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**Ymchwiliad:** Bargeinion Dinesig a Thwf

**Cyf:** CGD02

**Ymateb gan:** Prifddinas Ranbarth Caerdydd

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**Welsh Parliament**

**Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee**

**Inquiry:** City and Growth Deals

**Ref:** CGD02

**Evidence from:** Cardiff Capital Region



# CCR City Deal: Written Evidence

Cardiff Capital Region

## Written Evidence to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

City and Growth Deals Inquiry

Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, Chair

Kellie Beirne, Chief Executive

Thursday, 22 May 2025



Prifddinas  
Ranbarth  
Caerdydd

Cardiff  
Capital  
Region

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>2. Programme Update</b> .....	3
<b>2.1 Investment Strategy</b> .....	3
<b>2.2 Expenditure</b> .....	3
<b>2.3 Recycled Funds</b> .....	4
<b>2.4 Delivery Progress &amp; Performance</b> .....	4
<b>3. CCR City Deal Impact</b> .....	8
<b>4. Major Project Updates</b> .....	10
<b>4.1 Innovation: Compound Semiconductor Cluster</b> .....	10
<b>4.2 Net Zero: CCR Energy</b> .....	10
<b>4.3 Transport: Metro Plus</b> .....	11
<b>4.4 Digital Connectivity: Ogi</b> .....	12
<b>4.5 Impact Funds</b> .....	12
<b>5. Governance &amp; Democratic Accountability</b> .....	15
<b>6. Availability of Private Sector Investment</b> .....	17
<b>7. Business Support Landscape</b> .....	18

## 1. Introduction

Covering the ten local authorities of South-East Wales, the ambition of Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) is to foster a regional economy that is stronger, fairer, and greener, generating good growth and creating the conditions for shared prosperity across our ten local authorities. Accounting for circa 50% of the population and economic activity of Wales, CCR is a place that has reinvented itself in the face of global changes whilst retaining its creativity, resilience and social solidarity.

Brought together formally for the landmark City Deal in 2016, CCR has grown in its capability, capacity, remit, and responsibility for the collective region. Now acting as a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), and a separate legal entity, CCR's responsibilities include innovation-led growth, economic well-being, strategic development, transport planning, infrastructure, and sites and premises.

Signed in March 2016 across the ten CCR local authorities by the Welsh and UK Governments, the City Deal comprises £734m for the Metro project and £495m for the Wider Investment Fund (WIF), and to date has created and safeguarded more than 4,000 jobs, generated £112m in co-investment for projects and supported 735 SMEs across the region.

The City Deal focused on CCR's specialisms, leveraging the WIF to build on sectoral strengths. However, the City Deal has been more than a funding mechanism. It represents the first stage of regional economic governance. It supported the evolution of a networked and distributed model of leadership where the ten local authorities combined to boost the region as a whole.

The Deal has helped CCR to redefine the role of the public sector as a driver of innovation by using investment funds to create and stimulate new markets, convene around solving the big industrial and societal challenges, and work across public-private boundaries to share risk, reward, and responsibility.

CCR's Regional Economic & Industrial Plan (2023-28) gives a clear forward view of the ambitions in transitioning from a City Deal to a City Region, through the *'lift and shift'* of CCR City Deal into the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee in April 2024.

The combination of capability and capacity, mature thinking, expertise around innovation-led growth, with those key responsibilities and empowerment, makes CCR a very real strength and a game changer in how the region can and will grow, and achieve economic well-being.

This document provides a progress update on the CCR City Deal to the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee in the period since the last meeting with the Committee in September 2023. The report is structured to respond to the areas as highlighted in the Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://business.senedd.wales/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=41795>

## 2. Programme Update

### 2.1 Investment Strategy

CCR has taken a unique evergreen approach to the deployment of the £495m Wider Investment Fund (WIF), with a view to creating a legacy fund that will benefit the region and nation. Around 50% of the investments made through the City Deal are evergreen, deployed through a number of mechanisms, including debt finance and equity.

The WIF is the primary fund that proposals which align with CCR's priority investment areas of Innovation, Infrastructure, Challenge and Skills will seek to access. Investments in this fund should have the scale and ambition to robustly address the challenges facing the region.

CCR is committed to developing a dynamic and competitive economy that generates jobs, raises wages, improves skills, and promotes fair work across the region, through encouraging entrepreneurship and stimulating growth in the business base.

Investment has been deployed to improve the transport system, develop priority industrial clusters, support high growth firms retaining their supply chains in the region and achieve Net Zero. CCR has also invested directly in high value, innovative local firms, helping to grow priority clusters, such as FinTech, Creative Industries, Cybersecurity and Compound Semiconductors.

Impact Funds have been created for specific categories of investment. This is to ring-fence set sums for investment, create bespoke eligibility criteria, employ dedicated fund managers to manage the application and assessment stages and in general to simplify the overall process for applicants.

Details of major projects and Impact Funds can be found in **Section 4**.

### 2.2 Expenditure

CCR has continued to accelerate delivery in the period since September 2023 and, subsequently, funds have been deployed ahead of profile. £139m of the £495m Wider Investment Fund has been spent as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and there are plans in place to spend a further £55m in the financial year 2024/25. At the end of Quarter 3 of 2024/25 (31<sup>st</sup> December 2024), CCR had spent a further £39m, bringing the total spend to £178m. In addition, the forecast spend to the end of the financial year 2024/25 remained on target.

