South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Cyd-bwyllgor corfforaethol De-Dwyrain Cymru

South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

09.30am on Monday 16 December 2024
via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Members	Constituent Authority
Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby (Chair)	Leader, Monmouthshire County Council
Councillor Dimitri Batrouni	Leader, Newport City Council
Councillor Lis Burnett	Leader, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Councillor Brent Carter	Leader, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Councillor Anthony Hunt (Deputy Chair)	Leader, Torfaen County Borough Council
Councillor Andrew Morgan	Leader, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Councillor Sean Morgan	Leader, Caerphilly County Borough Council
Councillor John Spanswick	Leader, Bridgend County Borough Council
Mr Julian Stedman	Chair of Planning Committee, Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority (for items 1 – 6)
Councillor Huw Thomas (Deputy Chair)	Leader, Cardiff Council
Councillor Stephen Thomas	Leader, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Officers	
Kellie Beirne	Chief Executive
Jayne La Grua	Strategic Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Colan Mehaffey	Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships
Liam Hull	Strategic Director of Resources and S151 Officer
Hrjinder Singh	Head of Finance, Risk and Assurance and Deputy S151 Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 No Apologies for Absence were received.

2. Declarations of Interests

2.1 Cllr John Spanswick declared a personal interest during item 7 on the agenda that he had met Health and Safety Executive and Marubeni representatives in relation to the Hybont project. He also declared a personal interest during item 9 on the agenda that he was a former member of the Board for CCR Energy Ltd.

3. Minutes

3.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SEW CJC) **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of the CJC held on 18 November 2024 as a true and accurate record.

4. CCR Strategic Partnerships

4.1 The Committee received a report providing an overview of opportunities for CCR to engage in strategic partnerships with the Connected Places Catapult (CPC) & UK2070 Commission and sought approval from the SEW CJC to participate in the UK2070 Commission's engagement with the South African Presidential Climate Coalition.

4.2 Colan Mehaffey, presenting the report, referred at the meeting to CCR building a profile as a leading city region, including as a result of having a presence at the likes of MIPIM and UKReiiF and via learning and collaboration networks such as the Small Nations Learning Network. A number of direct relationships with city regions across parts of the world were formed too frequently on an ad hoc basis and there was now a determination to add structure and understand what value could be derived from relationships with other regions and nations. Several criteria had been developed for establishing the relationships and ensure that value was gained from them, including Clarity about CCR's Sources of Global Competitiveness; Developing Partnerships with, and beyond, Governments; Sharing Natural Assets; Collaborating Across Digital and Physical Infrastructure; Co-developing Innovation Capacities and Developing trade relationships.

4.3 Mr Mehaffey explained that CCR had engaged with the CPC since 2023 to better understand how to leverage its programmes to benefit the region. He also mentioned that CCR was actively engaging in or exploring three programmes as set out in the report, Innovation Places Leadership Academy, Joining The Dots and the Innovation Twins Programme. He made the point there was an opportunity to host a Joining The Dots event in Cardiff around summer 2025, bringing significant UK Government focus on the region. An appendix had been provided to the report, setting out some of the potential benefits of a partnership between key cities in Wales and Japan in the Innovation Twins programme. An exploratory group was travelling from South East Wales to Japan, funded by CPC in January 2025. A report on the potential for the programme to be enhanced and extended would be developed by CPC, with a view to securing funding from innovate UK. This report would be brought back to SEW CJC to consider when complete.

4.4 Mr Mehaffey also explained that the UK Commission had been established as an independent inquiry into city and regional inequalities in the UK, that they had produced a number of key reports on both the challenges and opportunities of regional development and they were keen to engage CCR. It was proposed that a taskforce was formed involving CCR, Teeside and South Africa, with a view to addressing regional development challenges, particularly around the Net Zero agenda. CCR was being asked to engage with the Teeside Taskforce, hosted by Teeside University and the Mpumalanga Taskforce, hosted by Tshwane University to host a visit by a South African delegation, including the South African Presidential Climate Coalition in March 2025. It would enhance CCR's international profile but also provide the opportunity to understand some of the co-operative areas as post-industrial regions in South Africa and South East Wales. It was anticipated a resource allocation extending to hire of venues and catering would be required from CCR amounting to circa £5,000 to 10,000 which would be funded via the central project support budget. This would be finalised in the January 2025 CJC Budget Report.

