



## Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

Governance & Audit Committee – 13 July 2022

# Overview of the Governance and Assurance arrangements of Partnerships and Collaborations

<b>Purpose:</b>	The report presents an overview of the governance and assurance arrangements of significant partnerships and collaborations.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Joanne Portwood
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar
<b>For Information</b>	

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016, published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) defines good governance as:

*'both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector entities must try to achieve their entity's objectives while acting in the public interest at all times. Acting in the public interest implies primary consideration of the benefits for society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders.'*

- 1.2 The Framework incorporates a number of principles including;

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

1.3 To achieve good governance, The Council should be able to demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the core and subprinciples contained in the Framework. A revised Corporate Code of Governance was approved by Council in August 2017 in order to maintain a local Code of Corporate Governance reflecting the principles set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Governance Framework.

1.4 The Governance and Audit reviewed the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 to assess how it has complied with its Code of Corporate Governance (informed by the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 2016). The Governance and Audit Committee resolved that the AGS be approved subject to a number of amendments.

## **2. The context of Partnerships and Collaborations in Wales**

2.1 The complexity of the Partnership landscape is a theme which has been consistently highlighted in numerous reviews of Welsh Public Services over the years (e.g. Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-Centred Local Services for Wales, Beecham et al, (2006), Local, Regional, National: What services are best delivered where? Simpson et al, (2011) and the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery, Williams et al (2014).

2.2 A Review of Strategic Partnerships in Wales commissioned by the Welsh Government and the WLGA in June 2020, concluded that despite numerous reviews and recommendations focused on improving the alignment and rationalisation of Partnerships, the landscape remains crowded and complex.

2.3 The Review of Strategic Partnerships in Wales identified a number of concerns related to Governance and accountability arrangements such as weak links between Partnerships, limited membership and representation, lengthy meetings with no clear correlation to improving outcomes, cultural barriers, poor or ineffective collective leadership, over regulation and prescription and a lack of engagement with citizens. Other challenges included tensions related to individual organisational sovereignty versus collective accountability and democratic accountability.

- 2.4 Given the complexity of Partnership landscape in Wales, it is perhaps not unsurprising that Governance and assurance arrangements for Partnerships is also complex. The relationship between the role and functions of the Council's Governance and Audit and the Governance and assurance relationships for Partnerships is also complicated. Given these complexities it is not the intention of this report to provide an in-depth review of the arrangements of each Partnership, but to provide an overview of arrangements.
- 2.5 The remainder of this report provides an overview of the Governance and assurance arrangements of 5 key significant Partnerships and collaborations; the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee, (CJC), Swansea's Public Service Board (PSB), the West Glamorgan Regional Health and Social Care Partnership, the Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) and Partneriaeth/ERW.

### **3. South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)**

- 3.1 Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) are relatively new partnerships established as a result of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The key purpose of the CJCs is to bring coherence to regional governance and strengthening local democracy and accountability by integrating decision making and wherever possible building on existing regional arrangements.
- 3.2 CJCs have functions relating to strategic development planning, regional transport planning and promoting the economic well-being of their areas. They have prescribed functions related to the preparation of the Regional Transport Plan, Strategic Development Plan and the exercise of Economic Wellbeing powers. The south west region has also chosen to include the delivery of its regional energy strategy under the umbrella of Economic Well being
- 3.3 In contrast to other joint committee arrangements, CJCs are separate corporate bodies which can employ staff, hold assets and budgets, and undertake functions. Guidance on their establishment suggests that CJCs should be treated as a member of the 'local government family' and where appropriate, should largely be subject to the same powers and duties as Local Authorities in the way that they operate.
- 3.4 The City and County of Swansea is part of the South West Wales CJC which also includes Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Pembrokeshire National Park and the Brecon Beacons National Park (the national parks will only have direct input into the planning strand and any directly related elements).
- 3.5 At the first meeting of the South West Wales CJC on January 13th 2022 Cllr Rob Stewart (Swansea Council) was appointed as Chair and Cllr Emlyn Dole (formerly Carmarthenshire Council) was appointed as

the Vice Chair of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee. At the first meeting, the Committee also adopted a set of standing orders by which the Corporate Joint Committee will be governed. This included the appointment of several statutory roles, including that of the Chief Executive role (currently held by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, which will be rotated annually between Constituent Councils) and the appointment of the s151 and Chief Finance Officer from Carmarthenshire Council and the Monitoring Officer from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