The Fund's 'committed spend' at the end of Quarter 3 amounted to £423m, representing over 85% of CCR's £495m Wider Investment Fund. These commitments cover 27 separate projects and programmes, as well as the setting-up and operation of several discrete Impact Funds.

The position against the Wider Investment Fund reported to Investment Board in December 2024 is summarised below:

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Committed funds (£m)</b>	<b>Forecast spend to end 2024/25 (£m)</b>
Innovation	130.2	78.7
Infrastructure	279.7	102.9
Challenge	7.7	5.8
Skills	5.7	5.5
	<b>423.3</b>	<b>192.9</b>

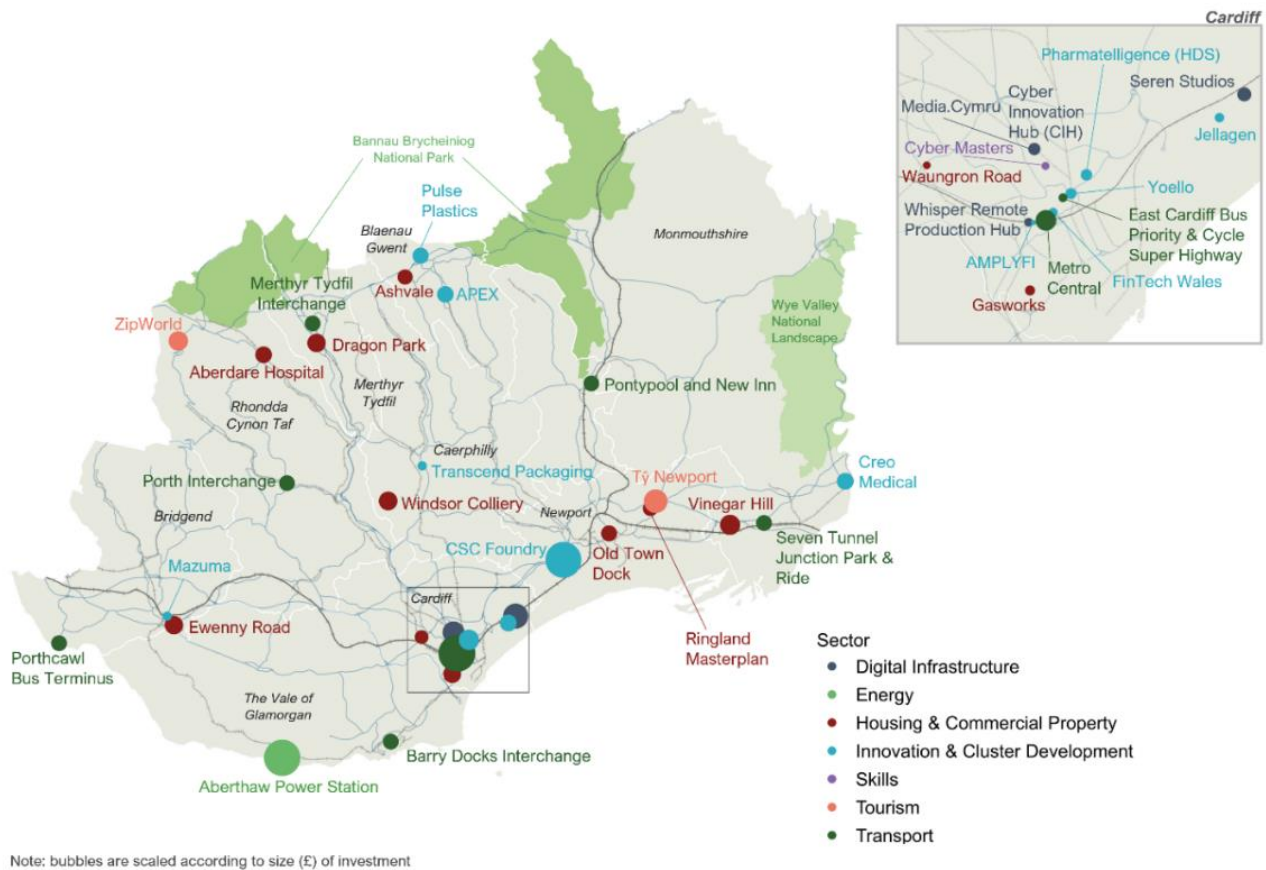
### **2.3 Recycled Funds**

An important aspect of CCR’s continued delivery and success is the Return on Investment of its interventions. Cumulatively, at end of the financial year 2023/24, these amounted to £11.2m in principal returns and interest. These amounts are held as usable reserves in CCR’s Balance Sheet and are available to fund expenditure in future years.

As at the end of Quarter 3 (31<sup>st</sup> December 2024) these sums are projected to total over £19m by the end of the financial year 2024/25.

### **2.4 Delivery Progress & Performance**

There has been significant progress made across the programme in the period since the previous submission of evidence to the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee, as CCR has made the transition to becoming a Corporate Joint Committee. There are now a total of 27 projects in deployment across the Wider Investment Fund, with a wide regional spread as indicated in Figure 1 (overleaf).



