

The South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Corporate Plan

2023-2028

(Appendix 5 CJC Report 30.3.2023)

March 2023

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Foreword

As Chairman of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), I am pleased to introduce our Corporate Plan for 2023-2028.

Over the next 5 years; this CJC will build upon the strong partnership arrangements already in place - making progress (where resource allows) in further developing arrangements for strategic planning for transport, whilst beginning to deliver our agreed regional aspirations for energy and economic development - as well as paving the way for the region to produce its first Strategic Development Plan.

Whilst the outlook for public spending is very challenging, we also see significant opportunities to grow the regional economy and are committed to working together to realise those opportunities.

*Cllr Rob Stewart, Chairman of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee
2022-2023 and the Leader of the City and County of Swansea*

1.0. Introduction

What are Corporate Joint Committees and what are their functions?

1.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (the LGE Act) created the framework for a consistent mechanism for regional collaboration between local government authorities, namely Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). The LGE Act provides for the establishment of CJCs through Regulations (CJC Establishment Regulations).

1.2 CJC's will exercise functions relating to strategic development planning and regional transport planning. They will also be able to do things to promote the economic well-being of their areas. In contrast to other joint committee arrangements, CJCs are separate corporate bodies that can employ staff, hold assets and budgets, and undertake functions.

1.3 The South West Wales CJC (SWWCJC) comprises Carmarthenshire County Council, the City and County of Swansea Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council ("the Constituent Councils"). In respect of some development planning functions, both Pembrokeshire National Park and Brecon Beacons National Park are also members.

1.4 The members of the SWWCJC are: the executive leaders of Carmarthenshire County Council, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, The City and County of Swansea along with a member of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, and a member of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

1.5 Our members are entitled to vote in relation to any matter, except that the Brecon Beacons National Park and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (together the “NPAs”) members may only vote where the matter to be decided is about strategic planning functions.

1.6 [Reference should also be made to the information already set out online, including detailed information on our constitution and governance arrangements.](#)

Purpose of this Plan

1.7 This Plan will capture our progress to date as well as set out our future ambitions in the form of a vision and well-being objectives. It will also allow us to chart the progress we are making in respect of our public sector duties.

2.0 Introducing South West Wales

High level Overview and Spatial Context

2.1 [Future Wales - The National Plan 2040](#) (published February 2021) outlines that South West Wales has a population of over 700,000 and that *“this large and diverse region includes extensive rural areas and urbanised, industrialised built-up areas around Wales’ second city, Swansea”* (p142).

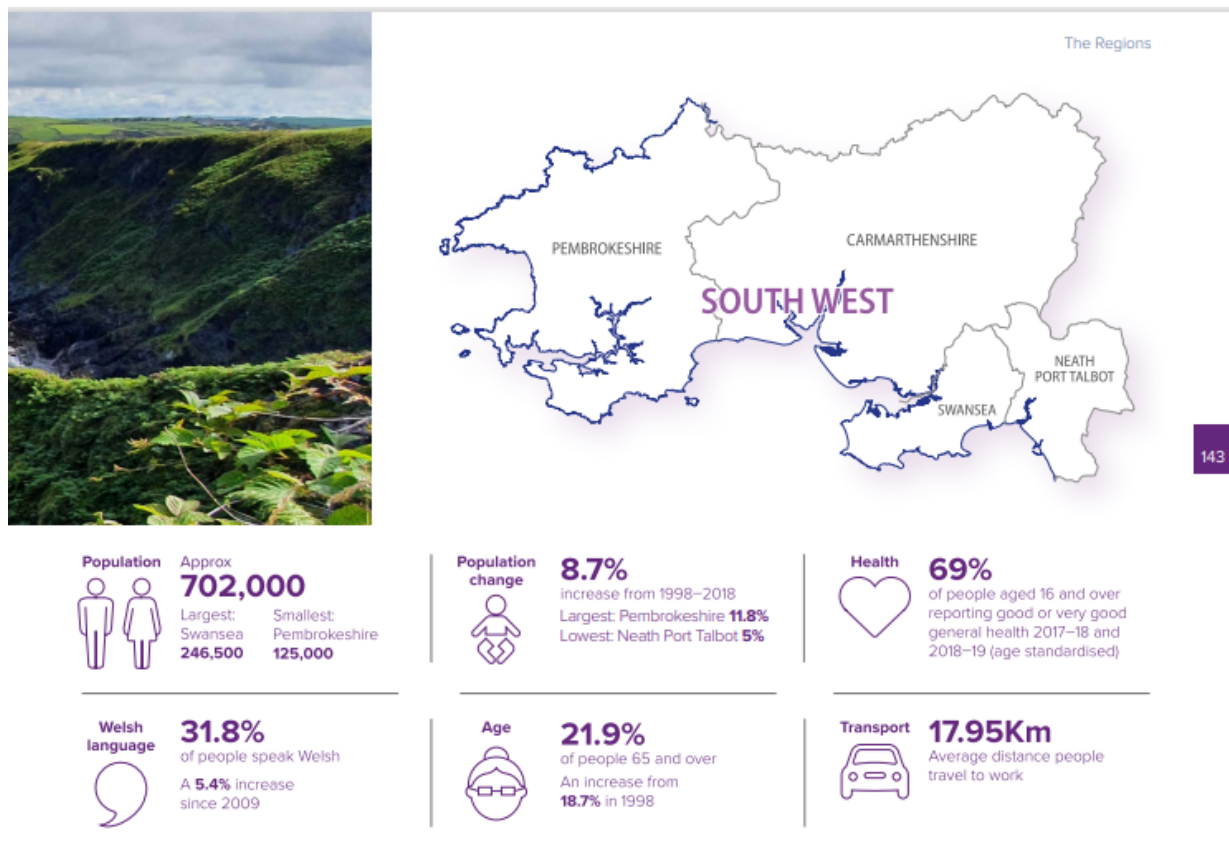


FIGURE 1 - HIGH LEVEL OVERVIEW – EXTRACT FROM FUTURE WALES

2.2 The [South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan](#) – REDP-(dated September 2021) states at paragraph 1.2 that *“Economically, our industrial heritage combines with some of the UK’s most significant marine energy potential, driving*

major opportunities for decarbonisation and the growth of the UK's Green Economy. Environmentally, the coastline and countryside – including the Pembrokeshire Coast and Brecon Beacons National Parks and the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – contribute to a superb visitor offer and quality of life. Culturally, the region encompasses the dynamic, growing university city of Swansea, a diverse and distinctive network of rural towns and an increasingly vibrant Welsh language”.

