



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Monday, 28 February 2022 at 3.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor P Downing (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

C R Doyle  
K M Roberts

**Councillor(s)**

P K Jones  
L V Walton

**Councillor(s)**

E T Kirchner

**Officer(s)**

Amy Hawkins  
Jeremy Parkhouse  
Joanne Portwood

Interim Head of Adult Services  
Democratic Services Officer  
Strategy and Policy Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): D W Helliwell, L R Jones and C Richards

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**39 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

**40 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee held on 24 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

**41 Swansea Poverty Truth Commission.**

Joanne Portwood, Strategy and Policy Officer presented a 'for information' report which provided an update on the Swansea Poverty Truth Commission (SPTC).

The report outlined the background details and progress made by SPTC and highlighted the work of the Facilitation Team had been optimising the Community Commissioners' ability to engage in the Poverty Truth Commission using a trauma informed approach.

It was added that the Facilitation Team were now working with a group of twelve Community Commissioners who had been meeting together regularly online to build relationships and trust while beginning to share their stories. The group is diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, cultural background, experiences of poverty and geography within Swansea.

In addition, the emerging themes that the Commission might focus upon included: Mental Health, Housing and Homelessness, Stigma, Family Justice, Policing, consistency of Person Centred Approaches and advice and guidance, Education, Class and Social Mobility, Caring responsibilities, rural and hidden poverty. While the outcomes for the SPTC were unknown at this stage, learning from the Poverty Truth Commission Network indicated that outcomes could occur at a number of levels, including individual, organisational, policy and wider society.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Commissioners mechanisms of reporting / providing feedback;
- The importance of stigma being included as an emerging theme due to it being a huge issue;
- Reviewing how people find out about, get involved as Commissioners and are spoken to as part of the process;
- The essential need for Community Commissioners to have the appropriate experience;
- The next steps in identifying the priority areas.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the report and requested that the Committee be updated regarding progress on a regular basis.

#### **42 Update on Community Food Growing Policy.**

The Strategy and Policy Officer presented a 'for information' update on the Community Food Growing Policy.

It was outlined that a draft Community Food Policy was developed by the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee (PDC) in 2020. It was informed by a review of similar policies across Wales, particularly the Community Food Growing Policy adopted by Monmouthshire Council. The draft policy was also informed by a workshop for the PDC with community growing experts from the third sector across Swansea and subsequent discussions with the PDC.

The aims of the Community Food Growing Policy were outlined as follows: -

- To ensure that suitable and underutilised land in its ownership is made available for community food growing,
- To promote opportunities for individuals and groups to grow food in local communities for community and social benefit,
- To work with its partners and the Third sector to support community food growing,
- To ensure that community food growing activities on Council owned land supports and benefits those most vulnerable to food poverty,
- To support the development of local food resilience and address food poverty.

It was highlighted that the implementation of a Community Food Growing Policy would require resources to promote, implement and monitor the policy. Examples of the potential support required were provided.

It was added that the work required to support the implementation of a Community Food Growing Policy cuts across a number of Council services and teams. Currently there were no dedicated resources to support the implementation of this policy. Therefore, it was recommended that a Working Group of Officers and Members be established to explore how the Policy could be implemented within existing resources and / or whether additional resource would be required to implement the policy.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Disappointment at the number of issues to address in order to progress;
- Liaising with voluntary groups across Swansea;
- Using start-up budgets;
- The nutritional, health and environmental benefits of introducing the policy;
- Ensuring that the people receiving food, actually needed it;
- Thinking 'outside the box' to progress the policy.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the update and added that further progress would be in the next Municipal Year.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) The contents of the report be noted;
- 2) A Working Group of Councillors / Officers be established to progress the Policy.

#### **43 Fairness in Green Health Policy. (Verbal)**

The Strategy and Policy Officer presented a verbal update regarding progress.

She added that further clarity was required from the Corporate Director and Legal in order to progress matters.

It was proposed that a Working Group be established to progress the Policy discussions.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) The contents of the update be noted;
- 2) A Working Group be established to progress the Policy discussions.

#### **44 Work Plan 2021-2022.**

The Chair presented an updated Work Plan 2021-2022.

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He added that the Affordable Credit Policy had been accepted and adopted by Cabinet. He thanked the Committee and Officers for their work on developing the Policy.

In addition, he noted that the Annual Committee Report would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting.

He further noted that if everything went to plan, an update to the Personal Debt Recovery Policy would also be provided.

**Resolved** that the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 4.05 pm

**Chair**