**Figure 1: Distribution of CCR investments (correct as of October 2025)**

As part of the UK Government Gateway Review of the CCR City Deal, and to set an appropriate frame for determining impact, CCR established a Local Evaluation Framework (LEF). This set the overall approach to evaluation aligned to the National Evaluation Framework (NEF). The specific approach for CCR was then agreed in the LEF, which was approved by CCR’s Regional Cabinet and submitted to DLUHC in September 2023. From this robust basis, a Mid-Term report was produced in February 2024, evaluating CCR at the ‘mid-point’ between its previous Gateway Review (2020) and its upcoming second review, due to conclude at the end of 2025. The report evaluates specific projects and interventions but also seeks to understand CCR’s wider processes and impact.

The Mid-Term report highlighted strengths in CCR’s business case development process, following the five-stage Green Book business case guidance, alongside the use of CCR’s advisory boards to allow for challenge and comment throughout each stage. Those advisory boards include the Investment Board and Regional Growth Board.

Stakeholder engagement was undertaken as part of the Mid-Term report and was led by a third party. This highlighted that collaboration between the ten Local Authorities has strengthened as a result of the way CCR has been set up and continues to operate, despite changes in Local Authority leadership. This same third party observed that CCR is the principal regional structure for economic development, with this role growing in terms of both delivery capacity and importance since the first Gateway Review in 2020.

The Mid-Term Report also contained a comprehensive socio-economic analysis, which reported a positive increase in regional GVA, which tracked ahead of the Welsh economy generally.

	2016	2022	Growth 2016 to 2022
Cardiff Capital Region GVA (£bn)	32,606	34,821	6.79
Wales GVA (£bn)	64,109	66,808	4.21

Likewise, Cardiff and CCR have seen significant improvements as measured in the UK Competitiveness Index (UKCI), being identified as among the most improved cities and the most improved of all city regions between 2019 and 2023. In a separate report, the authors of the UKCI recognise the important role of the CCR City Deal as a driver of entrepreneurial activity in key sectors<sup>2</sup>.

Allied to regional analysis, CCR tracks performance against the agreed indicators for each project as detailed in the Local Evaluation Framework. Performance is reported to UK & Welsh Governments on a quarterly basis and the performance to September 2024/25 is indicated in Figure 2 below.

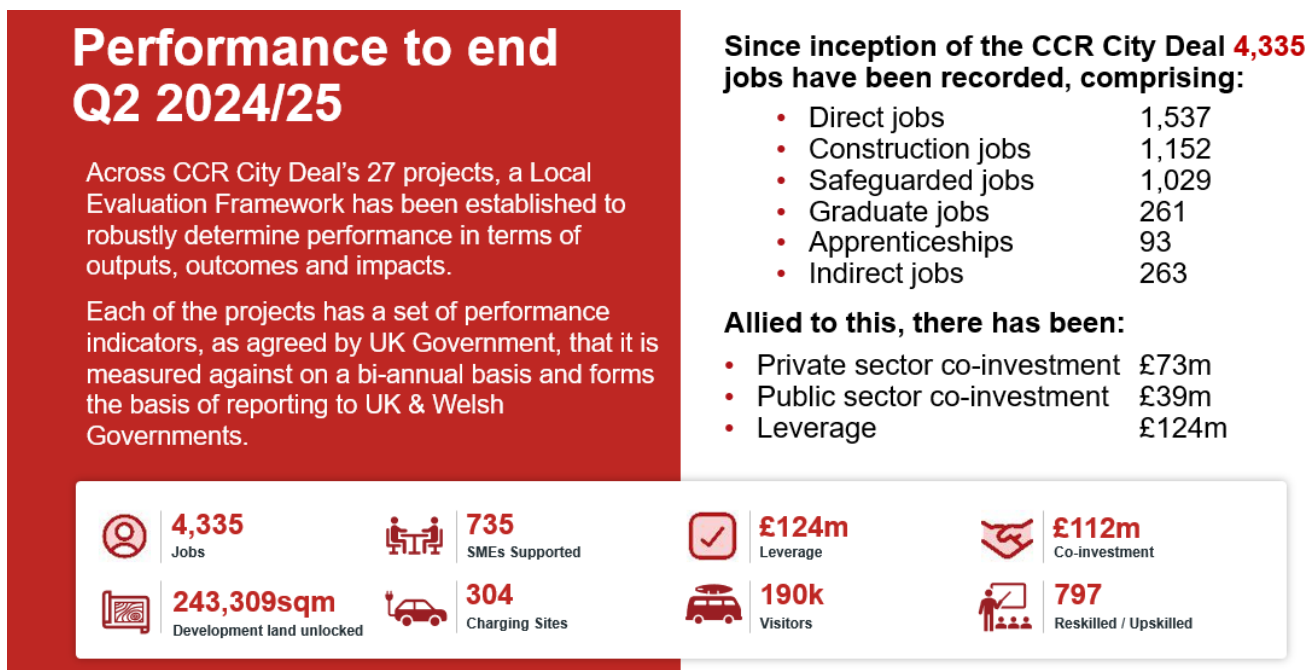


Figure 2: Performance to September 2024

<sup>2</sup> 'Entrepreneurial ecosystems, agency and regional development: Emergence and new path creation in the Cardiff city region', Huggins, Thompson, Munday & Xu, Local Economy

It is important to note that many of the projects are only at the stage of reporting *outputs* and, as such, reporting at this early stage is used as an indicator of trajectory against overall CCR City Deal targets. Per the Mid-Term Report, the Independent Evaluation Panel were satisfied that the City Deal had achieved milestones and was on course to deliver against objectives.