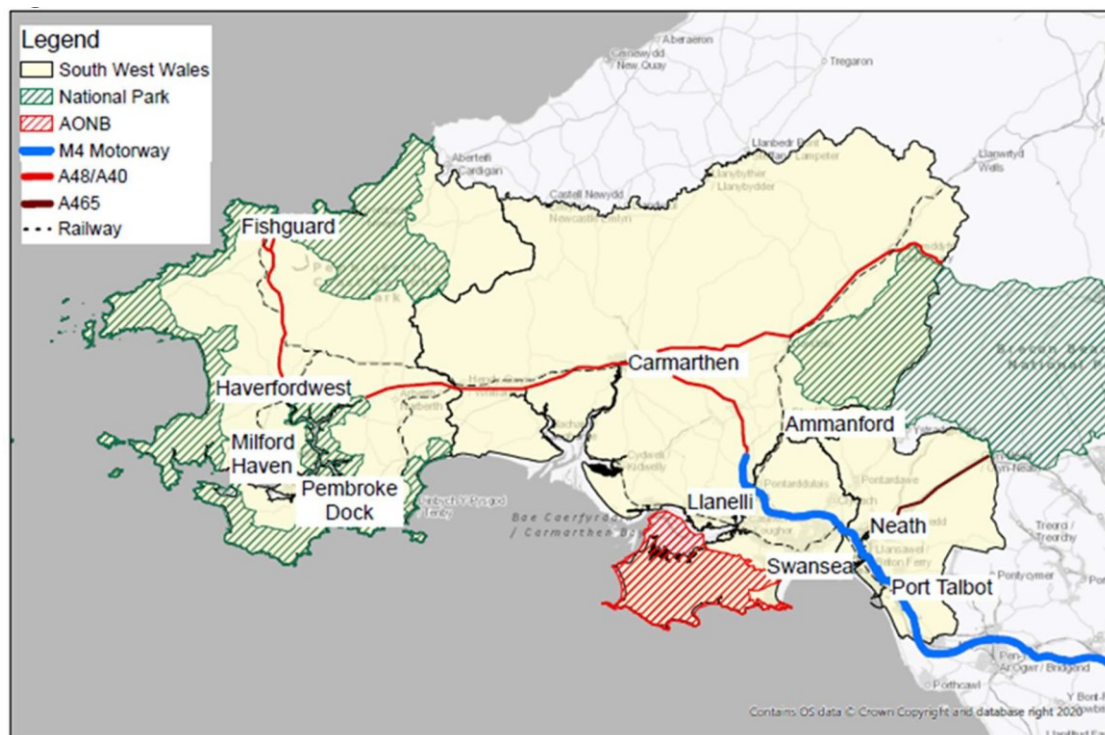


FIGURE 2 – SPATIAL CONTEXT – EXTRACT FROM THE SOUTH WEST WALES REDP

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High level issues identification and policy review

2.3 The REDP was endorsed as the regional strategy for the economic wellbeing strand of our work programme [at our meeting of March 15 2022](#). Furthermore at the same meeting, we endorsed the [South West Wales Regional Energy Strategy](#).

South West Wales Economic Delivery Plan (September 2021)

2.4 The REDP sets out an ambitious ‘route map’ for the development of the region’s economy over the next ten years, identifying priorities for intervention and setting out how business, government, education, voluntary/ community organisations, social enterprises and other partners can work together to bring them forward. The 3 ambitions and 3 missions are outlined below.



FIGURE 3 – REDP – AMBITIONS AND MISSIONS (EXTRACT FROM REDP)

South West Wales Energy Strategy (March 2022)

2.5 The South West region is ‘over-consuming’ and, whilst consumption has – and is – reducing, the current trajectory is not on track to achieve the net zero targets

by 2050 (2030 for the public sector). Figure 4 overleaf sets out the 2035 Vision and six regional priorities as extracted from [the Strategy Summary Document](#).

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

2.6 [Future Wales](#) is a development plan which sets the national direction in Wales to 2040. It is a Spatial Plan, setting out a broad direction for where investment and development should take place. Future Wales is not however prescriptive about the exact locations/sites where development will take place or how much specific settlements will grow. It will be for Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) to interpret issues such as the scale of national and regional growth areas within their respective geographical boundary and to consider ‘larger than local issues’ at a regional level and in a strategic manner. We will be required to prepare an SDP for South West Wales (Future Wales identifies 4 regions in total across Wales). The process for preparing an SDP broadly mirrors that of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process and an SDP must be in ‘General Conformity’ with the National Development Framework.

