



South East Wales
Corporate
Joint Committee

CONSTITUTION

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Part 1 - Summary and Explanation

The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

- 1.1 The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (“the CJC”) is a public body established under the following legislation:
- the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Part 5 of which provided the Welsh Ministers with the ability to establish a Corporate Joint Committee; and
 - the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021, Part 1 of which established a body corporate for the region to be known as the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee.
- 1.2 The CJC’s area comprises the administrative areas of:
- (1) Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council;
 - (2) Bridgend County Borough Council;
 - (3) Caerphilly County Borough Council;
 - (4) Cardiff Council;
 - (5) Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council;
 - (6) Monmouthshire County Council;
 - (7) Newport City Council;
 - (8) Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council;
 - (9) Torfaen County Borough Council; and
 - (10) Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- 1.3 The CJC’s membership is made up of the Leaders of the 10 Councils. The Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority is also a member of the CJC when it is exercising the function of preparing a Strategic Development Plan.
- 1.4 The public body will be known as Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), ensuring we build on the Councils’ established reputation for joint working, its partnership network and successes to date, but the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee will be our legal name.

Cardiff Capital Region

- 1.5 The Cardiff Capital Region has a population of 1.5 million, which equates to almost half the total population of Wales. The region is economically highly significant for Wales accounting for approximately 50% of the total economic output of the Welsh economy. It is home to 50,000 local business and three universities. It is a diverse region, comprising the two cities of Cardiff and Newport, a range of market towns, the industrial heartland of the South Wales Valleys, rural communities and a coastal belt.

The CJC's Functions

- 1.6 The CJC has three key areas of responsibility:
- Strategic Development Plans
 - Regional Transport Plans
 - Doing whatever is deemed necessary to enhance or promote the economic well-being of the area.

The CJC's Constitution

- 1.7 The CJC has agreed this Constitution, which sets out how the CJC operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures that are followed to ensure that the operates efficiently, effectively and is both transparent and accountable. Some of the processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the CJC to choose.
- 1.8 The Constitution is divided into 13 articles, which set out the basis rules governing the CJC's business. More detailed procedures and codes of practice are provided in a series of separate rules and protocols at the end of the document.

What's in the Constitution?

- 1.9 Article 1 of the Constitution commits the CJC to provide accountable leadership at regional level. Articles 2–14 explain the rights of citizens and how the key parts of the CJC operate. These are:
- Members of the Corporate Joint Committee (Article 2)
 - Citizens and the CJC (Article 3)
 - The Corporate Joint Committee (Article 4)
 - Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements (Article 5)

- Governance and Audit Sub-Committee (Article 6)
- Standards Sub-Committee (Article 7)
- Other Sub-Committees (Article 8)
- Joint arrangements (Article 9)
- Officers (Article 10)
- Decision Making (Article 11)
- Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters (Article 12)
- Review, Revision and Suspension of the Constitution (Article 13)

How the CJC operates

1.10 The CJC's decision-making structure includes:

Corporate Joint Committee

1.11 The 10 Council Leaders in the Cardiff Capital Region all meet together as the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee. The CJC decides the Authority's strategic policies and sets out the budget each year. Meetings of the CJC are open to the public to attend, except where confidential information or exempt information is being discussed.

Overview & Scrutiny

1.12 The 10 Councils have established a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC). JOSC supports the work of the CJC as a whole. The Committee monitors the decisions of the CJC. They produce reports and recommendations which advise the CJC on its policies, budget and service delivery. They can 'call-in' a decision which has been made but not yet implemented. This enables JOSC to consider whether the decision is appropriate. They may recommend that the CJC reconsider the decision. They may also be consulted by the CJC on forthcoming decisions and the development of policy.

Governance & Audit

1.13 The Governance & Audit Sub-Committee is a key component of the CJC's corporate governance. The purpose of the Governance & Audit Sub-Committee is to review and scrutinise the CJC's financial affairs and to provide an independent focus on the audit, assurance, performance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

Standards & Ethics

- 1.14 Members of the CJC have to agree to follow a Code of Conduct to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. The Standards & Ethics Committee advises them on the Code of Conduct and on development needs linked with conduct.

CJC Employees

- 1.15 The CJC has employees to give advice, implement decisions of the CJC, and manage the day-to-day delivery of its services, including making decisions in accordance with a Scheme of Delegations. Employees are bound by a statutory Code of Conduct and a Protocol governs the relationships between employees and Councillors. The employees of the CJC serve the CJC as a whole and are required to advise impartially.

Citizens' Rights

- 1.16 Citizens have a number of rights in their dealings with the CJC. These are set out in more detail in Article 3. Some of these are legal rights, whilst others depend on the CJC's own processes.

- 1.17 Citizens may:

- obtain a copy of the Constitution;
- attend meetings of the CJC and its Sub-Committees except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- contribute to investigations by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- see reports and background papers, and any record of decisions made by the CJC, except where they contain personal or confidential information;
- complain to the CJC with regard to a perceived dissatisfaction about the standard of service, action or lack of action by the CJC or its staff;
- complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales if they think the CJC has not followed its procedures properly;
- complain to the Ombudsman if they have evidence which they think shows that a Member or Co-Opted Member has not followed the Members' Code of Conduct;
- inspect the CJC's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.