Indeed, in the second half of 2024/25, there have been investments made through the impact funds that will accelerate achievement of targets, such as the debt finance of the Uskmouth Battery Energy Storage System<sup>3</sup> and the equity investment in Space Forge Limited<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cardiffcapitalregion.wales/news-events/latest-news/cardiff-capital-region-loan-enables-the-development-of-battery-storage-in-newport/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cardiffcapitalregion.wales/news-events/latest-news/innovation-investment-capital-backs-space-forge-to-revolutionise-space-manufacturing/>

### 3. CCR City Deal Impact

Statistical analysis is only part of the regional narrative and, ultimately, stakeholders and residents need to feel the impact of the CCR City Deal. This impact is seen in what the City Deal projects deliver – the improvements brought to residents' lives and the economic benefits realised.

#### **CCR invests in innovative companies and sectors that drive economic growth**

A key objective from its **Regional Economic & Industrial Plan** is to make the region more competitive, linking innovation to higher levels of productivity and growth in employment. CCR's **Innovation Investment Capital** and **Northern Valleys Initiative** are two £50m funds that actively invest in companies that are led by innovation. Examples so far include AMPLYFI, Mazuma and Transcend Packaging, all of which are disrupters in their sectors. CCR also funds tech bodies such as the Cyber Innovation Hub, which aims to make South East Wales a leading cybersecurity hub in the UK and beyond.

#### **CCR uses public money to leverage private sector investment in the region**

A recent example is the £8.5m debt finance deal with SAE Renewables to transform Uskmouth into one of the largest Battery Energy Storage Systems sites in the UK, helping support the energy transition to Net Zero. This sum from CCR leveraged co-investment of £56.5m of private capital for the first stage of the project.

#### **CCR's interventions unlock and complete stalled projects**

CCR's intervention and investment funds enable projects that have been halted or stalled, thus creating jobs and increasing resources for the region. Examples of this include CCR's **Strategic Premises Fund** that has funded companies such as the 146-bed Ty Newport Hotel, enabling much-needed additional hotel space to be created, and increasing employment and investment into the region.

#### **CCR's evergreen loans being recycled into new ventures**

CCR's investment funds are managed by experts both inside and outside the organisation, with robust governance and oversight. The loans are given at commercial rates and, upon repayment, are available to be reused. Recently, companies such as Zip World and Pulse Plastics have repaid their CCR loans – generating economic benefits while ensuring that funds can be recycled.

#### **CCR funds housing schemes across the region**

CCR's **Housing Viability Gap Fund** is focused on working with local developers and councils with a targeted housing fund of £35m to bring forward new homes across South East Wales. Funds have been committed across ten schemes that have unlocked the delivery of more than 1,800 new houses.

#### **CCR invests in the Northern Valleys**

The six counties of Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, RCT and Bridgend form CCR's Northern Valleys and this area needs targeted investment. The **Northern Valleys Initiative** is a £50m fund that aims to play a long-term levelling-up role in tackling some of the intra-regional disparities that exist within the region. Investments are focussed on businesses and sites that offer high-growth potential and the ability to help transform the regional economy.

### **CCR co-invests with Welsh Government for big ticket projects**

CCR often uses its funding as leverage, working with government, Local Authorities and the private sector to further increase opportunities for business and people. CCR co-funds projects with the Welsh Government, for example, the expansion of Great Point Seren Studios in Cardiff, where CCR gave £12m as a loan, backed up by a £6m grant from Welsh Government, leveraging in £30m of private sector co-investment.

### **CCR improves transport infrastructure**

CCR's £50m Metro Plus Programme is connecting and integrating sustainable infrastructure with nine schemes across the region, ranging from establishing new park and ride facilities with EV charging on-site in Pontypool, to a new rail interchange in Merthyr. Six of the schemes have already been delivered, with the remaining three being larger in scale, to deliver wider benefits across the region, including redeveloping Cardiff Central station.

## 4. Major Project Updates

This section contains updates on the CCR City Deal's most significant investments, as requested by the Committee.

### 4.1 Innovation: Compound Semiconductor Cluster

CCR is the owner of the CSC Foundry in Imperial Park, home to both IQE PLC and Compound Semiconductor Applications Catapult (CSA Catapult). The cluster includes world-renowned companies including Vishay, KLA, and Microchip and continues to be the UK's hub for compound semiconductors. CCR plays host to governmental delegations from around the world seeking information on its cluster know-how.

CSC Foundry Ltd and IQE PLC worked in collaboration with CCR and the Welsh Government to set up a globally significant and state-of-the-art manufacturing foundry in Newport supplying 3D sensing products for globally recognised electronics companies – known as the 'super-foundry'. Ten specialist reactor tools were installed in 2017 and were qualified for production in 2018.