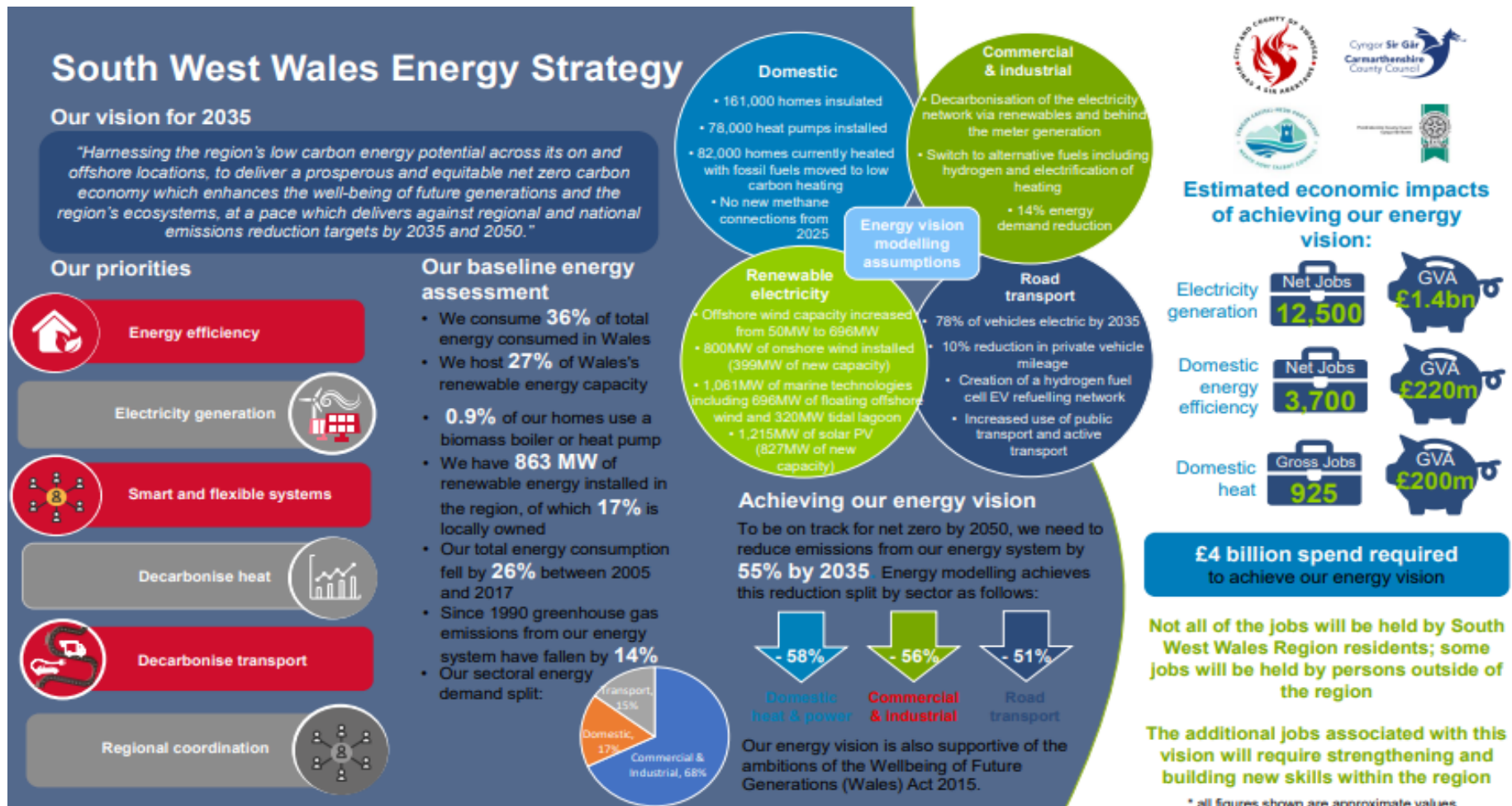


FIGURE 4 - SOUTH WEST WALES REGIONAL ENERGY STRATEGY (EXTRACT FROM STRATEGY SUMMARY DOCUMENT)

2.7 Future Wales contains 11 outcomes which are listed below:

“A Wales where people live

1. *... and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places;*
2. *... in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services;*
3. *... in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic; inequality through sustainable growth*
4. *... in places with a thriving Welsh Language;*
5. *... and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth;*
6. *... in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted;*
7. *... in places where travel is sustainable;*
8. *... in places with world-class digital infrastructure;*
9. *... in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution;*
10. *... in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems, and*
11. *... in places which are decarbonised and climate-resilient.”*

2.8 At page 144, Future Wales states that *“Across the South West region there are a range of strategic issues. Many of these issues have national, regional and local dimensions and will be delivered through co-ordinated action at all levels”.*

2.9 Future Wales sets out some specific policies for the South West region, as per the following:

- Policy 28 National Growth Area – Swansea Bay and Llanelli;
- Policy 29 Regional Growth Areas – Carmarthen and the Haven Towns;

- Policy 30 Green Belts in the South West;
- Policy 31 South West Metro, and
- Policy 32 Haven Waterway and Energy.

Llwybr Newydd - The Wales Transport Strategy 2021 (March 2021)

2.10 We also have a duty to prepare a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) setting out the priorities for our region.

2.11 It is considered that the content of the South West Wales RTP will be influenced [by Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy 2021 \(Llwybr Newydd\)](#).

A notable facet within Llwybr Newydd is the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy which promotes a modal shift and prioritises walking, cycling and public transport.

2.12 Figure 5 below sets out the vision, 3 priorities and the 4 well being objectives set out within Llwybr Newydd.

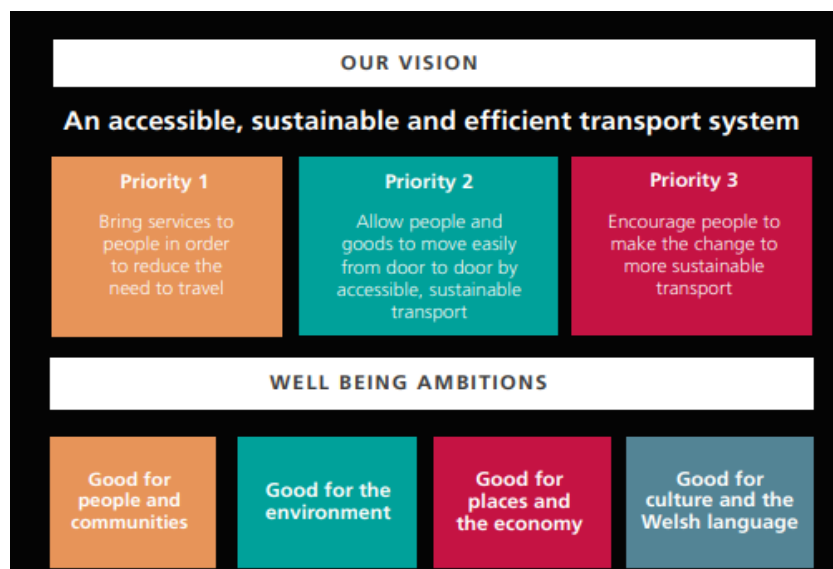


FIGURE 5 – LLWYBR NEWYDD: THE WALES TRANSPORT STRATEGY (EXTRACT FROM LLWYBR NEWYDD)

The Swansea Bay City Deal

2.13 [Signed in 2017 - The Swansea Bay City Deal](#) is an investment of up to £1.3 billion in a portfolio of major programmes and projects across the Swansea Bay City Region – which is made up of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea. The City Deal is being funded, subject to the approval of project business cases, by the UK Government, the Welsh Government, the public sector and the private sector.

2.14 In the 15-year life span of the City Deal, the investment portfolio will boost the regional economy by at least £1.8 billion, while generating more than 9,000 jobs. City Deal programmes and projects are based on key themes including economic acceleration, life science and well-being, energy, smart manufacturing and digital.

3.0 Our Vision

Approach

3.1 In formulating our vision, we have reviewed the high level policy review and issues capturing exercise undertaken in Section 2. To this end, we have extracted key 'visioning elements' which we feel set out an aspirational yet deliverable picture of the South West Wales we want in 2035.

3.2 Our Vision is time bound and is spatially relevant to South West Wales whilst also taking a national steer in the form of Future Wales and Llwybr Newydd. It provides a high level 'hook' that our well-being objectives can deliver upon.

Identifying visioning elements

3.3 The following elements of our 2035 vision have been sourced from the 3 REDP Ambitions: *'resilient', 'sustainable', 'enterprising', 'ambitious', 'balanced' and 'inclusive'*.

3.4 The following elements of our 2035 vision have been utilised from the South West Wales Energy Strategy Vision: *'potential - on and offshore', 'prosperous and equitable', 'net zero carbon economy', 'the well-being of future generations', 'region's ecosystems', '2035' and '2050'*.

3.5 We have captured visioning elements from all 11 of the Future Wales Outcomes within our 2035 vision, including the reference to climate-resilience. We note that climate emergencies have been declared within the region in recent years amongst our constituent Councils.

3.6 In respect of Llwybr Newydd, we have captured the following elements from its Vision within our 2035 vision *"an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system"*.