- 3.6 The constitution of the South West Wales CJC outlines the proposed governance and assurance framework, including the creation of Sub-Committees, a Governance and Audit Committee and Scrutiny arrangements.
- 3.7 Key matters resolved by the South West Wales CJC included;
- the approval of the Constitution of the South West Wales CJC,
  - the allocation of operational responsibilities for the South West Wales CJC,
  - the creation of Sub-Committees of the South West Wales CJC (Regional Transport Planning, Economic Well-Being – regional economic development, Economic Well-Being – regional energy strategy and Strategic Development Planning),
  - the establishment of a Governance and Audit Committee for the South West Wales CJC,
  - the designation of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Standards Committee as the Standards Committee for the South West Wales CJC,
  - the establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the South West Wales Corporate CJC,
  - the approval the Rules of Procedure for South West Wales CJC,
  - the approval of the Access to Information Procedure Rules for South West Wales
  - approval of the Members Code of Conduct for South West Wales CJC,
  - the delegation of authority granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the South West Wales CJC.
- 3.8 The South Wales CJC has also developed an overview of a forward work programme and considered draft annual budgets for 2021-22 and 2022-23. Support services and functions such as Democratic Services, Scrutiny, Governance and Audit, Human Resources, ICT and Data Protection and Communications will be provided on an ad hoc basis by Constituent Councils through Service Level Agreements.
- 3.9 The South West Wales CJC has established four Sub Committees (Regional Transport Planning, Economic Well-Being - regional economic development, Economic Well- Being – regional energy

strategy and Strategic Development Planning). The chair of each Sub Committee will be drawn from the Leaders of the Constituent Councils (or their nominated deputies) and shared between the four authorities. The Sub-Committees will be supported by a Lead Chief Executive of the Constituent Councils and additional representatives to each Sub Committee will be comprised of the relevant Cabinet members of the four Constituent Councils (and the Chairpersons of the relevant National Parks authorities in respect of Strategic Development Planning).

- 3.10 Work on current work streams - Economic Delivery, Strategic Planning, Transport and Energy - is currently underway to align existing arrangements with future plans e.g. the formal adoption of the Regional Economic Delivery Plan and the South West Wales Regional Energy Strategy by the CJC.
- 3.11 Carmarthenshire Council has been designated the accountable body to discharge the financial obligations of the Corporate Joint Committee as well as the legal requirements of setting the budget. A zero budget for the financial year 2021- 2022 was set, as costs have been absorbed by constituent authorities and a £250,000 grant for certain items has been received from Welsh Government towards the set-up costs of the CJC. There will be a duty to set a budget for future years to ensure provision of adequate resources to allow the Corporate Joint Committee to undertake its role and function appropriately and there is an obligation to recover costs of operating by a levy based on constituent authorities and if appropriate, National Park Authorities. To ensure fairness and equity across the region, the Regional funding of the South West Wales CJC will be set through a levy apportionment by population size. A Business Manager has been appointed to coordinate the Corporate Joint Committee and its overall operation within the draft budget.
- 3.12 As the South West Wales CJC will be treated as a member of the local government family, other associated governance matters and statutory duties such as promoting and carrying out sustainable development, promoting the Welsh Language, Equality, Biodiversity and resilience of eco-systems Freedom of Information, Child Poverty and National Parks will need to be considered in due course.
- 3.13 The AGM for the CJC is being planned for July 2022 whereby updates on the political arrangements post the local government elections in May will be considered as there are two new leaders in place on the CJC

#### **4.0 Swansea Public Service Board (PSB)**

- 4.1 Swansea Public Services Board was established by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The purpose of the Board is to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Swansea, contributing to the 7 national well-being goals and acting in

accordance to the sustainable development principle (the 5 ways of working).

