



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Scrutiny Programme Committee

**At:** Remotely via Microsoft Teams

**On:** Tuesday, 17 January 2023

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Chair:** Councillor Peter Black CBE

#### Membership:

Councillors: E W Fitzgerald, R Fogarty, T J Hennegan, V A Holland, M Jones, H Lawson, W G Lewis, P N May, F D O'Brien, S Pritchard, M S Tribe and T M White

Statutory Co-opted Members: Beth Allender and Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, S M Jones and L R Jones

**Watch Online:** <http://bit.ly/3WWcFES>

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**Webcasting:** This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to be filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and / or training purposes.

### Agenda

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**1 Apologies for Absence.**

**2 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.**

[www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests)

**3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.**

**4 Minutes.**

To approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.

1 - 3

**5 Public Question Time.**

Questions can be submitted in writing to Democratic Services [democracy@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@swansea.gov.uk) up until noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Written questions take precedence. Public may attend and ask questions in person if time allows. Questions must relate to items on the open part of the agenda and will be dealt within a 10 minute period.

<b>6</b>	<b>Report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.</b>	<b>4 - 55</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Q &amp; A Session with Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance &amp; Strategy (Councillor Rob Stewart).</b>	<b>56 - 102</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report:</b> a) Service Improvement & Finance (Councillor Chris Holley, Convener) b) Education (Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener)	<b>103 - 112</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.</b>	<b>113 - 114</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Scrutiny Work Programme.</b> Discussion on: a) Committee Work Plan. b) Opportunities for Pre-Decision Scrutiny. c) Progress with Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.	<b>115 - 147</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Scrutiny Letters.</b>	<b>148 - 178</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.</b>	<b>179</b>

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 14 February 2023 at 4.00 pm

*Huw Evans*

**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Tuesday, 10 January 2023**

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**Contact: Democratic Services - Tel (01792) 636923**

# Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

### Teams

Tuesday, 13 December 2022 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**  
E W Fitzgerald  
M Jones  
F D O'Brien  
T M White

**Councillor(s)**  
R Fogarty  
W G Lewis  
S Pritchard

**Councillor(s)**  
V A Holland  
P N May  
M S Tribe

### **Statutory Co-opted Member(s)**

Elizabeth Lee

### **Councillor Co-opted Member(s)**

P R Hood-Williams      L R Jones

### **Officer(s)**

Lee Cambule	Tackling Poverty Service Manager
Amy Hawkins	Head of Adult Services & Tackling Poverty
Sarah Jordan	Landlord and Community Housing Services Manager
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Carol Morgan	Head of Housing & Public Health
Steve Porter	Operations Manager, Community Housing Services
Anthony Richards	Poverty and Prevention Strategy and Development Manager
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer

### **Also present**

Councillor R Stewart, Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)

Councillor A S Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Councillor A Pugh, Cabinet Member for Wellbeing

### **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): H Lawson

Statutory Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley and S M Jones

**51 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.**

**52 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.**

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

**53 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 15 November, 2022, be signed and approved as a correct record.

**54 Public Question Time.**

There were no public questions.

**55 Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Homelessness - Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation.**

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation introduced her report which covered the portfolio responsibility regarding homelessness. She stated that Homelessness had increased across Wales. Reference was made to Swansea Council's 'Always a Bed' pledge and she placed on record her thanks to both internal and external teams who worked during the Covid Pandemic and continued to work to help people at their time of need.

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation asked the Operations Manager, Community Housing Services to provide an overview on current homelessness pressures and how these pressures are being tackled.

The Operations Manager, Community Housing Services, detailed the background regarding the challenges of the Covid Pandemic, levels and causes of homelessness, Housing Support Programme Strategy and priorities, current achievements, challenges going forward and conclusion and summary.

In addition to the Operations Manager, Community Housing Services, the Head of Housing & Public and Landlord & Community Housing Services Manager were present to assist the Committee.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on the following:

- The incorporation of Homelessness Strategy within a new Housing Support Programme Strategy 2023-2027.
- Progress on Homelessness Strategy priorities / specific areas for development, including progress with rapid rehousing and multi-agency support; partnership working with Health around mental health support and tackling substance misuse.
- Challenges associated with the Covid pandemic.
- Nature and levels of homeless presentations.



- Levels of rough sleepers. (Comparative figures of rough sleepers in Swansea and the other Welsh Local Authorities to be provided to Members).
- Challenges associated with temporary accommodation, including use of Bed & Breakfast.
- Progress in relation to supported housing.
- Nature, levels and ongoing development of housing for single persons.
- Ongoing initiatives to deal with the causes of homelessness, including prison leavers.
- The impact of a reduction in the supply of affordable housing within the private rented sector.

Due to technical difficulties, the Chair advised that the meeting would conclude and a letter would be sent to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation reflecting discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

**56 Report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.**

**Resolved** that the item be deferred to the meeting scheduled on Tuesday, 17 January, 2023.

**57 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.**

**Resolved** that the item be deferred to the meeting scheduled on Tuesday, 17 January, 2023.

**58 Scrutiny Work Programme.**

**Resolved** that the item be deferred to the meeting scheduled on Tuesday, 17 January, 2023.

**59 Scrutiny Letters.**

**Resolved** that the item be deferred to the meeting scheduled on Tuesday, 17 January, 2023.

**60 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.**

**Resolved** that the item be deferred to the meeting scheduled on Tuesday, 17 January, 2023.

The meeting ended at 4.58 pm

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 6



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Well-Being

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide a briefing to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on delivery of the Council's Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.
<b>Content</b>	The report provides an overview and context of the 'Report on the delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty'.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	Consider the report, to give their views and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member as necessary.
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Alyson Pugh, Cabinet Member for Well-Being.
<b>Lead Officer Report Author</b>	Amy Hawkins, Head of Adult Services and Tackling Poverty Lee Cambule, Tackling Poverty Service Manager Anthony Richards, Tackling Poverty Strategy Development Manager
<b>Legal Officer</b>	Carolyn Isaac
<b>Finance Officer</b>	Chris Davies
<b>Access to Services</b>	Catherine Window

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Swansea Council's Corporate Plan sets out six key council priorities, one of which is Tackling Poverty – so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential.
- 1.2 Poverty is caused by things that reduce resources, or increase needs and the costs of meeting those needs. Causes of poverty can also be consequences which can then create a cycle known as the poverty trap. Common triggers of poverty are often life changing events or changes in circumstances such as becoming sick, bereavement, redundancy or relationship breakdown.
- 1.3 During the last 12 months progress has been made against our ambitions for tackling poverty. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic challenges - including the Cost of Living crisis - have focussed and shaped our efforts to tackle poverty.

- 1.4 As we enter a period of revisiting our priorities and plans for tackling poverty, this is an opportunity to reflect back on the progress that has been made as well as informing our future approaches through national and local evidence and lived experience.

## **2. Content**

- 2.1 The report prepared for the Scrutiny Programme Committee (see **Appendix A**) is structured to include:
- Executive Summary
  - Context
  - Corporate Priority
  - Corporate Plan Steps
  - Corporate Performance Indicators
  - National Strategic Drivers
  - Additional Developments
  - Way Forward
- 2.2 The report presents evidence, insights and intelligence that demonstrates the contributions that have been made to achieving the Corporate Plan priority in the last twelve months.
- 2.3 The report also considers the findings and recommendations of Audit Wales' ['Time for Change – Poverty in Wales'](#) Report, published 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022, including a number of positive reflections of good practice identified in Swansea.

## **3. Context**

- 3.1 The Covid-19 pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis is disproportionately impacting low income households, pushing more people into poverty and those experiencing it, further into poverty resulting in increasing demand for services including crisis support services and increased complexities for those in need.
- 3.2 Swansea Council's ongoing response to the Cost of Living Crisis is contributing to mitigating the impact of poverty and increased levels of demand.
- 3.3 The report outlines the activity from the past 12 months and future plans over the next 12 months.

## **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.

4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above – see **Appendix B**. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

## 5. Legal implications

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report other than those set out in the body of the report.

## 6. Finance Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**Background papers:** *None*

**Appendices:** Appendix A – Report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty  
Appendix B – IIA Screening



# **Report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty**

**Scrutiny Programme Committee**

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

## 1. Executive Summary

Tackling poverty was identified as one of Swansea Council's six well-being objectives defined in its **Corporate Plan** published in 2017:

**Tackling Poverty** - so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential.

This is a cross-directorate commitment taking a 'tackling poverty is everyone's business' approach. In the last twelve months, we have:

- Responded to the Cost of Living crisis with more funding and support made available;
- Adapted our programmes and service delivery in response to COVID-19 impacts;
- Helped more people to find employment and improve their skills;
- Continued to deliver more affordable and energy efficient housing;
- Expanded our work with communities and partnerships focused on tackling poverty.

In 2017, Swansea Council published **Working towards prosperity for all in Swansea: A tackling poverty strategy for Swansea**. This corporate strategy represented the Council's commitment to reducing poverty and the impacts poverty has upon the people of Swansea.

Since 2017, progress has been made against our ambitions for tackling poverty but there has also been a lot of change, most significantly in the past three years. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic challenges - including the Cost of Living crisis - have affected not only our efforts to implement our strategy but our ability to refresh our strategic approach.

As the Cost of Living crisis has continued to escalate in this reporting year, the number of grants for individuals and organisations have increased. The table below provides a summary of the related grants that have been administered through the Council so far:

Grant	Funder / Partner	Amount	Who does it help
<b>Cost of Living Payment – Main Scheme (Closed September 2022)</b>	Welsh Government	£11,466,450 paid to 76,443 people	Eligible people / households struggling with the cost of living.
<b>Cost of Living Payment – Discretionary Scheme (Ongoing to 31/03/23)</b>	Welsh Government	£1,451,392 paid to 39,914 people	Eligible people / households struggling with the cost of living.
<b>Fuel Support Scheme (Applications close 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023)</b>	Welsh Government	£4,067,400 to 20,337 people	Supporting low-income households with energy costs.
<b>Unpaid Carers Grant (Closed September 2022)</b>	Welsh Government	£1,725,000 paid to 3,450 people	Supporting unpaid carers.
<b>Self-Isolation Payments (Closed July 2022)</b>	Welsh Government	2022/23 - £1,196,250 paid to 2,374 people	Supporting people with the cost of self-isolation.

Grant	Funder / Partner	Amount	Who does it help
<b>Swansea Spaces (Warm Hubs)</b>	Welsh Government	£83,831 in 2022/23	People struggling with the Cost of Living in particular energy costs. The grant supports organisations and groups with the increased costs of providing a warm hub.
<b>Period Dignity in Schools and Communities Grant</b>	Welsh Government	£211,853 in 2022/23	People struggling with accessing period dignity products. The grant supports schools, organisations and services to provide products.
<b>Direct Food Support</b>	Welsh Government	£121,213 in 2022/23	People experiencing food poverty and food insecurity. The grant supports organisations that are involved in tackling food poverty / providing crisis food provision.
<b>Household Support Grant (Food Poverty)</b>	Welsh Government	£83,440 in 2022/23	People experiencing food poverty and food insecurity. The grant supports organisations that are involved in tackling food poverty / providing crisis food provision.
<b>Men's Sheds Grant</b>	Swansea Council	£25,000 in 2022/23	Men's Sheds groups and people engaged in their activities.
<b>Community Calling</b>	Hubbub, O2, SCVS	700 reconditioned smart phones with calls and data in 2021/22	People who are digitally excluded and would benefit from the scheme. Digital Skills Training offered to recipients via Lifelong Learning.
<b>Surplus Bed Scheme</b>	Welsh Government, NHS, NPT	Over 500 surplus beds from Bay Field Hospital in 2022	People in bed poverty.

As we enter a period of revisiting our priorities and plans for tackling poverty, this is an opportunity to reflect back on the progress that has been made as well as beginning to gather views about what the future holds. Some of the challenges we faced when the Tackling Poverty Strategy was published remain relevant while others have changed significantly.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress made against the corporate Tackling Poverty priority in the last twelve months.

## 2. Context

### 2.1 Definition of poverty

While there is no single, universally agreed definition of poverty, in Swansea we define it as:

- Income below the Minimum Income Standard;
- Inadequate access to necessary services of good quality;
- Inadequate opportunity or resource to join in with social, cultural, leisure and decision-making activities.

As of this report, the Minimum Income Standard (the amount of income that a person or household needs to meet living standards) is £25,500 a year for a single person and £43,400 for a couple with two children.<sup>1</sup> The Minimum Income Standard itself is not a measure of poverty but is a measure of the household income deemed by the public a sufficient income to afford a minimum acceptable standard of living.

In general terms, poverty means being unable to afford the essential resources that allow you to live a minimum acceptable standard of living. It can be defined by the issues of living in poverty in the diagram opposite, characteristics that are common for people in poverty who either cannot afford or face challenges with these issues.



Fig. 1 – Seven characteristics of poverty<sup>2</sup>

Poverty is multi-dimensional, complex, growing and impacting more people in Wales. It can take several different forms that will present their own unique challenges:

- **Situational poverty** – linked to the individual's situation such as a loss of employment;
- **Generational poverty** – being part of a family living in poverty for two or more generations (a long-term cycle of poverty);
- **Absolute poverty** – being in complete destitution with an absolute lack of resources including food, housing, etc.;
- **Relative poverty** – struggling to live well based on living in households with income below 60% of the median in that year;
- **Material Deprivation** – being unable to afford every day essential items or services
- **Rural poverty** – defined by living in a rural area and situations arising from that environment including isolation, lack of access to technology, etc.;
- **Urban poverty** – defined by living in urban areas and situations arising from that environment including overcrowded homes, high competition for jobs, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Other common terms or descriptions of poverty include **in-work poverty** (households where at least one adult is in work yet still living in poverty), **child poverty** (children are at highest risk of poverty in Wales), **pensioner poverty** (people who have retired and struggling to live

<sup>1</sup> 'A Minimum Income Standard: UK in 2022' - Joseph Rowntree Foundation, September 2022 [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Information from Audit Wales 'Time for Change – Poverty in Wales' report published November 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Definitions are derived from a range of sources including Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Stats Wales.



above the poverty line with only their pensions to support them) and **persistent poverty** (when a person has been in relative poverty for at least three of four consecutive years).

Welsh Government define a person to be living in relative poverty (or relative income poverty) if they live in a household where the total household income from all sources is less than 60% of the average UK household income (as given by the median). In 2020-21 around 20% of all people in Wales lived in relative poverty.

The End Child Poverty Coalition and the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University released research in July 2022 showing the reality of Child Poverty in the UK. Child Poverty figures in Swansea show that 32.7% of children were living in poverty in 2020/21, up 3.9 percentage points from 2019/20. By comparison, 34% of children in Wales were living in poverty in 2020/21, up 3 percentage points from 2019/20.

## 2.2 Current position

With almost 1 in 5 people in Wales<sup>4</sup> classed as being in relative income poverty prior to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current Cost of Living crisis, those that were already experiencing financial hardship are more likely to have been pushed further into poverty and those that were at risk of poverty have been more likely to experience it.

Bevan Foundation's report **A Snapshot of Poverty in Summer 2022** looked at impacts of surging costs and slow income growth for households in Wales. Key findings of the report are:

- **Families are struggling to make ends meet** – More than 1 in 8 Welsh households (13%) either sometime or often struggle to afford everyday items. In total, 45% of Welsh households never have enough money for anything other than the basics.
- **The majority of people are cutting back on essential items** – 57% cut back on heating, electricity and/or water, 51% cut back on clothing for adults, 45% cut back on transport costs and 39% cut back on food for adults between January and July 2022.
- **Children are going hungry** – the number of people in households with one or two children who are having to cut back on food for children has nearly doubled since the previous Snapshot Report in November 2021, with 1 in 10 families with one child and 1 in 5 families with two children cutting back on food for their children.
- **Household debt has remained static** – the number of people that are reporting that they are in arrears on a bill or that they have borrowed money has not increased significantly since November 2021. In total, 14% of people have been in arrears on a bill for more than one month with 25% borrowing money.
- **A third of people have no savings** – 22% of people in Wales had no savings at the start of 2022, whilst 10% spent all their savings on day-to-day items between January and July 2022. Only 31% of people had savings in January 2022 and did not use them to cover day-to-day items.
- **More people are worried about losing their home** – 11% of people are worried about the prospect of losing their home over the next three months. This rises to a quarter of private rental sector tenants and 17% of social housing tenants.
- **The Cost of Living crisis is affecting people's health** – 43% of people in Wales have seen their mental health deteriorate as a result of their financial position whilst 30% have seen a deterioration in their physical health.
- **People are pessimistic about their prospects over the next three months** – nearly two thirds (63%) of people expect to have to cut back on at least one essential over the next three months, up more than 20% points from November 2021.

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<sup>4</sup> Based on Relative Income Poverty: April 2019 to March 2020 report by Welsh Government

- **More work to do to raise awareness of support** – many people are not aware of all the support to which they are entitled from UK, Welsh and local governments. This means that there are families struggling financially that are missing out on vital assistance that could make a difference.

### 3. Poverty in Swansea

#### 3.1 Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on society since it began in early 2020. As well as the significant health implications for our population, the economic impacts have also been substantial. Some industries like hospitality were hit hard, many communities were disproportionately affected and the long-term effects on areas like mental health and life expectancy are still to be understood.

In Swansea, we have seen a range of evidence and insights relating to the economic impacts of COVID-19 including:

- Strains on health and care workforces across sectors affecting staff wellbeing, recruitment and retention;
- Increased demand reported by food banks and crisis food support projects reflects an increase in the numbers of people struggling to make ends meet;
- Greater demand for benefits and welfare rights advice linked to people being unable to work or losing their jobs;
- Changes to working practices such as increased waiting times, backlogs and demands for service due to restrictions placed on service delivery;
- Organisations prioritising emergency responses to the pandemic had to pause, cancel or postpone investment into other key initiatives and programmes of work;
- Important sectors such as hospitality being adversely affected by restrictions and changing rules around social distancing.
- Increased arrears in respect of monies owed to the Council by citizens across all services.

As a global pandemic, COVID-19 has had broad, sweeping impacts across many sectors and services. While we continue to monitor the long-term implications of COVID-19 and deal with the more immediate challenges such as winter pressures on health and care services, the impacts on poverty will continue to emerge over time.

#### 3.2 Cost of Living crisis

The current crisis – where the cost of everyday essentials (e.g. groceries, household bills, etc.) is rising faster than average household incomes – has been escalating since 2021. This has been impacted by several factors on global and national levels including the energy crisis, labour shortages, supply chain issues and rising rates of inflation. The Bank of England has warned that the UK is facing its longest recession since records began a century ago.

This means that most people have seen their household income not keeping pace with rising prices of essential goods and services. Families are struggling to make ends meet which is impacting on wellbeing and the ability to provide for loved ones. The Snapshot of Poverty in Summer 2022 report highlights a range of impacts of this crisis including:

- Majority of people cutting back on essential items and services;
- Children are going hungry as families cut back on food costs;
- A third of people have no savings available to them;
- More people are worried about losing their home in the next three months;
- Physical and mental health is impacted by financial position;
- Many people are not aware of the support and help they are entitled to receive.

In Swansea, we have seen evidence of the impacts of the Cost of Living crisis from a range of sources and statistics including:

- An increase in the use of Food Banks and other charitable initiatives<sup>5</sup>;
- The need to develop Warn Hub provision in Swansea, as we are seeing across the UK<sup>6</sup>;
- Increased numbers of people and families struggling to make ends meet<sup>7</sup>;
- Increase in the availability of poverty-related grants and schemes;
- Changes in jobs as people seek more sustainable employment opportunities;
- Increased demand for crisis related services including from people in employment;
- Increased demand reported by Citizens Advice including for energy advice<sup>8</sup>;
- The Council’s Cost of Living Help webpage has had over 100,000 page views since it was established in early September 2022.

### 3.3 Population Needs

**3.3.1** Each regional area provides a unique set of opportunities, strengths, challenges and issues that we can look at in a systematic approach. By understanding and reviewing the health and wellbeing needs of the population, we can make the right decisions and priorities to achieve better outcomes and reduce inequalities.

**3.3.2** The **Census 2021** results were first published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in June 2022 with updated and unrounded data published in November 2022. Current data from the Census shows that a third (33.3%) of households in Swansea are deprived in at least one dimension. More detailed population data based on topic summaries (such as housing, education and labour market) are due to be released in the coming months.

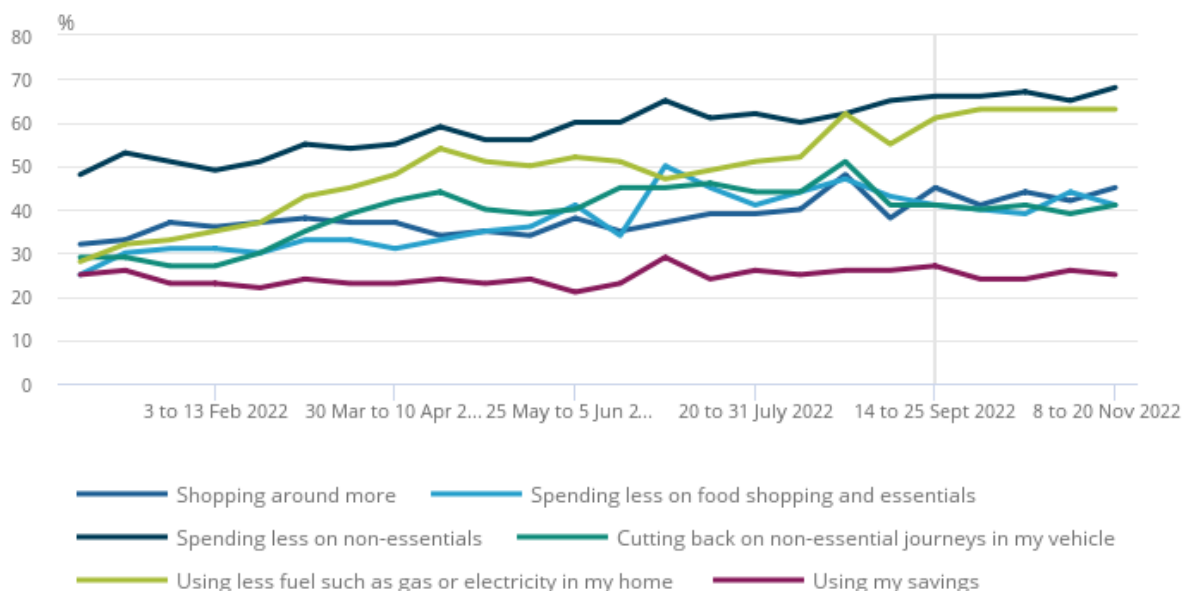


Fig. 2 – ONS graph on people taking action in response to Cost of Living crisis

<sup>5</sup> Statistics available at [www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats](http://www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats)

<sup>6</sup> A list of Swansea Spaces is available at [www.swansea.gov.uk/swanseaspaces](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/swanseaspaces)

<sup>7</sup> Source: Bevan Foundation ‘A snapshot of poverty in Summer 2022’ published July 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Citizens Advice ‘Wales: Cost of living briefing’ published July 2022

On a national perspective, the Cost of Living crisis was highlighted as an important issue for 93% of adults with people seeing an increase in the price of food shopping (95%), gas or electricity bills (68%) and the price of fuel (55%)<sup>9</sup>. Fig. 2 above shows that more people are taking more drastic actions to deal with financial hardship including reducing spend on non-essential items and using less fuel and energy at home.

**3.3.3** The Swansea Public Services Board (PSB) produced its annual **Assessment of Local Wellbeing** in May 2022 which provides a breakdown of the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing in Swansea. As well as providing evidence and data trends relating to poverty in Swansea, it covers the broader definition of the people of Swansea (geographical communities, population density, population characteristics, and so on) and their needs in relation to wellbeing.

*The recent cost of living crisis and the significant rise in energy bills will have a significant negative impact on households across Swansea. The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally impacted the well-being of people, households and communities in a multitude of ways since March 2020, including the prospects for children and young people, the impacts on physical and mental health, income and employment, crime and abuse, equality, connectivity and lifestyles – to name but a few. More recent and ongoing world geo-political events, whilst clearly mostly affecting those directly involved, will ultimately have consequences for people’s well-being locally.*

Swansea Assessment of Local Wellbeing 2022 Report

**3.3.4** The West Glamorgan **Population Needs Assessment** (PNA) is a joint exercise undertaken by health and social care partners in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot to gather information on people’s wellbeing and the barriers preventing them from achieving a sense of wellbeing. The chapters published at [www.westglamorgan.org.uk](http://www.westglamorgan.org.uk) highlight a range of impacts that poverty has on health and wellbeing, including:

- Suicide rates are two to three times higher in the most deprived neighbourhoods compared to the most affluent;
- 1 in 4 people experiencing a mental health problem is struggling with debt while people with mental health problems are three times more likely to be in financial difficulty;
- In January 2021, 43% of unemployed people reported poor mental health (compared to 27% of people in employment);
- Older people have been impacted financially by the pandemic, and those who wish to remain in the workforce are at higher risk of redundancy or exclusion from developing working practices;
- Deprivation is associated with childhood obesity with 14.2% of children who are obese in the most deprived fifth of areas compared with 8.2% in the least deprived fifth;
- Caring has an impact on participation in the workforce and unpaid carers who give up work to provide care can find themselves living in poverty as a result;
- Disabled people have disproportionately fallen behind with household bills during the COVID-19 pandemic, because of their disadvantaged position in the labour market, poor housing and increased costs associated with being disabled’.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Office for National Statistics ‘Opinions and Lifestyle Survey’ published November 2022.

*Mental health is affected by the social, economic and physical environments within which people live and homelessness, poor accommodation and poverty have a detrimental impact on mental health and wellbeing. These factors will have a different impact at different points in life. People in poverty will have an increased risk of mental health problems.*

Mental Health Chapter, West Glamorgan Population Needs Assessment 2022

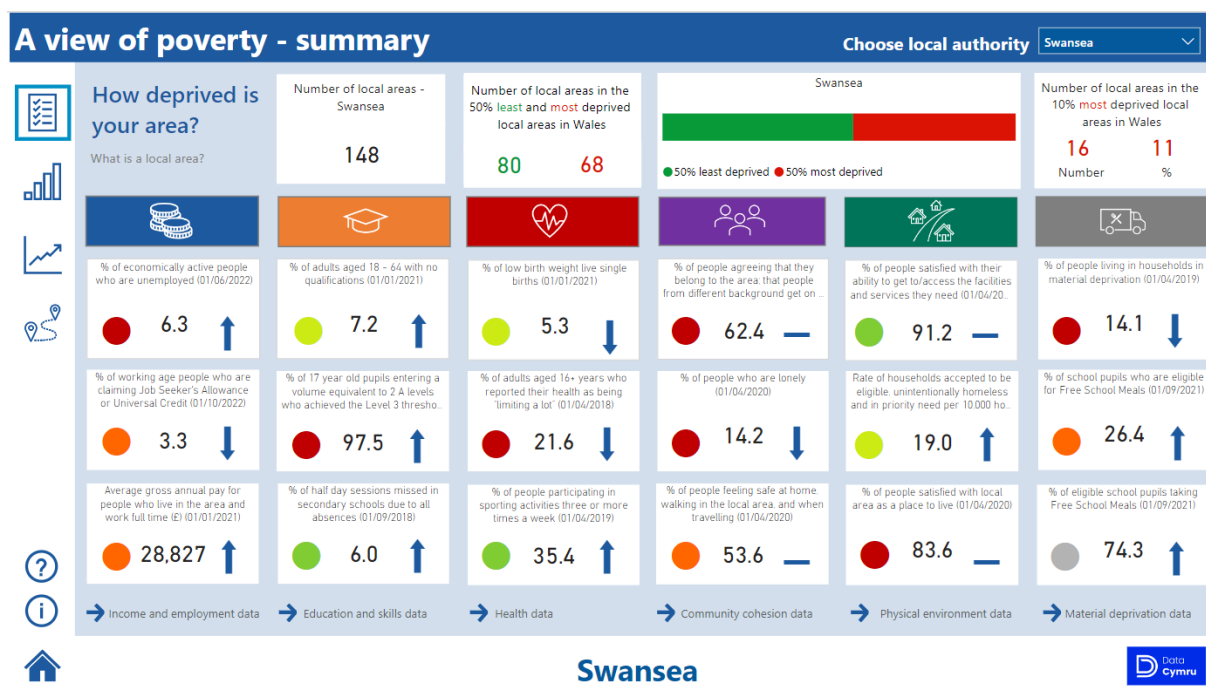
**3.3.5 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)** is designed to identify the areas of Wales that are most deprived. It ranks small areas according to their relative deprivation levels across eight types of deprivation to produce an overall index. There are 1,909 small areas known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Wales and 148 of them are in Swansea.

The WIMD can be used for:

1. Identifying the **most deprived** small areas
2. Comparing **relative** deprivation of small areas
3. Exploring the **8 types** of deprivation for small areas
4. Comparing the proportion of small areas within a **larger area** that are very deprived
5. Using **indicator data** (but not ranks) to compare absolute change over time

The percentage of people living in Swansea in income deprivation - as defined by the Income Domain of WIMD - in 2019 was 17%. This compares to the Wales average of 16%. Swansea ranks joint 7<sup>th</sup> across the 22 Welsh Local Authorities in terms of the percentage of LSOAs in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in Wales. Of the 10% most deprived LSOAs in Wales, 17 are in Swansea.

**3.3.6** This year, Data Cymru launched a new online portal - **Data Cymru Poverty Dashboard** - collating key data about poverty in Wales which breaks down to a dashboard view of the key statistics at a local authority level. This tool can be accessed for information at <https://www.data.cymru/dashboards/viewofpoverty>. Below is the latest snapshot of local data which highlights key data sets related to poverty:



## 4. Corporate Priority

The corporate well-being objective for 2021/22 is “Tackling poverty so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential” because:

- We are committed to reducing poverty and the impacts that poverty has upon its citizens. Poverty can limit aspirations, damage relationships and ensure a loss of life chances.
- We want a Swansea where poverty is not a barrier to doing well at school, having a healthy and vibrant life, developing skills and qualifications and having a good job and income.
- We want to ensure equitable access to necessary services of good quality by targeting resources where they have the most effect, with decisions made involving service users.
- We want all residents to have the opportunity and resources to join in with social, cultural and leisure activities and decision-making.
- We want people to maximise their income and get the most out of the money they have.
- We want people to avoid paying the 'Poverty Premium', the extra costs people on low incomes must pay for essentials such as fuel and transport.
- We want to ensure removal of barriers to employment.
- We want to ensure inclusion of people from Swansea's most disadvantaged communities so that we reduce inequalities between and within communities.