The work was focused on the redevelopment of a previously unoccupied building in Newport and the continued investment by CCR, with an initial allocation capped at £37.9m, to cover the cost of building conversion and specialist fit out. This investment covers the initial phases of development including the construction of specialist and fully serviced clean rooms which allows IQE to extend production to meet the continued demand for growth out to 2030 and beyond. IQE is funding the tools needed to operate (£6 million in 2024/25). It is anticipated that the project will involve significant capital spend from IQE to completely fit out and expand the new facility.

Whilst the CSC Foundry project is significant – and one of the only single sector priorities set out in the City Deal Heads of Terms (2016) – it was always seen as providing the building blocks for the growth, further development and reinforcement of the world's first Compound Semiconductor Cluster. To leverage and compound this good work, CCR seeded and invested in the creation of CSConnected, the cluster body for the region. CSConnected will help to drive growth of the wider cluster beyond that of an organic nature

The cluster directly contributes £381m per year to Welsh GVA, and once supply chain and household effects are considered, each direct job in the sector supports an additional 0.5 jobs elsewhere in the Welsh economy. The sector is characterised by high productivity, wages above the national average, and GVA per job more than twice the Welsh average.

Employment in the cluster during 2024 grew to a total of 4,047 highly skilled jobs spanning research, engineering, and high-value manufacturing. More than 20% of the workforce is engaged in R&D and innovation-intensive activities, reflecting the sector's emphasis on technological advancement. Industry partners within the cluster generate a collective turnover exceeding £560m, with over 95% of manufacturing output classified as exports—primarily to non-EU markets.

The cluster has a clear trajectory for growth, with a vision to expand and support between 6,000-7,000 jobs in semiconductor science, innovation, and manufacturing by 2030.

### 4.2 Net Zero: CCR Energy

The redevelopment of the former Aberthaw Power Station site represents a major strategic initiative within the region, supporting ambitions for decarbonisation, regional regeneration, and clean energy innovation. CCR Energy Ltd is a company set up by CCR for the acquisition of the Aberthaw site.

At the heart of the project is a strategic vision and plan to create sustainable green and clean energy for decades to come, drive new jobs and prosperity for the region and make a significant contribution towards UK and Welsh Governments' 2050 Net Zero targets. CCR Energy's board is a collective of industry experts and visionary leaders dedicated to shaping the future of sustainable energy.

Since the handover of the site, substantial progress has been made in delivering the initial phase of the Demolition Programme. Key milestones include the successful demolition of the Biomass Plant and Dust Bunker in Zone 5, with handover of this area to CCR Energy now imminent. Further works are underway, including the de-planting of the Turbine Hall and preparation for the demolition of the Water Treatment Plant. These activities are underpinned by a strong sustainability ethos, with 95% of materials from demolition being recycled or reused.

The Aberthaw project has attracted strong interest, showcased at international forums such as MIPIIM 2025. With an estimated Gross Development Value of up to £750m, the site has the potential to become a leading centre for renewable energy innovation. Current initiatives include advanced analysis of the Pulverised Fuel Ash (PFA) mound, totalling 18m tonnes, for reuse in a circular economy context, alongside plans for green hydrogen production, battery storage, and tidal energy research. CCR Energy has established a Tidal Consortium to introduce a first-of-its-kind testing facility for Low-Head tidal turbines on-site and has started exploring the potential of a Tidal Lagoon at Aberthaw in response to the Severn Estuary Commission Report published in March 2025.

The project is delivering immediate economic impact through the creation of 16 direct roles, 140 indirect roles, and 247 construction roles in the initial phase, with over 5,000 jobs projected across the full development lifecycle. The refurbishment of the ACE2 facility as a regional hub for sustainable energy innovation will support skills development, investor engagement, and collaboration across academia and industry. Strategic partnerships with WSP, Arup, Geldards, and Cardiff University are accelerating progress, while CCR Energy's participation in the Welsh Government's SBRI Agri-Food Challenge Programme links research to commercial application, with the first phase report due for publication shortly.

### **4.3 Transport: Metro Plus**

The £50m Metro Plus Programme is connecting and integrating sustainable infrastructure with nine schemes across the region, ranging from establishing new park and ride facilities with EV charging on-site in Pontypool, to a new rail interchange in Merthyr. Six of the schemes have already been delivered, with the remaining three being larger in scale, to deliver wider benefits across the region, including redeveloping Cardiff Central station.

The Cardiff Central Enhancements Programme (CCEP) has been a long-term project for CCR. In January 2018, the CCR City Deal's Regional Cabinet agreed in principle to set aside £40m of funding to support the redevelopment of Cardiff Central Station under the Metro Central programme, on the basis that match funding would be forthcoming from both UK and Welsh Governments. CCR has subsequently approved the Full Business Case in March 2025, and pending approval from the Department for Transport and Welsh Government, works will commence later in 2025 on this critical project.

Cardiff Central station is the only Category A1 railway station in Wales and serves as a national and regional transport hub within the South Wales Metro network. The station sits at the centre of the Cardiff Central Enterprise Zone (CCEZ), an area designated for new development and business investment, and Wales's largest economic centre. Cardiff is one of the UK's fastest-growing cities in percentage terms, with Cardiff Central accommodating a quarter of all station Welsh entries and exits annually.