3.7 In noting the considerable ambition and projected beneficial impact of the [Swansea Bay City Deal](#), we have also referenced it within our 2035 vision.

Our Vision for South West Wales 2035

3.8 ***“By 2035 South West Wales will be a place where people are living and working within a resilient, sustainable, enterprising, ambitious and climate resilient region that is serviced by world class digital infrastructure and is on track to achieve a net zero carbon economy by 2050, having already achieved its public sector decarbonisation target. The region is an integral part of Wales and is making a strong contribution to Wales as a whole nation.***

It will be a distinctive region that tackles health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth. It will have vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services, whilst people will also live and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth. Prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted within the region and the importance of a sustainable and engaged agricultural sector is fully recognised.

A prosperous, resilient and equitable region that is maximising upon its on and offshore potential, South West Wales is a place where the Welsh language is thriving and the region continues to be a key contributor towards the national target of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Effective collaboration between the region’s decision and change makers from all sectors – including private industry –is demonstrated by the fact that the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee continues to discharge all of its functions effectively. The region continues to feel the benefit from the Swansea Bay City Deal investment portfolio.

The need to enhance the well-being of future generations and ecosystems is firmly embedded within decision making structures that are balanced and inclusive and which recognise the need to sustainably manage our natural resources and reduce pollution resulting in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems. People are living and working in connected, inclusive and healthy places with an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system and where travel is sustainable.”

4.0 Our aim and well-being objectives

Our aim

4.1 We want to deliver our vision for ‘South West Wales 2035’. We know where we want to get to, and now we need to map out how we are going to get there. This means that our aim over the next 5 years to 2028 is to:

- Complete all of the constitutional, corporate and governance aspects of the SWWCJC’s establishment by the end of 2023;
- Deliver tangible betterment in terms of the region’s economic well-being;
- Demonstrably lead the region further along its journey towards net zero;
- Progress the formulation of a Regional Transport Plan for the region; and
- Progress the formulation of a Strategic Development Plan for the region.

How we will deliver

4.2 Whilst we remain ambitious, we must be realistic and open to change given the turbulence in the external operating environment.

4.3. We have set 3 well-being objectives (WBOs) to guide our initial work and are committed to revisiting these as the work of the CJC matures. We are taking an integrated approach as demonstrated by the fact that our well-being objectives will also be informing the formulation of our equality objective. We have reviewed the guidance on preparing well-being objectives [as set out within the 2020 Future Generations Report](#) - notably the emphasis on ensuring that we understand what we want to achieve.

Our well-being objectives

Well Being Objective 1

4.4 To collaboratively deliver the Regional Economic Delivery Plan and Regional Energy Strategy thereby improving the decarbonised economic well-being of South West Wales for our future generations.

4.5 Key to the delivery of this objective is the fact that we have [already endorsed the REDP and Regional Energy Strategy](#). It should be noted that the REDP sets out some initial key action areas to deliver against the ambitions and missions. These actions will form the basis of a 'living' action plan document, in the form of a project pipeline supplement, that will be regularly reviewed by regional partners and will evolve to embrace new investment proposals as they emerge. In terms of energy, it should be noted that a strategic action plan is the next stage of the regional energy planning process and is directed at turning the core principles and strategic priorities into reality.

4.6 The steps we will take to deliver this well-being objective are set out in Appendix 1 and 2. This sets out the action/steps, timescale and impact measures that we believe to be possible within the resources we expect to have available.

Well Being Objective 2

4.7 To produce a Regional Transport Plan for South West Wales that is founded on collaboration and enables the delivery of a transport system which is good for our current and future generations of people and communities, good for our environment and good for our economy and places (rural and urban).

4.8 There is already considerable regional working on transport planning in South West Wales and we have based our future plans on these foundations. The RTP preparation process will be shaped by guidance issued by the Welsh Government (the draft guidance was issued in January 2023) but also by the resources that are made available to us.

4.9 The steps we will take to deliver this well-being objective are set out in Appendix 3. This sets out the action/steps, timescale and impact measures that we believe are possible within the resources we anticipate to be available.

Well Being Objective 3

4.10 ***To produce a sound, deliverable, co-ordinated and locally distinctive Strategic Development Plan for South West Wales which is founded on stakeholder engagement and collaboration and which clearly sets out the scale and location of future growth for our future generations.***

4.11 There is already considerable regional working on development planning in South West Wales and we have based our future plans on these foundations. The preparation process will be shaped by guidance issued by the Welsh Government (Strategic Development Plans Manual) and the resources made available to us.

4.12 The steps we will take to deliver this well-being objective are set out in Appendix 4. This sets out the action/steps, timescale and impact measures that we believe to be possible within the resources we expect to have available.

5.0 Our Well-being Statement

Overview - The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

5.1 By embedding the requirements of [the WFG Act](#) into our corporate planning, we will ensure that it forms a central organising principle to the way we work. In this regard, we recognise the need to undertake the following steps:

- Set and publish wellbeing objectives [s3(2)(a)]
- Take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives [s3(2)(b)]
- Publish a statement about wellbeing objectives [s7(1)]
- Publish an annual report of progress [s13(1)and Sch1]
- Publish a response to a recommendation made by the Future Generations Commissioner [s22(4)]

Our ways of working

5.2 The WFG Act places a duty on each public body to carry out sustainable development. Sustainable Development is defined as a process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. This needs to be done by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle so that the well-being goals are achieved. The principle is made up of five ways of working that public bodies are required to take into account when applying sustainable development. It should also be noted that the Constituent Councils will all be bound by their own requirements in regards the WFG Act. Whilst setting our own well-being objectives, we need to have regard to the Well-being Plans (WBPs) already in place across the region as part of a collaborative and integrated approach. The following sets out how we will embed the 5 ways of working:

5.2.1 Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs: The recognition of the importance of future generations is implicit within our vision and well-being objectives, most notably in the fact that the vision (and as such the objectives designed to deliver the vision) are framed within a time bound context i.e. 'South West Wales 2035'. Our well-being objectives have also informed our equality objective. There will be specific opportunities to further embed these principles as the work develops – for example in undertaking the duty to prepare a Strategic Development Plan (WBO3) there will be a requirement for a range of impact assessments to be undertaken as part of this process – including a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment.

5.2.2 Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives: The National well-being goals have played a key role in the identification of the SWWCJC well-being objectives. In this regard, reference is made to Table 1 below.

5.2.3 Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them: This Plan was subject to consultation. The preparation of this Corporate Plan has engendered an increased awareness of the need for us to develop a Participation Strategy. In noting that the Constituent Councils will have their own strategies and engagement exercises, we do have an opportunity to develop an approach which is proportionate and does not duplicate existing provisions within the region. In respect of the WBO's themselves, specific reference should be given to WBO3 which emphasises the fact that the SDP Plan making process will be subject to consultation as per the requirements to prepare a Community Involvement Scheme.