To demonstrate how we are progressing with achieving this objective, we report on **Corporate Performance Indicators** that show the contribution we are making to this priority detailed in Section 6.

## 5. Corporate Plan Tackling Poverty Steps

### 5.1 Tackling Poverty – ‘Everyone’s business’

**5.1.1** Our first step towards achieving the ‘Tackling poverty’ priority is to **work in partnership to tackle poverty including the revision and implementation of Swansea Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy ensuring that tackling poverty is everyone's business.**

Work has started on refreshing the corporate Tackling Poverty Strategy using an evidence-based, coproduction approach working with people who have lived experience of poverty to define and shape our vision for the future. This will inform the specific outcomes, objectives and planned activities for the Council to undertake in order to tackle and alleviate poverty in Swansea. Adopting a coproduction approach will help us to ensure that the language we use is clear, appropriate and reflects the experiences of people in poverty. It will also identify the actions to be taken in tackling poverty including those that are the responsibility of the Council to implement.

The refreshed Tackling Poverty Strategy is planned to be published in mid-2023.

**5.1.2** In 2021/22, we continued to develop local tackling poverty networks and forums including:

- Swansea Poverty Partnership Forum (quarterly, led by Swansea Council);
- Swansea Food Poverty Network (bi-monthly, led by Swansea Council);
- Financial Inclusion Steering Group (quarterly, led by Swansea Council).

We have built positive relationships with and between the partners and stakeholders involved in these groups ensuring improved coordination of information is available to all members and opportunities for collaboration are realised. We recently began the process of seeking insights from these networks to inform our strategy development approach. This process commenced with a survey of key questions and will continue to include targeted workshops, presentations at network events and capturing case studies and service user stories.

**5.1.3** The Swansea Council Poverty Forum meet monthly and bring together colleagues from across the Council to focus on a range of tackling poverty outcomes and collaborative activities. In the last twelve months, this has included:

- Coordinating ‘Talk Money Week’ participation and communications;
- Informing Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) projects;
- Shaping the Swansea Spaces (Warn Hubs) response and grant funding approach;
- Informing the ongoing development of the Swansea Neath Port Talbot Community Action Network Referral System;
- Promoting key messages across the forums and services such as encouraging take up of Cost of Living Payments and Support;
- Presentations to support collaboration with partners such as BAME Mental Health, Christians Against Poverty and Swansea Bay Credit Union.

**5.1.4** On 20 October 2022, the Swansea Poverty Truth Commission (SPTC) was officially launched at the Taliesin Arts Centre, Swansea University Singleton Campus. This is the first





commission of its kind in Wales and the event brought together community, civic and business commissioners from across Swansea to kick off the process of putting people with lived experience of poverty at the heart of policy and decision making.

## 5.2 Community Cohesion

Our second step is to **enhance community cohesion and reduce inequalities of income, resource and opportunity by ensuring that residents can fully participate in society and contribute to their communities.**

**5.2.1** Community cohesion refers to how everyone in a geographical area lives alongside each other with mutual understanding and respect. This approach recognises our increasingly diverse communities which face challenges due to economic migration, intergenerational differences, the impact of poverty and the growing influence of extremism. The National Community Cohesion Delivery Plan 2022-23 was published in April 2022, to continue to strengthen, mainstream and sustain both local and regional community cohesion approaches through:

- Engagement and awareness raising;
- Training and capacity building;
- Tension monitoring and mitigation;
- Inclusive policy and decision-making;
- Prevention of hate, exploitation and extremism.

The Community Cohesion Regional Co-ordinator currently manages a team of three Community Cohesion Officers based in Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend, working with service providers and community groups towards a common vision.

**5.2.2** Supporting and enabling people to participate and contribute to their local communities is an important action across this priority.

The Council has continued to provide £25,000 funding towards Men’s Shed initiatives across Swansea for the third year in succession. These are community spaces for men to connect, converse and create through activities that help to tackle isolation and loneliness. In the last twelve months, funding has been provided to seven new and existing schemes across areas including Manselton, Dunvant, Clydach and Penllergaer Valley Woods.

**“Men's Sheds have a very positive impact on health, well-being and in reducing social isolation by drawing on the wealth of skills and experience that exists within our communities.**

**This is the third year that the council has been able to provide substantial direct support via our Tackling Poverty team to these fantastic projects.**

**I've been lucky enough to visit many of these groups in Swansea to see the life-changing impact they can have on those involved.”**

Cllr Alyson Pugh, Councillor Champion for Health and Wellbeing

**5.2.3** Since 2015, Swansea Council has implemented Local Area Co-ordination as a strategic community-based approach. Since 2021, we have full coverage across Swansea with 23 dedicated, locally-based Coordinators. The shared vision for this approach is that ‘all people

live in welcoming communities that provide friendship, mutual support, equity and opportunities for everyone’.

Local Area Coordination recognises the power of taking time to get to know people, families and the connections, resources and opportunities within communities. Walking alongside individuals enables them to stay stronger, confident and interdependent for longer, delaying – or even removing – their need for formal service support. It is a connected, integrated, preventative and strength-based role which provides a valuable bridge between community and Local Authority.



Local Area Coordination is part of a person-centred, strengths-based approach to tackling poverty. Coordinators have the trust, connections and local knowledge to support individuals struggling with poverty and the associated impacts. Implementing local and hyper-local support in partnership with communities, businesses and volunteers – building on local strengths and assets – can become a sustainable approach to not only reducing poverty but improving prosperity and wellbeing of our population.

Each Coordinator works with around 50 individuals, some of them more regularly than others, meaning a total of approximately 1,150 individuals in Swansea with a Coordinator walking alongside. In the last twelve months, the team have produced over eighty stories describing positive changes in peoples lives as a result of introduction with Local Area Coordinators. Over 1,800 individual informal contacts have been made and another 2,000 contacts with people attending groups so far this year.

### **CASE STUDY: Sue’s Story**

Sue has walked alongside her Local Area Coordinator (Dan) since 2015 when she ran the Daffodil Club, which met each week in a local pub. During the COVID pandemic, the Club suffered like many other community groups; it had to close its doors and sadly a third of its membership died in the same period.

Dan contacted Sue in the spring of 2021 and she explained how the Club was in danger of folding and remaining members were scared to venture out, let alone meet as a group. Sue felt isolated as she had lost her husband and her pet in the last year. She also had to move home due to poor mobility and expensive upkeep of her home. These life changes affected her confidence in remaining as group leader and her motivation to carrying on.

Together, Sue and Dan began exploring her strengths and reviewed how she was able to overcome similar challenges previously. Her goal remained the same; to have a social group of likeminded people meeting in their local community for fun, support and friendship. What emerged was a plan, which began with Sue looking for a meeting place somewhere more central in St Thomas, to attract people from Port Tennant and hopefully have a bus stop close by. Sue also felt it could be enhanced by having a café or similar involved, opening up possibilities for a wider age range and variety of activities.

Once COVID restrictions allowed people to meet safely again indoors, Sue and Dan visited St Thomas Church. Sue was delighted with the newly refurbished space and amenities. It had disabled access and facilities inside as well as a bus stop outside. Sue discovered their ‘pay-as-you-feel’ community meal promotion so anyone who wanted could have a meal. This was the catalyst for restarting meetings of the Daffodil Club.

Local Area Coordinators have recently supported the set up - by community members - of eleven community projects, all of which were provided a small grant which enabled them to get started. These projects include Warm Wednesday Brunch in West Cross, Art Group in Gowerton, Community Garden in Mynnydbach and Gently Exercise Class in Manselton.

**5.2.4** Through an application and selection process, Swansea was selected by the Children's Society to be one of four areas across the UK to pilot the Coordinated Community Support Programme<sup>10</sup>. The programme is a collaboration between the Children's Society, Swansea Council and a wide range of local and national partners. The programme aims to provide the support, guidance and resources local community organisations need to better coordinate crisis provision in their community. In the last twelve months, the Swansea project team have continued to deliver a range of projects including working with the Independent Food Aid Network to produce their cash-first advice leaflet for Swansea.



### 5.3 Access to Services

Our third step is to **ensure that services are accessible, inclusive, timely and effective, and that those with lived experience are involved in coproducing solutions.**

**5.3.1** The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on 31 March 2021. It aims to improve decision-making and help those who are socio-economically disadvantaged. The Council has a comprehensive Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) that not only considers in detail the likely impact of a policy decision on the various statutory responsibilities but also considers:

- involvement activity setting out those the service has engaged with in determining its strategic policy such as partners, service users and those it is co-producing with;
- an assessment of the cumulative impact/mitigation to ensure the policy is considered in the round showing how it links across services provided across the Council;
- how the Council will monitor and evaluate impact to be able to make changes swiftly;
- an action plan setting out activities the Council will take as a result of the IIA.

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<sup>10</sup> More information is available at [www.coordinatedcommunitysupport.org.uk/content/swansea](http://www.coordinatedcommunitysupport.org.uk/content/swansea)

**5.3.2** Making services accessible for people who are in poverty includes making more information and support available online but this can be a challenge for people who are unable to afford broadband or suitable IT equipment such as phones and laptops that can access the internet. This in turn makes it more challenging for people to find their way out of poverty, for example if they cannot access online job sites to find suitable employment.

Working in partnership with Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS), this year we have continued to support the Community Calling Campaign set up and run by O2 and environmental charity Hubbub. This project has provided over 700 smartphones and tablets to individuals without digital access, while encouraging local businesses and individuals to donate more devices which are data-wiped and cleaned before being redistributed.



**5.3.3** The Council continues to improve internet access and availability for homes and businesses including helping people to access grant programmes such as Access Broadband Cymru Grant and Open Reach's Fibre First Programme which has started rolling out full fibre broadband in Sketty, Gowerton and Ravenhill as part of a national £25m investment scheme.

**5.3.4** The Council is currently developing its Digital Strategy and digital inclusion is a key link to ensuring that our strategic approach to digital considers the needs of our population including people who are in or at risk of poverty.

**5.3.5** The Passport to Leisure (PTL) Scheme 2022/23 has so far supported 1,563 beneficiaries with discounts for residents on low incomes to access a wide range of sports and leisure venues throughout Swansea, ranging from all council libraries to sports centres, theatres and swimming pools as well as discounts from a number of private companies such as EXIST Skate Park, Taliesin Arts Centre and Swansea Rugby Football Club.

**5.3.6** We have commissioned Co-production Lab Wales to work with us on our Co-production and Involvement Project to support practical implementation of co-production, enhancing current good practice, and increasing capacity and confidence to apply a co-productive approach across the Council. This will involve upskilling and developing strong enabling leadership that supports our aspirations to be a co-producing organisation. It will grow awareness, working knowledge, skills and networks across the organisation and wider and will increase the involvement of communities and partners in decision making to ensure services meet the needs communities have identified.

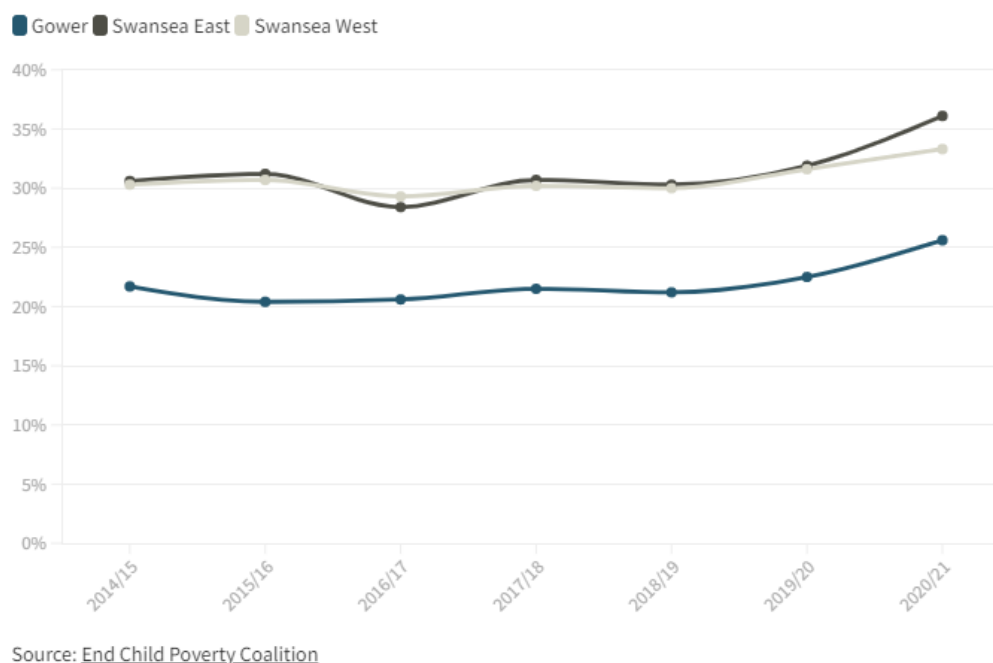
**5.3.7** Working with people who have lived experience of poverty is an essential part of our ongoing service delivery and plans are under development for a range of participation and engagement activities – including Experience Mapping – to inform our refresh of the Tackling Poverty Strategy.

## 5.4 Early Years

Our fourth step is to **work with our Health partners to ensure that, through our Early Years Strategy, children in their early years and at Foundation Phase achieve their expected language, emotional, social and cognitive development and are ready for learning and for school.**

**5.4.1** The impact of poverty on early years (i.e. the development of children from birth up to five years old) is significant as studies show that about 1 in 3 children in the UK are living in poverty<sup>11</sup>. This can impact on the child's health, social, emotional and cognitive development as well as their behaviours and educational outcomes. Children born into poverty are more likely to experience a wide range of issues from poor nutrition to mental health problems.

We believe it is important to address the impacts of poverty on children as soon as possible in their development. Poverty can have a negative impact of their education, health and overall well-being, along with their future housing and employment prospects can be negatively impacted upon.<sup>12</sup>



*Fig. 3 – Trends of changes in child poverty across Swansea areas*

The Council provide a range of services and support for children and families including those in or at risk of poverty.

**5.4.2** Flying Start is the Welsh Government flagship early years programme for families with children who are under 4 years of age, targeted in identified areas that are among the most disadvantaged in Wales. In Swansea, this includes Birchgrove, Blaenymaes, Clase, Hafod, Pentrechwyth, Portmead and Townhill.

**5.4.3** Families First is a Welsh Government funded programme that can provide families with help, advice and support to prevent any issues or problems from getting worse. These projects work with families to decide what help they need for the family to thrive. The Swansea Central Team work with a range of stakeholders providing local services and activities.

The Speech and Language Therapies Team provide advice, recommendations and strategies to support children's talking by:

<sup>11</sup> Report from the End Child Poverty Coalition published July 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Insight from Children in Wales [www.childreninwales.org.uk](http://www.childreninwales.org.uk)

- Providing training for the childcare setting workforce and parents to support children with their talking;
- Supporting parents and families of children with identified communication difficulties within their home (as well as in their childcare setting where appropriate);
- Identifying children with long term speech, language and communication needs for support further interventions via the Speech and Language Therapy Service at Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB).

**5.4.4** The Council's Sport and Health Team deliver training in Physical Literacy sessions for Swansea schools, childcare and community settings. Physical Literacy is about developmentally appropriate activities that best support children's physical development inclusive of children who may have motor development delays or a disability. Our qualified tutors deliver projects that benefit specific target groups including areas of poverty, ethnically diverse groups, early years, parental engagement and disability groups.

**5.4.5** Early Help Hubs across Swansea are the main point of contact for those seeking advice and support where they have worries about the wellbeing of children, young people and their families. The Early Help Hubs bring together community resources from the Council's Early Help service under one roof to provide guidance, signposting or support based on the need. The Hubs have multi-agency partnership links to assist with ensuring the correct support for the family is accessed at the right time. There are five Early Help Hubs across Swansea in a locality based model covering East, Penderry, Townhill, Valley and West.

**“Our aim is that the right services are available at the right time and in the right place for every child and young person according to their need.**

**The Early Help Hubs will provide preventative and support services to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families through effective packages of support to those who need it.**

**By bringing in these services under one roof within these five communities it will make it easier for those that need support to access it.”**

Dave Howes, Director of Social Services

## 5.6 Education, Training and Employment

Our fifth step is to **work with our partners to reduce inequalities in educational, training and employment outcomes throughout the life course.**

**5.6.1** Poverty can have detrimental impacts on people's ability to complete education, access essential skills training and gain meaningful employment. Some of the actions we have taken this year include:

- Presentations to all headteachers in Swansea on the poverty agenda, including local statistics.
- Headteachers and governors have been reminded to be mindful of the affordability of their school uniform policies. The local charity GROW provides recycled school uniform at a very low cost.

- Period products have been issued to schools for distribution to learners from the Welsh Government's Period Dignity Grant; a meeting has also been held recently with groups of learners from schools to better understand their requirements from the grant.
- Universal free school meals have been rolled out to all Reception pupils from September 2022 and work is ongoing to roll out to Years 1 and 2 early in the New Year.
- School uniform grant continues to be promoted with parents/carers and payments are made by bank transfer in the majority of cases to make the process as easy as possible for parents. Schools work with the parents/carers of learners who do not have a bank account to ensure they get their entitlement.
- Holiday payments continue to be made to those entitled to free school meals, and these will continue until the end of this financial year.
- The Council has coordinated and supported a number of schools to deliver Food and Fun schemes in the summer holidays, providing nutritious meals and stimulating activities.
- The use of Pupil Development Grant is monitored at school level to ensure it is narrowing the gap between those on free school meals and those who are not.

**5.6.2** Below are some of the various grant schemes that have been delivered by the Council to support children and young people who are affected by poverty:

### Free School Meals Holiday Payments 22/23

- Funded by Welsh Government
- Scheme is open and ongoing until end of February 2023
- 9,932 applications received since April 2022

### School Uniform Grant 22/23

- Funded by Welsh Government
- Scheme is open and ongoing
- 7,472 applications received since July 2022

**“We are keenly aware of the pressures facing families at the moment and are looking at options across the council to help.**

**The council made a series of policy commitments in June to support our communities and the freeze in school meal prices was one of these which I'm pleased we are delivering.”**

Robert Smith, Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills

**5.6.3** Supporting adults to overcome the barriers in education, training and employment is a focus of the Lifelong Learning Service, which promotes lifelong learning concepts and provides learning opportunities for working-age adults to progress or develop new career paths that contribute to their self-actualisation. This supports people who are in or at risk of poverty by helping to develop their skills and qualifications so that they can improve their personal prosperity through achieving employment and career progression.

**Gwasanaeth Lifelong  
Dysgu Learning  
Gydol Oes Service**  
Yn falch o fod yn Ddinas Ddysgu  
Proud to be a Learning City



The Lifelong Learning team is a part of the Tackling Poverty Service and is responsible for delivering essential skills development – numeracy, literacy, digital, employability skills, family learning and learning for life (including music, art, well-being, IT and photography courses) within communities. This includes developing and delivering bespoke accredited and non-accredited learning as well as promoting the benefits of a lifelong learning approach through events and exhibitions.

The courses and programmes of learning offered to Swansea residents aged 16+ includes:

- Essential Skills – Literacy and Numeracy (from non-readers to Level 2)
- Essential Skills Embedded – Jewellery Making, Cookery, Needlecraft, etc.
- Digital Skills – from absolute beginners to Level 2 accredited IT programmes.
- Family Learning – working with parents, grandparents and carers to support children’s learning and to raise essential skills of adults.
- Adult Community Learning (ACL) Programme.

During the last twelve months, the Lifelong Learning Services team have:

- Continued to contribute to the overarching vision and ambitions for Swansea as a UNESCO Learning City;
- Delivered a wide range of courses, taster sessions and learning opportunities while looking after the wellbeing and prosperity of our learners;
- Developed and delivered bespoke programmes designed to meet the needs of learners and/or partners;
- Continued to be a member of the Adult Learning Partnership Swansea (ALPS) working in collaboration with adult community learning partners;
- Participated in an Estyn review of adult community learning in Swansea in November 2022;
- Delivered the learning festival in September 2022 as part of Adult Learners Week including the public event in Castle Square.

<b>Lifelong Learning Service – Learners Reporting</b>	
<b>Academic Year 2021/22</b>	<b>Academic Year 2022/23 (Autumn Term)</b>
Learners across all programmes: <b>1,681</b> Improved skills: <b>94%</b> Progression to further learning or employment: <b>73%</b> Accreditation: <b>89</b> awards	Learners across all programmes: <b>735</b>

**CASE STUDY: Guy and Emma’s Digital Journey**

Guy and Emma regularly attended a Lifelong Learning Essential Skills class in Portmead, Swansea but when lockdown happened, classes had to shift to remote learning. Although sometimes they find learning difficult, they were keen to continue despite only having access to mobile phones. This initially involved phone calls and lessons carried out over speaker-phone. Neither had used email before so, with practice and careful instruction, they were delighted when they managed to send their first email. This opened more learning possibilities and they were able to stay in touch with their tutor via email.

Their next achievement came when they were able to join Google Classrooms and use GSuite to access work and activities. Over time, they managed to complete and achieve an Agored Cymru Entry Level Qualification. They both said how much they’ve enjoyed the classes even though they were completed remotely. The classes helped them to have



something to focus on in difficult and strange times, having a positive impact on their well-being, knowing that they were not on their own during this time.

At the start of the autumn term this year, Guy and Emma signed up again but in order to make their learning more accessible, they were able to join the Lifelong Learning Service scheme to borrow a laptop with portable Wi-Fi access. They are now able to view their work more clearly and now have access to the internet, which they did not have previously. They were also able to attend an online class via Google Meet and can now access lessons via video and regular live online sessions.

This has helped to expand their learning by enabling them to research information and explore learning sites (enabling them to complete the 2021 Census online). Their confidence in digital learning has grown and they have joined an online IT course called 'Learn My Way' to improve their skills further. Guy and Emma have both completed Essential Skills Wales qualifications with the Lifelong Learning Service and have started part time employment within a local charity shop.

## 5.6 Person-centred employment

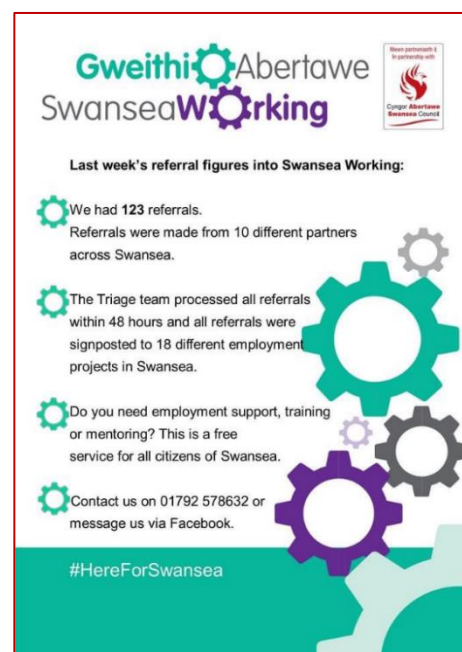
Our sixth step is to **provide a coordinated person-centred approach to supporting people to overcome their barriers to employment.**

**5.6.1** Applying a person-centred approach to employability support puts the focus of our service teams on supporting people to achieve their aspirations and tailoring solutions to their needs and unique circumstances. This is a principle that is embedded in our employability services and the way our teams engage with people looking to achieve employment. Some of the actions we have taken in the last twelve months include:

- Continued our mentor support and triage service around the principle of person-centred employability support;
- Supporting the BAME Mental Health Support employability hub to explore the issues facing people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in achieving employment;
- Improving social media and marketing content to reach a wider audience with our employability promotions while supporting efforts to tackle digital inclusion;
- Working with large employers and Council departments to assist in shaping post-COVID recruitment approaches;
- Participating in community park events in collaboration with Safer Swansea Partnership to bring employability information closer to people in their communities.

The Employability & Skills team is a part of the Tackling Poverty Service and is responsible for delivering services and programmes to improve the personal prosperity of people in Swansea by developing their skills, qualifications and opportunities.

**5.6.2** The Communities for Work (CFW) programme is responsible for delivering two Welsh Government funded programmes tackling poverty through sustainable employment, providing intensive employment mentoring and support. The first programme provides a triage service and mentors for Adults (over 25 years old) and Young People (aged 16-25). The second



programme works with a wider cohort of people who are not eligible under the first scheme (for example, people who are unemployed for less than 12 months). The Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) works with young people aged between 16 and 24 with the aim of significantly increasing employability support for this age group. It is delivered in line with the Children and Communities Grant (CCG) which focuses on the support needs of the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities, through a range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms.

**5.6.3** The Swansea Working team is responsible for delivering a partnership approach to supporting people to gain employment, providing a range of support services such as employment engagement/action plans, individual training, developing Curriculum Vitae and in-work support. This includes delivering a range of events, promotions and help for people looking for work in Swansea.

**5.6.4** During this year, the TPS Employability & Skills team have:

- supported 243 people into work by the end of October 2022, the highest level of 'into works' since the beginning of the programme;
- worked with 1,803 people accessing employment support via the Triage process since April 2022;
- achieved 756 sustainable Employment Opportunities, sourced via the Employer Engagement Officers, since April 2022;
- coordinated the ICT Chromebooks Scheme to offer digital support to clients with 46 individuals using Chromebooks finding employment;
- delivered marketing activities including newsletters distributed to 120,000 households, attendance at local events and Swansea Working promotional materials including lamppost banners and digital car park screens.

Employability Mentors have continued to work with high caseloads this year. The team continue to support community networks and hubs (which reopened earlier this year following the restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic) including Jac Lewis Foundation, BAME Mental Health Support and City Centre Hub, working in collaboration with partner agencies.

### **CASE STUDY: Employability Mentor**

SH completed an SIA qualification with support from our Employability Mentor and had had a job offer as a security guard at Caswell Beach car park. For him to be able to accept this job offer, he needed to have means of transport.

To overcome the lack of transport barrier which would allow him to accept this offer, the Mentor contacted JT's Motorcycles to enquire about CBT course, as he had a provisional licence and he was over 24 years of age so he could meet the criteria to drive 125cc motorcycle with a valid CBT. JT's Motorcycles had a spare place on a course that weekend on the Saturday so the Mentor secured his place and called SH to advise of date, time and documents he would need to take with him.

SH was struggling with poverty and desperately needed this job as he was frequently visiting food banks. This job would enable him to support himself and give him a sense of pride so the Mentor completed a requisition form with support from the Finance Team. Once his transport was organised, the Mentor also helped him to get all-weather clothes to be able to take the job. When he started work, SH visited his Mentor with his new bike and clothes, to offer his thanks as he felt without his CBT and clothing, he would have not been able to come off benefits and improve his personal circumstances.

**5.6.5** Workways+ tackles the barriers that prevent individuals from finding employment. The project provides support with job searching, Curriculum Vitae (CV) development, application forms, interview skills and access to training. Participants in the scheme must be over 25 years old, unemployed for 12 months+ and live outside CF Postcode areas. Participants are also matched with local businesses to gain vital experience needed to find long term employment.

**5.6.6** Workways Short Term Unemployed (STU) supports participants who are over 25 years old, unemployed for under 12 months and have a work limited health condition or low skills.

**5.6.7** In Swansea, Pathways to Work - funded by the UK Government - is open to local residents who are either long-term unemployed or aged 16-plus and economically inactive. It offers employability support, support for improving skills (including digital skills), volunteering and paid placements.

**5.6.8** The Employment Hub in the Quadrant Shopping Centre has played an important role in this partnership approach. It was launched earlier this year and this has resulted in an increase in referrals into Employability Support. The Employability Hub has resulted in 603 new referrals for employability support in a six month period. It has recently relocated to another unit in the Quadrant.



There have been over 30 partner, employer, recruitment, Cost of Living and information events held at the venue. There have been over 150 job offers and entries to employment because of the Employment Hub.

**5.6.9** In addition to our internal paid placements scheme and corporate apprenticeship programme, Beyond Bricks and Mortar (BB+M) is an important initiative to secure community benefits from all suitable council activities in Swansea for the lasting benefits of our communities. It involves introducing community benefit clauses – such as targeted recruitment and training – into Council contracts to ensure that members of our communities (especially young people and those who have been out of the job market for some time) are given opportunities of meaningful training and employment.

**5.6.10** Other employability activities undertaken this year include:

- Working with prison leavers, care leavers and partners on targeted initiatives;
- Delivering group sessions with Forest schools;
- Participating in engagement activities and events;
- Sponsoring and attending the Wales Air Show;
- Supporting Ukrainian refugees including bespoke engagement sessions and;
- Sector specific recruitment days;
- Deliver a budgeting programme in the run up to Christmas to develop craft skills, learn how to budget and save money over the Christmas period.

### **CASE STUDY: Employability Support**

Swansea Working referred a client to the Employability Mentor and after initial introductions, he met with his mentor at a library near home. He explained that he was seeking employment in the security sector and had previously served in the Armed Forces. He was now sixty-three and had been unemployed for two years after doing cash-in-hand jobs.

Due to his time in the Army, he had developed chronic Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and was taking anti-anxiety medicine. The mentor brought up various charities who provide support and confidential advice to veterans struggling with mental health difficulties. The client was not very talkative at first, eventually speaking up about his mental health.

After discussing different paths he could take into the security sector, the client decided to start by completing an SIA door supervisor course, which we could pay for in full to protect his livelihood. He was excited by the challenge however and expressed that after quite a long time not having a clear goal, it felt like he finally had purpose and direction. During this time, an Employer Engagement Officers found an employer in the security sector who was offering part time work as an event steward. They were happy to contract the client part time while he prepared for his SIA course. Following the course, they would then be able to provide him with lots of employment opportunities so he could essentially work full time.

On the final day of the client's SIA course, the client explained to the mentor that he had taken their advice to use a veterans helpline. This really helped his mental state and had changed his perspective on counselling. He was surprised that not only did he receive assistance with his employment search but that the mentor had supported him with his mental health difficulties.

## 5.7 Welfare Reform

Our seventh step is to **help to address the impacts of welfare reform and socio-economic disadvantage by supporting people to claim the full benefits and financial support that they are entitled to, reduce costs and make the most of the resources that they have, improving access to opportunities to improve their financial wellbeing.**

**5.7.1** The Welfare Rights team is a part of the Tackling Poverty Service and is responsible for providing a second-tier service specialising in welfare benefit and tax credits law, supporting those who are providing a front-tier service and working with claimants on benefit issues.

The Welfare Rights Team continue to maximise individuals' income by claiming additional benefits where possible, but much of the work is around maintaining income and preventing claimants being sanctioned because they have been placed in the wrong work-related requirement group.

