

South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee

(Via Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

20 April 2023

Chairperson: Councillor R.Sparks

Vice Chairperson: Councillor T.Bowen

Councillors: S.Pursey, M.John, M.Tierney, R.James, E.Schiavone, P.Black, M.White and W.Lewis

Officers In Attendance C.Griffiths, O.Enoch, N.Pearce, C.Morris and C.John

1. **Welcome**

The Chair introduced and welcomed the Committee.

2. **Chairs Announcements**

There were none.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

5. **Correspondence from the Scrutiny Committee to the Chair of the Corporate Joint Committee**

Members were informed of the correspondence between the Chairs of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee and the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee – Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee. This was due to a previous meeting of the Corporate Joint Committee – Overview and Scrutiny Committee that was held

on the 23rd February 2023 where members highlighted their views and concerns, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members welcomed the offer from the Chair of the Corporate Joint Committee to attend a future scrutiny meeting and provide further assurances. The Committee agreed that they would allow time for potential changes to occur in the first instance and would welcome the Chair to attend a future scrutiny committee within the next 6 months.

6. **South West Wales Strategic Development Plan**

Members were updated on the key components and stages of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP); the options for delivering the work programme; the current issues and risks; and an overview of the collaborative evidence base studies undertaken across South West Wales, as detailed within the circulated report.

Discussions took place around the complexities of Creating a Strategic Development Plan regionally while Local Councils would be developing their Local Development Plan. There was concern that this may cause duplication, as well as being heavily resource intensive due to the complexities of creating the plans cohesively.

Members queried the reason as to why Welsh Government had opted for the plans to be completed in this way going forward. Members were concerned that this would be resource intensive for officers without any additional funding being provided to support the process. Officers explained that there would be clear complexities/issues that were arising from the Local Development Plan which could be dealt with on a regional level. It was suspected that this is the reason as to why Welsh Government were interested in the plans being developed in this way going forward.

Members queried whether there would be involvement from the National Parks on Scrutiny. It was noted that legally they were in a process of co-opting representatives of the both National Parks on to the Scrutiny Committee.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

7. **South West Wales Energy Strategy Update**

Members were updated on the developments across the regional energy agenda, in line with the CJC Corporate Plan (Action Plan) that was adopted in March 2023, as detailed in the circulated report.

It was noted that there were complications with the published version of the attached Action Plan at Appendix C of the circulated report. It was requested that this be brought back to a future meeting.

Members noted that a grant of £350,000 had been provided to the Corporate Joint Committee to allow a requirement process to take place and help accelerate both local and regional energy plans and coordinate delivery.

Discussions took place in relation to the Welsh Government's plan to have a net zero carbon target that all Welsh Local Authorities are to participate and achieve by 2030. Members raised their concerns in relation to the scale of investment required to meet this target and the pace of delivering this within the next 7 years. It was noted that this would be difficult and extremely costly.

Following discussions, members felt it important to send a letter to the Chair of the Corporate Joint Committee raising the concerns detailed within this item.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

8. **Forward Work Programme**

Officers updated members on the Forward Work Programme. It was noted that members would have an opportunity to populate the Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024 at a future Forward Work Programme Session.

Members requested that the Energy Action Plan be included on the Forward work programme to be brought back to a future meeting.

9. **Urgent Items**

There were none.

CHAIRPERSON