We will emphasise that a key message is one of involvement in the delivery of our well-being objectives and the undertaking of Plan making.

5.2.4 Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions; Collaboration is at the very essence of the SWWCJC way of working, from the way it is constituted (i.e. leaders of the region's Councils) to the manner in which it is seeking to establish a co-option and advisory framework function. All 3 of our WBOs include reference to collaboration.

5.2.5 Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring: The fact that there are a specific set of duties and powers that are relevant to the SWWCJC are pertinent considerations, however in noting this we have sought to develop an appreciation of the issues by virtue of the policy and issues capture exercise undertaken in Section 2. To this end, the vision (which in turn requires the well-being objectives to deliver upon it) is informed by an appreciation of the challenges and opportunities that we face – as demonstrated by the visioning elements exercise undertaken.

5.3 We have put in place a clear flow and delivery pathway from the issues/policy review, through to the Vision and onto the 3 WBOs themselves. We know where we need to get to and how we are going to get there. We are confident that our WBOs are Specific Measurable Attainable and Relevant (i.e. we have duties and/or powers to deliver upon them by 2035) because they are legally deliverable and they also stem from an appreciation of the key issues, challenges and opportunities that we face in South West Wales.

5.4 In undertaking our functions, we are actively embedding the WFG Act 5 ways of working into our corporate governance. Also, in setting our own well-being objectives, we note the need to have regard to Well-being Plans (WBPs) across the region. We will seek to work in an integrated and collaborative way and recognise the significant amount of work that has been achieved to date by Councils and Public Services Boards across the region.

5.5 Our commitment to embedding the 5 ways of working is demonstrated via a dedicated section on the WFG Act within the reports provided to our Members by our Executive Officers. Moving forward, once this corporate plan is formally approved there will be an opportunity to add a section to the report template to allow for commentary on how the proposal will assist us to achieve our 3 WBOs and our Equality Objective.

5.6 [At our October 2022 meeting](#), we endorsed the principle of adopting Neath Port Talbot's 2 stage Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit. This will allow for an integrated approach to be undertaken which includes considerations around the WFG Act.

[Our contribution towards achieving the National well-being goals](#)

5.7 The WFG Act identifies seven National Well-being Goals: a Prosperous Wales; a Resilient Wales; a Healthier Wales; a More Equal Wales; a Wales of Cohesive Communities; a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language; and a Globally Responsible Wales. In developing our well-being objectives, we have sought to influence the achievement all of 7 goals, however clearly given our focused

duties and powers direct contributions will be made towards those goals that are most aligned with the powers and duties available to us.

5.8 It should also be noted that our 3 well-being goals are intended to be complimentary and integrated to each other and there are clear overlaps – including WBO2 and WBO3 in respect of sustainable travel. To this end, it is appropriate to review the impact all of 3 WBOs in regards the national goals as opposed to separate assessments.

TABLE 1 – OUR WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES AND THE NATIONAL WELL-BEING GOALS

National Goal	Integrated contribution of our well-being objectives
A Prosperous Wales	Increasing productivity and economic growth, to support the creation and safeguarding of more, better paid jobs, opportunities for business starts and growth, and further links between the knowledge base and industry. Good for places and the economy - A transport system that contributes to our wider economic ambitions, and helps local communities, supports a more sustainable supply chain, uses the latest innovations and addresses transport affordability. A region where people live in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted - with world-class digital infrastructure.
A Resilient Wales	Increased emphasis on economic sustainability through focus on the need to decarbonise the economy; resilience to future technology change through emphasis on responding to and harnessing digitalisation. Good for the environment - A transport system that delivers a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, maintains biodiversity and enhances ecosystem resilience, and reduces waste. A region where people live in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution and where travel is sustainable. The identification of climate risks to assets and communities and the actions that will need to be taken to address these across



	multiple areas of society and the economy are key considerations.
A Healthier Wales	Whilst the WBO is not directly concerned with health matters, greater prosperity (especially where more equally distributed) leads to better health outcomes. The REDP itself notes the importance of the health and care sector and the opportunity to link it with economic growth. Good for people and communities- A transport system that contributes to a more equal Wales and to a healthier Wales, that everyone has the confidence to use. A region where people live and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places. It is recognised that transport is a major contributor to poor air quality, especially in urban areas, and is also a driver of climate change (itself having health impacts). The connection to active travel also promotes a healthier population from the point of view of increased physical exercise. Improving access to blue and green spaces can also have positive impacts for health/health inequalities. The potential range of direct and indirect benefits to population health from actions within this Corporate Plan are noted.
A More Equal Wales	The REDP itself recognises the need to build an 'inclusive growth' model into the strategy, via efforts to support skills outcomes, resilience to automation, or mechanisms to support greater wealth retention within the community. Good for people and communities - A transport system that contributes to a more equal Wales and to a healthier Wales, that everyone has the confidence to use. A region where people live in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth.
A Wales of Cohesive Communities	Better economic inclusion outcomes should improve cohesion, where linked with programmes and mechanisms that focus on local community involvement and engagement. Good for places and the economy - A transport system that contributes to our wider economic ambitions, and helps local communities, supports a more sustainable supply chain, uses the latest innovations and

	addresses transport affordability. A region where people live and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth and in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Measures to support the growth of the creative economy (including associated with the Welsh language) should directly support, and could be an important part of the SW Wales investment proposition. More broadly, the WBO seeks to support the economic vibrancy of the region, including principally Welsh-speaking communities. Good for culture and the Welsh language - A transport system that supports the Welsh language, enables more people to use sustainable transport to get to arts, sport and cultural activities, and protects and enhances the historic environment. A region where people live in places with a thriving Welsh Language.
A Globally Responsible Wales	Achieving over time a decarbonised growth model will contribute to this goal. Good for the environment - A transport system that delivers a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, maintains biodiversity and enhances ecosystem resilience, and reduces waste. A region where people live in places which are decarbonised and climate-resilient - with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems. It is acknowledged that economic development isn't just relevant in the context of decarbonisation, but also in terms of how it might address social and environmental impacts on a global scale, e.g. through off-shoring.

5.9 Reference is also made to the requirement to prepare a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as part of the SDP process – along with considerations in regards Habitats Regulations Assessment. This can enable us to understand where the WBO3 (the SDP) can maximise its contribution to the national well-being goals and also potentially allow for the integration of a number of other facets.

5.10 We are content that our well-being objectives will contribute to the achievement of the wellbeing goals and that we are they are taking all reasonable steps to meet our well-being objectives. We are content that our well-being objectives are consistent with the sustainable development principle, most notably in terms of actively promoting collaborative working within our region.