- 4.2 Swansea Public Services Board is required to prepare and publish an assessment of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in Swansea and prepare and publish a Local Well-being Plan for Swansea setting out local objectives and the steps it proposes to take to meet them. They are also required to prepare and publish an annual report that sets out the Board's progress in meeting the local objectives and to invite participants to attend and participate in the business of the Board as appropriate. It must review and revise its local objectives, amend the Well-being Plan and attend Swansea Council's Scrutiny Programme Committee to provide information and assistance that enables the committee to discharge its responsibilities to scrutinise the work of the Public Services Board.
- 4.3 Swansea Public Service Board revised and agreed its terms of reference in April 2019. Statutory Membership of the Board includes; the City and County of Swansea, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales. Invited participants include; Welsh Ministers, the Chief Constable of South Wales Police, the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, a Probation services representative, a representative of voluntary organisations and any other persons who the Board may be required to invite under regulations made by Welsh Ministers. Invited participant are not members of the Board and are not required to accept the invitation. However, they can make representations to the Board about the content of assessments of local well-being, the local well-being plan and proposed amendments to the local well-being plan, to take part in Board meetings and provide other advice and assistance to the Board.
- 4.4 Swansea Public Services Board should also seek advice from its other partners and otherwise involve them as it considers appropriate. These partners will include but are not limited to; Community Councils, for a Public Health Wales NHS Trust, a Community Health Council, a National Park Authority for a National Park in Wales, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, an Institution in the Further education sector, or the Higher Education sector, the Arts Council of Wales, the Sports Council for Wales, the National Library of Wales and the National Museum of Wales.
- 4.5 Subsequent to each ordinary election of Local Government councillors, the Board will hold a "mandatory meeting" chaired by Swansea Council no later than 60 days after the date of each ordinary election of councillors. At this mandatory meeting the Board must review its terms of reference, amend the terms of reference and determine when and how often it meets. Members will also appoint the chair for subsequent meetings of the Board from the statutory members. Board decisions are only valid when made jointly and unanimously by all statutory

members (or their substitutes) and with all statutory members in attendance. The quorum of a PSB meeting is all of its statutory members.

- 4.6 Currently within Swansea, the PSB Joint Committee is the legal entity which is the Public Services Board which consists of the 4 statutory partners and invited participants. Currently the PSB Chair is Cllr Andrea Lewis (the City and County of Swansea) and the Vice Chair is Roger Thomas (Fire & Rescue).
- 4.7 Responsibility for the co-ordination of each of the Local Well-being Plan's four outcome based Local Well-being Objectives lies with 1 of the 4 statutory members. This includes all the administrative and support arrangements and currently are as follows; Early Years – ABMU, Live Well, Age Well – Swansea Council, Working with Nature – Natural Resources Wales and Stronger Communities – Fire and Rescue.
- 4.8 The City and County of Swansea provides an administrative role supporting statutory members of the Public Services Board to discharge their legal responsibilities. Task and finish delivery groups have worked to deliver the Local Well-being objectives, and steps. Each group has signed up to common terms of engagement and are led by Objective/Step Leads.
- 4.9 The majority of work carried out by Swansea PSB is carried out within the existing budgets of the Statutory Partners and subject to individual organisation's arrangements. However, in addition Swansea PSB and Neath Port Talbot PSB, received a Welsh Government grant for the financial year 2021-22 as part of a regional support package and was used help fund the costs associated with the development of the Well-being Plans.
- 4.10 The Review of Strategic Partnership commissioned by the Welsh Government and WLGA (2020) suggested that PSBs could be more effective, if they had their own funding as some other partnerships do. The Review noted that the concept of pooled budgets was not generally happening in practice.
- 4.11 The Partnership Forum is group which provides a mechanism for a range of interested parties from the public, private and voluntary sector to engage in the work of the Swansea Public Services Board. Currently over 150 participants have expressed an interest in the Partnership Forum and are included in a mailing list. The Partnership Forum takes place every six months and is open to all. The work of the PSB is open to the public and information is available online.
- 4.12 The City and County of Swansea's Scrutiny Programme Committee is the designated Council Committee for Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board. The Committee had previously delegated and

discharged responsibility for Scrutiny through a stand-alone PSB Scrutiny Performance Panel. Following adjustment to the Scrutiny Work Programme in November 2020 the Committee is now carrying out this work directly, aiming to hold two to three PSB Scrutiny sessions per year.

