority by CCR for some time and this had been reflected in CCR's Strategic Equality Plan. The second stage was a wider medium-term ambition of scoping the possibility of becoming a Real Living Wage Region, as also reflected in the Strategic Equality Plan. The example set by Greater Manchester, as referred to in the report, was stated as a good one for CCR to follow.

7.2 Councillor John Spanswick commented that he looked forward to all partner authorities signing up to being Real Living Wage accredited employers as this was

the first stage to becoming a Real Living Wage region. The challenge was to encourage CCR's contractors and third parties to also join the scheme.

7.3 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (including motions for approval of recommendations 1 and 2 below from Councillor John Spanswick, seconded by Councillor Sean Morgan):

1) Agreed to proceed with the accreditation process for CCR to become a Real Living Wage organisation; and
2) Supports CCR's approved ambition of scoping the possibility of becoming a Real Living Wage Region, as per CCR's Strategic Equality Plan.

8. Events and Sponsorship

8.1 Kellie Beirne stated, in presenting this item, that the report set out some short-term ambitions through to May 2025 in relation to events and sponsorship. Work was also being undertaken on a more medium to long term approach which would align with a medium-term financial plan being brought forward shortly.

8.2 Kellie Beirne referred to the need to commit to MIPIM 2025 as part of the approach to Events & Sponsorship and associated resourcing and funding requirements to May 2025 as other UK cities and regions were doing. Whilst there was a significant cost, contributions were received from the Welsh Government, other public sector partners and the private sector so that the cost was as cost neutral as possible. She also re-iterated the need to commit to UKREiiF. CCR had also held a number of important local Regionally Unleashed events after the conference which had been held last year.

8.3 Kellie Beirne also mentioned the upcoming CCR sponsored events, including being co-sponsors at the Technology Hub, National Eisteddfod, Pontypridd in August 2024.

8.4 It was agreed, as expressed by Councillor Sean Morgan and Councillor Geraint Thomas, that it was necessary to promote the area and the investment to the region far outweighed the cost of the events and sponsorship. The Chair requested that objectives were always set out in terms of what CCR sought from its partnerships at the events and that the outcomes of the events were tracked.

8.5 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (including a motion for approval of recommendation 1 below from Councillor John Spanswick, seconded by Councillor Stephen Thomas):

1) Approved the approach to Events & Sponsorship and associated resourcing & funding requirements to May 2025 for which resources have been allocated in the 24/25 budget; and
2) Noted the proposed development of a three-year Events & Sponsorship plan to be delivered by autumn 2024, in alignment with the revised Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

9. Regional Transport Plan: Case for Change

9.1 The CJC received a report which provided an update on Cardiff Capital Region's progress against the Regional Transport Plan and sought approval for the draft Case for Change and Scheme Prioritisation Tool for consultation. Kellie Beirne confirmed that the Regional Transport Sub-Committee had recently met. She stated that the Case for Change was the first stage and referred to future mobility, travel patterns, accessibility and bringing people together in the region. It would be complementary to the work undertaken for the delivery agreement for the Strategic Development Plan. It would also sit alongside the statutory economic wellbeing power which had been set out comprehensively in the regional economic and industrial plan. It was also able to examine the different levers and tools available for regional transport planning and address some of the challenges in the region such as productivity, inclusivity and sustainability (including the net zero agenda).

9.2 Kellie Beirne also explained the engagement process on this topic with local authorities, the Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and Western Gateway. She mentioned it would be necessary to commit to a wider community engagement plan. Appended to the report was the strategic prioritisation framework which CCR had worked on with Transport for Wales and provided an assessment of how schemes could be funded in the future through public investment.

9.3 Members made a number of comments in response to the Case for Change document, as follows:

- Councillor Stephen Thomas commented that the Case for Change document had not included all the key priority areas in terms of public transport provision in the Blaenau Gwent region. Kellie Beirne responded that the next stage in the process was to do a deeper dive and make sure the significant issues were raised.
- Councillor John Spanswick commented on the two valleys in the Bridgend region with no rail and very poor bus links. He expressed concerns that Transport for Wales needed to focus more on the modes of transport other than rail.
- Councillor Lis Burnett welcomed the report. She added that it was critical that people could travel to an economic site, that there were joined up transport links available and that the South East Wales region was not operating in isolation from other areas of Wales, examining the links out of the region as well as well as those inside it. Councillor Burnett referred to a request made at the Strategic Development Sub-Committee that there were joint workshops with the Regional Transport Sub-Committee and involving the CJC and it was hoped that this could be taken forward.
- The Chair commented that it was pointless creating affordable housing schemes if the cost to travel to work and town centres undermined affordable living.
- Councillor Dimitri Batrouni commented that the fourteen quantitative measures in the paper did not appear to factor in cost. He made the point that the reason why bus services were often struggling was that they did not have the patronage to make it a cost-effective enterprise. There needed to be a rationale as to why some bus routes were practical to take forward and others were not rather than making promises to all concerned. Councillor Batrouni also asked for clarification on the scoring system related to the prioritisation tool in the report which Transport for Wales had developed.