Cardiff Central Station urgently needs upgrading to address current issues of accessibility, crowding, safety and performance at the station and to accommodate projected growth in passenger numbers over the next 25 years. Moreover, investment in the station will unlock wider economic benefits such as employment opportunities, land value uplift and GVA, in addition to catalysing regeneration and wider development around the station and across the wider region.

The capacity enhancements of Cardiff Central Station are a critical component of the overall South Wales Metro programme. The station's capacity determines the overall capability and resilience of the network and is also the sole connection between the South Wales Mainline and the Core Valley Lines (CVL). As such, the ability of the station to deal with increased patronage is fundamental to the future success of City Region infrastructure, and its ability to achieve dispersed and inclusive growth and increase in productivity across the region.

The original case for CCR investment was predicated on a funding stack comprising both public and private investment, as well as on approximately 5m sqft of commercial development, seeking to leverage some £2bn of commercial funds and up to £1bn in additional GVA to the region, helping to create, support, and induce between 20,000-30,000 jobs.

The scheme will be on site for early construction works in 2025 and is due to complete in approximately three years.

#### **4.4 Digital Connectivity: Ogi**

In September 2024 CCR approved a £45m financing package to support the expansion of Ogi, Wales' leading Alternative Network Provider (Alt-Net). This is the largest single-company investment made by CCR to date and directly supports strategic goals around digital connectivity, regional competitiveness, and economic resilience.

As digital infrastructure increasingly underpins all aspects of modern life, access to fast, reliable broadband has become a fundamental requirement. Strengthening digital infrastructure through the deployment of full fibre networks enables business to operate more efficiently and allows communities, particularly in underserved areas, to participate fully in the digital economy. Crucially, it ensures that the region keeps pace with, and does not fall behind, other UK City Regions that are advancing rapidly in full fibre deployment and digital readiness.

The CCR investment in Ogi supports the next stage of the company's growth and is accelerating the large-scale rollout of full fibre, gigabit capable broadband infrastructure. Over the next five years, this will deliver a high-capacity digital network across the region, as well as wider economic benefits such as job creation, GVA uplift and leveraged investment.

#### **4.5 Impact Funds**

CCR has a series of Impact Funds that have been created for specific categories of investment. This is in order to ring-fence set sums for investment, create bespoke eligibility criteria, employ dedicated fund managers to manage the application and assessment stages and in general simplify the overall process for the applicant.

For each of the Impact Funds we have included a description, key objectives or characteristics, and a headline 'Case Study' with key facts.

##### **Housing Viability Gap Fund (£35m)**

The Housing Viability Gap Fund is a targeted funding programme created to bring forward new homes on key strategic housing sites across the region. The Fund is a mechanism to unlock sites that would have no other means of coming forward due to financial viability.

The objectives of the Fund are to:

- Unlock stalled sites that are unviable for housing delivery.
- Invest in projects that will deliver housing in areas needed most, whilst demonstrating value for money and delivery certainty.
- Kick-start construction, generating jobs and delivering sustainable developments.
- Enhance the long-term growth prospects and competitiveness of the region through improved infrastructure, increased connectivity and regeneration.

**Case Study: Dragon Parc, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil<sup>5</sup>**

- £3.5m grant funding
- 200 homes (forecast completion 2028)
- 9.03 hectares derelict land returned to use
- 25% (£1.75m) of costs to date spent with SME's

**Strategic Premises Fund (£50m)**

Regional Impact Fund targeted at accelerating the delivery of employment floorspace across Cardiff Capital Region.

- Flexible source of development finance for commercial development projects in the region.
- Independently managed by CBRE
- 10-year revolving fund with all capital returned and reinvested into future development projects
- Available to private sector-led schemes

**Case Study: Ty Newport Hotel Development<sup>6</sup>**

- £9.7m loan leveraging £9m co-investment
- 120 jobs created
- 53 apprenticeships supported
- 182,986 sqft employment space unlocked

**Northern Valleys Initiative (£50m)**

The Northern Valleys Initiative has been put in place to supporting growth to tackle economic and social disparity. The Initiative aims to:

- Build on previous interventions, support bold steps to boost growth
- Support delivery of infrastructure, digital connectivity and stimulate tourism
- Encourage private investment, generate jobs and drive prosperity
- Make projects with demonstrable gaps viable

**Case Study: Merthyr Industrial Development**

- £5.14m grant funding leveraging £32m private sector investment
- 200 new jobs
- 228,000 sqft employment space unlocked
- 19 acres derelict land reduced

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.asbriplanning.co.uk/statutory-pre-application-consultation/dragon-park-abercanaid-merthyr-tydfil>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ccrstrategicpremisesfund.co.uk/project/ty-newport/>

### **Innovation Investment Capital (£50m)**

Innovation Investment Capital is a £50m fund that has been established to provide patient capital to growing businesses across the region in South East Wales. Targeting investment proposals between £2m and £7m per deal to support high-growth, technology-focused companies located in, or expanding to one of the ten local authority areas in the region.