This year, the team has expanded as a result of additional temporary grant funding to offer people a more direct service (Tier 1). Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, the team has dealt with:

Enquiries	<b>620</b>
Appointments	<b>70</b>
Support Workers Trained	<b>104</b>
Benefits secured	<b>£484,233.23</b>
Value of debt addressed	<b>£87,066.21</b>

During this year, the Welfare Rights team have:

- provided advice to individuals who have received various grants which have been administered by Welsh Government;
- continued to support the Family and Friends Fostering Team and Special Guardians;

- delivered a variety of training courses to maintain and increase welfare rights knowledge of the work force of Swansea;
- provided a welfare rights service to support Local Area Coordination, helping local people in Swansea many of whom have complex needs;
- commissioned Kin Cymru to provide a public facing welfare rights advice line service;
- maintained the Welfare Rights Adviceline three days a week, providing benefits advice, support and assistance to those working in statutory and voluntary organisations which increases and maintains their clients benefit income.

### **CASE STUDY: Lola's Story**

The Early Help Hub, who at the time were supporting Lola's daughter, introduced her to Beth, her Local Area Coordinator. Lola was struggling with anxiety and isolation and was facing extreme financial hardship. She lives with severe anxiety; it influenced her life so much that she barely felt comfortable leaving her house, let alone holding down a job. She suffered financially as she was unable to work. As she didn't have a physical disability, she didn't realise she would be entitled to further financial help/benefits.

Beth spent time building up a trusting relationship with Lola; she eventually felt safe talking openly about her financial hardships. This was clearly contributing hugely to her anxiety. Lola ended up falling into substantial debt, taking out multiple loans, falling into rent arrears and needing food banks on a regular basis. Lola didn't feel able to pursue or even think about her 'good life' with Beth; she was just living day-to-day in fear and distress, hoping she had enough money at the end of each month.

Beth requested support from Sheila from the Welfare Rights Team. She initially supported Lola with successful DAF applications to address the immediate hardship. Lola was claiming the bare minimum, but over time, Sheila supported her to access Personal Independence Payments (PIP). She now receives £659.30 in PIP and a monthly increase in her Universal Credit (UC) of £343.63. Overall, Lola's monthly income increased by £1,002.93. Sheila was also able to access some back payments, which enabled Lola to have treats with her children, bringing both her and them pleasure.

Lola feels more relaxed knowing she can not only afford the essentials for her children but she has enough to spend on fun family activities outside the home. She doesn't have to worry that one bus or taxi trip to the seaside with her kids will leave her with nothing.

**5.7.2** In September 2022, the Council launched a dedicated web-page on its internet site with advice on the financial support available to help people dealing with the Cost of Living crisis.

Cyngor Abertawe Swansea Council

Residents Business Council Do it online Q

Swansea Home > Residents

## Cost of living help

We have put together these pages to help provide information on the cost of living. We will add more information when we receive it. If you are still struggling with costs, then you can find people to talk to who can give you further advice using our [search for advice and support](#).

**Cost of living payments available**

There are payments available from both the UK and Welsh governments to help with the cost of living.

**Energy costs and household bills**

Support and advice on paying your energy and other household bills.

**Swansea Working**

Looking for work? We can help you.

**Debt and money worries**

The most important thing to consider if you are struggling with money is whether you are receiving all of the benefits you are entitled to.

**Food and essential items**

Find out where you can access free food and other essential items such as period products.

**Housing**

Support is available to help find you somewhere to live, prevent you from becoming homeless and help you with your rent and other bills.

**5.7.3** The Revenues and Benefits team is a part of the Finance Directorate and is responsible for the administration of some benefits, the collection of council tax and business rates as well as undertaking financial assessments for a number of other schemes. At the start of 2022/23, the Revenues and Benefits service completed the 2021/22 Winter Fuel payment on behalf of Welsh Government, having dealt with 18,100 applications and paid £2,760,000 to 13,800 Swansea citizens.

During 2022/23, in addition to the Self-Isolation Payments, Unpaid Carers Payment, Cost of Living Payment and Fuel Payment illustrated in the section 1, the Revenues and Benefits Service has been administering the following schemes on behalf of the Welsh Government:

#### Council Tax Reductions 22/23

- Funded mostly by Welsh Government with a substantial contribution from the authority
- Scheme is open and ongoing
- 20,967 current beneficiaries of the scheme, £22,576,881.61 paid to those Swansea residents

Arising from the administration of these grants and the service's core roles is a significant amount of customer contact. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, the Revenues and Benefits Customer Service Team has dealt with:

Telephone calls	76,204
Face to face meetings with customers	5,118
Emails	60,137
<b>Total number of customer contacts</b>	<b>141,459</b>

Waiting times for telephone calls have been particularly challenging but additional temporary staff have been employed to deal with peaks of work. However, the high volumes of calls are not expected to decrease significantly for some time (if at all) during the Cost of Living crisis.

## 5.8 Homelessness

Our eighth step is to **prevent homelessness and support people to maintain their tenancies to help provide stability and security for families and communities, through the development and implementation of a new Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-2026.**

**5.8.1** The vision for homelessness prevention in Swansea has been amended to reflect the Welsh Government's priorities for homelessness to be "rare, brief and unrepeated," and the Housing Support Programme Strategy now includes strategic objectives for Housing Support Grant funded services as part of an overall Housing Support Programme that encompasses both the statutory homelessness duty funded through the revenue settlement and non-statutory preventative services funded through the HSG.

**5.8.2** A rapid rehousing approach has been adopted. The focus of rapid rehousing support is to help people move into settled accommodation ensuring the right support is in place. All Local Authorities are required to develop a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in partnership with key stakeholders. The 5-year transition plan will set out how the Council will move towards providing more sustainable models of accommodation and support that meet the needs of everyone; minimise the use of temporary accommodation to a system that assesses needs quickly and identifies the most appropriate option that meets the needs and wishes of the individual.

A report on Homelessness is being submitted to Scrutiny Programme in December 2022 with further details about the wider strategic approach and performance in relation to this theme.

## 5.9 New energy efficient Council homes

Our ninth step is to **continue to invest to improve existing council housing, provide energy efficiency improvements / decarbonisation to reduce fuel bills and fuel poverty for council tenants and help meet local and national targets for decarbonisation.**

**5.9.1** There are many ways of improving energy efficiency of new and existing homes including adding insulation, improving heating & cooling systems, upgrading appliances / lighting / equipment, and employing renewable energy systems. More efficient homes contribute to decarbonisation targets as well as being cheaper homes to run and maintain.

**5.9.2** The Council has recently met the deadline for bringing its properties up the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). Welsh Government is now set to introduce new targets into its Welsh Housing Quality Standard for social housing which will make it a requirement for homes to be highly efficient (with a SAP score of 92), affordable and virtually carbon neutral places to live. The Council has provided a response to the WHQS 2023 consultation and it is anticipated a revised statutory standard will commence in April 2023, with a future policy focus on providing residents with affordable warm homes while decarbonising properties to make social housing in Wales net zero carbon.

**5.9.3** The Council has already introduced energy saving measures into the specification of its major repair schemes such as external wall insulation, high performing loft insulation that goes beyond industry standards, new more efficient double glazing and highly efficient heating systems. In order work towards the new standard, the Council is currently designing a number of schemes in 2022 which will include renewable technologies such as photovoltaic solar panels, batteries to store the electricity generated by the panels as well as air source heat pumps for localities which are not on the mains gas network.

There are approximately twelve schemes in varying stages of development where the Council intends to begin rolling out in 2023/24. These will assist the Council with developing the skills and knowledge required as well as gauge tenant experience with this technology. The schemes represent a small proportion of the housing stock and achieving this across the Council's housing stock will require major additional government funding.

### 5.10 Affordable Housing

Our tenth step is to **build more energy efficient Council homes and support the building of affordable housing to help meet housing need, regenerate estates and bring wider economic and employment benefits.**

**5.10.1** Affordable homes include social rented housing owned by local authorities and Registered Social Landlords as well as intermediate housing where prices or rents are above those of social rents but below market housing prices or rents. The Council's More Homes Programme has set a ten-year delivery ambition of 1,000 new affordable homes to be directly delivered by the Council, along with a further 4,000 properties delivered by Registered Social Landlords (RSL) in Swansea.

**5.10.2** The Council has developed a high specification for the properties it is building - the "Swansea Standard". The aim is to deliver energy, efficient, environmentally conscious homes that exceed current regulatory performance standards to achieve net zero carbon buildings. The homes will reduce operating energy and Co2 emissions over the building's life-time. The construction form is a 'fabric first' approach – focussed to achieve at least a 25% improvement above the thermal performance prescribed in current Building Regulations. The envelope consists of a highly insulated timber-frame with high-performance doors & triple glazed windows - ensuring homes retain heat in the winter and help keep people cool in the summer.

The aim is to provide homes that are comfortable and make a positive contribution towards health and well-being, which are highly energy efficient and cost-effective to operate, providing a positive contribution towards the drive to eradicate fuel-poverty.

**5.10.3** Following on from the completion of 34 new build Council homes in 2020/21, progress during the last twelve months includes:

- Completion of Hill View Crescent in Clase – providing 25 new homes;
- Completion of Bryn House – former education centre in Uplands. Converted into four 1 bedroom flats, while the demountable outbuildings were demolished and replaced with four passivhaus pods, which are used as temporary accommodation;
- Development of 6 bungalows at West Cross is due for completion in December 2022;
- Conversion of a former social services property in Gorseinon into two 3 bedroom homes is due to complete in February 2023;
- Conversion of two decommissioned District Housing Offices (Penlan and Eastside) to create 10 one-bed and two-bed flats is due to start in January 2023;
- An on-going acquisition programme which has focused on purchasing ex-council properties to rapidly increase the social housing stock. So far during 2022/23 28 properties have been purchased. Overall, since the acquisition programme began in 2018, 99 ex-council properties, which were sold via the right to buy, have been purchased and returned to the Council's housing stock;
- Demolition of the former Clase District Housing Office has now been completed to enable the Creswell Road development of 9 new homes, with construction targeted to commence in 2023/24;



- The former Education site at Brondeg House has also been acquired by the HRA and the existing building has been demolished to make way for new affordable housing.
- Gorseinon Business Park has been acquired and demolition of the existing buildings will commence in January 2023 with further work to prepare the land for housing development taking place in 2023/24.

Future plans include preparing for the development of two large schemes, where the Council will seek a development partner to assist bringing them forward, including land at Milford Way, Blaenymaes and Brokesby Close, Bonymaen, along with a number of smaller plots in locations such as Penrhos Place (Gendros) and Heol Dynys (Ravenhill).

These schemes will form part of the Council's developments over the next four years and are anticipated to provide in the region of 300 new homes.

In addition to the Council's own building programme, we continue to work closely with RSLs partners to ensure we maximise the delivery of affordable housing through the allocation of Welsh Government Social Housing Grant (SHG) through the Programme Development Plan, which is managed by the Council. Swansea's allocation of SHG from Welsh Government was £23.7m for 2022/23.

**5.10.4** Work also continues in conjunction with the Planning Department to maximise the number of planning applications approved by the Council that achieve the stated % threshold of mixed-use tenure affordable homes on residential development sites in accordance with planning policy.

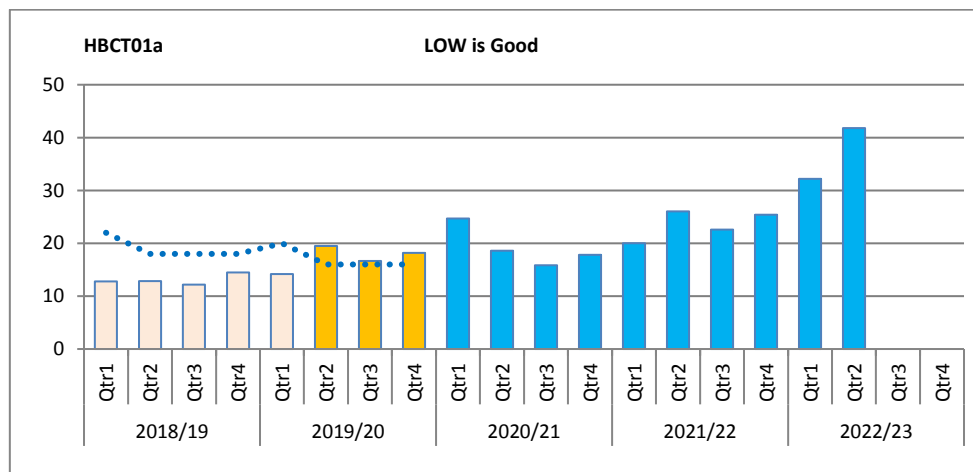
## 6. Corporate Performance Indicators

### 6.1 Benefit Entitlements

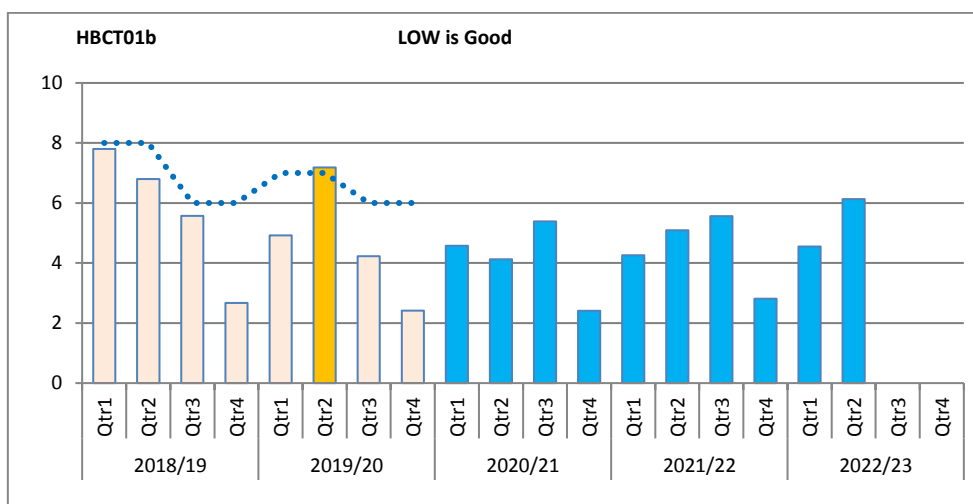
Our aim is to help people to access the benefit entitlements that will support them in dealing with the issues of poverty. Housing Benefits (HB) are designed to support eligible people who are unemployed, on low income or claiming benefits to pay rent (where they are not claiming Universal Credit). The Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme is designed to support eligible people who are on low income or claiming benefits to pay some or all of their Council Tax.

The performance data is collected to indicate how long customers are waiting before their applications for these benefits are processed. The Council is required to provide HB data to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on whose behalf we administer the Housing Benefit scheme locally.

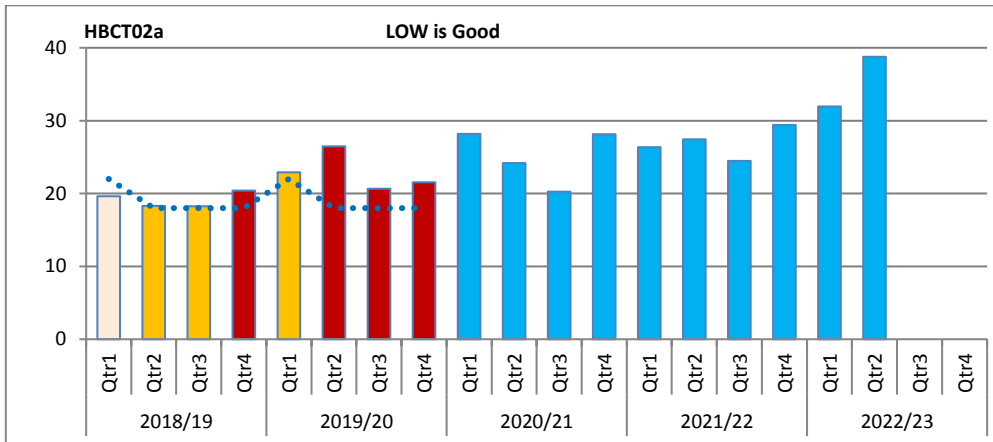
*HBCT01a - Housing Benefit speed of processing: Average time for processing new claims*



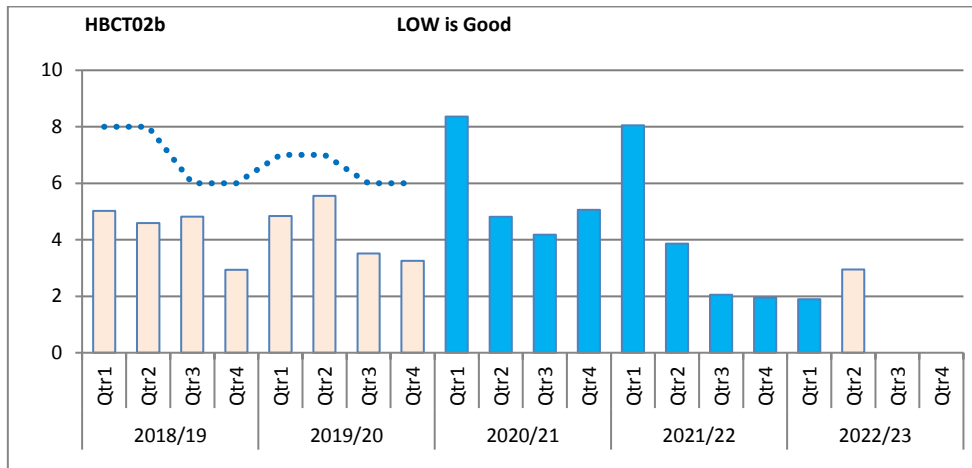
*HBCT01b - Housing Benefit speed of processing: Average time for processing notifications of change in circumstances*



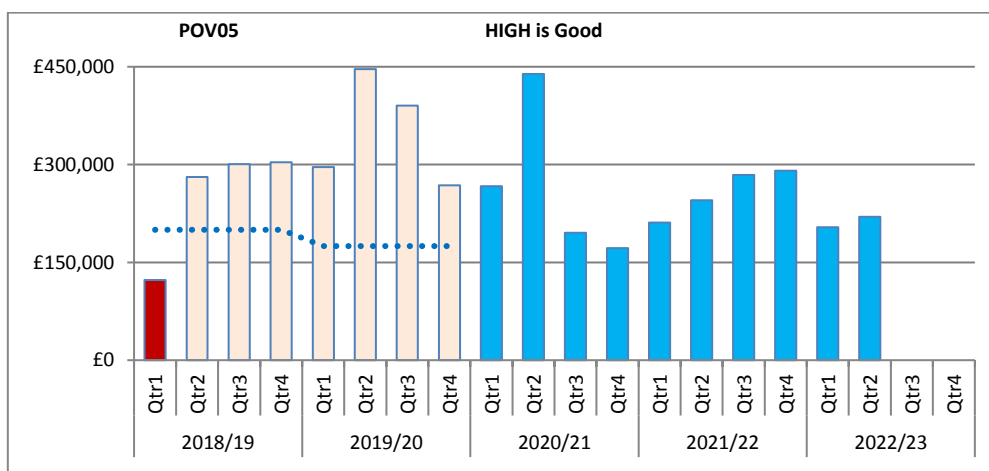
HBCT02a - Council Tax Reduction speed of processing: Average time for processing new claims



HBCT02b - Council Tax Reduction speed of processing: Average time for processing notification of change in circumstances



POV05 - The amount of welfare benefits raised through securing rights and entitlements by the Welfare Rights Team



As a result of additional work arising from the grant payments and the loss of some experienced staff to other services, the numbers of days taken to process new applications

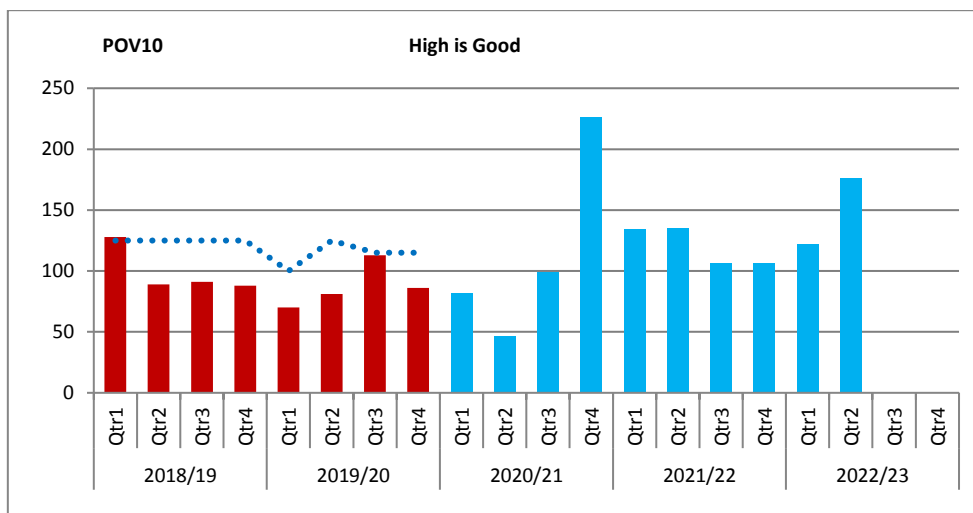
for HB/CTR and changes in circumstances has increased over the early part of the financial year and the summer. Performance is slowly improving since September 2022 and additional staff are being recruited however we do not expect to be back at previously high performance levels for some time. If further additional work is given to the Revenue and Benefits service (such as more grant schemes to administer) or the inability to maintain staffing levels, progress will be slower.

### 6.2 Employability

Our aim is to help people to overcome social, cultural, economic barriers enabling individuals to access employment opportunities. Employability means developing the skills, knowledge and experience of individuals that improve their chances of being suitable for paid work. We want to help adults of working age to gain employment and be successful in their chosen lines of work, which will enable them to contribute to their community, the local economy and support themselves and their families in dealing with the issues of poverty.

The performance data is collected to indicate how many people have been helped by our teams to gain employment through mentoring and support.

*POV10 - The number of people gaining employment through Employability Support*

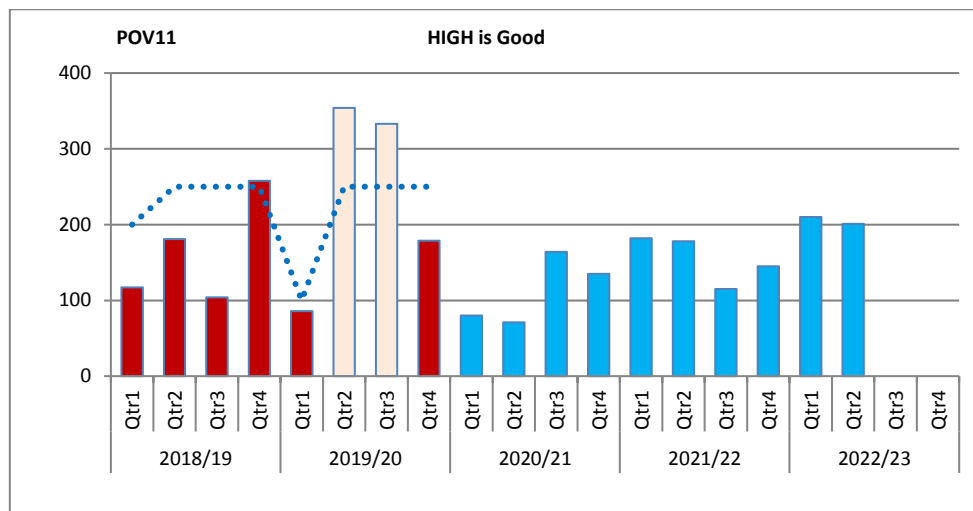


The number of people gaining employment through Employability Support has risen over the last twelve months. This covers the outcomes achieved by the following programmes; Swansea Working; Communities for Work; Communities for Work Plus; Workways STU; and Workways Plus.

### 6.3 Qualifications

Our aim is to help working age adults to achieve the qualifications required to achieve suitable, meaningful employment which will support them in dealing with the issues of poverty. People who improve their accredited qualifications and develop their skills and capabilities are more confident and better prepared for improving their earning potential and being successful in getting work that meets their needs and ambitions.

*POV11 - The number of accredited qualifications achieved by adults with Local Authority support*



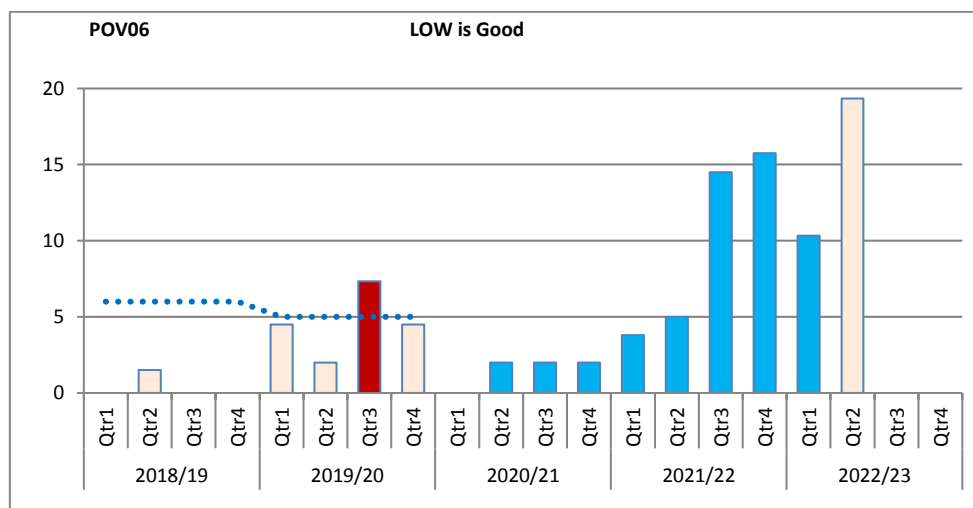
Whilst attendance at Swansea Working courses has improved and this shows on comparison to last year, the training course offer has expanded meaning more clients can access the courses.

### 6.4 Homelessness

Our aim is to help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to. This is in line with Welsh Government’s priority for homelessness to be “rare, brief and unrepeated”.

The Housing Act 1996 places a legal duty on local authorities to assist people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Council’s Housing Support Programme Strategy – which incorporates the strategic approach to homelessness – aims to ensure that every person has access to good quality advice, accommodation and support at the earliest possible opportunity in order to prevent homelessness. This target specifically aims to ensure that we reduce the number of families with children that are placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation and to reduce the time families spend in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

*POV06 - The average number of days all homeless families with children spend in Bed & Breakfast accommodation*



During the COVID-19 pandemic, people who were homeless and impacted by the Coronavirus were able to stay in local hotels and Bed & Breakfast sites with the support of the Council. The pandemic continues to have an impact on the availability of temporary accommodation; move on is slower due to wider pressures on the availability of affordable housing, and households continue to present at a time of crisis where little/no prevention work is possible prior to temporary accommodation being needed. We have also seen a number of Ukrainian families present as needing emergency accommodation which has placed added pressure on stock levels. The Housing service continues to work towards 'always a bed' although this is reliant on continued funding from Welsh Government.

## 7. National Strategic Drivers

### 7.1 Wellbeing of Future Generations

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a duty on public bodies – including the Council – to carry out sustainable development and deliver against key wellbeing objectives.



The five principles of sustainable development under the Act are:

- Collaboration
- Integration
- Involvement
- Long-Term
- Prevention

We recognise that the Council's strategic approach to tackling poverty aligns with the goals and principles of the Act. The Corporate Priority of 'Tackling Poverty' is intended to focus our actions on prosperity, resilience and equality for people who are in or at risk of poverty, while contributing to cohesive communities and improving the health and wellbeing of the population.

### 7.2 Time for Change – Poverty in Wales

In November 2022, Audit Wales published the ['Time for Change' – Poverty in Wales](#) report for the Auditor General. This report was the first of three strategic investigations into the national approach to tackling and alleviating poverty. Swansea Council contributed to the investigation, which ran between April 2021 and September 2022, through a series of interviews, focus groups and providing key strategic documentation for review. A number of positive reflections on the approach to tackling poverty by the Council were noted in the report including:

- Taking a council-wide co-ordination approach bringing together senior officers to address the issues relating to poverty;
- Having clear reporting data on the total investment of Welsh Government grant funding directed toward poverty initiatives;
- Establishing the Swansea Poverty Truth Commission, the first of its kind in Wales;
- Partnering with neighbouring councils and other stakeholders on our campaigns and planning activities;
- Developing a comprehensive Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to inform policy decision-making;
- Developing a Corporate Personal Debt Recovery Policy for supporting people that have overdue personal debt with the council.

The report identified eight recommendations for improvements to be made by Welsh Government and local authorities across Wales in relation to tackling and alleviating poverty. Further detail is in Section 9 Way Forward of our actions in response to the recommendations.

## 8. Additional developments

### 8.1 Prevention

While the Council's priority for tackling poverty focuses on supporting people dealing with the impacts of poverty, we must also ensure we continue supporting people to become resilient and achieve outcomes that they want to see in their own lives, which will in turn reduce demand on services.

A preventative approach means prioritising people staying healthy, happy, independent, and connected to their communities for as long as possible. Where people do need help to do this, they are supported earlier and more effectively.

We see a clear link between the prevention and tackling poverty corporate objective because preventing people's needs from escalating is an important approach to:

- Building resilience and capacity of individuals to address their own wellbeing needs;
- Building the strengths and assets of local communities to support individuals;
- Removing barriers facing individuals such as access to early interventions;
- Reducing the demand on services which can be mitigated through early interventions;
- Giving people the knowledge, skills and confidence to take full control of their lives.

As we engage with our population to refresh our strategic approach to tackling poverty, we will seek their views on how prevention can play a part in this priority as well as the wider benefits and opportunities from focusing in on early intervention and prevention.

### 8.2 Volunteering

One of the key features of the COVID-19 pandemic was the response of the volunteer community during the challenges of lockdowns and increased demand on public services. There were many stories of people stepping up within their communities to help those in need, providing essential support to supplement public services and third sector organisation.

Work is underway on the development of Swansea Council's Volunteering Strategy based on existing Council-led volunteering opportunities in departments like Social Services and Cultural Services. However, there is an opportunity to enhance the potential of volunteering to support people and communities to reduce poverty, improve prosperity and mitigate the risk to service delivery.

We see an opportunity to using the implementation of volunteering to tackle poverty by:

- Delivering volunteering tasks and activities that address the impacts of poverty, such as improving wellbeing;
- Helping unemployed people to develop skills and experience that can lead to future job opportunities;
- Improving the strengths and assets of local communities through social enterprises, community interest groups and volunteer-based initiatives.

Development of the Swansea Council Volunteering Strategy is one of the work plan items for the Safeguarding and Tackling Poverty Corporate Delivery Committee (CDC).