5.11 With such strong alignment to Future Wales and Llwybr Newydd, it is noted that the Welsh Government themselves will have had due regard to the WFG Act in publishing such national strategies.

6.0 Our contribution towards achieving a more equal region

Overview

6.1 With reference to the Equality Act 2010, [statutory guidance](#) issued by the Welsh Government in respect of CJC's confirm the need to ensure that that the consideration of our public sector equality duty and socio-economic duty is suitably embedded into our corporate governance and decision making structure.

6.2 CJCs are listed bodies under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 as amended and are therefore subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The Equality and Human Rights Commission ("the Commission") is the regulator of the PSED. To this end, we have been in dialogue with officers from the Commission to ensure that we are on the correct path towards compliance in this regard.

6.3 To review the potential impact of establishing the CJCs the Welsh [Government published impact assessments](#) – including a Regulatory Impact Assessment and Integrated Impact Assessment.

6.4 Our approach will be a twin track one, where we want to ensure that our decisions don't impact disproportionately negatively, but that we also grasp any opportunities for betterment as part of a positive approach.

How we measure the impact of our decisions

6.5 The need to measure the impact of our decisions is already firmly embedded into our corporate governance (notably in terms of a section on the reports provided to our Members where such matters are acknowledged). It is considered however

that as our work moves to substantive matters of policy formulation then these decisions should go through an assessment process.

6.6 [In light of the foregoing, at our October 2022 meeting](#), we endorsed the principle of adopting Neath Port Talbot's 2 stage Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit as our Toolkit. The utilisation of the Toolkit will further embed matters of equality into our corporate governance, and as such demonstrates that we are fully acknowledging and embracing our public Sector equality duty and socio-economic duty.

6.7 We also want to set out a specific equality objective within this first Corporate Plan. In preparing this Objective, we have had [reference to the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#). Reference can be made to the [Is Wales fairer](#) 2018 report. Furthermore, we have had reference to 3 our well-being objectives, because we want to embed an integrated approach in this regard. It is noted that many of the processes (eg SDP) are likely to be subject to impact assessments in their own right (e.g. Integrated Impact Assessments), however we want to identify a specific SWWCJC equality objective which re-affirms our corporate commitment to a more equal South West Wales. This is set out overleaf.

Our Equality Objective – A more equal South West Wales by 2035

6.8 ***“To deliver a more equal South West Wales by 2035 by contributing towards:***

(a) The achievement of the Welsh Government’s long-term equality aim of eliminating inequality caused by poverty;

(b) The achievement of the Equality statement set out in Llwybr Newydd which is to make our transport services and infrastructure accessible and inclusive by aiming to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport; and

(c) The achievement of the Welsh Government’s long-term equality aims of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal and where everyone is able to participate in political, public and everyday life and where there is no room for racism and / or discrimination of any kind.”

6.9 In terms of achieving element (a) of our equality objective, it is considered that this integrates suitably with WBO1 which focuses on economic well-being and energy. In noting that we have already endorsed the Regional Economic Delivery Plan and Regional Energy Plan, we will explore how we can take these Plans back through our Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit in 2023 to identify if there are any further opportunities to deliver a more equal South West Wales.

6.10 In terms of achieving element (b) of our equality objective, it is considered that it integrates suitably with WBO2 which focuses on transport. Llwybr Newydd is very clear on equality matters, and as such there are clear opportunities to provide a regional expression of this national policy direction. We will take any future decisions through our Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit.

6.11 In terms of achieving element (c) of our equality objective, it is considered that it integrates suitably with WBO3 which focuses on strategic development planning (noting that stakeholder engagement and collaboration are key elements of the SDP preparation process – as per the requirements for a Community Involvement Scheme). We will take any future decisions through our Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit.

7.0 Governance and operational facets

Our constitutional and governance framework

7.1 We [first met in January 2022](#) and we were reconstituted for the civic year 2022/2023 [at our July 2022 meeting](#).

7.2 Some of those key procedural steps we have already undertaken since our commencement include:

- Establishing a Governance and Audit Sub-Committee Committee;
- Establishing an Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee; and
- Designating the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Standards Committee as our Standards Committee.

7.3 We have agreed an approach for representatives from the two local health boards that serve our area, along with Swansea and Trinity St David Universities, to [be co-opted](#). We have also agreed an approach for the appointment of [private sector representatives](#) to an Advisory Board.

7.4 We have established 4 sub-committees, [with the terms of reference for each of these agreed in October 2022](#). These sub-committees will have a key role in driving forward delivery of our 3 well-being objectives.

TABLE 2 – OUR SUB-COMMITTEE STRUCTURE (FUNCTION THEMES)

Sub Committee	Lead Chief Executive	Political Lead
Regional Transport Planning	Swansea	Carmarthenshire
Economic Well Being – regional economic development	Carmarthenshire	Swansea
Strategic Development Planning	Pembrokeshire	Neath Port Talbot
Economic Well Being - regional energy strategy	Neath Port Talbot	Pembrokeshire

Budgeting

7.5 A key consideration in terms of how we will discharge our duties and functions is funding.

7.6 We must set a budget for the upcoming financial year i.e.1/4 to 31/3, by the end of January each year. We approved our 2022-23 budget of £575,411 at our [meeting on January 25 2022](#). The ability to increase the CJC budget through an increase in the levy for 2023-24 was considered to be very limited given the general economic outlook for local government budgets and the prevailing cost of living crisis. Consequently, progress in 2023-24 will be more dependent on other funding being available from Welsh Government or other sources. [We set a budget of £617,753 for 2023/2024 in January 2023](#).

Operational Facets, including staffing and service arrangements

7.7 We are required to appoint a number of statutory “executive officers” similar to the roles within principal councils (e.g. Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer). The Chief Executive of Neath Port Talbot is currently our Chief Executive, with the intention being to rotate this role on an annual basis amongst the respective constituent Council Chief Executives. The Head of Legal Services in Neath Port Talbot retains the Monitoring Officer function, and the Head of Finance in Carmarthenshire retains the Chief Finance Officer function.

7.8 In terms of operational facets provided to the SWWCJC, services are provided by the constituent Councils. Service Level Agreements are being formulated in respect of the statutory functions and the subject areas/function themes.

Engagement and consultation

7.9 We recognise that our constituent Councils undertake engagement and consultation and have their own methods and stakeholders in this regard. We will not seek to duplicate these established platforms, rather we will seek to utilise them and feed any consultation that we have through these channels.

7.10 In the short term, we have taken the following steps:

- [Dedicated SWWCJC website](#) and e mail addresses;
- SWWCJC branding;
- Commitment to produce easy read documentation;
- Proportionate awareness raising – including presentations, and
- Publishing accessible documentation.