4.5 In response to questions from Councillor Batrouni, Mr Mehaffey clarified that the collaborative work with North of Tyne Combined Authority on regional data and intelligence and what could be achieved in South East Wales was an early stage working group. With regard to the Innovation Twins programme, this particularly centred on specialism and expertise and the universities of Cardiff and Swansea had been selected as anchors of research excellence. Ultimately the programme needed to result in benefit to the region. Councillor Batrouni made the point that ageing populations which had been set out as one of the commonalities shared by Wales and Fukuoka Prefecture in Japan should not just be city focused but region focused. The Chair added that as a whole the partnerships should be representative of the region and not be overly city centric.

4.6 It was **RESOLVED** that the SEW CJC (including a motion for approval of Recommendation 3 below from Councillor Spanswick, seconded by Councillor Batrouni):

1) Noted the progress made in developing the strategic partnerships;
2) Noted the report on potential engagement for CCR in the UK-Japan Innovation Twins programme, facilitated and led by the Connected Places Catapult (CPC); and,
3) Approved CCR's participation in the UK2070 Commission's engagement with the South African Presidential Climate Coalition.

5. Draft Accounts 2023-24

5.1 Liam Hull presented the report. He advised Members that he had signed the Draft Statement of Accounts 2023-24 and they had been submitted to Audit Wales. It was an important first step towards re-aligning the CJC's timescales and meeting future deadlines for 2024/25 audit process. The Finance Team was working with Audit Wales regarding obtaining further information on their audit timetable over the next few months. Any updates on this would be reported to Members.

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5.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the SEW CJC noted that the Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 had been signed by the Section 151 Officer and submitted to Audit Wales.

6. Quarter 2 Performance Report

6.1 Members received a report providing the Quarter 2 reporting position against the 2024/25 CCR Business Plan, including the CCR City Deal and the transition to the SEW CJC. Approval was sought to formally submit the report, including supporting information, to both UK and Welsh Governments.

6.2 Kellie Beirne, presenting the report, referred to the Q2 portfolio highlights, including the financial performance. The spend had been £12.5m against a forecast of £15.7m primarily due to due diligence on an investment which had slipped into Q3. It was therefore expected that the level of spend would catch up with the projected figure at the end of the financial year. Ms Beirne advised that 579 jobs had been supported, induced and created in the period from April to September 2024 and there had been just shy of £15m in co-investment.

6.3 Other notable matters raised in relation to Q2 included the continued work with Metro Dynamics to understand opportunities emerging from the 118 new UK Government's policy priorities, the CJC governance arrangements/committees becoming established, benefits were being seen from investments such as Ogi and Whisper and CCR Venture Investment had successfully concluded, placing 257 graduates with businesses across the region. CCR had also been involved in a number of events and launches in order to influence, develop policy and progress partnerships and collaborations. Members had also received an updated risk register. There was further good news around funds being returned to CCR as a result of successful City Deal investments.

6.4 In response to a question from Councillor Sean Morgan as to whether CCR was at a disadvantage in comparison to English regions, Ms Beirne advised that this had been highlighted as a risk on the risk register and had been a reason why there had been the work with Metro Dynamics to develop the narrative and take forward the opportunities with UK Government. It was agreed, as mentioned by Councillors Batrouni and Hunt, that it was important to look to extend links and drive growth in partnership with the M4 corridor, including Bristol and the South West, in the light of the loss of the Western Gateway.

6.5 Ms Beirne explained in response to questions that there was currently a re-structure of CCR in order to ensure that the appropriate expertise was in place. CCR was also tapping into expertise elsewhere as referred to with the strategic partnerships. She also mentioned that it was anticipated that Members would have access to the Investment Dashboard soon. Councillor Hunt welcomed the success of the investments, including supporting businesses which had been successful and then re-investing the money. It was important to be able to tell the story of CCR's successes to a wider audience.

6.6 It was **RESOLVED** that the SEW CJC (including a motion for approval of Recommendation 3 below from Councillor Hunt, seconded by Councillor Batrouni) approved the Quarter 2 2024-25 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 SEW CJC **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 to 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

7. Investment & Intervention Framework

7.1 Kellie Beirne presented the report.

7.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the SEW CJC approved the recommendations in the report.

8. Gateway 2 – South East Wales Investment Zone

8.1 Kellie Beirne presented the report.

8.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the SEW CJC approved the recommendations in the report.

9. Aberthaw Procurement Challenge Update

9.1 Jayne La Grua presented the report.

9.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the SEW CJC approved the recommendations in the report.

Meeting end:

Date of Next Meeting: 27 January 2025

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