## 9. Way Forward

### 9.1 Corporate Plan Refresh

We are entering a period of strategic review of the Corporate Plan including the Tackling Poverty priority which will allow us to revisit the steps to tackling poverty. We will work with colleagues across the organisation to develop this corporate priority including preparing an IIA and Performance Indicators to feed into the 2023-27 Corporate Plan.

### 9.2 Strategy Refresh

The Tackling Poverty Strategy was due to be refreshed during 2022 but as a result of the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the Cost of Living crisis, this has been delayed. We plan to undertake a period of engagement and consultation with our partners and stakeholders – in particular with our population across Swansea – to inform and refresh our strategic approach. Our aim is to co-produce and publish a refreshed Tackling Poverty Strategy in 2023.

We recognise the need for working with colleagues, partners and stakeholders – including people with lived experience of poverty – to inform this approach. Using a person-centred, strengths-based approach means that there are many potential ways to tackle poverty including:

- Improving wellbeing and reducing health inequalities;
- Improving educational attainment;
- Improving opportunities for community participation;
- Helping people to maximise incomes and reduce costs;
- Promoting economic growth that is accessible, inclusive and benefits everyone;
- Providing more access to green spaces and opportunities to grow food.

A big part of this effort is to focus on prevention as a key approach to tackling poverty (as well as the wider benefits to the health and wellbeing of our population). We will also align closely with the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) strategic programme, Prevention and Community Coordination (PCC), to develop a regional, strategic approach in this area.

Our next steps are to take these key approaches to our population, partners and stakeholders to gather their views.

### 9.3 Recommendations from the 'Time for Change' report

The Audit Wales review into poverty in Wales highlighted eight key recommendations for Welsh Government and local authorities to action. We have reviewed our local position against these recommendations and identified the following key actions:

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What we are going to do</b>
1	<b>National strategy and targets for tackling and alleviating poverty</b>	1. Work with Welsh Government on the national strategy, targets and performance measures.

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What we are going to do</b>
2	<b>Local strategies, targets and performance reporting for tackling and alleviating poverty</b>	2. Refresh Tackling Poverty Strategy, aiming to publish by mid 2023. 3. Develop Tackling Poverty Performance Framework, aiming to publish by mid2023. 4. Develop a Swansea-centric dashboard of data and intelligence relating to tackling poverty.
3	<b>Leadership on the poverty agenda</b>	5. Engage with Welsh Local Government Association Poverty Group 6. Communications campaign to promote tackling poverty leadership roles and structures with our partners, networks and communities aligned to publication of the refreshed Tackling Poverty Strategy.
4	<b>Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of grant-funded programmes</b>	7. Develop a Tackling Poverty Data Framework to publish by mid 2023.
5	<b>Experience mapping to create inclusive services for people in poverty</b>	8. Deliver programme of engagement and 'experience mapping' activities with people with lived experience of poverty. 9. Review and identify opportunities and draft proposals for addressing digital and social inclusion.
6	<b>Single web landing page for people seeking help</b>	10. Review feedback on web page and undertake continuous improvement of content.
7	<b>Streamlining and improving application and information services for people in poverty</b>	11. Develop collaborative plan of community enablement activities and commitments as part of the corporate 'Tackling Poverty and Enabling Communities' priority. 12. Launch Corporate Personal Debt Recovery Policy to publish by April 2023.
8	<b>Complying with the socio-economic duty</b>	Action 4 above.

More detailed activities will be defined as part of the refresh of the Tackling Poverty Strategy and our action planning involving people with lived experience of poverty.

#### 9.4 Performance Framework

Linking the performance of our services and actions to the outcomes for our population gives us an opportunity to clearly evidence the impact we are making in our efforts to tackle poverty in Swansea. Given the nature of the actions required, there are a number of cross-cutting outcomes owned by various departments and Corporate Performance Indicators that are linked to this priority.

We will develop a **Tackling Poverty Performance Framework** to define how we align the objectives, outcomes, indicators and measures relating to tackling poverty. A framework is required due to the complexity of how poverty align with other aspects of our service performance such as wellbeing.

This framework will provide the foundation for ongoing monitoring, measurement, demonstration and reporting of performance across departments and service delivery teams as well as aligning with relevant data from our partners and stakeholders. It will also help us

to identify trends and validate our successes by articulating more clearly how effective we are in tackling poverty (as well as the value of our total investment in tackling poverty).

### **9.5 Human Rights**

Swansea declaration as a Human Rights City is part of the journey towards achieving a vision of vibrant, diverse, fair and safe communities built on the foundations of universal human rights. Tackling poverty emerged from the development of the proposals for the Human Rights City as the key priority for development, based on addressing the rights of people to live their lives.

We will allow us to explore different ways of ensuring that we meet the needs and rights of our population in the way we approach tackling poverty in the future.

### **9.6 Promotion and engagement**

It is expected that through the course of the Swansea Poverty Truth Commission, challenges to the perceptions of poverty will start to be addressed. Commissioners with lived experience of poverty working with Civic and Business Commissioners will focus on topics of their choosing. This is, however, just one approach to working closely with people with lived experience of poverty to shape our actions and services in the future.

One of the ongoing challenges in making this a priority for everyone is addressing the feelings about being in poverty. Such feelings can prevent people in need from reaching out for help that is readily available to them. In addition to our plans for Experience Mapping, we intend to explore the language and behaviours relating to poverty to ensure that our approaches are aligned with the needs of our population.

We see opportunities to raise the profile of our services and efforts in tackling poverty, embedding principles of co-production to get our messages right and increasing the effectiveness of our actions.

# Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

**Which service area and directorate are you from?**

Service Area: Tackling Poverty Service

Directorate: Adult Social Services

**Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?**

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services
- Other

**(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:**

This is an IIA Screening for the Report on the delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty. The report provides a briefing to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.

The Scrutiny Programme Committee is being asked to consider the report and give its views / make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member.

There is no impact for the report itself. Recommendations made by the committee to inform future activity may require further investigation through the full IIA process which would be actioned at the appropriate time.

**Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)**

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further Investigation	No Impact
	+	-	+	-	+	-		
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

Corproductive approaches with stakeholders including internal and external partners and people with lived experience of poverty will continue to shape our strategic delivery going forward. The launch of the Swansea Poverty Truth Commission in October 2022 will be one of the key mechanisms for ensuring the voice of lived experience informs and shapes our priorities and activities. Examples of current coproduction include the administration of targeted Welsh Government funding such as to tackle food poverty and food insecurity. Stakeholders inform the design of the grant administration to best meet local needs. Another example is Local Area Coordination, coordinators ‘walk alongside’ people to help them to achieve their personal aspirations for a good life and make good connections the support them in their journey.

**Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan’s Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

**Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

**Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes       No      **If yes, please provide details below**

Tackling Poverty is a Corporate Priority and implemented by an ‘everybody’s business approach’. Recommendations made by the committee could potentially impact other departments / services.

**Q7 Will this initiative result in any changes needed to the external or internal website?**

Yes       No      **If yes, please provide details below**

## Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

**Q8** What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

There is no impact for the report itself.

Recommendations made by the committee to inform future activity may require further investigation through the IIA process which would be actioned at the appropriate time.

The implementation of the 'way forward' identified within the report and also the recommendations from the Audit Wales 'Time for Change – Poverty in Wales' Report will include coproduction, engagement and consultation as appropriate with a wide range of stakeholders including those with lived experience. A coproductive way of working will furthermore continue to inform service delivery and development through ongoing involvement mechanisms.

We recognise that current delivery and the next steps impact on people, families and communities with the aim of addressing or mitigating the impact of poverty.

### Outcome of Screening

**Q9** Please describe the outcome of your screening using the headings below:

- Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)
- Summary of involvement (Q3)
- WFG considerations (Q4)
- Any risks identified (Q5)
- Cumulative impact (Q7)

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The Scrutiny Programme Committee is being asked to consider the report and give its views / make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Anthony Richards</b>
<b>Job title: Tackling Poverty Strategy Development Manager</b>
<b>Date: 29/11/22</b>
<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Amy Hawkins</b>
<b>Position: Head of Adult Services and Tackling Poverty</b>
<b>Date: 01/11/22</b>



**To/  
Councillors Alyson Pugh &  
Louise Gibbard  
Cabinet Members for Supporting  
Communities  
BY EMAIL**

cc: Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:  
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:  
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail  
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref  
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref  
Eich Cyf:*

*Date  
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637257

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SPC/2021-22/9

17 December 2021

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Members following the meeting of the Committee on 16 November 2021. It is about the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.

Dear Councillor,

### **Scrutiny Programme Committee – 16 November**

We are writing to you following our scrutiny session to monitor and challenge Council action in relation to Tackling Poverty.

We thank you both, and officers, for attending the Committee meeting to present a detailed report on the delivery of the corporate priority, so we can comment on progress, achievements, and implementation of strategy.

You will be aware that there was a Scrutiny Inquiry on Tackling Poverty which reported in 2017. This was followed up in October 2018 and recorded good progress with most of the scrutiny recommendations. The inquiry was credited with generating and helping to bring a clear focus to tackling poverty activity and informed the development of the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Your report provided us with information on aims and objectives, a comparative assessment of poverty in Swansea, an outline of key plans and priorities, available resource, an overview of delivery and performance, case studies / examples of the difference made to people's lives, and key service

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU**  
**SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE**  
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE  
[www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk) / [www.abertawe.gov.uk](http://www.abertawe.gov.uk)

achievements, as well as describing current challenges and risks, and future priorities.

We noted that Swansea Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy defines poverty as:

- income below the Minimum Income Standard (the Minimum Income Standard is based on what the public think people need for an acceptable minimum standard of living as researched by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation).
- inadequate access to necessary services of good quality.
- inadequate opportunity or resource to join in with social, cultural, leisure and decision-making activities.

You reported that poverty is caused by things that reduce resources or increase needs and the costs of meeting those needs. Causes of poverty can also be consequences which can then create a cycle known as the poverty trap. Causes can include unemployment or low-paid jobs lacking prospects and security, low levels of skill or education, an ineffective benefit system, high cost of housing and essential goods and services, discrimination, weak relationships, and abuse, trauma, or chaotic lives. Common triggers of poverty are often life changing events or changes in circumstances such as becoming sick, bereavement, redundancy, or relationship breakdown.

We were told that the Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted low-income households, pushing more people into poverty, and those experiencing it, further into poverty resulting in an increase in demand for services including crisis support services and increased complexities for those in need; and that the Council's ongoing response to the pandemic in relation to mitigating the impacts of poverty and meeting demand continues to shape new ways of working.

You highlighted that there is a holistic approach to tackling poverty and praised the work of officers involved in the Council's Tackling Poverty Service working hard to improve people's lives, though we noted that there is a heavy reliance on grant funding with approximately 15% core funding which was an ongoing risk to service delivery. You provided a list of service achievements and case studies of support to families and individuals. You also highlighted the importance of partnership working in tackling poverty and dealing with the impacts, and felt that relationships both within the Council, and between the Council and external organisations was good, with the common aim of improving lives, and that there is an active quarterly Swansea Poverty Partnership Forum.



This letter reflects on what we learnt from the information presented, questions, and discussion. It shares the views of the Committee and highlights any outstanding issues / actions for your response - main issues summarised below.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The Committee recognised that this is a massive agenda and poverty is of course a problem across Wales and affected to a great degree by national and UK policies and decisions. Given that the Council is limited in its powers to reduce or eradicate poverty we questioned whether the aims and objectives of the Council could be more clearly defined, i.e., was it best described as 'tackling poverty'? Looking at the range of actions being taken, you agreed that what the Council is trying to do is alleviate the problem / effects and deal with the impacts to improve people's lives, for example with welfare rights / benefits advice, lifelong learning opportunities to gain skills and qualifications, employability support, supporting health and well-being, etc.

We recognised the importance, nevertheless, of small wins, given the scope of what one Council can achieve, contributing towards a bigger goal. The Committee acknowledged that there is a lot of good work being done, as shown in the detailed report provided, but felt that the Council should be better placed to monitor, measure, and clearly demonstrate the success from all the clearly considerable efforts being made. We felt that the suite of current corporate / national performance indicators alone does not adequately tell the story, and each of the objectives the Council has should have clear targets and an effective measure, so that we can see the value from the resources being put in. We heard that this is acknowledged to be an area where more work could be done, so that it is clear what 'good' or 'success' looks like, how we measure that, and where we are in achieving that. We would welcome future reports being able to tell this clearly, tell us what the headlines are, with supporting evidence, linking investment to action and activities. Measuring the success was essential to check if actions were working and having the desired impact. An improved 'performance and delivery' report will help us to monitor and challenge whether there has been change and improvement.

As an example, there was a discussion on what the Council is doing, as part of its Tackling Poverty Strategy, to ensure poverty was not a barrier to doing well at school. It was unclear from the report whether we have been successful in achieving this. We know from performance data that children in receipt of free school meals do less well at school academically, which would tell us that poverty remains a barrier to academic success. Did we know whether the gap is widening or being closed, which will help assess the effectiveness of resources being put in and actions being taken by the Council under the Strategy? This is something which our Education Scrutiny Performance Panel can explore in more detail, particularly around the effectiveness of the Pupil Development Grant, but the overall report on the delivery of the Corporate Objective would be better if it can tell us how work

being done is helping poorer pupils to succeed, and what we mean by success. This is something that the Committee can return to next year.

### **Link to Well-being Goals**

Your paper referred to how Swansea's Tackling Poverty actions align with the seven well-being goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. A Resilient Wales is a key goal and is about maintaining and enhancing a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic, and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change, for example climate change. With that in mind, we asked you to clarify how tackling poverty actions support this goal, which were unclear from the report.

We heard that work across the Council in supporting that goal, with links to 'tackling poverty', has focussed on things like improving access to green space to improve people's environment and health, the development of energy efficient houses that will reduce the cost of heating, and employability support in relation to the green economy.

### **Swansea Poverty Truth Commission**

One of the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Inquiry was to create a Swansea Poverty Truth Commission, with real input from people who have experienced poverty, to provide challenge and promote culture change. The evidence the Inquiry Panel heard from the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission persuaded the Panel that this was a model which Swansea should follow and should be at the heart of our Strategy. It is pleasing that this has been progressed and that it is planned to launch the Poverty Truth Commission in 2022. We noted that it has been developed based on learning from Leeds Poverty Truth Commission and the Poverty Truth Commission Network, who have provided valuable assistance in our work on this here and ours would be the first in Wales.

We discussed the benefits of having an independent Poverty Truth Commission and how it will add value and improve lives, by bringing together key multi-agency decision makers with people who have direct lived experience of poverty to work together to bring about change, based on issues raised by those experiencing poverty. This will be a good example of co-production, with partners and the public involved in shaping the solutions to poverty, which we welcome.

You reported that although the Covid-19 pandemic has delayed the pace of delivery, a Commission is establishing, which includes a mix of Community Commissioners with lived experience of poverty and key decision makers, known as Civic/Business Commissioners. A Facilitation Team has been recruited, hosted by SCVS (Swansea Council for Voluntary Service) and work

is currently underway to identify the themes that the Poverty Truth Commission will focus on.

### **Access to Advice & Support**

We asked about sources of advice and support for people and whether there was any intention of setting up a one-stop-shop in communities to support families, e.g., in a school or community centre, where people can access a range of information and advice? We are aware of the development of a Community Hub within the City Centre and asked whether that could also be utilised.

It was explained to us that a range of methods are employed to offer advice and support, with much of this available on-line, and that the one-stop-shop approach already exists in some quarters but is also being developed further. You referred to the Common Access Point and Early Help Hubs within Social Services, Local Area Coordinators supporting communities, projects in Libraries, and the development of a multi-agency facility within Dyfatty shops which will grow organically. You stated that there are still discussions around which front-facing services will be delivered out of the new City Centre Community Hub.

### **Food Poverty**

The Committee noted plans to focus on improving opportunities for people to grow food. It has already been a Policy Commitment of this Council to 'Support Community Enterprises, Growing and Cooking Skills to help people escape food poverty'. Your report told us that there has been grant funding to many organisations to tackle food poverty and food insecurity. We asked about the impact this has made, how successful this support been in the development of community gardens, etc, and which areas of Swansea have benefited most.

We heard that over the last three years, a total of £463,484 of funding has been allocated to over 100 applications supporting organisations, with projects right across Swansea, to tackle food poverty and food insecurity from ensuring crisis food parcels and hot meals are available to those in need, to building on opportunities for community food growing and developing cooking skills, which is hoped to reduce dependency on food banks or other food support. You felt that it may be too early to be able to show the impact, but referred to some good examples, including the St. Johns Day Centre in Cwmbwrla and Matthew's House and Swansea Together in the City Centre, with positive feedback from organisations which have helped people during the pandemic. We also noted the Council's emergency food support effort, and help to food banks and other organisations, provided during the lockdown. The Committee praised the number of people volunteering to support vulnerable people their communities. We also noted that there is a Swansea Food Poverty Network, facilitated by the Council, which meets

monthly to discuss food crisis support and how best resources can be co-ordinated to deal with food poverty.

You told the Committee that, with increasing interest, you were looking at developing a community food growing policy that would be able to facilitate the development of community gardens more quickly and easily than might be possible under the Council's existing Community Asset Transfer policy, where there may be parcels of suitable land that could be utilised for growing. You stated that more work on this would be done by the Policy Development Committee and wanted the Council to be pro-active in identifying suitable areas across Swansea. Councillors will be interested in hearing more on this and opportunities in their local areas.

Our Education Scrutiny Panel could also investigate practice in Swansea following concerning reports in the national media that pupils have been denied school meals through no fault of their own because of accounts being in debt, as no child should be left hungry at school.

## **Earnings**

We note from the Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, which you included in your report data showing that the Swansea median full-time figure (2020) of £27,480 is 2.8% lower than the Wales average, although both Swansea and Wales figures are below the UK average (in Swansea by 12.6%). Over the year 2019–2020, average annual full-time earnings in Swansea fell by 2.3%, whilst Wales and UK figures increased. We asked whether it was likely to be the case that many people in Swansea would need to work more than one job to earn that median income amount. You agreed that this would be the case for some people, and of course the data shows that some earn much less than the median figure and are struggling. You stated that the pandemic has made matters worse for many and officers in the Welfare Rights Service have had contact from many new people. We can see the spike in claimant count totals / rates since March 2020 which have not come down to pre-pandemic levels. You stated that there were many people in 'in-work' poverty when they work more hours or hold down more than one job, but then reach a certain threshold and benefits stop. You talked about the various employability projects to support people.

We also asked about the key issues that are affecting employability, and whether there were any areas of concern that was making it difficult for people to gain employment, e.g., access to transport. You stated that transport – lack of personal transport and public transport - was a significant issue making it difficult for some people to take up employment, particularly shift work. Childcare is also a significant problem for some. Both issues were made worse by the pandemic. You also talked about lack of experience (and opportunities to gain experience) and the gap in receiving pay after starting work as barriers to employment, where people cannot wait until they are paid.

It is clear that the transition from unemployment to work is difficult for many people.

We will re-visit work on Tackling Poverty at least annually within the Committee and will advise on meeting arrangements in due course. This will enable us to keep close watch regularly on progress, follow up on the issues we have raised, and enable scrutiny views to influence action and improvement. We acknowledge that tackling poverty cuts across the whole organisation therefore this is something that our Scrutiny Panels can also explore with other Cabinet Members, during their scrutiny work, about their efforts and contribution. The Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel will regularly review poverty performance indicators as part of corporate performance monitoring reports.

### **Your Response**

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful and would welcome any comments on any of the issues raised within; however, we do not expect you to provide a formal response.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK**

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ [cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 7



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities – Q & A Session with Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy

<b>Purpose:</b>	To enable the Committee to question the Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy on his work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to his areas of responsibility.
<b>Content:</b>	<p>The Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance &amp; Strategy will appear before the Committee for a Q &amp; A Session which may cover any of his areas of responsibility, but will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• achievement against specific Policy Commitments / Council Priorities</li><li>• progress with the Council's Recovery &amp; Transformation Plan</li><li>• managing the Council's budget</li></ul>
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question the Leader / Cabinet Member on specific portfolio responsibilities</li><li>• Make comments and recommendations as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas
<b>Access to Services Officer</b>	Catherine Window

## 1. Introduction

1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the Council's Cabinet to account. The Cabinet (also known as the Executive) is made up of the Leader and other councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific portfolio responsibilities.

1.2 There are 10 Cabinet portfolios:

	<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
1	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader of the Council)	Cllr Rob Stewart
2	Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cllr Andrea Lewis
3	Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cllr David Hopkins
4	Education & Learning	Cllr Robert Smith
5	Care Services	Cllr Louise Gibbard
6	Wellbeing	Cllr Alyson Pugh
7	Environment & Infrastructure	Cllr Andrew Stevens
8	Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
9	Equalities & Culture	Cllr Elliott King
10	Community (Services) Community (Support)	Cllr Cyril Anderson Cllr Hayley Gwilliam

### NOTE:

- The Community Portfolio operates under a job-sharing arrangement
- Detailed breakdown of Cabinet Portfolio Responsibilities are **attached** to this report.

1.3 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members on their actions and performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.

1.4 Rather than a look at overall responsibilities, the Committee has agreed to focus on specific areas of interest / concern, taking into account any gaps in the overall scrutiny work programme and ensuring good coverage of scrutiny across all cabinet portfolios.

1.5 The Committee should be mindful to avoid duplication of any issue(s) which are being examined elsewhere in the Scrutiny Work Programme e.g., within Performance Panels.

## 2. Q & A with Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy

- 2.1 The Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy, Councillor Rob Stewart, will appear before the Committee to participate in a question-and-answer session.
- 2.2 Councillor Stewart has provided a report on his areas of responsibility and issues identified by the Committee to help focus the discussion and questions - see **Appendix 2**. He will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee. Lead officers may also be present to assist the Committee.
- 2.3 Although having specific Cabinet portfolio responsibilities, as Leader of the Council Councillor Stewart is responsible for:
- providing political leadership to the Council
  - working with officers to lead the organisation
  - appointing the Cabinet
  - managing and leading the work of the Cabinet and chairing meetings
  - delegation of executive functions that allow the Cabinet and Officers to make decisions and manage day-to-day delivery of Council Services, in line with the Council's overall policies and budget
- 2.4 The session provides Committee members with opportunity to hold the Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy to account for his work, actions, and challenge performance, improvement, and future thinking.

### 3. Approach to Questions

- 3.1 Councillor Stewart has wide ranging responsibilities which may be subject to Committee questions, but the session is planned to focus on a smaller number of key issues, e.g., relating to:
- achievement against specific Policy Commitments / Council Priorities
  - progress with the Council's Recovery & Transformation Plan
  - managing the Council's budget
- 3.2 The correspondence following last year's Q & A session with the Leader (January 2022) is **attached**, and Committee Members may wish to follow up on previous discussion.
- 3.3 In terms of themes that cut across all cabinet portfolios, the Committee can ask Cabinet Members about:
- Well-being of Future Generations Act – impact on their work / decisions e.g., what they are doing to achieve the well-being goals and ways of working, e.g., focus on long-term thinking, collaboration / involvement etc. (including regional / collaborative working, service user / public engagement)



- Links to poverty reduction, reducing inequalities, including socio-economic disadvantage
  - Links to the Council's Recovery and Transformation Plan, 'Swansea Achieving Better Together'
  - Links to the Public Services Board (PSB)
- 3.4 The Committee also invites members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions that the Committee should ask. It is up to the Committee how to deal with any suggested questions within the session.
- 3.5 Following the session the Chair will write to Councillor Stewart to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for him to consider
- 3.6 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during the session, then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.
- 3.7 The Committee should note that Councillor Stewart has already been engaged in recent scrutiny, or is planned, of the following:
- Public Services Board (Scrutiny Programme Committee)
  - Covid Recovery & Investment (Scrutiny Programme Committee)
  - Budget / Budget Monitoring (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
  - Sustainable Swansea (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
  - Oracle Project Investment (Scrutiny Programme Committee)
  - City Centre Retail / Regeneration Programme & Projects (Development & Regeneration Performance Panel)
  - Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty (Scrutiny Programme Committee)
  - Swansea Bay City Region City Deal (regional scrutiny) – Cllr Stewart is current Chair of the City Region Joint Committee
  - South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (regional scrutiny) - Cllr Stewart is current Chair of the Corporate Joint Committee

#### **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.

4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.2 An IIA screening has been undertaken noting there are minimal impact assessment implications associated with this report (IIA can be viewed in **Appendix 1**). The work of Scrutiny is open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views. The public were invited to contribute to the session. The work of Scrutiny will involve examination of Council services and making recommendations for improvement to Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers). Scrutiny activities have the potential for engagement to ensure public views can feed into the Scrutiny process.

## **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: IIA Screening

Appendix 2: Leader’s Report

Appendix 3: Committee Letter re. Leader Q & A Session held January 2022

Appendix 4: Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility Listing

# Appendix 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

## Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence

Directorate: Resources

### Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

### (b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Information report on the Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities to guide the Committee.

### Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Appendix 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

**Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

The work of Scrutiny is open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views. The public were invited to contribute to the session.

**Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

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**Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

---

**Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

The work of Scrutiny will involve examination of Council services and making recommendations for improvement to Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers).

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**Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**

Low impact because there are no decisions within the information report which will directly affect service users, people and/or communities, but scrutiny activities have the potential for engagement to ensure public views can feed into the Scrutiny process.

## Outcome of Screening

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

- Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)
- Summary of involvement (Q3)
- WFG considerations (Q4)
- Any risks identified (Q5)

## Appendix 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

There are minimal impact assessment implications associated with this report. The work of Scrutiny is open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views. The public were invited to contribute to the session. The work of Scrutiny will involve examination of Council services and making recommendations for improvement to Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers). Scrutiny activities have the potential for engagement to ensure public views can feed into the Scrutiny process.

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Brij Madahar</b>
<b>Job title: Scrutiny Team Leader</b>
<b>Date: 22 December 2022</b>
<b>Approval for Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Debbie Smith</b>
<b>Position: Deputy Chief Legal Officer</b>
<b>Date: 9 January 2023</b>



## Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Key Portfolio Headlines: Economy, Finance and Strategy

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report seeks to outline notable activities and achievements in terms of ensuring the delivery of key priorities within the Economy, Finance and Strategy portfolio. This report focuses on three key areas of significance, being: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cost of living and budgetary impacts</li> <li>2. Regional work</li> <li>3. Progress on major projects</li> </ol>
<b>Report Author:</b>	Emily Davies
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar
<b>For Information</b>	

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 As Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy, key responsibilities covered within this portfolio include the following:

- Capital Programme
- City Centre Strategic Redevelopment
- City Deal
- Communications
- Community Leadership
- Constitutional Changes
- Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) – Chair
- Finance Strategy, Budget & Saving Delivery
- Financial Services

- Legal Services
- Local And Regional Investment Strategy
- Major Projects
- Planning Policy (Regional)
- Poverty Reduction Corporate Lead
- Public Service Board (PSB)
- Recovery Plan
- Regional Working Lead (All Bodies)
- Risk & Resilience Management
- Strategic Partnerships
- Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee – Chair
- Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) – Deputy Leader
- WLGA Lead on Economy & Inward Investment, Europe & Energy
- WLGA Representative To LGA

**1.2** Owing to the breadth and scope of the Economy, Finance and Strategy portfolio, it is not the intention of this report to provide an update on all of the responsibilities within the portfolio, but rather to highlight key areas of national, regional and local significance. Progress on each of the constituent elements of the Leader’s portfolio are scheduled and reported through existing scrutiny arrangements throughout the municipal year.

## **2. COST OF LIVING CRISIS & BUDGETARY IMPACTS**

**2.1** The challenges experienced under the Cost-of-Living crisis, linked to this portfolio, are wide ranging and cross-cutting. Following on from the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Cost-of-Living crisis, many of our core functions had been overtaken by ‘new’ work on behalf of Welsh Government to pay out a variety of grants. Priority has been given to the grants, but performance against those core functions has suffered, for example we are taking longer to process benefit applications and the collection rate for Council Tax is the lowest it has ever been. We acknowledge it will take some time to recover from this position.

**2.2** Demand for hardship payments is increasing. We have obtained top up funding from Welsh Government via the Housing Department for 2022/23, however as costs rise, we need to choose whether to help less people and give them a little more financial help OR help as many people as we can but give them a little less help (on the basis that other grants/payments are also available). At this time, we will be taking the latter option and helping as many people as we can.

**2.3** In response to the continuing challenges, following on from the pandemic and now also arising from the Cost-of-Living crisis, there are a number of far-reaching achievements, as outlined below:

**2.3.1** Approximately £152,000,000 in grants and rates relief has been paid to Swansea businesses since the pandemic started, resulting in direct feedback from businesses informing us that this help kept them afloat during restrictions.

**2.3.2** *Winter fuel payment 2021/22* – 18,100 applications have been dealt with; 13,800 applications have been approved and £ 2,760,000 paid to Swansea citizens.

**2.3.3** *Self-Isolation Payments* - 16,000 applications have been dealt with; 11,000 applications have been approved and £6,509,500 paid to Swansea citizens.

**2.3.4** *Unpaid Carers Payment* – 4,560 applications dealt with, 3,449 approved and £1,724,500 paid to Swansea citizens.

**2.3.5** *Cost of Living Payment* – 110,000 payments made to Swansea citizens to a total value of £12,165,000 so far.

**2.3.6** *Fuel Payments 2022/23* – 25,700 applications received in three weeks with more coming in daily, 16,800 approved and £3,360,000 paid to Swansea citizens so far.

**2.4** As detailed in the report to Cabinet (July 2022) 'Revenue Outturn and Savings Tracker 2021/22', it was highlighted that a significant element of the Contingency fund (including the previous year unused element) was potentially required, along with other reserves, as emergency funding to mitigate the un-forecastable impact of Covid-19 costs in year. As the year progressed and Welsh Government support both increased, and became clearer, the level of emergency funding likely to be required to mitigate any unfunded Covid-19 costs reduced. The third quarter overall position, based on known Welsh Government funding at that time was forecasting a net underspend in the region of £12m. The further improvement during the last quarter to out-turn is largely as a result of ongoing action taken in the third and fourth quarter by all Services to contain or reduce potential spending and significant additional late Welsh Government funding including additional Revenue Support Grant, compensation for Council Tax collection reductions, Cost of Living Support scheme and Social Services regional funding in addition to further funding for both additional costs and assumed loss of income with regard to Covid-19 in 2021-22.