- Focusing on innovative scalable businesses.
- The fund is managed by Capricorn Fund Managers and advised by PwC.
- Catalysing 'good growth' in high growth companies and supporting high value jobs.

### **Case Study: Space Forge Limited<sup>7</sup>**

- Equity investment as part of £22.6m Series A funding
- Funding round led by the NATO Innovation Fund
- Retained the business and created further jobs in the region

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<sup>7</sup> <https://fintechwales.org/news/space-forge-secures-series-a-funding-with-backing-from-cardiff-capital-region/>

## 5. Governance & Democratic Accountability

### March 2017 – March 2024

Cardiff Capital Region, comprising the ten principal Local Authorities in South East Wales was established in 2017 to oversee the delivery of the CCR City Deal. The ten Local Authorities entered into a joint working agreement on 1 March 2017 to formalise their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to the City Deal. The joint working agreement, amongst other matters, established a Joint Committee (known as Regional Cabinet) comprised of the ten Council Leaders, and appointed Cardiff Council to act as the Accountable Body for and on behalf of the Partner Councils to discharge the Local Authorities' obligations in relation to City Deal.

### April 2024 - onwards

In 2021, the Senedd Cymru passed legislation establishing a new public body for the region to be known as the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SEWCJC). The SEWCJC's area comprises the administrative areas of the ten CCR Partner Local Authorities.

The SEWCJC has three key areas of responsibility:

- Strategic Development Plans
- Regional Transport Plans
- Doing whatever is deemed necessary to enhance or promote the economic wellbeing of the area (the 'Economic Wellbeing Function')

With effect from 1 April 2024, the SEWCJC has been the stewardship and decision-making entity for the CCR City Deal, which it delivers as part of its Economic Wellbeing Function, allowing the existing regional collaboration to make use of the additional tools that the structure of a corporate body allows.

The SEWCJC is responsible for receiving and spending funds on behalf of the Local Authorities in relation to the CCR City Deal in accordance with the funding conditions and has adopted a Constitution governing how decisions are made, who is responsible for making decisions and the procedures that must be followed to ensure that it is transparent, accountable and efficient. This includes Standing Orders in relation to the delivery of CCR City Deal.

The SEWCJC's Constitution, together with a Guide to the Constitution, is published on its website<sup>1</sup> at alongside an overview of its Governance Framework.<sup>2</sup>

The SEWCJC's Constitution also includes specific [Standing Orders in relation to the delivery of CCR City Deal](#), which include the Committee's [Terms of Reference](#) in relation to CCR City Deal at Annex 2 and the CCR City Deal Wider Investment Fund [Assurance Framework](#) at Annex 5.

Details of the SEWCJC's members and meetings are published on its website<sup>3</sup> and meetings of the SEWCJC are webcast and open to the public to attend, except where confidential information or exempt information is being discussed. The SEWCJC publishes a [Forward Plan](#) of the key decisions it intends to make at least 28 days in advance of the meeting and [agendas and reports](#) are published at least three clear working days prior to each meeting at which a decision is to be taken, together with a link to the live broadcast of the relevant meeting.

The SEWCJC has established several sub-committees and advisory boards to support its functions. These are shown in Figure 3 (below) and a full list of these, and their Terms of Reference, may be found in [Part 3B](#) of the SEWCJC's Constitution.