- 4.13 Scrutiny made a number of recommendations for the PSB in June 2021; to improve the performance framework to better evidence the tangible difference the PSB is making, to improve public visibility / messaging about the work of the PSB, to lobby Welsh Government on PSB resources, to improve the clarity of action and outcomes from meetings, to improve the ability to measure progress in the delivery of Well-being objectives and to reflect on PSB governance in light of lessons learned from the pandemic.
- 4.14 A follow up Scrutiny committee meeting in January 2022 noted that some improvements had been made and noted some good progress which had been made across the workstreams. However areas for continued improvement were noted. These included the need to differentiate between PSB achievements versus achievements which could be attributed to individual organisations, or other partnerships, promoting the visibility of the PSB and raising the profile of the PSB and improving its performance framework

## **5. West Glamorgan Regional Partnership**

- 5.1 The Partnership Arrangements (Wales) Regulations 2015 require Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and the Health Board as the Partnership Bodies to form a Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to implement requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- 5.2 The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board was established in November 2016 (formally known as the 'Western Bay Regional Partnership Board'). The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced a statutory role for a Regional Partnership Board, (although this was preceded by the Western Bay Regional Partnership Forum, which was originally established on a non-statutory footing in 2014).
- 5.3 The key purpose of the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership is to bring coherence to regional governance The Board is responsible for managing and developing services to secure strategic planning and partnership working between Local Authorities and the Health Board and to ensure effective services, care and support are in place to best meet the needs of the population.
- 5.4 The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership is a collaborative Health and Social Care initiative including the City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council , Swansea Bay University



Health Board, Organisations in the third and independent Sectors and citizen and carer representatives

- 5.5 The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership focuses on four key strategic areas with associated projects and work streams being delivered in the context of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. These areas include; stabilisation and reconstruction, remodelling acute and community health services, transforming complex care and transforming mental health services.
- 5.6 A revised Regional Governance Framework was approved by Cabinet in February 2022. The purpose of the Governance Framework was to clarify the remit of the Regional Partnership Board.
- 5.7 The Regional Governance Framework provides an outline of the terms of reference for the Regional Partnership Board, the appointment and tenure of Board Members, action required between meetings, declaration of interests, the approval of funding and Board etiquette. The purpose of the formal Governance Framework is to reduce any risks in terms of understanding how the Regional Partnership Board operates and therefore ensure that courses of action taken by the Board is in line with a governance framework which has been agreed by the Partnership Bodies.
- 5.8 Membership of the Board includes; Elected Members of each Local Authority and Members of the Local Health Board, Officers from each Local Authority and representatives from the Local Health Board, representatives from the Third sector, representatives of care providers, representatives of people with needs for care and support, representatives of carers, representatives of Trade Unions and representatives of Registered Social Landlords.
- 5.9 The Regional Partnership Board has established a number of Sub-groups to undertake its functions based on its 4 current workstreams. Each sub group has its own terms of reference approved by the Board. Each Sub-group is chaired by a member of the Partnership Board and includes representatives of people with needs for care and support and a carers representative.
- 5.10 The Regional Partnership Board meets at least four times of year, with additional meetings held at the discretion of the Board. The West Glamorgan Regional Transformation Programme Director produces an Annual Plan of Board business which includes proposals to cover business activity during the year and also sets out any standing items that will appear on every Board agenda.
- 5.11 Board decisions are only valid when meetings are quorate (attended by at least 1 member from each of the Partnership Bodies). The Board is not a formal decision-making body and has no executive powers. Courses of action are agreed by consensus among the full members.

Partners need to take issues agreed by the Board through their own local policy and decision-making for ratification as required.

- 5.12 In terms of pooled funding, a partnership agreement is drawn up between the partners to cover the governance arrangements, which address accountability, decision making, how the budget is to work and monitoring arrangements.
- 5.13 The Regional Partnership Board (RPB) is responsible for agreeing and managing the overall strategic direction and ensuring effective governance of the use of the Integrated Care Fund and other grants and funding.
- 5.14 The Board will be subject to scrutiny by overview and scrutiny committees of the local authorities which are Partnership Bodies or a joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee established by those local authorities.