**2.5** Administration Grants – throughout the year the Council administered tens of millions of pounds of Covid and other support grants on behalf of Welsh Government, albeit on a smaller scale than the preceding year. Each grant came with a variable value administration fee to recompense for the work undertaken. The majority of the work was achieved by reprioritising other work and not recruiting to temporary short-term posts or by utilising software and other automated solutions which saw some modest overspending elsewhere (but substantially less than the income received). With the cessation of the bulk of covid grant support schemes



this scale of windfall will not continue into 2022-23, although an administration fee is currently due on the Council administering of the £14m Council Tax rebate scheme on behalf of Welsh Government so a modest underspend can be expected once again from this source in 2022-23.

**2.6** Grant claims to Welsh Government in relation to TTP/WVCS (Welsh Vaccination Certification Service) costs are ongoing currently but are expected to cease later in the year when the service is scaled back considerably with a new set up in conjunction with public health. As such it is expected that there will be total costs in the region of £3.9m arising.

**2.7** In addition to the specific additional service costs regarding Free School Meals in relation to Covid-19 the authority has once again continued to act as an “Agent” on behalf of the Welsh Government in relation to Self-Isolation payments, Statutory Sick Pay and Cost of Living national scheme. All of these costs are anticipated to be funded 100% by the Welsh Government and as such costs incurred and grants received will be reported later in the year once the most recent announcements/schemes have been implemented.

**2.8** The Corporate Management Team has re-enforced the current arrangements for budget monitoring in particular:

**2.8.1** focus on a range of corrective actions, particularly for services overspent even before allowing for the unfunded pay award;

**2.8.2** targeted immediate spend minimisation and deferral action;

**2.8.3** spending control on all vacancies and contracts;

**2.8.4** a continued reminder that no Responsible Officer is authorised to overspend their budget in line with Financial Procedure Rules;

**2.8.5** and consequently that Directors must work closely with Cabinet Members and the Corporate Management Team to contain, reduce, defer and delay spending as far as possible, having due regard, to existing agreed budget and political priorities to nonetheless seek to limit service spending especially given the substantially higher than expected national pay awards;

**2.8.6** but recognising that the overall spend pressures are near wholly Covid or pay award related and that reserves were bolstered to temporarily assist with such pressures in the short term.

**2.9** Offsetting opportunities do exist to temporarily ameliorate the currently identified service demand and price pressures as follows.

- 2.9.1** £1m was set aside in the budget for the potential costs relating to the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy. The final costs relating to this levy will only be known once final employee related costs are calculated at the year-end. Should the full allocation not be required then any saving will be proposed to be used to mitigate service pressures at year end.
- 2.9.2** £3.13m was set aside to meet any specific and significant inflationary increases arising in year. Given the overall financial projection at this stage, it is proposed by the S151 officer that this be earmarked as a compensating funding mechanism for likely higher than expected pay awards.
- 2.9.3** Use of the Contingency Fund as detailed below.
- 2.10** The current indication is that, for 2022/23, there needs to be continued targeted mitigating action and delivery of savings proposals to help reduce the overall overspend. It looks inevitable at this stage that major draws from contingency and earmarked reserves will be needed to achieve a fully balanced budget for the year but this was somewhat anticipated and led to the material bolstering of earmarked reserves at outturn. Any inroads to net spending will reduce the necessary draw from reserves and increase the amount of reserves available to carry into 2023/24.
- 2.11** The action being taken includes working through existing plans on an accelerated delivery basis:
- 2.11.1** Management and Business Support Review: ongoing review of the management structure across the Council and future requirements given the Council's priorities, future challenges and the changing nature of the role of managers.
  - 2.11.2** Managing the Pay Bill: review of options to contain or reduce employee costs across the Council as part of our overall future workforce strategy (subject to trade union consultation at the appropriate time).
  - 2.11.3** Commercialism through third party Procurement Savings and Income Generation: review of further options to increase income from fees and charges, trading etc, in addition to the targets already set.
  - 2.11.4** Progressing implementation of residual phases Commissioning Reviews and Cross Cutting Themes.
  - 2.11.5** Further implementation of the Social Services Saving Plan through which we have identified mechanisms for bringing down overall costs.

**2.11.6** On the basis that these are existing agreed actions fully set out in the agreed budget set by Council in March, whilst wholly recognising the ability to progress any of the above have been seriously impacted by Covid 19.

**2.11.7** Continuing the extant spending restrictions which have been agreed as necessary by Corporate Management Team.

**2.11.8** The Interim Director of Corporate Services leading the Recovery Plan implementation as agreed by Cabinet to agree alternative mitigating actions and future steps, taking into account post Covid-19 and Brexit.

**2.12** We now have the provisional settlement for 2023-24 and work is underway to finalise the budget for 2023-24 in March 2023. Clearly, the significant increase in funding and front loading (settlement up from 3.5% to 7.6%) will provide significant flexibility to our budget options for 2023-24. The settlement for 2024-25 is also likely to be slightly higher but the longer-term outlook remains challenging. In all years, including 2023-24, the settlement in cash terms whilst welcome remains undoubtedly below inflation and amounts to ongoing real terms cuts to spending power.

## **RECOVERY PLAN**

**2.13** On 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020, Cabinet approved the new 'From Recovery to Transformation' report detailing the 3 Phases from recovery through to the 'Swansea – Achieving Better Together, Transformation Strategy & Programme Framework 2022 – 2026'.

**2.14** As the Council moves on from Phase 1, 'Re-mobilise', and through Phase 2, 'Refocus', the information herewith highlights the current position of the programme.

**2.15** Phase 2, 'Refocus', supported the Council to deliver its ongoing corporate priorities and plans, whilst adapting to address the impacts coming out of the COVID crisis. The delivery was through a formal process within the following work streams;

- Care Services
- Education and Learning
- Future Workforce and Equalities
- Community Support
- Economy and Environment

**2.16** Refocussing the Council set about creating the foundations to support the longer-term culture change required to reshape the Council, encouraging employees to adopt behaviours and mind-sets that are required to support a sustainable, efficient, and effective future Swansea Council. Examples include:

- A renewed Agile Policy (including staff wellbeing)
- Development of a Coaching Network (including learning & development opportunities)
- Relaunch & re branding of the Leadership hub (Let's Talk)
- Relaunch of the Ideas Hub
- Involvement Workshops
- A flexible working project enabling staff to work from any location, including from home, and exploring hours of work
- Various Network Groups established e.g., Diverse Staff Support Group and a Cross Council Community Response Group
- Staff Story Book launch

**2.17** The next phase of transformation for Swansea Council is looking beyond 2022, it is taking account of the priorities of the new Council, a new Chief Executive and a new corporate plan for the Council.

### **3 REGIONAL WORK**

#### **Swansea Bay City Deal**

**3.1** The Swansea Bay City Deal is an investment of up to £1.3 billion in a portfolio of nine major programmes and projects across the Swansea Bay City region. Of the total £1.3bn funding, £235.7m is from the City Deal, £380.67 is from the public sector and £625.04 from the private sector. The City Deal is expected to give a regional economic boost of at least £1.8bn as well as create over 9,000 jobs.

**3.2** The City Deal will improve people's lives in all parts of South West Wales, both urban and rural, by raising aspirations, improving services, boosting skills, and creating well-paid employment opportunities.

**3.3** Set to align with three core themes – economic acceleration, energy and smart manufacturing, and life science and wellbeing - the Swansea Bay City Deal has already seen significant progress through several of its projects. The opening of Yr Egin, a creative sector hub led by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in Carmarthen; the Swansea City Centre developments through the opening of Swansea Arena; and the construction of the Bay Technology Centre in Port Talbot. These developments are starting to create long-lasting partnerships with key companies such as S4C in Yr Egin and the Ambassador Theatre Group who run Swansea Arena.

**3.4** The Swansea Bay City Deal is being led by the four regional local authorities, together with the Swansea Bay and Hywel Dda University Health Boards, Swansea University, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, and private sector partners. All nine programme and project business cases are now approved and moving through the delivery phase. These are outlined as follows:

- 3.4.1** The *Skills and Talent* project aims to deliver a regional solution for the identification and delivery of the skills and training requirements for all City Deal projects. Working alongside partners from the private sector, higher and further education, schools and the third sector; establishing the skills and training needed for students, teachers, and lecturers both now and in future.
- 3.4.2** The £55 million *Digital Infrastructure* programme will benefit residents and businesses in all parts of the Swansea Bay City Region. The programme is estimated to be worth £318 million to the regional economy in the next 15 years. This project aims to ensure the region's cities, towns and business parks have:
- Competitive access to full-fibre connectivity
  - Pave the way for the region to benefit from 5G and internet of things innovation
  - Improved access to broadband in the region's rural communities
- 3.4.3** *Yr Egin* is a digital and creative hub at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in Carmarthen. Anchored by S4C's headquarters, the 3,700 square metre first phase of the development is also home to a range of other companies working within the creative sector.
- 3.4.4** The *Swansea City and Waterfront Digital District* being led by Swansea Council is made up of three elements:
- The 3,500-capacity indoor arena.
  - A state-of-the-art office development on The Kingsway in Swansea city centre. Around 100,000 square feet of flexible office space and amenities will be developed for tech and digital businesses, with conference and meeting facilities.
  - An Innovation Matrix development at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David SA1 for start-up businesses, which will foster entrepreneurship through close links with academia.
- 3.4.5** Under the *Homes as Power Stations* programme, state-of-the-art design and energy efficiency technologies will be introduced to thousands of properties. The pioneering project is aiming to facilitate the adoption of the Homes as Power Stations approach to integrate energy efficiency design and renewable technologies into the development of new build homes and retrofit programmes.
- 3.4.6** The £60 million *Pembroke Dock Marine* programme will place Pembrokeshire at the heart of global zero carbon marine energy

innovation while also helping tackle climate change. Pembroke Dock Marine will deliver the facilities, services and spaces needed to establish a world-class centre for marine engineering.

**3.4.7** *Life Science, Well-being and Sports Campuses*: The Swansea University's Campuses project was the final to be approved by both governments which will promote innovation and business growth in the expanding Medical Technology and Sports Technology sectors. The Life Science, Wellbeing and Sports Campuses project is a phased project based on two sites at Singleton and Morriston. The vision is to integrate life sciences, med tech, sport and well-being to transform services provided from the Morriston and Singleton sites, to drive economic growth and job creation, and to attract significant inward investment into the region.

**3.4.8** The *Pentre Awel* project will feature new business, education and health facilities, along with a state-of-the-art new leisure centre and swimming pool. Outline planning for the site was secured in August 2019, and detailed design work has been undertaken on Zone 1.

**3.4.9** *Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth*: This £58.7 million programme will deliver sustainable jobs and growth in the Swansea Bay City Region to support the creation of a decarbonised and innovative economy, thanks to a partnership between government, academia and industry.

**3.5** In November 2022, Swansea was shortlisted for the 'City of the Year' title at the Estates Gazette 2022 awards, which celebrate the country's best regeneration and development schemes. Developed by Swansea Council and managed by RivingtonHark, Swansea's £135m Copr Bay district was among the schemes that led to the city being recognised.

**3.6** The awards scheme also took notice of other complete, on-going or planned regeneration schemes in Swansea City's £1bn transformation. These include major, multi-million-pound improvements to the look and feel of both Wind Street and The Kingsway. Also being developed by Swansea Council, a major new high-tech office development providing space for 600 jobs in the tech and digital sectors is now being constructed at the city's former Oceana nightclub site. Both Swansea Arena and the new office development are part-funded by the £1.3bn Swansea Bay City Deal.

**3.7** These schemes and others have helped attract the private sector to invest in Swansea. This includes the Council's appointment of regeneration specialists Urban Splash (as referenced within Appendix A)

to lead on the £750m transformation of several key sites, including the Civic Centre on the seafront and the Swansea Central development site in the area of the former St David's Shopping Centre.

### **South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan**

- 3.8** As outlined to the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel in March 2022, the new South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan will replace the 2013 Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy as the Council's economic regeneration policy.
- 3.9** Since the publication of the Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy in 2013, the economic and policy context has changed considerably at the Welsh and UK level since then, particularly in light of the UK's decision to leave the European Union and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the regional landscape is changing with the advent of the new Corporate Joint Committees, and the preparation of new Regional Economic Frameworks by Welsh Government that set out visions and high-level priorities for each region in Wales.
- 3.10** To respond to changing circumstances, the four local authorities in South West Wales, in partnership with Welsh Government, commissioned SQW Ltd to produce a new Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP). This will replace the previous Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy.
- 3.11** Unlike the previous Economic Regeneration Strategy, which was predominantly focused on improving productivity, the REDP recognises that 'Transformational' growth opportunities need to be balanced with the conditions for incremental improvements in resilience, capacity and capability across the whole of the economy. This was a key theme that emerged from consultation with regional partners during the preparation of the Plan. While there are distinctive opportunities to pursue at the 'leading edge', long-term employment resilience and wage growth is going to depend on the sustainability, productivity and expansion of the wider stock of regional businesses.
- 3.12** The new Regional Economic Delivery Plan will be owned and overseen by the new South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). Supporting the CJC, the Regional Regeneration Directors will keep track of progress and will be responsible for developing business cases, securing investment and ensuring delivery on the CJC's behalf.

## **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)**

- 3.13** The South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 include the following county and county borough Councils: Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.
- 3.14** The Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales is one of four now established in Wales, having been introduced by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act). The Act established a framework to support and encourage greater collaboration between local authorities.
- 3.15** Cllr Rob Stewart, as Swansea Council Leader, was elected chair of the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales, following its formal constitution in January 2022.
- 3.16** Tasked with preparing transport and strategic development plans for the region, the Corporate Joint Committee can also exercise economic well-being powers. Since January 2022, the Corporate Joint Committee has met to discuss topics, including those outlined below:
- 3.16.1** *South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP)* - The South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP) was adopted as the regional strategy for the economic wellbeing strand of the CJC's work programme.
- 3.16.2** *South West Wales Regional Energy Plan* - The South West Wales Regional Energy Strategy will be adopted as the framework for the CJC's work programme with further reports to be brought forward in due course identifying how it is proposed that the strategic intent will be delivered.
- 3.16.3** *Shared Prosperity Fund* - The CJC has noted the UK Government's White Paper 'Levelling Up' and associated pre-launch guidance for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The CJC has noted the consultation and engagement being undertaken by the UK Government with partners including local authorities to develop arrangements that maximise UK Shared Prosperity Fund in each nation.
- 3.16.4** *Transport and Infrastructure Development* – A formal letter, addressed to Welsh Ministers, was sent regarding funding requests and to make a case for the transport work programme to have the appropriate support in place.
- 3.16.5** *Formulation of South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee Corporate Plan* – to discharge the range of public sector duties



imposed on CJs through a 'corporate plan'. The first corporate plan, incorporating the various public sector duties, will need to be published by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The Plan will need to be subject to public consultation.

**3.16.6 Investment in Health Estate** – presentation delivered by Hywel Dda University Health Board about the economic benefits of planned investment programmes.

## **4 PROGRESS ON MAJOR PROJECTS**

**4.1** As outlined within the report to Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December entitled 'Policy Commitments - the first 100 days', excellent progress is being made on major regeneration projects throughout Swansea. See **Appendix A**.

**4.2** *Swansea Central Phase 1:* Developed by Swansea Council and overseen by development managers RivingtonHark, Copr Bay also includes the 1.1-acre coastal park, the new bridge over Oystermouth Road, new car parking, new apartments and new spaces for food and drink businesses. This has led to the Council's beyond bricks and mortar team beating off competition from the rest of the country to win the social value category at the GO Awards Wales, which celebrate the very best procurement achievements from public, private and third sector organisations. A Swansea Council regeneration and procurement policy, beyond bricks and mortar ensures community benefits are embedded in all major contracts. The team represented Wales in the social value category at the UK-wide Go Awards and gained a Highly Commended accolade.

**4.3** *Bridge Link to City:* This serves as both a statement bridge and a striking visual representation of the work Swansea Council is carrying out to create an urban destination that brings together the best of city living and access to nature. Designed by local artist Marc Rees and award-winning architectural practice ACME. Part-funded by the Welsh Government's Access to Travel grant, the bridge provides seamless access between Swansea city centre and the new arena in the leisure-led first phase of the Copr Bay project.

**4.4** *Digital Square:* A digital square featuring digital artworks and ultra-fast internet connection speeds is open for outside the arena and is part of the City Deal delivery.

**4.5** *Rooftop Park:* This is the first new urban park to be developed in Swansea for a century. The coastal park, located on the rooftop of the new arena car park, also features a selection of new trees, including cherries and pines. They are among more than 70 new trees being introduced as part of the Copr Bay Phase 1 district. The Countess of Wessex had also visited the park in March 2022 to plant a Jubilee tree at

the new coastal park, in recognition of the City's status as a Queen's Green Canopy Champion City.

- 4.6** *Swansea Central North Project:* The Swansea Central North development site is in the area of the former St David's Shopping Centre. The Stage 1 review is now complete and the external report assessing stage 1 documentation has been received, supporting the recommendation to approve stage 1 and allow commencement of stage 2. Milligan is now working closely with Swansea Council Corporate Property Department to define Council requirements and specifications.
- 4.7** *Residential Units:* The residential section is now complete and Pobl tenants have taken immediate occupation of the Copr Bay apartments. The 33-apartment block being run by Pobl Group forms part of the £135m Copr Bay district developed by Swansea Council. Located on the city centre side of the new bridge over Oystermouth Road, the apartment complex overlooks Swansea Arena and the 1.1-acre coastal park. Some of the apartments benefit from views of Swansea Bay and the coastline.
- 4.8** *Civic Centre Relocation:* This development is working towards completion in Spring 2025. Due to staffing increases made over the last 2 years, we will require an additional 2,000sqm of space at the new Swansea Central North building. It is envisaged that the Civic Centre will not be demolished, and re-design will be based on an existing development in Portsmouth called 'Royal William Yard'. The site will be mixed use, including hotels, retail, residential and leisure.
- 4.9** *Swansea Market:* The market has and will continue to play an important role in the pandemic-recovery efforts of the City Centre. Initiatives designed to maximize the economic value of market trading and attract new traders and entrepreneurs has delivered positive results - bucking national trends with an occupancy rate of 93% and receiving national recognition from the likes of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) and National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA).
- 4.10** *277-278 Oxford Street (former BHS building):* A £2m grant from the Welsh Government has been provided - and a further £3.5m is available to the Council to develop the former BHS store as a public focal point. The funding is being provided under the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns initiative that provides support to improve town centres across Wales. The Council has acquired the former BHS building for a multi-purpose community hub. The tender process is now complete, with four tenders received back, reviewed by the project team against quality and cost criteria. Following final interviews, Kier have been appointed as the main contractor.
- 4.11** *71/72 Kingsway:* Due for completion in 2023, the 71/72 Kingsway development will provide space for 600 jobs in sectors like tech, digital and the creative industries. Swansea Council is developing the office building, with Bouygues UK as its main contractor. Construction of the

new building has now started, following-on from the completion of foundation works. The development, once complete, will be carbon zero in operation and worth £32.6m a year to Swansea's economy. Set over five levels, it will include 114,000 square feet of commercial floor space featuring flexible co-working and networking opportunities.

**4.11.1** A new link between Oxford Street and The Kingsway will also be constructed. The development is being part-funded by the £1.3 billion Swansea Bay City Deal and supported by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government.

**4.11.2** Also due for completion by the end of 2023, the 'living building' scheme led by Hacer Developments will be among the UK's first schemes of its kind. Made up of the former Woolworths unit and a new adjoining 13-storey structure, the scheme will include green walls and green roofs, an educational facility, retail, offices, a landscaped courtyard, rooftop solar panels, battery storage and gardens. Pobl Group will manage 50 affordable apartments forming part of the scheme.

**4.12** *Castle Square Gardens:* A revitalised public space with new uses will bring Castle Square in line with the wider programme of regeneration already taking place in Swansea, reinforcing the aim of making it an attractive city to live, work and visit. The RIBA Stage 3 design is underway, and a planning application has been submitted. It is anticipated that work will start on site during Q4 of 2022/23.

**4.13** *Palace Theatre:* This historic flat iron building had fallen into disrepair before being acquired by Swansea Council. Tramshed Tech has signed a heads of terms agreement with Swansea Council for the development of the 133-year-old building. Planned to open in 2023, the influence of Tramshed Tech will see the creation of a modern workspace for young and growing businesses, especially those in the tech, digital and creative sectors.

**4.14** *Albert Hall:* The aim is to restore the 157-year-old venue to its original splendour, creating a development that'll include 800-capacity music and entertainment venue plus new spaces for lifestyle businesses and offices. This historic Swansea music hall had fallen into disrepair and has now been acquired by a private sector partner. Work has commenced to convert this building into a music venue, with completion anticipated by October 2023.

**4.15** *Pontoon @ Copperworks:* Tender documents have been prepared for the procurement of the supply and installation of the pontoon, which is expected to be delivered by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 . Appointment of a supplier will be subject to planning consent being issued, and planning is yet to be determined by the planning committee.

- 4.16** *Hafod Copperworks:* The scheme, that's due to see Welsh distillery Penderyn open an attraction in the site's disused powerhouse next year, will also help the Council redevelop other under-used areas of the Lower Swansea Valley. The powerhouse scheme's latest grants are from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (£250,000) and the Welsh Government's Regional Capital Stimulus Funding Programme (£500,000). The scheme is part of the first phase of development of the 12-acre site on the west bank of the River Tawe, encompassing long term ambitions to create a destination to capitalise on the site's extraordinary heritage.
- 4.17** *Blue Eden:* The consortium of firms are working on the Blue Eden proposal at SA1, which aims in the long term to deliver an electric battery manufacturing plant and battery storage facility, hundreds of waterfront homes, a tidal energy lagoon and floating solar farm within it, a data storage centre, a green hydrogen production facility, and an oceanic and climate change research centre. The project is being put together by Bridgend-based Batri Ltd and DST Innovations, with support from Swansea Council. The UK Government has provided a £200,000 grant via its community renewal fund and names announced as being on board are engineering and construction firm HDR, infrastructure group Enable, hydropower specialists Anditz, and HSBC bank and Siemens.

## **5 Integrated Impact Assessment Implications**

- 5.1** The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
  - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
  - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
  - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.2** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

**5.3** Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

**5.4** This is a 'for information' report that provides an overview of progress meeting the responsibilities of the Economic, Finance & Strategy Cabinet portfolio, so there is no direct impact on people or communities.

## **6 Financial Implications**

**6.1** There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **7 Legal Implications**

**7.1** There are no legal implications associated with this report

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – 'Policy Commitments - The First 100 Days'

Appendix B – IIA screening form



## Report of the Leader/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy

Council – 1 December 2022

# Policy Commitments - The First 100 Days

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report highlights the achievements and successes of Swansea Council during the 'first 100 days', in line with the Policy Commitments Statement agreed at Council on 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2022.
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Richard Rowlands
<b>Report Author:</b>	Emily Davies
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar
<b>For Information</b>	

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022, a report to establish a number of policy commitments of Swansea Council was adopted (Policy Commitments Statement 2022-27).
- 1.2 This report moves the Policy Commitments Statement on one stage further and reports on what the council has achieved by the end of the first 100 days, outlining some of the key actions that have been taken. It should be noted that not all actions have been detailed in this report, as many aspects continue to evolve and progress.
- 1.3 Swansea Council continues to work in partnership to promote and develop the well-being of all our citizens and our communities, working co-operatively and co-productively both within the council as well as with other bodies / organisations.
- 1.4 The council will continue to place an urgent emphasis on the delivery of high-quality services for all. Swansea Council has become an award-winning council, recognised as excellent in many of the services it delivers

and has been shortlisted for national awards in numerous categories including Council of The Year, Waste Management, Building Services and Construction, and Workforces (including our Apprenticeship Scheme). In September 2022, Swansea hosted more than 300 UK delegates at the annual Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) conference and awards, at which Swansea Council won the award for the best commercialisation and entrepreneurship initiative.

1.5 In addition, a range of independent assessments of our services by Estyn (Education), CiW (Social Services) and Audit Wales provide strong independent validation of the strength and quality of the services in Swansea. For example, officers from Estyn inspected Swansea Council's education services in June 2022, noting that pupil performance is above the national average and there is important work being done to support vulnerable young people to ensure they succeed and remain in school.

1.6 The council wants to continue to be recognised for high quality public services. To this end, the council will continue to modernise and invest in our front-line services to ensure their long-term sustainability through our Corporate Plan 2022/23, which outlines our ambitions and commitments to residents - our 'well-being objectives':

- **Safeguarding** people from harm - so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- Improving **Education & Skills** - so that everyone in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- Transforming our **Economy & Infrastructure** - so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.
- **Tackling Poverty** - so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential.
- Delivering on **Nature Recovery and Climate Change** - so that we maintain and enhance nature and biodiversity in Swansea, reduce our carbon footprint and tackle climate change.
- **Transformation & Future Council Development** - so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.

1.7 The Corporate Plan and corporate priorities are currently being reviewed with a new plan being adopted early in 2023 for the period 2023-27.

## 2. What Is Being Achieved?

2.1 A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken over the last five years in delivering the council's policies. The council will build upon these achievements to create an environment which enables people to lead flourishing lives, secure local well-paid employment, live in strong and resilient communities which promotes physical and psychological wellbeing, with access to excellent services and protective of our natural environment.

- 2.2 All of the 100 days commitments have been started and some are well advanced, including the following;

### **Education**

- 2.3 The council made a commitment to mapping out future priorities, in line with our Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning programme. This pledge is aligned to the Corporate Plan under the 'Improving Education and Skills' objective, and has been included in the work programme for the Education and Skills Corporate Delivery Committee (CDC). The next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme is mapped out and supported, with final delivery being noted as on track.
- 2.4 Swansea Council has commenced the upgrade works at Cefn Hengoed Community School, progressing the £7m investment in a new Community Sports Barn in Bonymaen. South Wales-based contractor Morganstone have successfully tendered to deliver the project and work is now underway on site. The investment at Cefn Hengoed Leisure Centre and Community School will see a new sports barn complete with indoor 3G pitch and fitness studio as well as a re-purposed outdoor five-a-side pitch. The development should be completed by Autumn 2023.
- 2.5 Swansea Council has begun the delivery and development of new special school facilities, a commitment aligned to the Corporate Plan under 'Improving Education and Skills'. Progress to date includes the approval by Welsh Government of the strategic outline case and completion of some ground investigations.
- 2.6 The council has expanded free school meal provision, in line with Welsh Government guidance and the freeze on school meal prices. New or improved equipment has been ordered and delivered, and the majority of school kitchens surveyed. Parents have been informed of programme delivery for Reception children, which commenced in September 2022.
- 2.7 The council has commenced the new regional partnership arrangements; the South West Wales Education Partnership will be a regional collaborative arrangement designed to promote excellence in all of our schools. In November 2021, a legal partnership agreement was approved by the respective Cabinets of the City and County of Swansea, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Council to establish a joint committee for a new regional education partnership, 'Partneriaeth', to support the delivery of school improvement. The joint committee of Partneriaeth is now in place.

### **Better Care**

- 2.8 Incorporated into the delivery programme for the Safeguarding People and tackling Poverty CDC, the council will undertake a review of post-pandemic care provision, including an internal and external domiciliary



care capacity review. Swansea Council is also looking into the development of an Assistive Technology Strategy and an internal residential care provision review. In addition, the workforce development programme (recruitment and retention) is underway, as well as development of a locality-based prevention and early intervention framework.

2.9 Swansea Council's commitment to begin options appraisal and move to increase council direct delivery of care is underway, with progress including the scoping of current demand and pressures. Work is underway to evaluate the cost comparison of in-house and external provision, as well as identifying and addressing any budget gaps. This commitment is also included in the programme delivery for the Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty CDC.

2.10 Swansea Council is engaging with Health to ensure care plans align with health recovery. Transformation priorities have been aligned with regional transformation agendas, and objectives have been shared with partners across the region. Specific workstreams have been developed including:

- Prevention and Community Co-ordination
- Homes First Model Development
- Learning Disability & Wellbeing
- Transformation Complex Care
- Wellbeing & Mental Health
- Carers

This commitment is also included in the programme delivery for the Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty CDC.

2.11 Work has commenced on progressing a new children's care facility and we have purchased one home for development and transformation. Recruitment and development of staff for this provision is underway. Work is ongoing to source a second property and additional work is ongoing to secure further regional funding for extra developments in this area.

### **Communities**

2.12 The council is completing bus shelter installations and continuing to review records of current stock to confirm which shelters would benefit from upgrading. Part of the city-wide upgrade includes ten new 'green roof' bus shelters, featuring natural plants on top, which can help filter out dust particles and contribute to better air quality.

2.13 Swansea Council committed to setting up the new Cleansing Ward Operative Team, which will head into every ward in Swansea to undertake deep cleans and tackle major littering and fly-tipping issues, in line with input from ward councillors.

- 2.14 Swansea Council have committed to installing new bins and to replace dog waste bins with larger general bins. Tender bids have been received and new bins ordered, with the first deliveries successfully received during September 2022. This area of delivery is aligned to the Corporate Plan under 'Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure'. The council is also in discussions about introducing new smart bins which send messages to the clean-up team to let them know when they are full.
- 2.15 The council is committed to the roll-out of new drainage teams and new PATCH (Priority Action Team for Community Highways) programmes. A major 4-year contract has been re-issued and the programme is due to start with two teams in early October 2022. All works programmed are scheduled to complete within a year. Consideration will need to be given to next year's programme and whether additional funding will continue or revert to pre- ERF levels.
- 2.16 The council has commenced work on progressing the £10m local road upgrade commitment, with areas of intended focus / priority set out for agreement by Cabinet Members. This area of delivery is aligned to the Corporate Plan under 'Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure'.
- 2.17 Swansea Council has revised community budget rules in full.
- 2.18 The council is progressing roll-out of free public Wi-Fi and continue to work on developing options. Work is progressing around delivery of the following aspects:
- Options Appraisal
  - Agree a Strategic Approach
  - Procurement of Solution
  - Implementation
  - Links with the CCTV roll out to ensure state aid compliance
- 2.19 The council continues to progress investigations into the options for a Substance Use Truth Commission, aligned to the Corporate Plan under Tackling Poverty. Partnership work has commenced to commission a substance use review, to help understand how services can operate differently by listening to the lived experiences of people and services. Exact milestones and timelines are yet to be defined in full and final form.
- 2.20 Swansea Council continues to drive forward work to agree a Local Library Plan, including the community hub developments. The central library project is underway as part of the new Hub and the wider plan is continuously developing throughout its scoping phase.
- 2.21 Swansea Council seeks to expand Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) and work has been completed to evaluate success of a City Centre PSPO, informing the business case for roll-out to other areas. The City Centre PSPO is now operational.

