

## Budget Requirements of Corporate Joint Committee Strategic Planning Functions

<b>Name of Committee</b>	Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
<b>Date</b>	20 January 2022
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<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To agree with members a BBNPA position on key outstanding issues in relation to Corporate Joint Committees and their strategic planning functions including budget and other governance arrangements
<b>Single Integrated Assessment</b>	Not applicable.
<b>List of enclosures</b>	None.
<b>Public Interest Test</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the three Brecon Beacons members may agree any CJC estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and proportion payable by the National Park Authority which results in an amount up to and including the following maximum levels reflecting broadly, the magnitude of influence the CJC will have over Strategic Development Planning across the National Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£8,000. Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee</li> <li>£1,000. South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee</li> <li>£1,000. South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Where there is an urgent need to adapt our position, that Members delegate responsibility for agreeing the governance and financial arrangements for the CJC to the Chair and Chief Executive (in consultation with the other CJC Members) in order to enable all three Brecon Beacons Members to participate in the CJs</li> </ol>

## **1.1 Introduction**

For each financial year, each Corporate Joint Committee must calculate an estimate of the amount which it will spend, in respect of the financial year, in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and agree those calculations at a meeting no later than 31 January in each preceding financial year.

Each CJC may, at any time before the end of the financial year to which they relate, revise, and agree the calculations at a meeting of the CJC.

Each CJC's strategic planning budget requirement must be paid to the CJC by the constituent councils and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, and the proportion of that amount payable by each constituent council and by the Authority is to be determined by the unanimous agreement of the CJC members.

Where such unanimous agreement cannot be reached, the Welsh Ministers may by direction specify the proportion payable by each constituent council or each constituent council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

## **1.2 Proposals**

Item 6. Corporate Joint Committees of the National Park Authority EGM held on Tuesday 14 December 2021 identified:

“Any commitments made by Brecon Beacons members of CJCs, when undertaking their roles in relation to the CJCs, must have received prior approval by the National Park Authority. Should a decision be necessary within a short timeframe, this approval may be sought out of committee.”

As yet, there is no clear mechanism to gain this approval out of committee and so approval of the Authority is sought on an approach to enable the Brecon Beacons members of each CJC to agree to calculations of an estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and the proportion of that amount payable by the National Park Authority.

Meetings of the Corporate Joint Committees where formal agreement is to be sought are as follows:

- 25 January 2021. Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee
- 25 January 2021. South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee
- 31 January 2021. South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Officers' current understanding of the calculations of an estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions in the 2022 / 2023 are:

- £200,000. Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee
- £0. South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee
- £0. South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

No approach to agreeing the proportion of that amount payable by the National Park Authority has been determined. There are many approaches which may be proposed.

In the 2022/23 financial year, to enable flexibility in agreeing an approach, Officers' recommend NPA agree the three Brecon Beacons members may agree any CJC estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and proportion payable by the National Park Authority which results in an amount up to and including the following maximum levels reflecting broadly, the magnitude of influence the CJC will have over Strategic Development Planning across the National Park:

£8,000. Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee

£1,000. South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee

£1,000. South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

### **1.3 Implications**

Should NPA agree the proposal, it is hoped that the Brecon Beacons members will be able to agree any CJC estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and proportion payable by the National Park Authority at the forthcoming meetings.

### **1.4 Risk**

Where unanimous agreement cannot be reached by CJC members on the calculation and funding of budget requirements of Corporate Joint Committee strategic planning functions, the Welsh Ministers may by direction specify the proportion payable by each constituent council or each constituent council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

The Welsh Ministers have not indicated how they would approach this scenario and so it is an unknown.

### **1.5 Audit and Scrutiny**

Working with their constituent councils the CJsCs will be required to put in place appropriate overview and scrutiny arrangements. Draft Welsh Government Guidance states that it is expected that the scrutiny arrangements will be proportionate to the scale of the functions the CJC undertakes.

Scrutiny will be an important part of the democratic accountability of the CJC. The SW CJC has adopted an approach where the NPAs are not part of these arrangements. This is because they are simply adopting the minimum statutory requirements. The other two CJsCs are at time of writing silent on the involvement of NPAs in this important aspect of the CJC constitution. Given that in considering the most effective and efficient approach to scrutiny, the aim should be to create, facilitate and encourage a

clear democratic link back to the constituent councils and NPAs if appropriate, the BBNPA Member for the SW CJC made the point at the meeting that once the CJC expands its role post set up, it should be back on the table for NPAs to join the audit and scrutiny arrangements.

CJC members and staff will have a duty to provide information to the Scrutiny Committee; attend committee meetings if requested to do so; and consider or respond to any report or recommendations made by a Committee within the agreed arrangements and which relate to the CJC.

CJC Scrutiny Committees will be established to fulfil the Overview and Scrutiny functions associated with CJs. A future report will be presented to the National Park Authority to agree the Member to represent the Authority on the CJC Overview and Scrutiny Committee, if an NPA representative is agreed.

A Governance and Audit subcommittee will also be established and it is proposed that we also make the case for the NPA/s to be represented on it. If the Authority is successful in securing a place on the Governance and Audit Sub Committee a paper will be presented to a future Authority meeting to agree which Member will represent the Authority.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

Prior approval by the National Park Authority is required to enable the Brecon Beacons members of each CJC to agree to calculations of an estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and the proportion of that amount payable by the National Park Authority. The recommendation enables the Brecon Beacons members of CJC to reach agreement for the 2022/23 financial year.

Audit and scrutiny arrangements are a key part of accountability and should ideally involve the NPA.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- I. That the three Brecon Beacons members may agree any CJC estimate of the amount which it will spend in the exercise of its strategic planning functions and proportion payable by the National Park Authority which results in an amount up to and including the following maximum levels reflecting broadly, the magnitude of influence the CJC will have over Strategic Development Planning across the National Park:

£8,000. Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee

£1,000. South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee

£1,000. South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

2. Where there is an urgent need to adapt our position, that Members delegate responsibility for agreeing the governance and financial arrangements for the CJC to the Chair and Chief Executive (in consultation with the other CJC Members) in order to enable all three Brecon Beacons Members to participate in the CJs
3. That Members agree that the NPA CJC Members and officers continue to press for NPA involvement in the Audit and Scrutiny arrangements.