

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2021

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE: 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY ,2021

“361 CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEES – RESPONSE TO WELSH  
GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION (REF) –

Cabinet, on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2020, had considered the report and referred it to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration, with any additional recommendations to be reported back to Cabinet in advance of submission to Welsh Government as an addendum, if necessary and appropriate.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning, in presenting the Council’s response, outlined that across Wales there would likely be four Regional Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). These would be based on the City Deals or Growth areas foot prints. For the Vale of Glamorgan this meant the Cardiff Capital Region. Functions for the CJCs covered four areas; economic wellbeing, transport, strategic planning and school improvement.

The Committee was advised that there were 44 questions in the consultation relating to the draft regulations, with a closing date of 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, although responses could be submitted past that date.

Some of the key points of the consultation included the following:

- Membership to include Council Leaders;
- CJCs could co-opt other members, which could be voting or non-voting members;
- National Park members must also be a member when dealing with Strategic Development Plan functions;
- Voting would be on a ‘One Member One Vote’ basis, but once established CJCs could adopt alternative voting procedures should they wish;
- Funding – CJCs would be required to set a budget each financial year to include the amount required to exercise its functions, reserves and liabilities;
- CJCs would have to appoint a Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Governance Officer and Monitoring Officer;
- CJCs would be accountable to their constituent Councils via the Leaders;
- CJCs would have to set up an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with individual Council Scrutiny Committees able to scrutinise regional bodies as they do now;
- There was a requirement for CJCs to meet for the first time by the end of September 2021

The Head of Regeneration and Planning outlined that there had been concern about the 'mandation' of regional structures or services and what outcomes could be achieved. Furthermore, there had been concern raised by some member Authorities that 'One Member One Vote' was not equitable given the different sizes of Authorities. In addition, there were concerns regarding the ability for CJsCs to meet by the end of September and also around funding.

Councillor Robertson stated that he did not agree with the proposals for Joint Committees as this would create another tier of bureaucracy which would cost money. He agreed with the comments contained in the response document that finance was a major issue and it would be difficult to have the Committees up and running by the Autumn.

Councillor John stated that he was not keen on the idea and shared Councillor Robertson's view that this would create another layer of government. He added that it would be better if these proposals were implemented after the 2022 elections, when there was likely to be a change in Elected Members.

Councillor Ms. Sivagnanam agreed with the sentiments of Councillor John but outlined that Wales needed to work more on a regional basis, so she agreed with the principle of more joint working.

In reply to query from Councillor Robertson regarding public consultation, the Head of Regeneration and Planning stated that the consultation had been open to anyone. Publicity for the consultation was a matter for Welsh Government. There was a view among the Committee that more could have been done.

There being no further comments, it was subsequently

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** in relation to the consultation regarding Corporate Joint Committees, Cabinet consider the views of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, which are:

- It would be better for the Corporate Joint Committees to be established after the 2022 local government elections, as there would likely be a change in Elected Members;
- There was a concern regarding public consultation and opportunities for members of the public to make their views known;
- Concern that Corporate Joint Committees could be seen as an extra layer of government;
- That the importance of regional working be stressed and highlighted.

#### Reason for recommendation

To allow Cabinet to consider the views of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.”