- 2.22 Swansea Council has engaged proactively with the Police to improve visibility of local policing. An initial meeting was held in June 2022 with Cabinet Members and the local SWP Inspector, Sergeant and Community Safety Officers. Continuing this work stream, follow-up meetings are scheduled for October 2022, January 2023 and April 2023.
- 2.23 Swansea Council has prepared to receive more refugees. Accommodation options were put in place for the initial reception, inclusive of temporary accommodation and settled accommodation. Robust processes have been put in place using well established support mechanisms, however it should be noted that the level of arrivals has been high, resulting in pressures on temporary accommodation and subsequent delays to move-on options. Hotels have been utilised where appropriate, funded by Welsh Government's Ukraine scheme. The council continue to work with other schemes also in operation, as funded by the Home Office.
- 2.24 The council has progressed the roll-out of next generation CCTV systems. Work is underway for the replacement of the current analogue CCTV system with a modern digital system, providing:
- Faster and more flexible connectivity (digital IP based)
  - More cameras in more locations
  - Analytics Software to assist operators in monitoring activity
  - A robust foundation for further growth of service provision

This area of work continues to develop in line with the Corporate Plan objective of Transforming our Economy and Infrastructure.

## **Housing**

- 2.25 The council has completed the Welsh Quality Housing Standard (WQHS) 1 and has begun work to plan for the implementation of WQHS 2023. Schemes continue to progress at various stages of design, procurement and site delivery to maximise spend of capital budget.
- 2.26 The council will begin its review of its council housing lettings policy. The review of the Allocations Policy ensures it continues to assist those most in need. The deadline for completion of the review is March 2024. The More Homes programme has an ambitious target to increase the supply of social housing which will help meet future demand and reduce the waiting list.
- 2.27 Swansea Council is progressing work aligned to our commitment to agree a strategy to support homeless individuals as the Covid hotel use ends, whilst striving to continue our 'always a bed' pledge. This will be achieved via the HSG, Rapid Rehousing and Move-On strategies, aligned to our corporate plan priority of Safeguarding People from Harm.
- 2.28 Swansea Council is continuing onto the next phase of the More Homes build, whilst maintaining progress on acquiring and further retrofitting of

council homes. Although some schemes are experiencing delays due to design capacity, most schemes are progressing well through the design and planning stages, with four schemes scheduled to start in 2022/23. Associated costs are contained within 2002/23 HRA Capital Programme.

## **Regeneration**

- 2.29 Working with our regional partners, we are progressing the £1bn regeneration and £750m partnership with Urban Splash as our new strategic partner, with an initial focus on Copr Bay Phase 2, the Civic Centre site and St Thomas site. This new partnership had been announced on signing of the Strategic Partnership Agreement and early work has commenced on design of the initial three schemes and delivery strategy.
- 2.30 The council is working towards securing a major new tenant for the Debenhams unit in the Quadrant Shopping Centre. Productive discussions continue, with a focus on securing the use of this unit for the future.
- 2.31 The council continues to progress work on the new Castle Square Gardens project. A planning application was submitted in July 2022, and work continues on the procurement and construction aspects of the project. The design stage is now complete, as well as pre-application consultation.
- 2.32 Swansea Council is driving forward work on the new Central Library project, as highlighted in paragraph 2.20 above. The planning application has now been approved, and the RIBA (plan of work) stage 3 complete. We are pleased to confirm that a contractor has also been successfully appointed.
- 2.33 Swansea Council has begun the phased demolition of Ty Dewi Sant and the old multi-storey car park. Work is underway to begin site demolition to clear footprints for the redevelopment as part of Swansea Central North scheme. Work continues to progress on Ty Dewi Sant and the full car park demolition will follow in 2023. Capital costs for this project are included in the Copr Bay project costs.
- 2.34 Work is progressing on site at 71-72 The Kingsway, to create an innovation hub which will be home to new businesses and up to six hundred new jobs. We successfully appointed Bouygues UK as the development's main contractor, with the development on course for completion by summer 2023. This commitment is also included within the delivery programme of the Economy and Infrastructure CDC.

## **Finances and Resources**

- 2.35 The council continues making cost of living (COL) payments on behalf of Welsh Government until the scheme closes or the fund is spent in full. All Swansea citizens who are eligible for a payment from the scheme and who have made the necessary applications will have been paid their COL payment by April 2023. Over 91% of the people who are eligible for the

main scheme element have been paid. Payments under the discretionary scheme have commenced and are well in hand.

- 2.36 The council has agreed the outturn position, resulting in a report to Cabinet and a substantial add to reserves.
- 2.37 Given the national financial crisis, the council is reviewing the Economic Recovery Fund (ERF). A range of projects and initiatives will proceed but consideration is also being given to retain a proportion of the fund in reserves to deal with future budget pressures, including rising energy costs.
- 2.38 Work is underway to review the 'Achieving Better Together, Transformation Strategy & Programme' goals. In November 2022, Cabinet will be invited to approve an outline transformation strategy and goals to be finalised alongside the corporate plan and Medium-Term Finance Plan before the start of 2023-34 financial year. A 'Lessons Learnt' review of Sustainable Swansea is in progress.
- 2.39 The council has commenced a senior pay and grading review, aiming to ensure it fits with the wider workforce pay and grading scheme. External consultants have been appointed and have started the review, which includes looking at a future scheme, the pay and grading structure and potential impacts of change on Grade 12 National Joint Council workforce. By mid-October 2022 external consultants will have produced a report with recommendations in respect of the senior pay and grading scheme and implications for the wider workforce scheme. The next steps will be determined as part of the work on the MTFP.
- 2.40 The council is ensuring that all planned savings as set out in the budget approved for 2022-23 are delivered in full or if necessary, by exception, mitigating alternative savings are achieved. First quarter monitoring to Cabinet (15 September) and tracking of Achieving Better Together indicates a service shortfall of currently approximately £1m to date, which is a mix of emerging spending pressures and four savings items, which are not fully on track.

Directors and Heads of Service are expected to mitigate the current gap. Spending pressures are likely to become exacerbated during the remainder of this financial year, but a distinction will continue to be made between pressures outside of the council's control, those that are, and those that are directly shortfalls in quantum or delays to timings of savings. £1m in the context of a £0.5bn revenue budget is considered within reasonable tolerance of the budget set and thus currently this commitment is on track.

- 2.41 By the end of October 2022, Cabinet will have been invited to agree principles that will underpin the council's post-pandemic working model, taking account of operational requirements, customer expectations and workforce needs. The council has an extant agile working policy, as well

as an accommodation strategy, a draft workforce and a draft digital and customer service strategy. These are being reviewed together with feedback from members and staff gathered during the pandemic to inform the development of principles to underpin a post pandemic working model. Continued work around this commitment is also included in the delivery programme of the Organisational Transformation CDC.

### **Attractions**

- 2.42 The council continues to progress development and investment through the Skyline park attraction on Kilvey Hill, having hosted the Skyline board visit during June 2022 and various meetings since. We continue to liaise frequently with Skyline on this project and are working closely together to progress funding. This project has been earmarked as part of the delivery programme for the Economy & Infrastructure CDC.
- 2.43 The council continues to progress hotels discussions for the City Centre and Stadium through ongoing dialogue with the private sector to identify viable development opportunities, and gap funding discussions are nearing completion. This commitment is aligned to the Corporate Plan objective of Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure.
- 2.44 The council remains committed to progressing the development and reopening of the River Tawe corridor, including new pontoons expected by Winter 2022. Progress so far includes completed designs, with which a planning application was submitted in July 2022. The project has now moved into the procurement phase and work is underway to begin installations during Autumn 2022.
- 2.45 Swansea Council continues to work towards delivering new promenade improvements and developments, as well as completing the missing lighting to the promenade along Swansea Bay. These developments are progressing through the design and procurement stages and will advance pending further approvals as and when appropriate.
- 2.46 We are committed to delivering a range of exciting events and immersive attractions, summer concerts and a new phase of Arena shows; encapsulated in a larger than ever events programme (including the half Iron Man event), which commenced with community support for a range of successful Platinum Jubilee events.
- 2.46.1 During summer 2022, five concerts were programmed / supported in Singleton Park, and more than two thousand people took part in the first pro-race of the 2022 Ironman UK season. We continue to liaise with the Ambassador Theatre Group regarding opportunities for designing events / activities in the wider area, although we recognise programme announcements are outside the remit of the cultural services department.
- 2.47 The council remains committed to retaining the Wales National Air Show in Swansea, bringing tens of thousands of visitors to the City for this annual

event and reviewing how its delivery can align with its net-zero carbon targets. The National Airshow took place in July 2022, with two days of flying featuring The Red Arrows, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and many other displays to entertain visitors from across the UK. The Wales National Airshow is set to return in 2023 and work is underway to establish how we can better align delivery of this event with net-zero carbon targets.

- 2.48 Swansea Council has been committed to progressing discussions for the new interactive aquarium, aiming to offer an immersive experience for visitors and a wider educational resource. This commitment is aligned to the Corporate Plan objective of Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure. The project has been progressing and initial design works are underway. Discussions continue to take place with the aquarium operator.

### **Transport and Energy**

- 2.49 Work continues to progress on the Blue Eden project with cabinet reports expected before the end of December 2022. Work is underway to complete feasibility studies, and this project has been planned for the delivery programme of the Economy and Infrastructure CDC.
- 2.50 The council has successfully continued the 'free bus ride' scheme for 2022 school summer holidays and will consider further extensions in the future.
- 2.51 Swansea Council has increased the availability of electric vehicle (EV) charging points and continues to work to develop a wider EV charging strategy. In June 2022, fifteen public facing charge points were successfully installed in council car parks.
- 2.52 Work is underway to review the council transport fleet to increase the green fleet in line with its agreed Green Fleet Strategy. In line with the ULEV Transition Strategy (2022-2030), approximately 100 electric vehicles and 60 fleet charge points are planned for 2022-2023.
- 2.53 Swansea Council has commenced the review of its disabled parking bay policy, and work continues to update the existing policy. Draft papers are scheduled to be presented to the Policy Development Committee in Autumn 2022.
- 2.54 The council continues to strive to progress discussions regarding a new ferry service linking Wales with the South West of England. Although initial discussions have become delayed, we continue to work diligently to identify a viable option that is commercially deliverable.
- 2.55 The council is progressing talks on the development of a hydrogen fuelling hub; discussions are ongoing as part of the expanded Blue Eden project.

## **Well – Being**

- 2.56 Swansea Council is progressing the delivery of all-weather sports pitches. Discussions are underway with Football Association Wales, Welsh Rugby Union, local groups and leagues. As outlined in paragraph 2.4 above, work is now underway on the £7m sports and leisure complex at Cefn Hengoed Community School. A turf-cutting ceremony has been held at the site of the new indoor sports barn on the city's east side.
- 2.57 The council remains committed to progressing discussions with partners regarding the International Sports Science Village. A feasibility study is now underway, aiming to identify opportunities around how best to deliver a diverse sporting infrastructure for growing participation; elite performance and international events.
- 2.58 Swansea Council is working towards announcing new Active Travel routes, which develop the built and natural environment and encourages higher levels of physical activity. Work is underway to successfully deliver Active Travel grant funding within the current financial year (2022-2023).
- 2.59 The council remains committed to delivering better skate-park facilities within Swansea. Projects are progressing and discussions continue to evolve in line with a feasibility / site consultancy contract (yet to be awarded) and final details will be agreed with the skateboarding community.

## **Other**

- 2.60 The new regional Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) is now formally constituted, with a recent meeting having been held in July and October 2022. A new work programme for 2022-23 has been agreed for each of the four work strands. This area has been incorporated into the delivery programme for the Economy & Infrastructure CDC.
- 2.61 The council has commenced a review of delegated decisions that can be taken by both Officers and Councillors. Work is underway to define the scope and remit of this review, which will include aspects of officer decision making, and the process for recording / publishing decisions. It is planned that any consequential amendments to the constitution will be presented via a formal report to the Constitutional Working Group and to Council.
- 2.62 Swansea Council is working towards agreeing a new Swansea Bay Strategy and a draft delivery plan is emerging. The scoping document(s) are being prepared to capture relevant strategies that should inform an overarching masterplan. This topic has been incorporated into the planned delivery programme for the Economy & Infrastructure CDC.
- 2.63 The council is working towards updating the recognition and naming policy, with a working group to be established to oversee this cross-cutting



project. This is also incorporated into the planned delivery programme for the Organisational Transformation CDC.

- 2.64 The council will progress TAN15 discussions with Welsh Government to find a solution that supports appropriate development, having already instructed commission and received initial reports. We continue to work alongside Welsh Government to attend workshops and events as necessary. This area of delivery is aligned to the Corporate Plan under 'Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure'.

### **3. Integrated Impact Assessment Implications**

- 3.1 The council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.

- 3.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

- 3.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

- 3.4 This is a statement of progress over 100 days meeting the Council's Policy Commitments. Each individual commitment will need to be clearly defined and built into Corporate / service plans and subjected to consultation and engagement and individual IIAs as appropriate. The report is for information only and so there is no impact on the people and / or communities covered by the IIA.

### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Whilst there are no immediate financial implications arising directly from simply adopting this report, acceptance of the actions contained within the report may result in additional expenditure at a future time which will be dealt with by appropriate and subsequent cabinet reports if additional revenue or capital funding is required.

- 4.2 The first substantial tranche of funding will be aided and assisted by the replenishment of the Economic Recovery Fund (ERF).
- 4.3 Acceptance of this report does not mean further additional resources will be made available beyond those in the Economic Recovery Fund, once that is replenished, or already budgeted for 2022-23 and it should be assumed for now that all future spending needs will need to be contained within existing budget and medium-term financial plan provisions and specifically set aside reserves levels.
- 4.4 That assumption regarding overall future revenue spending will be dependent upon the level of future local government finance settlements and decisions to be made by Swansea Council on levels of future Council Tax as part of the annual budget cycle and medium-term planning. Overall real terms future revenue resources are likely to remain significantly constrained given current inflation pressures and expectations.
- 4.5 Capital investment decisions and the associated funding requirement will be primarily a function of decisions by Council regarding the broad level of capital versus revenue spending, including any further amounts that Council may decide to budget for capital financing (borrowing), capital receipts from ongoing asset disposals, continued successful access to large scale capital funding programmes and future funding flexibilities.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Legal advice and assistance will be provided where necessary in relation to the policy commitments.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – IIA Screening form

# Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

**Which service area and directorate are you from?**

Service Area: Strategic Delivery and Performance

Directorate: Corporate Services

**Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?**

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services
- Other

**(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:**

The Leader's Report to Scrutiny - Key Portfolio Headlines: Economy, Finance and Strategy. This is a 'for information' report that provides an overview of progress meeting the responsibilities of the Economic, Finance & Strategy Cabinet portfolio.

**Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)**

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further Investigation	No Impact
	+	-	+	-	+	-		
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Q3** What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

This is a 'for information' report that provides an overview of progress meeting the responsibilities of the Economic, Finance & Strategy Cabinet portfolio, so no consultation or engagement is required.

---

- Q4** Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No
- 

- Q5** What is the potential risk of the initiative? (*Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...*)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

- Q6** Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

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- Q7** Will this initiative result in any changes needed to the external or internal website?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

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N/A

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- Q8** What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

### Outcome of Screening

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- Q9** Please describe the outcome of your screening using the headings below:
- Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)

## Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Summary of involvement (Q3)
- WFG considerations (Q4)
- Any risks identified (Q5)
- Cumulative impact (Q7)

This is a 'for information' report that provides an overview of progress meeting the responsibilities of the Economic, Finance & Strategy Cabinet portfolio, so there is no direct impact on people or communities.

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Richard Rowlands</b>
<b>Job title: Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager</b>
<b>Date: 19.12.22</b>

<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Lee Wenham</b>
<b>Position: Head of Communications and Marketing</b>
<b>Date: 19.12.22</b>



**To/  
Councillor Rob Stewart  
Cabinet Member for Economy,  
Finance & Strategy (Leader)**

**BY EMAIL**

cc: Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:  
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:  
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail  
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref  
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref  
Eich Cyf:*

*Date  
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637257

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

SPC/2021-22/13

14 February 2022

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 18 January 2022. It is about Brexit and the wider 'Levelling Up' Agenda, the City Centre, Delivering the Swansea Bay City Deal - Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth Programme, Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro Programme, and Housing. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

### **Cabinet Member Question Session – 18 January**

Thank you for attending the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 18 January 2022 and answering questions on your work as Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy.

The Q & A session gave us an opportunity to explore priorities and achievements in relation to your areas of responsibility. We appreciate you providing a written paper in support of your appearance at the meeting, which focused on issues of interest and concern to the Committee. Your report covered the following matters: COVID-19 response and Recovery Planning, Brexit and New Economic Relationships, the wider 'Levelling Up' agenda, Delivering the Swansea Bay City Deal and other regeneration programmes and projects across Swansea, Budget, Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro Programme, and Partnership Working.

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU**

**SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE**

**GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE**

[www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk) / [www.abertawe.gov.uk](http://www.abertawe.gov.uk)

I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall neu yn Gymraeg, cysylltwch â'r person uchod  
To receive this information in alternative format, or in Welsh please contact the above

This letter reflects on what we learnt from the discussion, shares the views of the Committee, and highlights any outstanding issues / actions for your response - main issues summarised below.

### **Brexit and the wider 'Levelling Up' Agenda**

Your report provided some information on EU Replacement Funding and the wider 'Levelling Up' agenda. There is some debate around whether funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund (or equivalent) will achieve the levels provided under EU Structural Funds. We asked about previous levels of EU funding that benefitted Swansea, and whether you have received any assurances around Swansea not facing any shortfall. The Committee was concerned about the implications for Swansea and potential loss if future funding is considerably less.

You talked about the danger of Brexit having an even greater impact than the Covid pandemic, and concern that Wales will lose out, with negative impact on our economy. Had the UK remained in the EU, Wales would have been receiving around £375m of EU funding annually. To date Wales's share of post-EU funds (Community Renewal Fund) is just over £40m for 2021/22. Of this Swansea successfully bid for CRF funding totalling £2,471,029 for eight projects, including support for developing the Blue Eden project, the successor to Dragon Energy Island, and funds for projects in areas ranging from education and training opportunities for vulnerable groups to green community transport and regeneration schemes. You reported that detail on the Shared Prosperity Fund and the UK Government's 'Levelling Up' funding programme was still awaited, but there were fears of a £100m shortfall.

We noted that, through the WLGA, you are seeking assurance from the Secretary of State for Wales that Wales will receive the previous level of EU funding it received prior to the UK's departure from the EU and clarification around replacement capital funding, the prioritisation of bids and the flexibility of approaches based on local circumstances, and will continue to lobby the UK Government to ensure that Wales receives its fair share of funding from the UK Government.

### **City Centre**

Despite regeneration plans and activity around the City Centre, the Committee was concerned about the growing number of empty shops / units, and impact on Swansea as a shopping centre. We asked about the future of the Debenhams unit in the Quadrant, and wider plans to improve Swansea as a shopping centre.

The Committee heard that all City Centres have been hit by the pandemic, with several national companies failing, however you stressed that Swansea had weathered a significant amount of that and stated that the numerous investments ongoing around the city, including Copr Bay, the Arena, Wind

Street, Castle Gardens, were helping to make Swansea an attractive place to invest. You argued that this was not a picture of a declining City Centre, but one that would be multifaceted destination not solely dependent on retail. You clarified that there were 7 vacant stores in the Quadrant, 4 of which have now been re-let and discussions were ongoing in respect of Debenhams. You stated that the investment and regeneration programme, which includes increasing the number of people living and working in the City Centre, should increase footfall in the City Centre, which in turn will attract new shops and businesses, and lead to a vibrant 24-hour city economy, that will have regular events attracting local people and visitors.

We noted that the Cairn Group have been identified as the preferred bidder for a planned four-star 150 room hotel adjacent to the Arena site. The importance of sufficient hotel provision was discussed. We referred to speculation in the media about the Dragon Hotel which has been closed. You stated that misinformation about the situation on social media has been rife, including that it would be used to house refugees and asylum seekers, but the Council has had assurance from the Home Office that this was not the case. You felt strongly that use of hotels for such purposes would not be in the best interests of refugees – there were better housing options that would offer community support for such groups of people. You stated that the re-opening of the Dragon Hotel was a matter for the owners. We have seen in recent local press that the hotel was shut for refurbishment and will re-open in the coming months and note plans for improvement to the facades of the hotel with the implementation of green walls, contributing to the overall plans for greening the central Swansea area.

You also referred to the appointment of Urban Splash as the Council's preferred development partner to lead a £750m redevelopment of several sites, including the Civic Centre, Swansea Central North on the former St David's Shopping Centre site, and a plot of land along the riverside in St Thomas. This would be substantially funded by the private sector, who you felt have confidence in the city, in part due to the City Deal projects being delivered.

You also mentioned the improvements to the public realm such as the work already taking place along Wind Street and planned for Castle Square / Gardens that will also add to Swansea's offering. On the re-imaging of Wind Street, we noted the progress made in relation to this £3 million public realm improvement scheme, which aimed to expand the appeal of the area and provide a safer, more accessible, and attractive environment. This has included a redesign of the road, new street furniture and lighting, enabling expansion into the outdoor space for businesses on the street. You told us that the Council has worked closely with businesses, and they have been positive about the improvements.



## **Delivering the Swansea Bay City Deal - Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth Programme**

You mentioned some of the key milestones marking the delivery of the Swansea Bay City Deal during 2021, including reference to the Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth programme. This programme includes decarbonisation projects to establish a regional approach to decarbonise journeys in the region, including a low emission vehicle charging network, as well as air quality monitoring and a hydrogen stimulus project. We noted the installation of 70 air quality monitoring sensors which will use digital technology to monitor and understand air quality. That is very good news given the seriousness of air pollution. We know there are severe consequences from air pollution on our health and biodiversity. It is important that the data from these sensors, and those elsewhere around Swansea, informs policymaking, future transport planning, and decision-making on green infrastructure. We were keen to see local air quality data being accessible to the public, and you told us that would be intended.

## **Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro Programme**

You reported that work is ongoing in relation to the development of the Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro programme – a regional project, being delivered in partnership with the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales, aiming to develop an integrated public transport system which will include a variety of modes such as heavy rail, tram-train, light rail, and bus, all of which can be accessible by walking and cycling.

The Committee welcomed the ambition and potential benefits to the city and wider area. We noted that discussions have been ongoing with a wide range of stakeholders, and a twelve-week public consultation was carried out by the Welsh Government during 2021. The next steps will include the development of a full business case. You stated that the project will be taken forward by the new South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee, which has now begun to meet, and is responsible for regional transport planning, and further statements would be made on progress in due course.

## **Housing**

Whilst not specifically within your portfolio, we took the opportunity to ask about progress in relation to the future of the council housing estates on Heol Emrys and Tudno Place in Penlan and masterplan. We understood that a Steering Group had recently been set up and Committee members were interested to know more. Councillor Andrea Lewis was present and was able to advise on the current position. She stated that several consultation events had taken place to feed into the masterplan, but the pandemic had delayed progress. We heard that work will re-commence as soon as possible during 2022, including tenant participation with individuals and groups.

## Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any comments on any of the issues raised within; however, we do not expect you to provide a formal response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Black', written in a cursive style.

**COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK**

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ [cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk)

## Appendix 4 - CABINET PORTFOLIOS (July 2022)

<b>Economy, Finance &amp; Strategy (Leader) (Cllr Rob Stewart)</b>	<b>Service Transformation (Cllr Andrea Lewis (Deputy Leader)</b>	<b>Corporate Services &amp; Performance (Cllr David Hopkins) (Deputy Leader)</b>	<b>Education &amp; Learning (Cllr Robert Smith)</b>	<b>Care Services (Cllr Louise Gibbard)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery Plan</li> <li>• Capital Programme</li> <li>• City Centre Strategic Redevelopment</li> <li>• City Deal</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Community Leadership</li> <li>• Constitutional Changes</li> <li>• Finance Strategy, Budget &amp; Saving Delivery</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Legal Services</li> <li>• Local and Regional Investment Strategy</li> <li>• Planning Policy (Regional)</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction corporate lead</li> <li>• Public Service Board (PSB)</li> <li>• Major Projects</li> <li>• Regional Working Lead (All Bodies)</li> <li>• Strategic Partnerships</li> <li>• Risk &amp; Resilience Management</li> <li>• Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) - Chair</li> <li>• Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee - Chair</li> <li>• Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) – Deputy Leader</li> <li>• WLGA Lead on Economy &amp; Inward investment, Europe &amp; Energy</li> <li>• WLGA representative to LGA</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post covid service stabilisation &amp; transformation</li> <li>• Corporate ICT &amp; Digital Transformation</li> <li>• Contact centre</li> <li>• Public Service Board (PSB) Leader’s Representative</li> <li>• Homes as Power Stations (City Deal)</li> <li>• APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence)</li> <li>• Climate change action plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Programme</li> <li>• Building Services</li> <li>• Housing Adaptations &amp; Renewal Schemes</li> <li>• Housing Policy, Affordable Housing and Housing Options</li> <li>• More Homes Delivery</li> <li>• Penderry redevelopment board</li> <li>• Climate &amp; nature recovery board chair</li> <li>• Sheltered Housing</li> <li>• Co-operative Housing</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Housing support grant</li> <li>• Council House Management &amp; Repairs</li> <li>• Lettings policy &amp; Tenancy Enforcement</li> </ul> <p><b>Transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fleet Renewal &amp; Maintenance inc Green fleet strategy</li> <li>• CJC (Corporate Joint Committee) representative for regional Energy</li> <li>• Green Vehicle Adoption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Delivery of Priorities</li> <li>• Performance monitoring</li> <li>• Commercial Services, Procurement &amp; Frameworks</li> <li>• Food sustainability</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Mayoral &amp; Civic Functions</li> <li>• Member Development</li> <li>• Outside Bodies participation oversight</li> <li>• Council Champions</li> <li>• Petitions</li> <li>• Scrutiny liaison</li> <li>• Democratic Services</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Planning Policy</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Landlord Licensing</li> <li>• Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)</li> <li>• Licensing Policy</li> <li>• Building Control</li> <li>• Public Protection</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Trading Standards</li> <li>• Strategic Estates &amp; Property Management</li> <li>• Trade Union Engagement and JCC (Joint Consultative Committee)</li> <li>• Agile Rollout Programme Lead</li> <li>• Western Gateway Leader’s Representative</li> <li>• Audit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21st Century Schools Programme inc. School Building Upgrade</li> <li>• Apprenticeships</li> <li>• Catchment Review</li> <li>• Education Services from 3 to 19</li> <li>• Further Education</li> <li>• Inclusion &amp; Learner Support</li> <li>• NEETS (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) Prevention &amp; vocational opportunities</li> <li>• Quality in Education (QEd) Programme</li> <li>• Readiness for Work</li> <li>• UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)</li> <li>• Regional Workforce Planning &amp; Skills Development</li> <li>• School Improvement</li> <li>• Schools Estate Planning &amp; Resources Planning</li> <li>• Schools’ Organisation &amp; Performance</li> <li>• Flying start (schools settings &amp; transitions)</li> <li>• Partneriaith (regional working) Leaders Representative</li> <li>• City of Learning (COL) - Member of UNESCO COL (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Steering Group (Cllr EK to support)</li> <li>• Corporate parenting Board member</li> <li>• Skills &amp; Talent Project (City Deal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Social Services Modernisation</li> <li>• Strategic Health &amp; Social Care Collaboration Opportunities</li> <li>• Mental Health including CAHMS</li> <li>• Assessment / Care Management</li> <li>• Elderly Care</li> <li>• Supporting People</li> <li>• Joint Equipment</li> <li>• Learning Disability</li> <li>• Local Area Coordination (support)</li> <li>• Physical &amp; Sensory Impairments</li> <li>• Safeguarding lead</li> <li>• Wellbeing lead</li> <li>• Preventing Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse &amp; Sexual Violence (Support)</li> <li>• Child &amp; Family Services</li> <li>• Children &amp; communities grant</li> <li>• Continuum of Care</li> <li>• Regional Adoption Service</li> <li>• Safe Looking After Children (LAC) Reduction Strategy</li> <li>• YOS (Youth Offending Service)</li> <li>• Leaders Representative on West Glamorgan RPB</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting chair</li> <li>• UNCRC (support) (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)</li> <li>• Human Rights city accreditation</li> </ul>

## Appendix 4 - CABINET PORTFOLIOS (July 2022)

<b>Wellbeing (Cllr Alyson Pugh)</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Infrastructure (Cllr Andrew Stevens)</b>	<b>Investment Regeneration &amp;Tourism (Cllr Robert Francis-Davies)</b>	<b>Equalities &amp; Culture (Cllr Elliott King)</b>	<b>Community (Services: Cllr Cyril Anderson &amp; Support: Cllr Hayley Gwilliam)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• 3rd Sector Services</li> <li>• Drugs and substance misuse reduction</li> <li>• Sexual exploitation reduction</li> <li>• Preventing Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse &amp; Sexual Violence</li> <li>• Flying start (all settings)</li> <li>• UNCRC (support) (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)</li> <li>• Refugees &amp; Asylum</li> <li>• Community Cohesion</li> <li>• Life long learning support</li> <li>• Vulnerable people support</li> <li>• Community Safety</li> <li>• NGETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training)</li> <li>• Employability</li> <li>• Financial Inclusion</li> <li>• Prevention and intervention initiatives</li> <li>• Swansea Working</li> <li>• Welfare Reform</li> <li>• Welfare Rights</li> <li>• Public Space protection orders</li> <li>• Safer Swansea Partnership member</li> <li>• Public Service Board Representative</li> <li>• RPB (Regional Partnership Board) representative</li> <li>• CCTV operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways maintenance &amp; improvements</li> <li>• Infrastructure repairs &amp; Maintenance</li> <li>• Pothole Task Force</li> <li>• Patch services Parking Policy, Control and Enforcement</li> <li>• Road safety</li> <li>• Operational Public Transport Services</li> <li>• Coastal Defences</li> <li>• Flood prevention</li> <li>• Marina, Foreshore &amp; Beach Maintenance</li> <li>• Active travel &amp; cycleways</li> <li>• Estates Maintenance Management (Non HRA (Housing Revenue Account))</li> <li>• Members Community Budget Scheme delivery</li> <li>• Play upgrade programme delivery (in collaboration with IRT)</li> <li>• Green infrastructure</li> <li>• Corporate &amp; Community digital connectivity (inc hybrid facilities, free community WiFi &amp; next gen CCTV technical delivery)</li> <li>• Rural development</li> <li>• Rural economy including sustainable farming</li> <li>• Leaders' representative for regional collaborations for Transport, and Waste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business &amp; City Promotion</li> <li>• City Centre Management</li> <li>• City Projects delivery</li> <li>• Future Development Opportunities</li> <li>• Inward Investment Opportunities</li> <li>• Suburban Centres &amp; Community Regeneration Initiatives</li> <li>• New Local &amp; Regional Business Opportunities</li> <li>• Economic recovery local business grant delivery</li> <li>• River Corridor Development</li> <li>• Events and attractions</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Purple Flag</li> <li>• Destination Management &amp; Marketing</li> <li>• Parks investment, maintenance and usage</li> <li>• Play investment (links to play sufficiency)</li> <li>• ERF (Economic Resilience Funds) grants for play enhancement lead</li> <li>• Sports Facilities development and maintenance</li> <li>• Universities Collaboration (Development)</li> <li>• Business engagement</li> <li>• Western Gateway Leader's Representative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equalities</li> <li>• Access to Services</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Age Friendly City</li> <li>• Inclusion</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Creative City</li> <li>• The Arts</li> <li>• Galleries &amp; Museums</li> <li>• Floating exhibits</li> <li>• Street Art</li> <li>• Healthy City Partnership</li> <li>• Healthy Night Life</li> <li>• Heritage protection and restoration</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Archives</li> <li>• Community Centres</li> <li>• Community hubs</li> <li>• Veterans support fund</li> <li>• Science City</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services (Cllr Cyril Anderson):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Caretakers</li> <li>• Grass Cutting Services</li> <li>• Weed control</li> <li>• Tree services</li> <li>• Wildflower planting</li> <li>• Fly Tipping</li> <li>• Litter &amp; Community Cleansing</li> <li>• Street scene improvements</li> <li>• Local Waste Management services</li> <li>• Recycling</li> <li>• Community operatives (new)</li> <li>• Regreening in communities</li> <li>• Bin services</li> <li>• Public Toilets</li> <li>• Community Growing (inc. Allotments)</li> </ul> <p><b>Support (Cllr Hayley Gwilliam):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live well Age well</li> <li>• Mental Health awareness</li> <li>• Community Groups, Engagement &amp; Development</li> <li>• Community Support Services</li> <li>• LAC (Local Area Coordinators) Services in Communities</li> <li>• Co-production champion</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Working</li> <li>• Early years</li> <li>• Corporate parenting board member</li> <li>• Promoting Youth Inclusion &amp; Youth Citizenships</li> <li>• Youth Services</li> <li>• Opportunities for play</li> <li>• Play sufficiency</li> <li>• Community based events</li> <li>• Community safety</li> <li>• Community Wellbeing</li> <li>• Digital inclusion</li> <li>• Local policing</li> <li>• Dementia Champion</li> </ul>

# Agenda Item 8



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report

<b>Purpose</b>	The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panel conveners will regularly provide a progress report, updating the Committee on headlines from their Panel's work and impact.
<b>Content</b>	This report focuses on the following Performance Panels: a) Service Improvement & Finance b) Education
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure awareness and understanding of the work of the Panels</li><li>• Consider their effectiveness and impact</li><li>• Consider any issues arising and action required</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Chris Holley (Service Improvement & Finance Panel Convener) Councillor Lyndon Jones (Education Panel Convener)
<b>Lead Officers &amp; Report Author</b>	Rachel Percival / Michelle Roberts E-mail: <a href="mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk">scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 There are six Performance Panels which have been established by the Committee. Whilst the work of an Inquiry Panel leads to the production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet based on evidence gathered on a specific issue, the work of a Performance Panel represents regular monitoring of, and challenge to, particular services / service areas and issues.
- 1.2 Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet / lead members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about the performance of services and service delivery.