## **6. Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD)**

- 6.1 The Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) growth deal represents a £1.3 billion investment in the regional economy and includes the City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot Borough County Council, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Council. Good progress has been made in terms of delivering the investment as all 9 of the programmes and projects within the SBCD portfolio have now been approved by the UK Government and Welsh Government. This means over 99% of the available deal investment fund has been approved.
- 6.2 In terms of the governance structure a joint UK Government and Welsh Government Board – the Welsh Cities and Growth Implementation Board - has been established to oversee the Swansea Bay City Deal. The Board is responsible for providing assurance and advice to the Board regarding the SBCD programme and the release of funding. The Board is charged with providing oversight, challenge and the monitoring of progress for the SBCD programme and individual projects. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that there are robust governance and assurance arrangements in place for the Swansea Bay City Deal.
- 6.3 The Joint Committee has overall responsibility for scrutiny and regional business case approvals for submission to the UK Government and Welsh Government for final sign-off. It holds the Programme Board and the Portfolio Management Office to account. The Joint Committee comprises of the four regional Local Authority Leaders of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, and Swansea, as well as senior officers/representatives from all eight regional primary partner organisations. The Joint Committee is chaired by a Local Authority Leader and currently meets on a monthly basis.

- 6.4 The Economic Strategy Board is a private sector advisory body which acts as the voice of business. The ESB provides strategic direction for the City Deal through advice to the Joint Committee on matters relating to the City Region. The Chair of the Economic Strategy Board has been appointed following an open competition exercise.
- 6.5 The Programme Board oversees the operations of the SBCD. It is responsible for reviewing business case developments and portfolio progress. The Programme Board consists of the Chief Executives or head of paid service of each of the eight primary partners for the SBCD – or senior representatives in their places.
- 6.6 The Joint Scrutiny Committee provides advice, challenge and support to the Joint Committee, and is made up of two elected members from each of the four regional local authorities.
- 6.7 The City and County of Swansea is responsible for hosting the Joint Committee and all Legal and Democratic services (and provides the Monitoring Officer). Carmarthenshire County Council has the responsibility as the accountable body for the entire portfolio ensuring outcomes are delivered (and provides the Section 151 Officer). Pembrokeshire County Council has responsibility for all audit activity for the holistic portfolio. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council has regional responsibility for scrutiny of the portfolio and its constituent programmes and projects.
- 6.8 Following internal and independent external reviews for the SBCD in December 2018 a new City Deal Portfolio Director and City Deal Portfolio Management Office was established. This resulted in the management of the City Deal as a portfolio, a redistribution of roles and functions to ensure an equitable balance across the City Deal partnership and improved Governance and assurance arrangements such as the production of an Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan, a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and an updated Portfolio Business Case.
- 6.9 In June 2020, the Gateway 0 review into the SBCD Portfolio was commissioned to evaluate differentiating accountabilities for strategic oversight and delivery. The review made a number of recommendations in relation to the frequency of meetings, the role of Joint Committee and Programme Office, improving documentation and representation, aiming to improve Governance and assurance arrangements.
- 6.10 The Swansea Bay City Deal adopted a new SBCD Portfolio Risk Management Strategy in 2020 aligned to the HMT Green Book supplementary guidance: The Orange Book. They also established a Portfolio Risk Register and Issues Log, and regularly report on prioritised risks through the governance structures. Risk management is an integral part of the SBCD routine decision-making and is

incorporated within strategic and operational planning processes at all levels. Key risks are captured in a SBCD Portfolio Risk Register. The Portfolio Office regularly reviews and monitors the risk management process. In order to further support the management of risks and potential associated issues, the Portfolio Management office developed a change control in February 2021.

