Cyd-bwyllgor Corfforedig De-Ddwyrain Cymru | South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

09.30am on Monday 16 March 2026
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 James Pritchard	Leader, Caerphilly County Borough Council
Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe	Chair of Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority
Councillor John Spanswick	Leader, Bridgend County Borough Council
Councillor Huw Thomas (Deputy Chair)	Leader, Cardiff Council
Councillor Stephen Thomas	Leader, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Officers	
Colan Mehaffey	Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships
Mike Brough	Strategic Director, Regional Growth and Investment
Jill Byron	Strategic Director, Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
James Howse	Interim Strategic Director of Finance & S151 Officer
Cliona May	Democratic Services Manager
Jonathan Deacon	Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interests

2.1 Cllr John Spanswick declared a personal interest during item 8 on the agenda as he had been involved in his capacity as the Leader of Bridgend CBC with discussions regarding the Hybont project.

3. Minutes

3.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of the CJC held on 26 January 2026 as a true and accurate record.

4. Appointment of S151 Officer

4.1 Colan Mehaffey, presenting the report, referred to the Director of Resources and S151 Officer role having been vacant following the departure of Liam Hull in February. CCR had been working with Gatenby Sanderson to permanently recruit to the post. Shortlisting for the permanent post was due to take shortly. It was proposed to appoint a suitably qualified candidate, James Howse, on an interim contract to undertake the role of Director of Resources and statutory S151 Officer role, whilst recruitment for the permanent post was undertaken.

4.2 Mr Mehaffey also mentioned that following her appointment to the role of Director of Legal and Governance, Jill Byron had designated Governance Lawyer, Jill Morgan, as the interim Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer. He added that this would assist in providing resilience in a small team ahead of a permanent recruitment process.

4.3 It was **RESOLVED** that the CJC:

1) Approved the appointment of James Howse for an interim contract to undertake the role of Director of Resources and statutory S151 Officer role, whilst recruitment for the permanent post is undertaken; and,
2) Noted that the Director of Legal and Governance, in line with the SEWCJC Constitution has designated Jill Morgan, currently Governance Lawyer, as the interim Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

NOTE: James Howse left the meeting whilst the matter was being considered and took no part in the discussion prior to the decision being taken.

5. Month 10 Budget Monitoring Report

5.1 Members received a report setting out the CJC Revenue Budget position as at the 31 January 2026 (Month 10). James Howse, presenting the report, explained that the revenue budget was forecast to underspend by £227k against the approved budget. The main variance related to vacancies in CCR. The organisation was continuing to address this and had made a number of appointments recently.

5.2 Mr Howse mentioned that within the overall underspend there were overspends in relation to the Strategic Development Plan, marketing and communications costs, Resources Directorate as a result of costs associated with the Independent Review into the procurement challenge for Aberthaw and in Legal and Governance directorate particularly due to a number of agency employees in the directorate.

5.3 Mr Howse also drew Members' attention to the fact that as a result of the forecasted underspend, the CJC was now expected to drawdown from the accumulated balances £477k, which was £811k less than the budgeted figure of £1,289k. He added that overall this was a positive report and provided Members with assurance that the organisation would operate within its budget for 2025/26.

5.4 The Chair noted Mr Howse's point that there had been a number of recent permanent appointments. She asked whether there was a timeline for filling the outstanding vacancies. Mr Mehaffey replied that the priority for the organisation when the reorganisation commenced was to fill the posts at the heads of service level and this recruitment had been completed prior to the S151 Officer role becoming vacant. It was hoped that the recruitment process for the S151 Officer would be completed in April. He highlighted priorities for recruitment in 2026/27, including in response to the Local Innovation Partnership Fund and the Investment Zone commitments following receipt of new funds that the CJC had been able to secure. It was crucial that the CJC had the capability and the capacity to deliver for the region. Regular updates would be provided to the CJC on recruitment activity.

5.5 It was **RESOLVED** that the CJC:

1) Noted the Revenue Budget position as at the 31 January 2026 (Month 10) as set out in the report; and,
2) Noted that regular budget updates will be provided to the Committee throughout the year.

6. Treasury Management Strategy

6.1 Members received a report which sought Members' approval of the CJC's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS), along with a range of supplementary statements which also required approval, necessary for effective control of the CJC's borrowings and investments for 2026/27 and compliance with applicable regulations and relevant accounting codes.

6.2 Mr Howse confirmed there were no significant changes proposed and set out the key elements in the report. This included clarification that the report only referred to Treasury investments and not non-Treasury investments such as in other businesses in the region. Also the CJC's capital programme was fully funded and currently there was no borrowing or plans to do so in the short term. Mr Howse emphasised that in line with Statutory Guidance, the priorities for the Strategy on Treasury investments were firstly 'Security', secondly 'Liquidity' and thirdly 'Yield' / interest rate. For 2026/27 the CJC would continue to only invest in the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility and other Government backed public sector bodies.

6.3 It was **RESOLVED** that the CJC:

1) Approved the CJC's 2026/27 Treasury Management Strategy Statement, which incorporates its Capital Strategy, attached at Appendix 1 of the report;
2) Approved the CJC's 2026/27 Treasury Management Policy Statement, attached at Appendix 2 of the report; and,
3) Approved the CJC's 2026/27 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, as attached at Appendix 3 of the report.

7. CCR At 10

7.1 Colan Mehaffey provided Members with an update on the CCR At 10 review. 2026 marked the 10 year anniversary of the Cardiff Capital Region Growth and Competitiveness Commission's work and the CCR At 10 review would look at progress and understand how the regional context had evolved. It would provide an evidence-led assessment of the achievements to date, the areas for improvement and identify the policy priorities for the next decade. The review would be led by Professor Greg Clark, supported by his research team for international case studies and the CCR officer team. There would be up to 30 stakeholder interviews across CCR, Welsh Government and UK partners and also international benchmarking against comparable city regions, including on a policy and economic basis, to learn lessons on progressing the work further. The outcome would include a clear actionable set of recommendations for the next decade.

7.2 Mr Mehaffey mentioned the four papers that were due to be published as part of the CCR At 10 review. These were 'What has CCR Done?' (scheduled for April 2026), 'What does CCR's delivery mean for the region?' (scheduled for July 2026), 'International comparisons and case studies' (also scheduled for July 2026) and 'Recommendations for 2026-2036' (scheduled for September 2026).

7.3 It was **RESOLVED** that Members of the CJC:

1) Supported the commission as an important review point of the last 10 years of CCR; and,
2) Partake in interviews and consultations with Professor Greg Clark.

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

8. Hybont Business Case

8.1 Mike Brough presented the report.

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

9. Investment and Intervention Framework

9.1 Mike Brough presented the report.

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

10. Investment Zone

10.1 Mike Brough presented the report.

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

11. Any Other Business

11.1 The Chair referred to Cllr Andrew Morgan's decision to step down as Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC in May 2026 and that this was therefore likely to be the final CJC meeting he attended as the next meeting was scheduled for June. She thanked him on behalf of the CJC and CCR for all he had done for the region over the last 10 years, including being instrumental in securing the City Deal for the Cardiff Capital Region.

Meeting end: 10.58am

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