1.3 The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panels Conveners will therefore provide a regular progress report to the Committee to enable:

- a discussion on the work of each Panel, achievements, effectiveness and impact
- the Committee to consider any issues arising from Panel activities which may have an impact on the overall scrutiny work programme
- awareness amongst the Committee as well as visibility across the council and public.

1.4 This report is about the following Performance Panels:

- a) Service Improvement & Finance – this is an update on work carried out since the previous update provided in February 2022.
- b) Education - this is an update on work carried out since June 2022.

To focus the discussion a short, written report has been provided by the Conveners and is **attached**. This includes a summary of Panel activities, correspondence between the Panel and relevant Cabinet Members, recommendations and impact.

1.5 The Service Improvement & Finance Panel involves the following members:

**Labour Councillors: 4**

Dai Jenkins	Hazel Morris
Matthew Jones	Rebecca Fogarty

**Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 5**

Peter Black	Jeff Jones
<b>Chris Holley (CONVENER)</b>	Michael Locke
Lynda James	

**Conservative Councillors: 2**

Paxton Hood-Williams	Brigitte Rowlands
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1.6 The Education Panel involves the following members:

**Labour Councillors: 5**

Adam Davis	Sara Keeton
Beverley Hopkins	Hazel Morris
Yvonne Jardine	

**Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 3**

Mike Day	James McGettrick
Susan Jones	

**Conservative Councillors: 3**

<b>Lyndon Jones (CONVENER)</b>	Angela O'Connor
Francesca O'Brien	

**Uplands Councillor: 1**

Sandra Joy	
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**Statutory Co-opted Members: 2**

Beth Allender	Parent Governor Representative
Dr. Elizabeth Lee	Parent Governor Representative

**2. Legal Implications**

2.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

**3. Financial Implications**

3.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel – SPC Update

Appendix 2 – Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – SPC Update

## Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

### 1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the Panel is to ensure that the Council's budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient. The Panel meets on a monthly basis.

### 2. Key Activities

Meetings have included a range of issues such as budget monitoring and annual performance reports as outlined in the table below.

Since the last update in February 2022, meetings resumed in September 2022 and the Panel has covered the following topics and for October and November items, sent 6 letters to Cabinet.

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>
<b>6 September 2022</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Role of the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Panel</li> <li>2. Overview: Understanding Financial Reporting</li> <li>3. Overview: Understanding Performance Monitoring</li> </ol>
<b>4 October 2022</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q1 Budget Monitoring Report – 2022/23</li> <li>2. Annual Performance Monitoring Report for 2021/2022</li> </ol>
<b>8 November 2022</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review of Revenue Reserves</li> <li>2. Annual Review of Performance 2021/2022</li> <li>3. Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report 2021/22</li> <li>4. Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update 2021/22</li> </ol>
<b>6 December 2022</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mid Term Budget Statement 2022/23</li> <li>2. Quarter 1 2022/23 Performance Monitoring Report</li> <li>3. Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring 2021/22 and Recycling of Business Waste Briefing</li> <li>4. Audit Wales Report – “Making Equality Impact Assessments more than just a tick box exercise”</li> </ol>

### 3. Achievements / Impact

#### *Financial Monitoring*

- The Panel expressed their concern on hearing that there is an anticipated draw on reserves of 20/25% from a total of £158m total reserves. Although the total reserves remains healthy, drawing down at this level is not sustainable.



- All functions and services are under pressure for price rises and inflation and the Panel discussed a number of strains being put on the budget.
- The Panel were informed that the Leader has announced at Council a pausing of the Economic Recovery Fund further to commitments already made, to provide some protection around the budget position.
- The Panel agreed that using cash backed reserves in the short term means borrowing can be avoided for as long as possible until a more stable and affordable position for external borrowing is achieved.
- Panel Members raised their concerns about rising material costs. The Council has benefited from fixed price deals and early borrowing in some cases and officers informed us that overall, capital expenditure is likely to be underspent.
- The Section 151 Officer gave the advice to Panel that the current Council needs to continue to prepare for significant change in service delivery that will inevitably impact on direct employment levels going forward.
- The Panel received a response from the Leader for further information on what measures are being taken to address overspends. The letter outlined the difficulty with finances in the current climate with a fuller picture expected in the third quarter now that December budget settlements have been announced.

### ***Performance Monitoring***

- The Panel were informed that the pandemic had a significant impact on all performance areas during 2021/22 and that 18 new safeguarding indicators were introduced as a result of new national Social Services Performance Framework.
- The Panel were pleased with progress made with ALN priorities which is a key priority along with wellbeing, mental health and the impact of poverty.
- It was noted that there has been a rise in fixed term exclusions, a 6% rise in NEETS and fewer apprenticeship opportunities but the Panel appreciated that Covid had been a major factor in this and in counter balance there is an increased number of those gaining employment through employability support and accredited qualifications through local authority support.
- The Panel were concerned that sickness absences had not been broken down to identify enforced absences, for instance those in Covid isolation. This has adversely affected the overall absence figure. The Panel requested that future absence breakdown better define and categorise absence to take this into account.
- The statements for special educational needs uses only a quantitative measure. The Panel will monitor to see what changes are made to the performance indicators regarding statements to see if the changes that are due include more quantitative measures.
- The Panel have asked for more information on the current call load of the contact centre, as with a drop in the number of online payments this may be having a knock on affect.
- The Convenor attended the Governance and Audit Committee in December to discuss the Annual Review of Performance 2021/22, share the Panels recommendations and take on board further recommendations from the Committee for further scrutiny.

### ***Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2021/22***

- The Panel were impressed to hear that despite the temporary closure of library services during the pandemic, Swansea Libraries met all of the 12 core entitlements during this time and are meeting the obligations of the Public Libraries Act, and that as soon as was possible, access to free broadband and Wi-Fi in public libraries was provided to members of the public.
- The Panel were made aware that borrower numbers have reduced but Panel Members were reassured that libraries are looking to address those issues.
- Panel Members asked how individual libraries share best practice across library sites were assured that due to the challenge to learn, practice is shared regularly within the context of using each libraries strengths.
- Library Services stressed to the Panel that Swansea remains in the bottom quartile in libraries for qualified staff.

### ***Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update 2021/22***

- The Panel were informed on the overall success officers have had in achieving WHQS with 70% of homes fully compliant.
- Panel members were alerted to the implementation of additions to WHQS due in April 2022. These new standards included decarbonisation, fire safety and property safety measures amongst others. This has the potential for a major financial challenge as delivering the new standards could cost in the region of £875m. £423m is currently set aside to meet the current standard but falls short of what will be required for new standards.
- The Panel asked about the time scales of the new standards and were told that the current consultation documents indicates 10 years, however due to Councils highlighting the difficulty financing the programme, there may be a revision of this target.
- The Panel wished to highlight that money spent on WHQS has come from revenue contributions and Welsh Government Funding, not council tax as this has been a misinterpretation in the past.

### ***Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring 2021/22 and Recycling of Business Waste Briefing***

- The Panel were informed that Swansea Council achieved 65.07% recycling which is an increase of 0.58% on the previous year. They were also made aware of the new Waste Strategy which sets out the Councils plan for achieving the Welsh Government statutory targets.
- The Panel were pleased to hear that from February the Council has moved way from landfill towards energy to waste which contributed to a jump in recycling performance from 65% to over 70% subject to validation.
- A number of questions were asked about the move to energy to waste and expressed disappointment that this could not be carried out more locally.
- Wood recycling is limited in Swansea which is a challenge for many residents however the Panel were informed this is due to wood recycling now requiring 2 bins therefore there are space limitations.
- The Panel wait to see how the imminent legislation from Welsh Government around mandatory recycling for all non-domestic premises, deposit return schemes and extended producer responsibility will impact the Council.

**Audit Wales Report – “Making Equality Impact Assessments more than just a tick box exercise”**

- The Panel recognised the importance in tackling inequality and echo the sentiments of the Audit Wales report that they should not become a tick box exercise.
- The Panel understood the challenges Swansea Council faces alongside all public bodies when carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) and in particular the lack of resources and absence of clear guidance.
- There was concern that the responsibility for monitoring Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) Swansea Councils integrated version of an EIA is with the officer responsible for the policy or decision which although understandable due to resources, does mean the monitoring process could be missed and the impact of a policy or decision on protected characteristics may not be monitored after the fact.
- The Panel suggested that if an officer completing the IIA ticks to say there will be no impact they should explain why there isn't an impact, not just explaining the impact when ticking yes. This would help to make sure this question is being answered accurately by officers.
- The Panel queried whether an IIA screening is required for information only reports. This is being looked at internally so the Panel wait to hear what comes from those discussions.
- The Consultation and Engagement Strategy is out for public consultation and the Panel would be keen to see that the impact measurements for this reflects all the protected characteristics when making these assessments.

**4. Future Work Programme**

The programme for the remainder of this municipal year is as follows:

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>
<b>17 January 2023</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Budget Proposals 2023/24 – 2026/27</li> <li>2. Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23</li> <li>3. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23</li> <li>4. Sustainable Swansea Update - Transformational delivery aspects</li> </ol>
<b>14 February 2023</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan: Pre-Decision Scrutiny</li> </ol>
<b>14 March 2023</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q3 Budget Monitoring 2022/23</li> <li>2. Planning Annual Performance Report 2021/2022</li> <li>3. Annual Complaints Report</li> </ol>
<b>18 April 2023</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q3 2022/23 Performance Monitoring Report</li> <li>2. Annual Review of Well-being Objectives and Corporate Plan</li> </ol>
<b>9 May 2023</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan (delayed due to pandemic impacts / diversion of resources) - tbc</li> </ol>

**5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee**

None.

## Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – SPC Update

### 1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the Panel is to provide ongoing challenge to school's performance to ensure that *pupils in Swansea are receiving high quality education and the authority is meeting its objectives in relation to improving school standards and pupil attainment.*

### 2. Key Activities

The Panel is currently meeting on a monthly basis and the work completed since June 2022 includes:

Meeting	Topic(s)
27 Oct 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Role of the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel</li> <li>2. Estyn Inspection Feedback/report and recommendations</li> <li>3. Education overview and discussion session to include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overview of structure of and key priorities for Education currently</li> <li>○ Partneriaeth Regional Education Partnership briefing and current position update</li> <li>○ Pupil Voice Manifesto, what is it and the current position</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Discuss and agree Work Programme for 2022/2023</li> </ol>
17 Nov 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Additional Learning Needs Reform Update (watching brief item)</li> <li>2. Pupil Development Grant Spend on vulnerable pupils</li> <li>3. School Improvement Service</li> <li>4. New Curriculum for Wales Update</li> <li>5. Convener feedback from Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group</li> </ol>
15 Dec 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual Education Performance against identified priorities (RAG) and Cabinet Member Q&amp;A</li> <li>2. Estyn Inspection – progress with recommendations</li> <li>3. Music Provision for/in Swansea Schools</li> </ol>

### 3. Achievements / Impacts

Three letters to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning have been sent since our first meeting this Council term in October 2022, these have given the Panels views and raised any concerns. Some of these include:

#### ***Estyn Inspection of Education Services in Swansea***

In October, the Panel looked at the outcome, recommendations and proposed actions moving forward, following the Estyn Inspection. The Panel agreed that it had been an excellent outcome and found that the two recommendations made by Estyn are

already in the process of being addressed. The Panel agreed to receive regular updates on progress with these recommendations over the coming year.

### ***Additional Learning Needs Reform***

The Panel received the first of two updates scheduled for this year on additional learning needs reform. They discussed the progress of a number of issues including the training available for schools and practitioners, how this was being managed and how we are ensuring consistency of approach. The Panel heard that there is a significant training menu available that is open to all key stakeholders including schools, further education colleges, local health board and also includes independent schools. Moderation events are being held in and across schools to help to ensure a consistency of approach. The Panel were keen to emphasise the importance of consistency of the education available to pupils with ALN, in whatever school they may attend.

### ***The Introduction of the New Curriculum for Wales***

The Panel are keeping a watching brief on this item and this is the first of two updates this year. The Panel wanted to hear more about the quality and cost of the training programme supplied by Partneriaeth, asking whether it is proving to be beneficial and value for money. We heard that the cost is free to schools at source but schools when they release a teacher, they may have to pay supply teacher costs. The Partneriaeth training offer is currently good and broad. The Council makes a contribution to this partnership of £123,000 a year, which works out at approximately £30 equivalent per teacher per year, making pooling of resources for professional learning a cost-effective solution.

### ***The Pupil Voice Manifesto***

The Panel were pleased to hear about the Swansea Pupil Manifesto. They asked about the inclusion of those children and young people who may not be confident at expressing themselves or that may be disengaged from the education system. They heard that it is considered very important that we hear and focus upon getting involvement from the 'quiet voices'. Officers are looking at how best this can be done including speaking to other local authorities to see how they are approaching this. The Panel were told that schools are just one vehicle being used to reach children and young people but they are by no means the only way we are engaging with them. The Panel were pleased to hear that the intention is for the Pupil Voice Manifesto to feed into planning and consultation corporately, including for the new Corporate Plan and revision of the Abertawe 2023. The Panel agreed to look at ways in which they can include the voices of children and young people in their work moving forward.

### ***Partneriaeth***

The Panel heard about the new regional education partnership 'Partneriaeth' including a current position update. The Panel were pleased to hear that the new partnership is working closely with our schools and has specific objectives that will meet our requirements. The Panel agreed that this is a positive move forward.

The first meeting of the Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group took place on the 24 October 2022, where Cllr Lyndon Jones was appointed a Chair for a period of two years. Cllr Jones will update the Education Scrutiny Panel on progress after each of the Scrutiny Councillor Group meetings. The Councillor group discussed and agreed their work programme and will next meet in February 2023.

#### 4. Education Scrutiny Performance Panel - Future Work Programme 2022/23

Meeting	Topic(s)
<b>Meeting 4</b> 19 Jan 23	School Scrutiny Session – Pontarddulais Comprehensive School and its cluster of primary schools. To look at how they are introducing the new curriculum for Wales
<b>Meeting 5</b> 13 Feb 23	Annual Budget as it relates to Educations matters
<b>Meeting 6</b> 16 Mar 23	School Scrutiny Session – Education Other Than at School Services Update, combined with a visit to the Maes Derw Pupil Referral Unit
<b>Meeting 7</b> 20 Apr 23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People</li> <li>2. Additional Learning Needs Reform Update (watching brief item)</li> <li>3. Swansea Skills Partnership Update</li> <li>4. Estyn Inspection – progress with recommendations</li> <li>5. Tackling Racism in Schools</li> <li>6. Convener feedback from Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 8</b> 11 May 23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Harassment in Schools - Update</li> <li>2. New Curriculum for Wales Update (watching brief item)</li> <li>3. Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning Update</li> <li>4. Outdoor Play in Primary Schools</li> <li>5. Cookery lessons in Schools</li> <li>6. End of year review in Education Scrutiny</li> </ol>

#### 5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.

# Agenda Item 9



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

<b>Purpose:</b>	The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups that are established. This report advises of relevant matters that need to be considered.
<b>Content:</b>	This report is provided to facilitate any changes that need to be made.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	agree the membership of Panels and Working Groups reported, and any other changes necessary.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with Council report 18 October 2012, when current scrutiny arrangements were agreed, the Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups that are established.

#### 2. Proposed Revision to Current Scrutiny Panel / Working Group Membership

- 2.1 Road Safety Working Group – REMOVE Councillor Lynda James.

#### 3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 When determining membership / conveners or agreeing any changes there are some key considerations for the Committee:

- It is necessary for more than one political group to be represented on each Panel / Working Group.
- These bodies also need to be of a manageable size in terms of team working and effective questioning.
- To ensure that all political groups have opportunities and are engaged.
- Good scrutiny practice places emphasis on respect for minority party wishes around both chairing of such bodies and the work programme.
- Being fair and balanced in the appointment of conveners, when there is interest from more than one councillor, e.g. giving opportunity to those who have not acted as convener previously.
- The Committee should reflect on the existing 'balance' of conveners to help inform future appointments.
- A minimum of three members should be present at all Panel / Working Group meetings.

#### **4. Legal Implications**

4.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** None



# Agenda Item 10



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Scrutiny Work Programme

<b>Purpose</b>	This report presents the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2022/23, which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.
<b>Content</b>	The agreed work programme is attached, which shows the topics that will be examined by scrutiny through various Panels and Working Groups. A plan for future Committee meetings is also attached.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• plan for the Committee meetings ahead</li><li>• consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny</li><li>• review the Scrutiny Work Programme (including progress of current Panels and Working Groups)</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Catherine Window

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's Scrutiny Work Programme and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- 1.2 A report is provided to each meeting to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of agreed scrutiny activities, monitor progress, and coordinate work as necessary.
- 1.3 The broad aim of the scrutiny function is to engage non-executive councillors in activities to:

- provide an effective challenge to the executive
  - help improve services, policies, and performance
  - engage the public in its work
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of scrutiny time and resources.

It also needs to be:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
  - relevant to council priorities
  - adding value and having maximum impact
  - coordinated and avoids duplication
- 1.5 The work of scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the Committee itself, by establishing informal Panels (for in-depth activities) or via one-off Working Groups. Panels and Working Groups would be open to all non-executive councillors - the Committee will determine membership and conveners following expressions of interest.
- 1.6 Scrutiny will regularly send letters to Cabinet Members communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, by producing reports. Inquiry panels will always produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered. Inquiry panels will reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and the impact of their work – usually 6-12 months following cabinet decision.
- 1.7 Although much of the work of scrutiny is carried out by informal Panels and Working Groups these meetings are accessible to the public. Agendas, reports and letters relating to all such scrutiny activities are published, in the same manner as the committee, on the Council's modern.gov online platform:

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

## **2. Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23**

- 2.1.1 The agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2022/23 is set out in ***Appendix 1***.
- 2.1.2. The following paragraphs break down the work programme by specific ways of working to provide a brief overview.

## 2.2 Scrutiny Programme Committee:

2.2.1 The Committee work plan for the year ahead is attached as **Appendix 2**. This should be kept under constant review to ensure it represents a robust, manageable, and effective plan.

2.2.2 Committee members should always review and confirm items for the next and future meetings considering who should attend and confirm expectations so that meetings are always well planned and prepared for, e.g., information required and key questions that the Committee wishes to ask.

2.2.3 The main item(s) scheduled for the next Committee meeting on 14 February are:

- Scrutiny of Public Services Board – Consultation on PSB’s Draft Local Well-being Plan  
Every 5 years Swansea Public Services Board develops a Local Well-being Plan, which sets out objectives and steps that are used to guide PSB actions each year. The Committee is a statutory consultee on the Plan and will have opportunity to review and comment ahead of decision-making and Plan approval. The Plan must be published by May 2023. The Chair of the PSB, Cllr. Andrea Lewis, will attend along with relevant officer(s) to report to the Committee and answer questions.
- Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Houses in Multiple Occupation  
Councillor David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance, will attend along with relevant officer(s) to report on this matter and answer Committee questions.

2.2.4 The Committee will have the opportunity to review priorities and introduce issues of concern as and when they arise, e.g., pre-decision scrutiny or call-in which may require extra meetings.

2.2.5 Pre-decision scrutiny – this is carried out by the Committee unless delegated elsewhere. The Committee is invited to consider the available information on future Cabinet business and any opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny, taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications (see Cabinet Forward Plan attached as **Appendix 3**). Any requests will require discussion with relevant Cabinet Member(s) to confirm timescales and window of opportunity for scrutiny involvement. Pre-decision scrutiny enables scrutiny to develop understanding about and ask questions on proposed Cabinet reports to provide ‘critical friend’ challenge and influence decision-making.

### 2.3 Inquiry Panels:

- 2.3.1 Once membership and a convener have been appointed the first task of an Inquiry Panel will be to have a briefing on the issue and then determine the key question and terms of reference for the inquiry. Once the planning stage is complete, the inquiry will be evidence gathering, with the last stage being to develop the final report.

<b>In Progress / Planned</b>	<b>Completed (follow up stage)</b>
1. <b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b> (initial meeting held on 24 Nov; first evidence gathering session 17 Jan)	1. <b>Procurement</b> (Follow up tba June / July 2023)

### 2.4 Performance Panels:

- 2.4.1 The following Performance Panels, which enable regular and structured monitoring of performance within these key areas, have been agreed and will meet on an ongoing basis until otherwise agreed by the Committee (frequency of meetings in brackets):

Performance Panel	Convener
1. <b>Service Improvement &amp; Finance</b> (monthly)	Cllr. Chris Holley
2. <b>Education</b> (monthly)	Cllr. Lyndon Jones
3. <b>Adult Services</b> (every six weeks)	Cllr. Susan Jones
4. <b>Child &amp; Family Services</b> (every six weeks)	Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams
5. <b>Development &amp; Regeneration</b> (every two months)	Cllr. Chris Holley
6. <b>Climate Change &amp; Nature</b> (every two months)	Cllr. Hannah Lawson

- 2.4.2 Performance Panel conveners are scheduled to provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact.

### 2.5 Working Groups:

- 2.5.1 The following Working Groups will be convened during the year ahead, in the order shown (date where known in brackets):

1. <b>Road Safety (7 Dec)</b>	3. <b>Healthy City</b>
2. <b>Co-production (7 Feb)</b>	4. <b>Customer Contact</b>

### 2.6 Joint / Regional Scrutiny:

- 2.6.1 **Partneriaeth** - A Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group, comprising of Education Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs, or equivalent, across Swansea Council, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Councils will scrutinise the work of the new regional Partnership which

will support the delivery of school improvement, and ensure greater public accountability over decisions made. Scrutiny will seek reassurance and consider if the Partnership is operating according to the Joint Committee Agreement, and its Business Plan, and is being managed effectively. The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Convener of the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel are participating in the Scrutiny of Partneriaeth. The Partneriaeth Joint Committee, comprises the Leaders of the three Councils, as the strategic decision-making body. The Swansea Scrutiny Team will support the Scrutiny of Partneriaeth.

**2.6.2 Swansea Bay City Region City Deal** – Swansea scrutiny is also involved in the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee, approved by Council in July 2018. This arrangement involves three councillor representatives from each of the four Councils involved in the City Region, meeting to scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal programme. As per the Joint Committee Agreement, the Scrutiny Committee is serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Scrutiny Councillor representatives are currently: Jan Curtice, Victoria Holland & Chris Holley.

**2.6.3 South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee** – Following establishment of the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), which involves Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Councils, as well as Brecon Beacons and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities, the CJC has agreed to set up a CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee which will consist of three elected members from each Council which will meet at least quarterly. The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee, serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council, will scrutinise the decisions / actions of the CJC as it discharges its functions and performance in relation to policy objectives and targets. The CJC will exercise functions relating to strategic land use planning, regional transport planning and the exercise of economic well-being powers. Swansea Scrutiny Councillor representatives are currently: Peter Black, Wendy Lewis & Mike White.

**2.6.4** The Scrutiny Programme Committee will need to ensure that there is no duplication between local and regional scrutiny. A regular update on regional scrutiny activity will be provided to Committee members to ensure awareness. Regional scrutiny arrangements will not, however, preclude Councillors within constituent Councils discussing the impact of the regional body on their Council and locality, and holding Cabinet Members to account for their involvement / Council's involvement and engagement in regional bodies, and relevant local decision-making.

### **3. Monitoring the Work Programme**

**3.1** The Committee is responsible for monitoring progress against the agreed work programme and this includes work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings, to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility.

- 3.2 A timetable of all scrutiny activities (projected or actual where dates are known) is attached as **Appendix 4a**. Lead councillors and officers are also noted within. Also provided as **Appendix 4b** is a snapshot of progress with all Panels and Working Groups established by the Committee, as well as Regional Scrutiny, and their current position. These will be updated and provided to every Committee meeting.
- 3.3 The work plans of the individual Performance Panels, once agreed, will also follow to improve Committee oversight of topics being examined, check coverage across cabinet portfolios, and help avoid duplication of effort between the Committee and Panels and between Panels etc.
- 3.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme will be kept under constant review by the Committee, with changes made as necessary. The Committee will always retain the flexibility to adapt and re-prioritise the work of scrutiny in response to changing circumstances and/or urgent issues which may arise in-year, to ensure the continued relevance of the programme.
- 3.5 To ensure awareness and avoidance of any issue of duplication it is beneficial for the Committee to receive information about the work plans of relevant Council bodies. The work plans of the Council's Corporate Delivery Committees will also be reported when these are available. Any issues regarding possible overlap / duplication will be discussed between the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and relevant Chairs.

#### **4. Public Requests for Scrutiny / Councillor Calls for Action**

- 4.1 Members of the public are able to make requests for scrutiny by contacting the Chair or Scrutiny Team in writing detailing the issue of concern, its impact, and suggested action. This can be via the Council's website: [www.swansea.gov.uk/raiseanissuetoscrutiny](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/raiseanissuetoscrutiny) or email to [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk). In accordance with agreed protocol the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee will consider any requests received and bring about proposals to deal with these to the Committee for consideration. Taking into account relevant advice, any such issues may merit inclusion in the work programme, referral elsewhere, or no action.
- 4.2 No public requests for scrutiny have been received.

#### **5. Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 5.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.

5.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

5.2 An IIA screening has been undertaken noting there are minimal impact assessment implications associated with this report (IIA can be viewed in **Appendix 5**). The work of Scrutiny is open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views. The Work Programme takes into account a range of factors, including Council priorities and community concerns. The public were invited to input scrutiny topic suggestions. The work of Scrutiny will involve examination of Council services and making recommendations for improvement to Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers). Scrutiny activities have the potential for engagement to ensure public views can feed into the Scrutiny process. Each Scrutiny Inquiry and report will be subject to its own IIA process.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 Any costs that arise out of work plan activities, for example expenses for witnesses or transport costs, are not envisaged to be significant and will be contained within the existing Scrutiny Budget.

