

SOUTH WEST WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

5th December 2023

Report of the Chief Executive

Report Title: Audit Wales: Corporate Joint Committees – commentary on their progress (November 2023)

Purpose of Report	To note the Audit Wales Report: Corporate Joint Committees – commentary on their progress (November 2023)
Recommendation(s)	It is recommended the Corporate Joint Committee notes the above report whilst reflecting on the points raised in the earlier letter issued to the South West Wales CJC (dated 17 th July 2023).
Report Author	Will Bramble, Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive
Finance Officer	Chris Moore
Legal Officer	Craig Griffiths

Introduction / Background:

The Committee will re-call the consideration at the last meeting (held on 24th October 2023) of the letter issued by the Auditor General for Wales on the progress being made by this Corporate Joint Committee. The Committee resolved to approve the action plan to address the key areas identified in the letter from the Auditor General.

This report recommends the Committee notes the findings and recommendations contained within the Audit Wales Report: Corporate Joint Committees – commentary on their progress (November 2023) which focuses on the progress being made by CJCs in developing their arrangements to meet their statutory obligations and the Welsh Government’s aim of strengthening regional collaboration.

The Audit Wales Report is structured around the following areas:

- Understanding of Welsh Government’s aims for CJCs
- Governance arrangements
- Clarity and progress of the CJCs’ plans to deliver Welsh Government’s aims and meet their statutory obligations
- Partnership working
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (WFG Act)

The five recommendations contained within the Audit Wales Report set out where it is expected to see the CJCs making further progress over the next 12-18 months in line with the above areas. It is noted within the report, some of the recommendations will be more relevant to some CJCs than others and therefore it will be necessary to reflect on the points raised in the report to the committee of 24rd October 2023 and the earlier letter issued to the South West Wales CJC (attached respectively at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

Financial Impacts:

The programme of audit work undertaken by Audit Wales has been delivered within the budget allocated for audit and inspection work.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact assessment to be completed for this report.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

It is acknowledged in the Audit Report this Committee has consulted on and published its well-being objectives in accordance with the Act.

The fifth recommendation contained within the Audit Report recommends the four CJs should ensure they effectively apply the sustainable development principle, so they are well placed to improve the well-being of the populations they serve and can demonstrate that they have proper value for money arrangements.

Workforce Impacts:

None.

Legal Impacts:

The audit undertaken by Audit Wales was in accordance with Section 41 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

Risk Management Impacts:

Failure to evidence the expected further progress set out in the report could attract adverse audit opinion impacting the reputation of the CJC and potentially increasing audit fees.

Consultation:

No formal consultation required for the purpose of this report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To note the Audit Wales Audit Wales Report: Corporate Joint Committees – commentary on their progress (November 2023).

Implementation of Decision:

Following the 3 day call in period.

Appendices:

1. Audit Wales Report – Corporate Joint Committees – commentary on their progress (November 2023)
2. CJC Report (24th October 2023)
3. Audit Wales Letter - Commentary on CJsCs' progress – South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (July 2023)

List of Background Papers:

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and related statutory guidance.