Kellie Beirne replied that the document was the 'Case for Change' at this stage. There would be a need for a comprehensive cost benefit model. In relation to the prioritisation tool, decisions would ultimately be made by Members. She advised that the prioritisation tool model was purely for transport schemes which could be delivered through public funding. It would also be necessary to develop what would be the criteria in terms of transparent methodology / assessment process for schemes that it might be possible to attract private finance for.

Kellie Beirne added that the benefit of undertaking the Plan as a wider Region was that the type of issues highlighted by Members in relation to bus connectivity, equality or inclusion could be looked at in a powerful and more joined up way.

Colan Mehaffey confirmed that the Deliverability and Risk Appraisal considered scheme costs. Case studies were being developed and the schemes referred to by the Burns Commission were included. He also explained that the intention of the prioritisation tool was to be data driven and not data dictated. Officers would be stress testing the prioritisation tool with transport schemes and feedback on this would be given to the CJC. The aim would be to work with the regional transport officers in the CCR local authorities, understand their priorities and then take them forward through the Regional Transport Sub-Committee.

- Councillor Sean Morgan emphasised the importance of speaking as one voice on transport matters in the region. He also commented that public transport tended to cost more than it brought in directly financially but what was never measured was the social cost of not upgrading public transport.

9.4 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (including a motion for approval of recommendation 1 below from Councillor Stephen Thomas, seconded by Councillor Sean Morgan):

1) Noted the progress made against the Regional Transport Plan; and
2) Endorsed the draft Case for Change and draft Scheme Prioritisation Tool and authorised officers to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders and consultation bodies.

Councillor Sean Morgan left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

10. 2023/24 Revenue Budget Final Outturn Report

10.1 The CJC received a report which set out the financial performance (subject to audit) against the approved Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Joint Committee Revenue Budget for the financial year 2023/24. Liam Hull thanked Hrjinder Singh and the wider finance team for putting the report together prior to him commencing his role at CCR.

10.2 Liam Hull confirmed that during this period CCR had a net underspend of £503,552 against the approved budget of £2,923,165. The final underspend represented an increase of £91,388 against the position reported at Month 09. The details of the key variances were set out in the report, including Table 1. The overall underspend would result in local authority partner contributions and the Wider Investment Fund Top-Slice not being required in full. The General Reserve balances would allow for the SEWCJC budget requirement of £459,470 to be met. It also allowed a

further £226k to be carried forward as Specific Earmarked Reserves, as set out in the report.

10.3 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (including a motion for approval of recommendation 2 below from Councillor Stephen Thomas, seconded by Councillor John Spanswick):

1) Noted the final out-turn position against the approved Joint Committee Revenue Budget for the year ending 31 March 2024; and
2) Approved the proposed treatment of the 2023/24 Joint Committee Revenue Budget underspend as set out in Table 2 of the report.

11. 2023/24 Annual Business Plan Quarter 4 Performance Report

11.1 Kellie Beirne introduced the report. She advised that the 2023/24 Annual Business Plan Quarter 4 Performance Report took into account CCR, the City Deal and the transition programme to the CJC. It discharged the reporting requirements in relation to the City Deal performance reports that are required to be sent to both the UK and Welsh Governments.

11.2 Kellie Beirne mentioned the programme highlights in H2. Overall Q4 spend achieved £14.66m against a forecast of £20.43m. This was in part because of an investment displacement where there was funding through other resources such as the Shared Prosperity Fund. It was also in part because a significant investment was completed after year end. She also mentioned that 491 reported jobs had been created, £24m reported Leverage and £19m in reported Private Sector Investment. They were tracked through the investment monitoring processes.

11.3 Kellie Beirne also referred to significant non-investment activity undertaken in Q4, including the welcome announcement of investment in Mazuma in Bridgend, CCR hosting an Investment Reception at House of Lords as part of Wales Week London and CCR representative being invited to attend the opening of London Stock Exchange by Fintech Wales and CCR's involvement in International Women's Day and MIPIM.

11.4 Members also were advised on the transition work to the SEWCJC which was successfully completed on 1 April 2024, the activities on the Annual Governance Statement and the most recent internal audit of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal which had resulted in an EFFECTIVE assurance rating. The Chief Executive confirmed that the risk register, mentioned in the report, would be updated.

11.5 On a motion from Councillor Stephen Thomas, seconded by Councillor Lis Burnett, it was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee approved Quarter 4 2023-24 performance report (Appendix 1) and authorised the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive to formally submit the report, including supporting information, to both UK and Welsh Governments, and other stakeholders as required.

Exclusion of Press and Public

The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee **RESOLVED** that the public and press be asked to leave the meeting during discussion of the remaining items of business

because exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 is likely to be made known.

NOTE: In accordance with the Standing Orders in relation to the delivery of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority was not represented during the Exempt Session.

EXEMPT SESSION

12. Investment Zone

Rhys Thomas presented the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

13. CSC Foundry Annual Business Plan

Kellie Beirne presented the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

14. Investment and Intervention Framework Report

Rhys Thomas presented the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee approved the recommendations in the report and an addendum to the report.

Meeting end: 11.30am

Date of Next Meeting: 21 October 2024

DRAFT