

Corporate Joint Committees – Implementation Prospectus

Background

1. Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) are a new statutory mechanism for regional collaboration by local government provided for by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
2. Four regional CJCs will be established to exercise functions relating to Strategic Development Planning and Regional Transport Planning; they will also be given a power to do things to promote or improve the economic well-being of their areas. These are areas where there is consensus that working at this scale makes sense - aligning economic development, transport and land use planning approaches to develop successful regional economies and encourage local growth. CJCs will be established on 1 April 2021 but they will not exercise functions until agreed dates in 2022. This will provide a period of time for each Region to put in place appropriate constitutional and operational arrangements.

Purpose

3. To provide principal councils and the relevant National Park Authority with a prospectus on financial support available in 2021/22 to assist their Regions with the establishment and implementation of their CJCs.

Aim

4. This prospectus aims to set out the scope of the financial support available to support regional transitional planning arrangements and enable preparatory work to begin. It outlines a range of core areas associated with establishing and implementing CJCs which the Welsh Government could provide financial support towards.

Core areas of potential activity / criteria

5. It is envisaged that each Region may seek financial support/funding towards work on different aspects of establishing their CJC, subject to what they already have in place for their existing regional collaboration mechanisms.
6. The following list therefore provides potential areas for support rather than a fixed list to allow for these differences. It will be for each Region to identify which particular elements of support they would find useful to support establishment of their CJC, but it is anticipated these will include one or more of the areas set out below:
 - Programme resource to take the lead in each region to plan and oversee the transition from existing arrangements to CJCs
 - Dedicated resource / additional expertise to coordinate and /or develop appropriate constitutional and governance arrangements for the CJC;

- Support for any meetings which may take place during the implementation / regional transitional planning phase
 - Expertise to develop approaches (potentially 'once for Wales' common approaches) to aspects such as scrutiny arrangements / standards / approaches to terms and conditions for staff
 - Other activity associated with setting up / establishing a CJC
7. In addition, Regions may also wish to consider applying for this funding in relation to preparatory work supporting the transfer of functions (strategic land use planning, strategic transport planning and economic development) to the CJC.

Beyond the initial establishment of CJsCs, ongoing support costs should be met by the sector, and will form part of the identification of the budget requirement for each CJC.

Funding

8. The amount of funding available will be £1m in total and relate to the 2021/22 financial year.
9. It is envisaged funding will be distributed to a nominated lead authority for each CJC via a grant. Use of the funding could be managed via existing arrangements such as a City or Growth Deal Partnerships.
10. Welsh Government Officials anticipate the funding will be allocated to the Regions on a broadly equal basis, subject to a satisfactory proposal for funding from each area.

Proposal process

11. Each Region / CJC will need to provide a **proposal for funding** which Welsh Government officials can consider and appraise to ensure it is in line with the spirit of the funding and grant requirements.
12. As part of this, and in order to avoid any potential risk of double funding, Regions will also be required to confirm that any funding they bid for is for activity that is additional/complementary to any other regional activity that they are already in receipt of funding for, for example through European Structural Funds (ESF).
13. The intention is to put in place a proportionate, rather than onerous, process for securing and reporting on the use of the funding, but proportionate grant management arrangements will nevertheless be required.
14. Therefore proposals for funding must demonstrate how it would enable / support the effective establishment and implementation of CJsCs.
15. In particular, we would expect the proposal to provide:

- A short summary (consisting of two or three paragraphs) summarising the key points or objectives of the core area(s) of activity you are seeking funding for;
- The benefits of receiving the funding and how the proposed activity will be supported (whether via additional capacity / capability)
- Details of the desired outcome as a result of the funding
- How much money is required to be funded to deliver the desired results

16. Proposals which do not demonstrate how they will contribute to enabling / supporting the effective establishment and implementation of CJsCs will not be funded.

17. Upon receipt of a satisfactory proposal the Welsh Government will issue an award letter together with terms and conditions of the funding.

Please submit proposals to LGPartnerships@gov.wales

In case of queries or if you wish to discuss, please email Paula James at paula.james@gov.wales, copied to Lisa Hughes at lisa.hughes@gov.wales