



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Update on putting the underpinning legislative framework for Corporate Joint Committees in place**

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BY **Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government**

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provided for the creation of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) to further drive collaboration across local authorities. The overall intent is CJCs are treated as part of the 'local authority family' in Wales and are largely subject to the same or similar powers and duties in the way they operate and are governed.

In March 2021 Regulations were made which provided for the establishment of four CJCs in Wales, as well ensuring that CJCs and their members were subject to appropriate oversight, management and conduct requirements from the start. Two further tranches of secondary legislation were approved by the Senedd in November 2021 and March 2022, which provided for aspects of the legislative framework for CJCs.

I have today laid the Corporate Joint Committees (General) (Wales) (No.2) Regulations 2022, which are scheduled to be debated on 12 July. These provide for:

- applying the local government performance and governance regime to CJCs;
- the overview and scrutiny of CJCs;
- requiring a CJC to adopt certain procedural standing orders; and
- a small number of other consequential and miscellaneous changes to existing legislation.

These General Regulations were subject to a public consultation between 28 March and 23 May. I am grateful for the 17 responses to this consultation which generally felt the draft Regulations were clear and agreed with the proposed provisions. One proposed amendment to the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 was removed in response to concerns raised by Audit Wales.

Three ancillary Statutory Instruments will also be laid shortly. These are necessary to give effect to the application of Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000 which was provided for in the Corporate Joint Committees (General) (Wales) Regulations 2022. The following Statutory Instruments will provide for the Code of Conduct to fully apply to CJCs:

- The Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2022
- The Conduct of Members (Principles) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2022

Alongside this, subject to Senedd approval of the General Regulations on 12 July, I will also be issuing a Welsh Authorities Staff Transfers (Pensions) Direction 2022 which will encompass CJsCs and seek to generally update the terminology of the previous Direction from 2012.

There will be a small number of further minor Statutory Instruments required in the coming months to give full effect to the application of Part 3 of the 2000 Act but these will not constitute a further substantive tranche of legislation. In addition, in a small number of areas there is legislation which needs to be amended which relates to reserved matters and will need to be amended by the UK Government. However the Statutory Instruments outlined above largely conclude the work to put the underpinning CJC legislative framework in place.

CJsCs have significant immediate responsibilities they will begin to discharge from June which will have big impacts for local authorities and people living in their areas. The CJsCs will be required to prepare a Strategic Development Plan and a Regional Transport Plan. From this time CJsCs will also be able to exercise a broad economic well-being power - the power to do anything that will enhance or promote the economic well-being of its area.