- 6.11 The SBCD developed a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan in June 2020. Project teams contribute to monthly highlight and quarterly monitoring reports, an annual report and planned milestone evaluations. These reports outline planned and completed activity, key deliverables, risks, issues and finances at project, programme and portfolio levels.
- 6.12 In terms of assurance, the SBCD has developed an Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP) to ensure that the planning, coordination and provision of assurance activities and approval points throughout the City Deal portfolio are proportionate to levels of cost and risk. All nine SBCD projects and programmes have also established IAAPs, which are regularly updated and shared with the SBCD governance boards and committees.
- 6.13 The SBCD Portfolio and projects are also subject to OGC (Office of Government Commerce) Gateway Reviews to assure successful progression and overall delivery of the portfolio and associated projects and programmes. Gateway reviews are instigated and led by the Portfolio or Project/Programmes. All Welsh Government sponsored Programmes and Projects are mandated by the Welsh Government Permanent Secretary to complete an RPA form for review/appraisal by the Office of Project Delivery.
- 6.14 In terms of engagement, the SBCD has developed a Communications and Marketing Plan which outlines activities in relation to digital and print media coverage, social media, communication with regional businesses, marketing, branding, partnership working and internal communication. Business and Stakeholder engagement is a priority theme, underpinning the SBCD's engagement activities and events have included developing relationships with support parties, face to face meetings and a series of introductory stakeholder engagement and meet the buyer events.
- 6.15 the Swansea specific elements of the city deal programme are progressing well with the arena complete and operational and with the remaining aspects due for completion later this year. Work is also progressing well with 71/72 Kingsway digital district and the aligned projects being carried out by University Wales Trinity St David's also making good progress. The Council is also actively involved in the regional project of talent and skills, Homes and Power stations and the digital strand

## 7. Partneriaeth/ERW

- 7.1 In March 2020, Cabinet agreed to serve notice and withdraw from the formal regional arrangements for education improvement, Educational through Regional Working (ERW) consortium by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The report noted that since its inception ERW has struggled to function as an effective consortium owing to the sheer size and diversity of the geographical area of the ERW footprint, several changes of political and managerial leadership, difficult issues with staffing and management and a disproportionate focus on specific performance measures and traditional lines of attainment and attendance within schools, which were not aligned to economic ambitions within the region. Neath and Port Talbot County Borough Council gave notice to leave ERW on 31 March 2020. Although attempts were made to resolve these issues, underlying problems and challenges remained.
- 7.2 In September 2020, the Lead Chief Executive Officer of ERW (Swansea's Chief Executive Officer) requested that Directors work together to design a new education consortium based on the Swansea Bay City Deal Footprint following a report to Swansea's Cabinet.
- 7.3 In March 2021, Cabinet agreed that that more time was needed to wind down current ERW arrangements and create a new partnership by September 2021. The report noted that the formation of a new partnership had been complex and given the pandemic a more realistic timeline for dissolution of ERW and creation of Partneriaeth would be from September 2021. This has resulted in the straddling of two financial years and the need to implement a revised staff structure with a view to complete the dissolution of ERW and commencement of Partneriaeth by April 2022.
- 7.4 In November 2021, a legal partnership agreement was approved by the respective Cabinets of the City and County of Swansea, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Council to establish a joint committee for a new regional education partnership – Partneriaeth - to support the delivery of school improvement.
- 7.5 Cabinet approved the appointment of the Leader of the Council as a member of the Joint Committee and the delegation of those functions necessary to support the delivery of school improvement within the Council's area and the region. It also approved the creation of a Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group and delegated authority to the Director of Education in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer and the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills to make any further necessary amendments to the legal agreement and authorised the Chief Legal Officer to make these changes. It also approved the provision of services by the Partneriaeth to Councils who were not parties to the legal agreement, namely Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Ceredigion County Council and Powys County Council.

7.6 The legal partnership agreement outlines arrangements for the Joint Committee to establish a Strategic Group which will have responsibility for undertaking some operational matters and will report to the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee will also seek to establish an Operations Group and a Stakeholder Group which shall report to the Strategic Group. The Joint Committee will also have the responsibility to establish Sub-committees, establish terms of reference and membership as it sees fit within the confines the legal partnership agreement. A Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group will also be established to provide an informal scrutiny function to ensure greater public accountability over decisions made by the Joint Committee and any of its sub-committee.

## **8. Integrated Assessment Implications**

8.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

8.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

8.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

8.1.3 This is an 'information only' report on the governance arrangements of strategic partnerships, so there is no direct impact on people or communities from this report.

**9. Legal Implications**

9.1 There are no legal implications.

**10. Financial Implications**

10.1 There are no financial implications.

**Background papers:** none

**Appendices:** none.