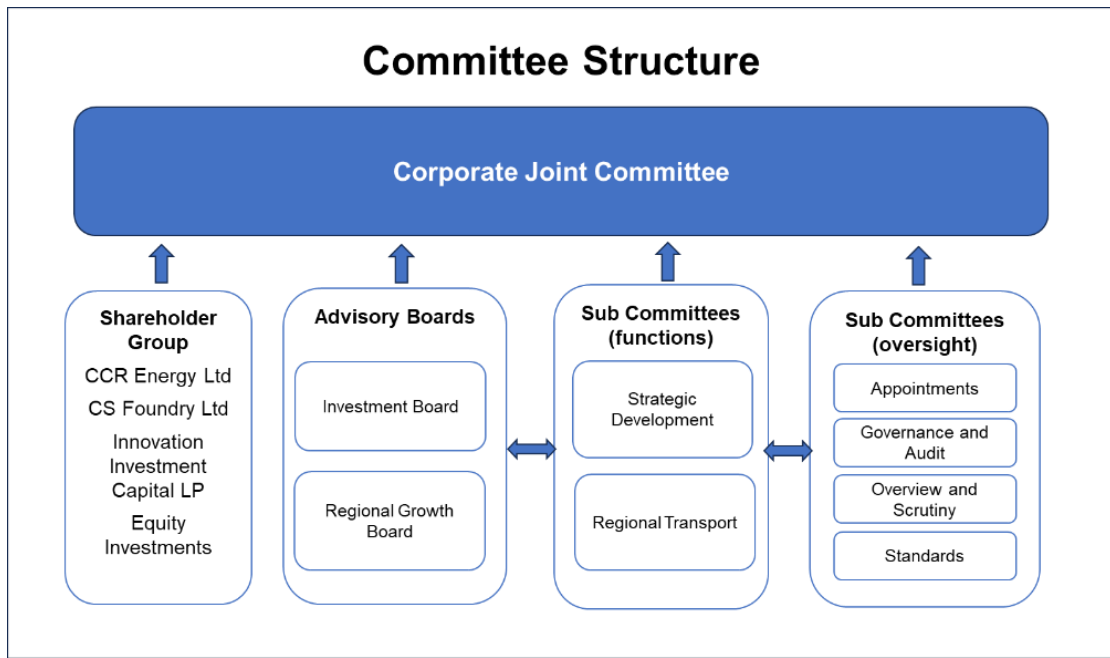


Figure 3: SEWCJC Committee Structure

## **6. Availability of Private Sector Investment**

Private sector investment is critical to the success of any region, and a key driver for the Wider Investment Fund is to drive private sector co-investment and leverage wider funding. CCR has also created a series of Impact Funds, identified in Section 4, with specific targets in regard to co-investment of public and private sector capital.

There are many examples of this within the funds, some mentioned previously in this document, including:

- Uskmouth Power Station Battery Energy Storage Systems – a loan of £8.5 million from the CCR Strategic Premises Fund has unlocked private sector finance of over £56 million.
- The Housing Viability Gap Fund's £35m investment in ten schemes across the region will deliver 1800 homes on sites that would have struggled without the support provided due to viability issues for each site, while leveraging significant developer investment.
- The Innovation Investment Capital Fund's first four investments have raised further private sector capital to support their growth and development. Co-investment ensures that the public money invested in these firms can realise a much greater impact.

Going forward, CCR is working to develop investible propositions across the region, thereby attracting a wide range of pension funds, institutional investors, and patient capital. This is a key ethos and focus for the CCR investment strategy as the organisation matures.

## 7. Business Support Landscape

As referenced in the Regional Economic & Industrial Plan, CCR focuses on priority sectors for cluster development and growth and aims to support the growth of businesses within these sectors across the region. To gain a wider and deeper impact across those six cluster areas, CCR seeded the creation of sustainable enabling bodies that can support, disrupt, and develop their respective business environments in the region. The table highlights these industrial clusters with examples of CCR interventions to date that have enabled growth.

Sector/ cluster	Regional employment	CCR funded enabling organisation	Examples of CCR interventions currently in delivery
Creative Industries	5,600 employees <sup>4</sup>	Media Cymru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Media Cymru</a> (£50m Strength In Places Bid)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Great Point Studios</a> (£12m loan enabling £60m wider studio investment)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Whisper TV</a> (£1.5m loan for global production hub)</li> </ul>
Green Energy	825 employees <sup>5</sup>	CCR Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Aberthaw Power Station</a> (acquisition of 500 acre-site, transforming to Low Carbon Energy Destination)</li> <li>• <a href="#">HyBont</a> (investment in an SPV to create an innovative hydrogen production demonstrator)</li> <li>• <a href="#">ULEV</a> (pan-regional charging infrastructure)</li> </ul>
Compound Semiconductor	1,773 employees <sup>6</sup>	CSconnected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">CSConnected</a> (£43.7m Strength In Places Bid)</li> <li>• <a href="#">CSC Foundry</a> (£40m mega-foundry)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Investment Zone</a> (in development with Welsh Government)</li> </ul>
Cyber Security	1,256 employees <sup>4</sup>	Cyber Innovation Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cyber Innovation Hub</a> (£20m co-funded commercialisation &amp; skills programme with Welsh Government and industry)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Cyber Masters</a> (industry-driven skills programme)</li> </ul>
FinTech	6,500 employees <sup>7</sup>	FinTech Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">FinTech Wales</a> (funding the FinTech trade body)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Mazuma</a> (equity investment from Innovation Investment Capital)</li> </ul>

CCR has worked with the Welsh Government on many of these projects and has been a driver in supporting and delivering interventions across the innovation pipeline to support businesses, covering these sectors. This includes direct support into organisations (equity and debt investments) and indirect support by building and enhancing the environment and ecosystem that they exist in.

CCR appreciates that 'one size does not fit all' with respect to business support. Across the region there are obvious nuances that require a discrete approach to ensure that we are inclusive, and that options and opportunity remain accessible. The ongoing pipeline of interventions from CCR are purposefully bespoke and specific to the region. This pipeline does not deviate from the operations of Welsh Government and others, but the specific nature of the activity makes this complementary, as opposed to replication or competitive.

In developing this approach, CCR mapped out regional business support, and identified gaps and weaknesses, working with Welsh Government and other actors to ensure they can be addressed collaboratively.

Specific programmes have been developed and delivered to be complementary to current Welsh Government support. For example, CCR's Business Growth Programme was a strategic initiative launched to support 75 high-potential businesses across South-East Wales. Funded by CCR and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the programme drove regional economic development by helping entrepreneurs and scale-up companies grow sustainably. As a result of the programme 50 FTE roles were created, 68% of which were outside of Cardiff.

Existing and in pipeline developments related to business support with Welsh Government include:

- Investment Zone, working with Welsh Government to shape the proposition and focus
- Inward investment and collaborative support programmes
- Cluster bodies (such as, the Cyber Innovation Hub and Media Cymru)
- Industrial strategy, aligned to Welsh Government sectoral focus
- AI Growth Zone, building this new proposition with Welsh Government