

Dear colleague,

WCVA has already provided extensive responses to the two previous consultations around Corporate Joint Committees.

In regard to the latest consultation, we feel that most matters are not directly relevant to the voluntary sector in Wales. However, there are a handful of points we would like to raise.

Regarding the question around other legislation not currently provided for in regulations; in exercising their functions relating to strategic development planning and regional transport planning, CJsCs must follow the requirements of the Future Generations Act to ensure that decisions they take do not hinder Wales' progress towards the seven wellbeing goals. There must also be scope to incorporate future legislation into the regulations – for example, should the Clean Air (Wales) Bill eventually become legislation, CJC regulations must be amended to ensure that CJsCs follow this Act too.

Regarding the question around approach to overview and scrutiny of CJsCs; we welcome the Minister's intent to increase collaboration and focus on democratic accountability across these structures. There is real opportunity to embed transparency, accountability and participation in the CJsCs, including within any scrutiny measures.

Whilst we acknowledge the need to involve the constituent principle councils in the scrutiny process (either individually or through a joint overview and scrutiny committee), to support democratic accountability, there should be some mechanism to involve the voluntary sector in the scrutiny of these Committees. The voluntary sector has a role in holding decision makers to account and these structures should be no exception.

To lessen the disconnect between citizens and decision makers, authorities must ensure they engage and consult appropriately with those affected by their decisions. The recommendation for CJsCs to be subject to section 62 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill, is welcome. This would help alleviate some of this disconnect by requiring CJsCs to take into consideration the views of those who live and work in the local authority areas, on any matter under consideration by the CJC.

We are happy to speak with any officials, Ministers, Committee Members or Members of the Senedd regarding matters arising from this note, or our previous consultation responses on this subject.

Kind regards.

Jessica Williams  
Third Sector European Team Manager  
Wales Council for Voluntary Action  
[jwilliams@wcva.cymru](mailto:jwilliams@wcva.cymru)

David Cook

Policy Officer  
Wales Council for Voluntary Action  
[dcook@wcva.cymru](mailto:dcook@wcva.cymru)

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