8.0 Public Sector Duties, Plans and Strategies

Overview

8.1 There are a number of duties relevant to us as summarised within [statutory guidance](#) issued by the Welsh Government in respect of CJC's. We will embrace these duties, but in so doing we will be taking a proportionate and integrated approach. Our emphasis has been on embedding such considerations into our corporate governance. Specific reference should be made to Section 6 of this Plan in respect of our approach to our public sector equality duty and socio-economic duty.

The Welsh language

8.2 In the absence of the imposition of standards by the Welsh Language Commissioner, we have taken a proactive approach, particularly given the prominence of the language within the social fabric of our region. [At our October 2022 meeting](#), we endorsed the principle of adopting Carmarthenshire County Council's standards as our interim policy position.

8.3 Reference should also be made to our adoption of an Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit which will also allow for consideration of Welsh language matters. Also specific workstreams – notably the Strategic Development Plan – will have policy considerations - e.g Impact Assessment process and national policy [e.g Technical Advice Note 20 – The Welsh Language](#).

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

8.4 As one of the Public Authorities subject to the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty, we are required to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of our functions and in doing so promote the resilience of ecosystems. We must have regard to:

- [The section 7](#) list of habitats and species of principal importance for Wales;
- [The State of Natural Resources Report \(SoNaRR\)](#), published by Natural Resources Wales; and
- Any Area Statement which covers all or part of the area in which the authority exercises its functions, once these are produced.

8.5 We must prepare and publish a plan setting out what we propose to do to comply with the Section 6 duty. We must also produce and publish a report on what we have done to comply with the s6 duty by 31 December 2022 and then every three years after this date. Discussions with Biodiversity Policy Officers within the Welsh Government have indicated that we can embed our Duty Plan into our Corporate Plan and in fact this would be preferable to a standalone one ([this is also confirmed in Welsh Government guidance](#)). Whilst there is no specific timescale to publish Our Duty Plan, we have taken the opportunity to publish it within this Corporate Plan so that key principles are embedded into our corporate governance from the outset. This will be subject to review. [In terms of our Compliance Report – this was published by 31 December 2022.](#)

8.6 [The Nature Recovery Action Plan \(NRAP\) for Wales](#) was originally published in December 2015 as the Nature Recovery Plan and contains the following ambition: *‘To reverse the decline in biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, and to ensure lasting benefits to society’*. This ambition is supported by 6 objectives:

- 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels;
- 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their Management;
- 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation;
- 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats;
- 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring, and
- 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

8.7 We recognise these aims and objectives and have utilised them to frame our first Duty Plan, which is set out in Table 3 overleaf. Our approach and focus is on embedding the consideration of our duties into our corporate governance, noting our specific functions and the fact that the work that will be undertaken (e.g. Strategic Development Plan) will be subject to rigorous scrutiny in terms of designations (including National Site Network) together with policy alignment – [e.g. Technical Advice Note 5 - nature conservation and planning](#). Whilst the Section 6 Duty Plan seeks to meet the specific requirements placed upon the CJC under The Environment (Wales) Act 2016, it is considered that giving due regard to our region’s historic landscape and built heritage can also, where appropriate, form part of our corporate thinking moving forward. It is noted that the South West Wales area and

coast hosts internationally important environments (including those within the marine protected areas) and as such relevant plans and development will need to be sympathetic and compatible with the safeguarding of these designated areas.

8.8 In formulating our Duty Plan, we have had regard to the [South West Wales Area Statement](#) (SWWAS) and its themes as set out below:

T1 - Reducing health inequalities: This theme aims to examine the opportunities to address health inequalities in South West Wales by using natural resources and habitats;

T2 - Ensuring sustainable land management: Ensuring our land is sustainably managed for future generations;

T3 - Reversing the decline of, and enhancing, biodiversity : This theme aims to explore how we can reverse the decline of biodiversity by building resilient ecological networks, and

T4 - Cross-cutting theme: mitigating and adapting to a changing climate : This theme looks at how we can adapt and respond to a changing climate.

Our Biodiversity Duty Plan 2023-2028.

8.9 Our Duty Plan is set out within Table 3 below.

TABLE 3 - OUR BIODIVERSITY DUTY PLAN 2023-2028

NRAP Objective	NRAP Extract	SWWCJC Action	SWWAS Theme
1	Addressing this objective demands corporate change, and the integration of biodiversity values, both economic and intrinsic, into decision making, so that the value is recognised, accounted for and acted on at an early stage.	We will formulate a Corporate Plan and set well-being objectives. We will adopt an Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit (which will include a biodiversity section for screening).	T1,T2,T3,T4.



		<p>We will embed the 5 ways of working into our corporate governance.</p> <p>We will ensure that this Section 6 Plan is referenced in Executive Officer Reports to Members.</p> <p>We will embed a 'Health in all Policies' approach and have reference to the Welsh Government's 'A Healthier Wales' Plan as well as the Swansea Bay Population Health Strategy.</p>	
2	<p>We need to use the legislation that we have to ensure we safeguard our protected species and habitats, and to manage them better to reduce the multiple pressures they are facing. We need to identify opportunities for policy change, managing for multiple benefits and using resources (both human and monetary) innovatively. Partnership working is key.</p>	<p>In accordance with legislative / policy requirements we will ensure that impacts are considered – eg Habitats Regulations Assessment to the Strategic Development Plan.</p> <p>As a regional body, we will take a collaborative and integrated approach which is underpinned by partnership working.</p>	T3,T4
3	<p>Action is needed across the whole of Wales to recover biodiversity and build the resilience of our ecosystems.</p>	<p>We will actively scrutinise the requirement for conservation and enhancement as part of our corporate governance. In so doing, we will take decisions that reflect the WFG Act and we note The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR), published by Natural Resources Wales.</p>	T3
4	<p>The Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) puts in place a framework and tools for an integrated approach to tackling negative impacts on our biodiversity while building resilience of our environment.</p>	<p>At a corporate level, we will recognise and embed SMNR approaches into our ways of working. As such, we will place an emphasis on integration and promote nature based solutions.</p>	T3,T4



		<p>We recognise the Section 7 list of habitats and species of principal importance for Wales.</p> <p>We also recognise the potential significant implications of the Marine Area Statement and the Welsh National Marine Plan for our region; along with our potential contribution in respect of State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) for Wales 2020 and the 4 Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) long-term aims.</p>	
5	To inform the delivery of our actions to help nature recover we need to improve the quality of data and the confidence we have in it, direct relevant and prioritised research and review and develop monitoring and surveillance.	Much of the data will be collected on a local / Local Authority level. However, we will take opportunities through our activities to attain information on our contribution towards conservation and enhancement – e.g. Strategic Development Plan monitoring indicators.	T1,T3,T4
6	We need to ensure these are as well informed and prioritised as possible, and that this information is accounted for in local planning and decision making. We need to put in place resourcing (both human and monetary) to achieve our nature recovery objectives.	<p>We will utilise Impact Assessments (eg Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment that will be done with the Strategic Development Plan) to increase our understanding.</p> <p>In formulating our budget, we will have reference to our WBOs/sub committees.</p> <p>We will have specific reference to the South West Wales Area Statement and have utilised its cross cutting themes in this Plan.</p>	T1,T2,T3,T4.

Towards the formulation of a Child Poverty Strategy

8.10 The requirement for us to prepare a Child Poverty Strategy is noted. We will address this as the CJC work activities are further developed.

Freedom of Information

8.11 Within 2023, we will also be looking towards the production of a Publication Scheme and any associated requirements in respect of these matters.

9.0 Measuring our performance

Overview

9.1 We need a framework to measure our success.

Well-being of Generations (Wales Act 2015).

9.2 We will be required to report on the progress we have made in meeting our well-being objectives at the end of each year. [Reference is made to the Well-Being of Wales Report 2022](#). Annual Reports must be published as soon as possible, but no later than 31 March. In preparing our report we must review our well-being objectives. We will need to demonstrate that:

- our well-being objectives are contributing to the achievement of the wellbeing goals;
- we are taking all reasonable steps to meet our well-being objectives, and
- our well-being objectives are consistent with the sustainable development principle.

[Audit Wales landscape review Autumn 2022](#)

9.3 During the Autumn of 2022, Audit Wales will have undertaken an early landscape review to understand the evolving arrangements of CJC's across Wales. A Project brief has been issued, with the below forming the overall commentary questions:

- What is our understanding of Welsh Government's aims for the CJC's?
- Have we established effective governance arrangements to meet the Welsh Government aims and statutory obligations?

- Do we have clear and effective plans to deliver the Welsh Government aims and meet our statutory obligations?
- How will we fit in to existing partnership arrangements?, and
- How are we planning to meet their requirements under the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 including how are we setting our well-being objectives?

9.4 It is considered that the production of this Corporate Plan will be an important component of our response to the above, notably in terms of clarifying the progress we have made in terms of governance and meeting our statutory obligations and our responsibilities under the WFG Act. We are also actively reviewing partnership arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

10.0 Next steps

10.1 The Corporate Plan was reported to our Members in draft form in December 2022. Our Members gave their approval for the undertaking a public consultation on the Draft Plan in early 2023.

10.2 Further to above, the consultation responses received were reported back to the Members on March 30 2023, with the Corporate Plan subsequently approved as final.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Well-being objective 1 - action/steps, timescale and impact measures (Regional Economic Delivery Plan).

1 Regional Economic Delivery Plan (Well being Objective 1)

To deliver the REDP, we will take the following steps 2023-2028:

Priority	Actions	Impact Measures
Secure and align resources to support the delivery of the REDP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map and maintain visibility of regional activity managed outside of the scope of the CJC eg Shared Prosperity Fund Grant; Levelling Up Fund Grant; etc. • Identify and secure new investment and funding opportunities. 	Effective Coordination & Delivery of REDP.
Build capacity, governance and expertise to maximise SWW renewable energy and net zero potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope the substantial opportunities in renewables and the low carbon energy sector across the region. • Clearly define a programme of work to maximise the benefits for the region. • Establish appropriate governance to further develop regional coordination between the major projects and through skill development, business growth and potential for local ownership models. 	Growth in renewable energy sector.



Further develop the economic development infrastructure across the region.

- Create a virtual innovation agency to provide a better integrated regional innovation offer.
- Establish co-ordinated regional business support programme to support enterprise and entrepreneurship at scale.
- Establish regional commercial property investment fund.
- Develop regional inward investment proposition.
- Establish a regional Commercial Property Investment Group.
- Develop governance structure.
- Develop a property commercial investment fund for SW Wales.
- Explore the feasibility of devolved regional investment fund.

X amount of businesses supported.
 X amount of jobs created.
 Improved coordination of business support across region.
 X - amount of businesses supported.
 X – amount of employment space to be created.
 X – amount of jobs accommodated.
 X inward investment leads New Regional Investment Fund.
 X – External Funding levered.

Appendix 2 – Well-being objective 1 - action/steps, timescale and impact measures (Regional Energy Strategy).

2 Regional Energy Strategy (Well being Objective 1)

To deliver the RES, we will take the following steps 2023-2028:

Priority	Actions	Impact Measures
Map available resources and identify resource gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an evaluation exercise to determine that the correct level of resource and expertise is embedded within each Council for the effective delivery of activity and programmes within each specific thematic theme of the strategy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domestic energy 2. Renewable energy generation 3. Transport and active travel 4. Commercial and industrial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Local Area Energy Plans 	Establish regional delivery team. Alignment to existing programmes.
Formulate implementation programmes alongside our partners, including private industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop prioritised action plans for the four programme themes • Enable and facilitate programme and project implementation • Align projects (and benefits) with REDP low carbon objectives • Ensure Well-being objective informs Regional Transport Plan. 	Local Authority Energy Plans aligned with RES benefits realised.

Appendix 3 – Well-being objective 2 - action/steps, timescale and impact measures (Regional Transport Plan).

3 Regional Transport Plan (Well being Objective 2)

To deliver the RTP, we will take the following steps 2023-2028:

Priority	Actions	Impact Measures
Engage with Welsh Government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and respond to draft Welsh Government guidance. 	Any issues addressed.
Develop RTP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop RTP delivery programme. Identify resources needed to deliver the programme. Agree RTP delivery programme and resources with Welsh Government. Approve and publish RTP. 	Robust and resourced programme establishing clear transport priorities for the region.
Implement and continuously develop RTP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop business cases for programme priorities, work with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and other stakeholders and secure investment to ensure delivery. 	Improved connectivity and increased modal shift to sustainable modes of transport.

Appendix 4 – Well-being objective 3 - action/steps, timescale and impact measures (Strategic Development Plan).

4 Strategic Development Plan (Well being Objective 3)

To deliver the SDP, we will take the following steps 2023-2028:

Priority	Actions	Impact Measures
Engage with Welsh Government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Welsh Government Officers on the draft SDP Manual to ensure the final version of that guidance serves to help facilitate an SDP that can deliver on CJC, Council and National Parks corporate objectives. Further engage with Welsh Government regarding the resource requirements to develop the SDP. 	Any issues addressed in final guidance.
Prepare Delivery Agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively across the region to undertake key studies that will form an evidence base for the SDP. 	Ensures early key stage work benefit from alignment with latest underpinning evidence, and is aligned with replacement LDPs being produced.
Develop SDP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a number of SDP key stages with engagement and consultation of stakeholders – (including Community Involvement Scheme, the ‘Call for’ Strategic Locations and Sites/Areas, Preferred Strategy. 	Compliant SDP.