## **7. Legal Implications**

7.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

**Background papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Programme Committee Work Plan 2022/23

Appendix 3: Cabinet Forward Plan

Appendix 4a: Scrutiny Work Programme – Projected Timetable of Activity

Appendix 4b: Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels, Working Groups,  
Regional Scrutiny

Appendix 5: IIA Screening Form



## Appendix 1 - AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23

<b>New Inquiry Panel</b> (time-limited in-depth scrutiny – six months)	<b>New Working Groups</b> (light-touch scrutiny / one-off meetings)	<b>Performance Panels</b> (ongoing in-depth performance / financial monitoring & challenge)	<b>Issues for Scrutiny Programme Committee</b> (overall work programme management; discussion of broad range of policy and service issues)
<p><b>1. Anti-Social Behaviour</b>                      (Terms of Reference / Key Question to be agreed by Panel, but could focus on the effectiveness of partnership working in tackling anti-social behaviour in our communities; look at factors behind rising anti-social behaviour; powers &amp; resources; reporting and response; current approaches; good practice elsewhere; the role of elected members, etc.)</p> <p>Reserve / Alternate Topic:</p> <p><b>2. Domestic Abuse</b>                      (Terms of Reference / Key Question to be agreed – but would concern the quality of support for victims and what could be done better, taking internal &amp; external evidence)</p>	<p><b>1. Road Safety</b>                      (enabling focussed questioning &amp; discussion on hot spots; work to improve safety; preventative measures; speed controls – use of signs / humps / cameras; proposed new 20mph limits; condition of roads; safety of cyclists &amp; pedestrians; partnership working, etc.)</p> <p><b>2. Co-production</b>                      (enabling focussed questioning &amp; discussion on the development of Co-production in the Council and progress, helping to improve involvement and engagement with service users, partners and the public in the design &amp; delivery of services &amp; decision-making, etc.)</p> <p><b>3. Healthy City</b>                      (enabling focussed questioning &amp; discussion exploration of the Healthy City Partnership, key activities and achievements, work in relation to health promotion, particularly physical activities, including provision of outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.)</p> <p><b>4. Customer Contact</b>                      (enabling focussed questioning &amp; discussion on user experience when contacting the Council /</p>	<p><b>1. Service Improvement &amp; Finance</b> (monthly)</p> <p><b>2. Education</b> (monthly)</p> <p><b>3. Adult Services</b> (every six weeks)</p> <p><b>4. Child &amp; Family Services</b> (every six weeks)</p> <p><b>5. Development &amp; Regeneration</b> (every two months)</p> <p><b>6. Climate Change &amp; Nature</b> (every two months)</p> <p>Specific issues to consider including within wider Panel work plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Service Improvement &amp; Finance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Corporate Plan</li> <li>- Scrutiny of Budget Proposals</li> <li>- Overall Performance Management</li> <li>- Welsh Housing Quality Standard</li> <li>- Planning Services</li> <li>- Waste &amp; Street Cleansing</li> <li>- Recycling of Business Waste</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Education:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments</li> <li>- Follow up post Education Estyn LEA inspection</li> <li>- Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning</li> <li>- Additional Learning Needs (ALN)</li> <li>- School New Curriculum</li> <li>- Outdoor Learning in Primary Schools</li> <li>- Music Provision in Schools</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific annual reports:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Children &amp; Young People’s Rights Scheme</b></li> <li>- <b>Corporate Safeguarding</b></li> <li>- <b>Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leader Q &amp; A Session(s):                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>‘Achieving Better Together’ Recovery / Transformation Plan</b></li> <li>- <b>Policy Commitments / Council Priorities</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other Cabinet Member Q &amp; As (issues to pick up):                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Archives / Community Hub</b></li> <li>- <b>Fly Tipping</b></li> <li>- <b>Homelessness</b></li> <li>- <b>Houses of Multiple Occupation</b></li> <li>- <b>Parks</b></li> <li>- <b>Community Growing</b></li> <li>- <b>Community Groups, Engagement &amp; Development</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Public Services Board</b></li> <li>• <b>Crime &amp; Disorder (Community Safety)</b></li> <li>• Follow Up on Previous Working Groups:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Bus Services</b></li> <li>- <b>Workforce</b> (including discussion on <b>Workforce Development Strategy</b>)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Appendix 1 - AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23

<p>Follow Up of Previous Inquiries:</p> <p><b>1. Procurement</b></p>	<p>accessing services whether by telephone or on-line / though digital means; provision for off line and on-line contact; effectiveness of Council Contact Centre; on-going actions to improve digital inclusion / access; quality of website, etc.)</p> <p>Reserve List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Active Travel</b> (enabling focussed questioning &amp; discussion on the Council's Active Travel Plans and outcomes; current &amp; future developments; improvements to community consultation; how well we are meeting obligations of Welsh Government Active Travel Act; usage - impact on numbers cycling / walking; and relevant issues)</li> <li>• <b>Racism in Schools</b> (enabling focussed questioning &amp; discussion on the extent of the issue; how schools deal with suspected racist incidents; reporting arrangements, rates etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments</li> <li>- Relationship between Health &amp; Social Care</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Child &amp; Family Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments</li> <li>- Supported Living for Young People</li> <li>- Quality Assurance Framework</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Development &amp; Regeneration:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments</li> <li>- City Deal 'Swansea specific' Projects</li> <li>- City Centre Retail / Development</li> <li>- New Build Housing Towers (e.g., student accommodation)</li> <li>- Historic / Listed Buildings</li> <li>- SA1 development &amp; supporting infrastructure / services</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Climate Change &amp; Nature:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments</li> <li>- Progress against Net Zero 2030</li> <li>- Use of Glyphosate</li> <li>- Air Pollution</li> <li>- Green Vehicle Adoption &amp; Provision for public / residential EV Charging</li> <li>- Flooding / Local Flood Risk Management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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### Joint / Regional Scrutiny

- **Partneriaeth** (Education / School Improvement – Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group)
- **City Deal** (Development / Regeneration - Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee)
- **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee** (Land Use Planning; Regional Transport; Economic Well-being – Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee)

## Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2022/23

ACTIVITY	19 Jul 2022	16 Aug 2022	13 Sep 2022 CANCELLED	18 Oct 2022	15 Nov 2022	13 Dec 2022
<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>	Agreement of Scrutiny Work Programme	Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22				
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q &amp; A Sessions</b>		Archives / Community Hub (CM for Equalities & Culture)	Fly Tipping (CM for Community Services)	Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board	Fly Tipping (CM for Community Services)	Homelessness (CM for Service Transformation)
<b>Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports</b>					Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report (CM for Care Services / Director of Social Services)	
<b>Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports</b>						
<b>Pre-decision Scrutiny</b>				Oracle Project Investment Update		
<b>Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.</b>					Follow Up: Scrutiny Working Group - Workforce (CM for Corporate Services & Performance)	

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>17 Jan 2023</b>	<b>14 Feb 2023</b>	<b>14 Mar 2023</b>	<b>18 Apr 2023</b>	<b>16 May 2023</b>	<b>June 2023</b>
<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>					Work Programme Review	Work Planning Conference
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q &amp; A Sessions</b>	Leader / Economy, Finance & Strategy (incl. focus on Policy Commitments / Council Priorities; Recovery & Transformation Plan; Council Budget)	Houses in Multiple Occupation (CM for Corporate Services & Performance)			Parks (CM for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism)	
<b>Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports</b>	Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty (annual item) (Leader / CM for Wellbeing)	Scrutiny of Public Services Board (Draft Local Well-being Plan)	Children & Young People's Rights Scheme (annual report) (CM for Care Services / Education & Learning)	Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership		
<b>Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Improvement &amp; Finance</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	Adult Services	Child & Family Services	Development & Regeneration	Climate Change & Nature	
<b>Pre-decision Scrutiny</b>						
<b>Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.</b>			Follow Up on Bus Services Working Group recommendations (CM for Environment & Infrastructure)			

Other topics to schedule:

- Cabinet Member Q & A: Community Growing (Cabinet Member for Community Support); Community Groups, Engagement & Development (Cabinet Member for Community Support)
- Audit / Scrutiny Relationship – Discussion w/ Chair of Governance & Audit Committee
- Periodic 'Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Reports'

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Fixed Penalty Notices for Breach of Householder Duty of Care in relation to Fly-tipping.</b>	Original legislation currently in place within this authority has been amended by Welsh Government to allow Local Authorities to issue fixed penalty notices for breach of duty of care for householders, as an alternative to prosecution where appropriate.	Chris Howell	Cabinet Members - Community	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Open
<b>Car Parking Charges.</b>	To seek approval of City Centre Car Parking Charges for the new Copr Bay North and South Multi Storey Car Parks.	Gavin Newman	Cabinet Member - Environment & Infrastructure	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Open
<b>General Building Materials Framework.</b>	Framework agreement is required for Building Services to carry out day to day work. This framework covers: Heavy Building Material, Timber, Doors, Paint, Ironmongery, Fixings, Roofing materials, PVC Fascia and miscellaneous items. This will allow Building Services on behalf of Swansea Council to carry out works to our Housing stock and Schools and other public buildings.	Nasir Shahzad	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Open

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Proposal to Publish Cumulative Impact Assessment – City Centre.</b>	The report sets out the background to and changes in the requirements for dealing with cumulative impact, the current legislative requirements regarding Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA) and details of the basis for the proposal to publish a CIA for the city centre areas.	Lynda Anthony	Cabinet Member - Corporate Service & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Open
<b>Review of the Statement of Policy for Licensing.</b>	The report sets out the legislative requirements in respect of producing, publishing and reviewing the Council's Licensing Policy. Provides information on when the Licensing Policy was last reviewed, details of the basis for the current review of the policy and the proposed changes.	Lynda Anthony	Cabinet Member - Corporate Service & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Open
<b>Review of the Policy on the Licensing of Sex Establishments.</b>	The report sets out the legislative background to the licensing of sex establishments, the aim of the policy on the Licensing of Sex Establishments, details the proposed changes to the policy and matters for consideration.	Lynda Anthony	Cabinet Member - Corporate Service & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Open

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### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Update Estate Management Report on Swansea Airport.</b>	Update management report at Swansea Airport, including works carried out to date, lease obligations and independent legal opinion.	Geoff Bacon	Cabinet Member - Corporate Service & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	19 Jan 2023	Fully exempt
<b>Updated FPR7 for Palace Theatre Refurbishment.</b>	We will be submitting an updated FPR7 report to summarise the current situation regarding the Palace Theatre project and its expenditure and funding. This report will provide detail of the progress so far and the requirements to complete.	Tracy Nichols, Elliott Williams	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cabinet	16 Feb 2023	Open
<b>UK Shared Prosperity Fund Implementation.</b>	Report outlines SPF Regional Investment Plan and implementation approach including Swansea lead for South West region and request approval to proceed.	Paul Relf	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader), Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cabinet	16 Feb 2023	Open



### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Tabernacle Morriston Community Resilience Hub.</b>	Grade 1 listed Tabernacle Chapel renovation & improvements, to widen community / business usage. 3rd Sector asset. Council's role purely to manage the capital construction project and associated funding sources.	Jacquelyn Box	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cabinet	16 Feb 2023	Open
<b>Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2022/23.</b>	To note any significant variations from the agreed budget 2022/23 and savings plan and the actions planned to achieve a balanced budget.	Ben Smith	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	16 Feb 2023	Open
<b>Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2022/23.</b>	This report sets out the annual review of Swansea Council's charges (social services), providing a transparent framework for the setting of charges and the application of allowances to citizens who receive managed care and support, provided or arranged by the council.	Simon Jones	Cabinet Member - Care Services	Cabinet	16 Feb 2023	Open

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<p><b>National 20 Mph Default Speed Limit Including Consideration of the Exemptions Process.</b></p>	<p>This report has been prepared to advise members on the proposal to make the national default speed limit on restricted roads 20mph and detail those roads which will be exempt and remain at 30mph.</p>	<p>Alan Ferris</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Environment &amp; Infrastructure</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>16 Feb 2023</p>	<p>Open</p>

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Quarter 3 2022/23 Performance Monitoring Report.</b>	To report the performance indicator results and summarise the Council's performance meetings its priorities for the third quarter period October 2022 – December 2022	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Corporate Service & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 Mar 2023	Open

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2022-23

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Disabled Facilities &amp; Improvement Grant Programme 2023/24.</b>	To provide details of Disabled Facilities & Improvement Grant Programme and to seek approval to include schemes in the 2023/24 Capital Programme.	Darren Williams	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 Mar 2023	Open



## Appendix 4a

Activity / Month	JUN 2022	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2023	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
<b>PERFORMANCE PANELS:</b>												
<b>Service Improvement &amp; Finance</b> (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / David Hopkins Lead CMT: Ness Young / Ben Smith Lead Head of Service: Lee Wenham				6	4	8	6	17	14	14	18	9
<b>Education</b> (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting					27	17	15	19	13	16	20	11
<b>Adult Services</b> (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Sue Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Amy Hawkins / Helen St John				27		8		31	13 Joint SS	21		2
<b>Child &amp; Family Services</b> (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Paxton Hood-Williams Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Julie Davies					11	1	5	24	13 Joint SS	7	25	

Activity / Month	JUN 2022	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2023	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
<b>Development &amp; Regeneration</b> (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / Robert Francis-Davies Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes				5		14		23		20		15
<b>Climate Change &amp; Nature</b> (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Hannah Lawson Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Andrea Lewis Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting						9		10		8		2
<b>WORKING GROUPS:</b>												
<b>Topic 1 – Road Safety</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Hazel Morris Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Andrew Stevens Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Stuart Davies							7					
<b>Topic 2 – Co-production</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Hayley Gwilliam Lead CMT: cross-cutting / Ness Young Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting / Marlyn Dickson									7			

Activity / Month	JUN 2022	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2023	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
<b>Topic 3 – Healthy City</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Mary Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Elliot King Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting												
<b>Topic 4 – Customer Contact</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Rebecca Fogarty Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Andrea Lewis Lead CMT: Ness Young Lead Head of Service: Sarah Lackenby												
<b>REGIONAL SCRUTINY:</b>												
<b>Partneriaeth Regional Scrutiny Councillor Group</b> (Education / School Improvement) (quarterly) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Lyndon Jones (chair) / Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Partneriaeth: Ian Altman / Gareth Morgans Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Regional Lead: (Lead Director for Partneriaeth)					24				13			



<p><b>Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee</b> (every 2 months)                  Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Rob James (Carmarthenshire Council)                  Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Jan Curtice, Victoria Holland, Chris Holley                  Lead Scrutiny Officer: Stacy Curran, Neath Port Talbot Council                  Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart                  Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade                  Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes</p>		5		6			6		28			
<p><b>South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Overview &amp; Scrutiny Sub-Committee</b> (quarterly)                  Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Russell Sparks (Carmarthenshire Council)                  Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Peter Black, Wendy Lewis, Mike White                  Lead Scrutiny Officer: Stacy Curran, Neath Port Talbot Council                  Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart                  Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade                  Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes</p>						8		27				

\* denotes extra meeting

\*\* not public

## Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups / Regional Scrutiny

### 1. Inquiry Panels:

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers).

#### a) **Anti-Social Behaviour** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

Key Question: to be determined

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Pre-Inquiry Working Group met on the 24 November, were they received a strategic overview of the matter. They then discussed and agreed their Terms of Reference and Project Plan. The first evidence gathering session will take place on the 17 January where they will speak to Community Safety, Community Inclusion and the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer.

(NB - Inquiries may take up to six months to complete, as they will call for wide ranging evidence, and will lead to a report with conclusions and recommendations that will be presented to Cabinet)

### 2. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

Follow-ups of inquiries will consider both the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and wider impact / difference made. Inquiry Panels are reconvened between 6-12 months after cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Procurement	20 Oct 2022	14	0	0	tba June/July 2023

### 3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

a) **Service Improvement & Finance** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

This Panel meets every month. A progress report appears in the agenda under Item 8.

b) **Education** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Panel meets every month. A progress report appears in the agenda under Item 8.

c) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. The Panel met on 8 November to discuss actions following the Audit Wales report on Direct Payments for Adult Social Care, receive a briefing on recent CIW Inspection Reports, and discuss the Director of Social Services Annual Report 2021/22. The meeting scheduled for 20 December was cancelled. At its next meeting on 31 January the Panel will discuss the latest Performance Monitoring Report, receive an update on the Adult Services Transformation Programme and the Options Appraisal for Assistive Technology and Community Alarms.

d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. The Panel met on 1 November to receive an update on the Corporate Parenting Board and to discuss Residential Care Services. At the meeting on 5 December the Panel received an update on the Child and Family Improvement programme and Performance Monitoring, discussed how regional arrangements are working with the Regional Safeguarding Board and looked at the Safeguarding Quality Unit Annual Report. The next meeting on 24 January will receive an update on CAMHS, Support for Carers and Child Disability Services.

e) **Development & Regeneration** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

This Panel meets every two months. On 14 November the Panel reviewed the Regeneration Programme/Project Monitoring Report as well as a focussed look on City Centre Retail Development. At the next meeting on 23 January the Panel will focus on the Tourism Destination Management Plan / Swansea Bay Strategy (incl. Foreshore Developments) and continue reviewing progress on the Regeneration Programme/Projects.

f) **Climate Change & Nature** (convener: Cllr Hannah Lawson)

This Panel meets every two months. The Panel met on 9 November to receive an overview on the subject matter and information on relevant priorities, plans and challenges and to discuss Water Quality and

Management. The Panel also agreed the Work Programme for the year ahead. When the Panel next meets on 10 January it will receive an update on Climate Change including the response to Audit Wales report on Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030. The Panel will also discuss Green Vehicle Adoption and Public/Residential Electric Vehicle Charging and receive a briefing on Weed Management/Use of Glyphosate.

#### **4. Regional Scrutiny:**

This is collaborative scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

##### **a) Partneriaeth - Regional Education Partnership**

Following approval of a legal agreement by each Council's Cabinet, the new regional education partnership called 'Partneriaeth' includes Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Councils. Within the agreed governance structure, there is a Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group, similar to that which existed to scrutinise the Education Through Regional Working (ERW) Regional School Improvement Consortium.

The first Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group took place on the 24 October 2022 where they looked at the legal agreement, received feedback on items on the agenda for the Partneriaeth Joint Committee agreed their work plan for this school year.

Partneriaeth Scrutiny is expected to take place every school term, mirroring meetings of the Partneriaeth Joint Committee. Two further meetings have been scheduled so far in February and June 2023.

##### **b) Swansea Bay City Region City Deal**

The Joint Scrutiny Committee meets every two months. On 6 September the Committee focussed on financial monitoring and looking at the City Deal Annual Report for 2021/22 which provides summary of key activity for the last 12 months and forthcoming 12 months planned activity along with case studies of completed work and various other aspects covering delivery achievements and planned benefits/outcomes.

The meeting on 6 December, focussed on the Homes as Power Stations City Deal project, as well as overall programme / project monitoring including the latest financial position. There was also discussion on the independent Gateway Review carried out in July and associated action plan.

The next meeting takes place on 28 February 2023.

The Joint Scrutiny Committee is supported by Scrutiny Officers in Neath Port Talbot Council and agendas / minutes of meetings can be found on-line:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=417>

### c) **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee**

The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) involves Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Councils, as well as Brecon Beacons and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities, and will exercise functions relating to strategic land use planning, regional transport planning and the exercise of economic well-being powers. The Committee has agreed to set up a CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee which will meet at least quarterly. The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee, is being serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council, and will scrutinise the decisions / actions of the CJC as it discharges its functions and performance in relation to policy objectives and targets. The Joint Scrutiny arrangement will not preclude scrutiny within constituent Councils in order to discuss the impact of the CJC on their Council and locality. The first CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting took place on 8 November 2022 (re-arranged from 23 September) to appoint a Chair (Cllr Russel Sparks – Carmarthenshire Council and Vice-Chair (Cllr Tim Bowen – Neath Port Talbot Council). The Sub-Committee was provided with an overview on the structure of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee, functions of the Sub-Committee, and discussed a work plan for scrutiny. The next meeting is scheduled for 27 January 2023.

The Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee is supported by Scrutiny Officers in Neath Port Talbot Council and agendas / minutes of meetings can be found on-line:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=499>

## 5. **Working Groups:**

A number of new topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting (in the order shown below) primarily involving discussion with relevant cabinet member(s) / officer(s), and any other persons called, to gather information, ask questions, and give views / raise any concerns.

### a) **Road Safety** (convener: Cllr Hazel Morris)

This Working Group met on 7 December to enable information, focussed questioning & discussion to understand the Council's role and responsibilities on road safety, e.g., asking about hot spots; work to improve safety; preventative measures; speed controls – use of signs / humps / cameras; proposed new 20mph limits; condition of roads; safety of cyclists & pedestrians; partnership working, etc. A letter with

the Working Group's conclusions and recommendations will now be sent to the Cabinet Member.

This has been carried over from previous work programme.

b) **Co-production** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Working Group has been arranged for 7 February 2023. It will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion on the development of Co-production in the Council and progress, helping to improve involvement and engagement with service users, partners, and the public in the design & delivery of services & decision-making, etc.

c) **Healthy City** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion exploring the Healthy City Partnership, key activities and achievements, work in relation to health promotion, particularly physical activities, including provision of outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.

This has been carried over from previous work programme.

d) **Customer Contact** (convener: Cllr Rebecca Fogarty)

This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion on the user experience when contacting the Council / accessing services whether by telephone or on-line / through digital means; provision for off line and on-line contact; effectiveness of Council Contact Centre; on-going actions to improve digital inclusion / access; quality of website, etc.

# Appendix 5 - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

## Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence

Directorate: Resources

### Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

### (b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Information / monitoring report on the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme and progress.

### Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix 5 - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Q3** What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

The work of Scrutiny is open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views. The Work Programme takes into account a range of factors, including Council priorities and community concerns. The public were invited to input scrutiny topic suggestions.

- Q4** Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

- 
- Q5** What is the potential risk of the initiative? (*Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...*)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

- 
- Q6** Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

The work of Scrutiny will involve examination of Council services and making recommendations for improvement to Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers).

- 
- Q7** What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

Low impact because there are no decisions within the report which will directly affect service users, people and/or communities, but scrutiny activity described within the report have the potential for engagement to ensure public views can feed into the Scrutiny process. Each Scrutiny Inquiry and report will be subject to its own IIA process.



## Appendix 5 - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

### Outcome of Screening

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

The work of Scrutiny is open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views. The Work Programme takes into account a range of factors, including Council priorities and community concerns. The public were invited to input scrutiny topic suggestions. The work of Scrutiny will involve examination of Council services and making recommendations for improvement to Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers). Scrutiny activities have the potential for engagement to ensure public views can feed into the Scrutiny process. Each Scrutiny Inquiry and report will be subject to its own IIA process.

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Brij Madahar</b>
<b>Job title: Scrutiny Team Leader</b>
<b>Date: 22 December 2022</b>
<b>Approval for Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Debbie Smith</b>
<b>Position: Deputy Chief Legal Officer</b>
<b>Date: 9 January 2023</b>

# Agenda Item 11



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### Scrutiny Letters

<b>Purpose:</b>	To ensure the Committee is aware of the scrutiny letters produced following various scrutiny activities, and to track responses to date.
<b>Content:</b>	The report includes a log of scrutiny letters produced this municipal year and provides a copy of correspondence between Scrutiny and Cabinet Members for discussion as required.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the scrutiny letters and responses</li><li>• Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The production of scrutiny letters has become an established part of the way scrutiny operates in Swansea. Letters from the chair (or conveners) allow scrutiny to communicate directly and quickly with relevant Cabinet Members.
- 1.2 These letters are used to convey views and conclusions about particular issues discussed, and provide the opportunity to raise concerns, ask for further information, and make recommendations. This enables scrutiny to engage with Cabinet Members on a regular and structured basis.

## 2. Reporting of Letters

- 2.1 All scrutiny letters, whether they are written by the Scrutiny Programme Committee or conveners of Panels / Working Groups, are published to ensure visibility, of the outcomes from meetings, across the Council and public.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee agenda also includes a copy of letters to/from Cabinet Members for its attention and discussion as required, e.g., letters relating to the work of the Committee, Working Groups, and Inquiry Panel follow ups. Letters are included when Cabinet Member responses that were awaited are received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response.
- 2.3 Where requested Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to scrutiny letters within 21 calendar days. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take, or have taken, as a result of the views and recommendations made.
- 2.4 Letters relating to the work of Performance Panels are part of an ongoing dialogue with Cabinet Members and are therefore reported back and monitored by each Panel. However, all Performance Panel Conveners will provide a progress report to the Committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes.

## 3. Letters Log

- 3.1 This report contains a log of scrutiny letters produced to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of letters activity over the current municipal year – see **Appendix 1**. The letters log will show the average time taken by Cabinet Members to respond to scrutiny letters, and the percentage of letters responded to within timescale. For comparison, during the previous year (2021/22) 66 letters were sent to Cabinet Members, of which 24 required a written response. The average time taken to respond was 18 days, with 71% responded to within the 21 days target.
- 3.2 The following letter(s), not already reported to the Committee, are **attached** for discussion:

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>
a	Committee (Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board)	18 Oct	Letter to Chair of Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee
b	Committee (Follow Up – Workforce Working Group)	15 Nov	Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance

c	Committee (Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report)	15 Nov	Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Care Services
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- 3.3 Further to the previous Committee session on Swansea Public Services Board, the Committee can consider and give views on the draft Public Services Board's Local Well-being Plan at its meeting on 14 February, enabling feedback ahead of formal decision-making and approval of the Plan. The Committee should note that public consultation on the Plan has already been launched, which runs until 13 February 2023:  
<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/wellbeingstrategysurvey>

**4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Letters Log – 2022-23

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Letters / Responses

## Scrutiny Letters Log (2022-2023)

Ave. Response Time (days):

19 (target within 21 days)

% responses within target:

50

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Meeting Date	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received
1	Committee	16-Aug	Community Hubs / Archives	Equalities & Culture	12-Sep	n/a
2	Development & Regeneration Performance Panel	05-Sep	Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring	Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	17-Oct	n/a
3	Committee	18-Oct	Pre-decision Scrutiny - Oracle Project Investment Update	Joint Economy, Finance & Strategy and Service Transformation	19-Oct	n/a
4	Adult Services Performance Panel	27-Sep	Service Overview	Care Services	24-Oct	n/a
5	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	04-Oct	Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report 22/23	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	27-Oct	28-Nov
6	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	04-Oct	Annual Performance Monitoring Report 21/22	Corporate Services & Performance	27-Oct	n/a
7	Education Performance Panel	27-Oct	Service Overview, Partneriaeth, Pupil Manifesto	Education & Learning	07-Nov	n/a
8	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	11-Oct	Overview of Child & Family Services, Draft work programme	Care Services	08-Nov	01-Dec
9	Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group	24-Oct	Legal Agreement, Joint Committee on 7 Oct, work programme	Education & Learning	10-Nov	n/a

10	Education Performance Panel	17-Nov	Additional Learning Needs Reform, Curriculum for Wales update, Pupils Development Grant spend, School Improvement Service	Education & Learning	25-Nov	n/a
11	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	01-Nov	Residential Services; Corporate Parenting Board	Care Services	28-Nov	n/a
12	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	08-Nov	Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update	Service Transformation	29-Nov	n/a
13	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	08-Nov	Annual Review of Performance 2021/22	Corporate Services & Performance	29-Nov	n/a
14	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	08-Nov	Welsh Public Libraries Standards Annual Performance Report	Equalities & Culture	29-Nov	n/a
15	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	08-Nov	Review of Revenue Reserves	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	29-Nov	n/a
16	Committee	18-Oct	PSB Scrutiny	Chair of Public Services Board Joint Committee	29-Nov	n/a
17	Development & Regeneration Performance Panel	14-Nov	City Centre Retail and Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring	Joint Economy, Finance & Strategy; Investment, Regeneration & Tourism; and Corporate Services & Performance	01-Dec	n/a
18	Adult Services Performance Panel	08-Nov	Audit Wales report on Direct Payments; CIW Inspections, Director of Social Services Annual	Care Services	05-Dec	
19	Committee	15-Nov	Follow Up - Workforce Scrutiny Working Group	Corporate Services & Performance	16-Dec	04-Jan
20	Education Performance Panel	15-Dec	Annual Performance; and the Music Service	Education & Learning	22-Dec	

21	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	09-Nov	Water Quality/Management; Overview of Climate Change & Nature in Swansea	Service Transformation	22-Dec	n/a
22	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	06-Dec	Mid Term Budget Statement 22/23	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	04-Jan	n/a
23	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	06-Dec	Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring 2021/22 and Recycling of Business Waste Briefing	Community (Services)	04-Jan	n/a
24	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	06-Dec	Audit Wales Report – “Making Equality Impact Assessments more than just a tick box exercise”	Equalities & Culture	04-Jan	n/a
25	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	06-Dec	Quarter 1 2022/23 Performance Monitoring Report	Corporate Services & Performance	04-Jan	n/a
26	Working Group	07-Dec	Road Safety	Environment & Infrastructure	04-Jan	
27	Committee	15-Nov	Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report	Care Services	04-Jan	06-Jan
28						
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31						
32						
33						
34						
35						
36						
37						



**To/  
Councillor Andrea Lewis,  
Chair of Swansea Public Services  
Board**

**BY EMAIL**

cc: Vice-Chair of Swansea PSB

*Please ask for:  
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:  
Linell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail  
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref  
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref  
Eich Cyf:*

*Date  
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637257

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SPC/2022-23/3

29 November 2022

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Chair of Swansea Public Services Board following the meeting of the Committee on 18 October 2022. It is about the performance of the Public Services Board. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

### **Scrutiny Programme Committee – 18 October**

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session on the Public Services Board (PSB) with our views, reflecting on information presented, questions, and discussion.

As part of our ongoing scrutiny, the Committee considered the PSB Annual Report 2021/22 in relation to overall progress and performance of the PSB. We thank you for also providing information on work being done to improve the PSB's performance framework (following issue raised by the Committee); the new Assessment of Local Well-being (published in May 2022), and the development of a new Local Well-being Plan which we understand must be in place by May 2023.

We thank you for attending the meeting, and appreciated the input provided by the PSB Vice-Chair, Roger Thomas, Leader of the Council, Councillor Rob Stewart, Richard Rowlands, Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager, Swansea Council, and the various partner representatives (PSB strategic / operational leads) who were able to contribute giving the Committee a more rounded view of the PSB and its effectiveness.

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This was further evidence to the Committee on how the PSB is performing and making a difference for citizens, and follows on from the January 2022 PSB Scrutiny session, at which we considered the previous annual report and took the opportunity to focus on the delivery of the 'Early Years' and 'Live Well, Age Well' PSB well-being objectives with relevant leads.

We also took the opportunity to follow up on previous issues raised by the Committee, communicated to you within previous letters.

## **Scrutiny Views**

From our discussion, the Committee would highlight the following issues in terms of providing 'critical-friend' challenge to the PSB for improvement:

### **1) Performance Framework**

The Committee over recent PSB sessions has called for the PSB to improve the way it measures its performance. Given that PSBs have been in operation since 2016, you acknowledged that this has taken time to develop. However, we welcomed the efforts you reported being made to improve this, to facilitate Scrutiny, but also noted the challenges you outlined around this. Nevertheless, the Committee looks forward to seeing more progress in developing the performance framework, as the PSB develops its new Well-being Plan, which will make it easier for Scrutiny to monitor PSB activity and performance against indicators, stated actions, expected outputs / outcomes, and its effectiveness.

We noted that the pandemic has hindered progress in the last few years, as well as the ongoing funding and resource challenges that PSBs (and individual partners) face that impact ability to focus on the work necessary in the development, collection, processing, and reporting of data. As such, it is important that the PSB focuses on what it can deliver, and less about aspirations, to be able to see results from partnership activity and the investment of time and resources. We accept that quantitative data (KPIs) alone will not be sufficient, and in many cases reporting on outcomes will require qualitative information.

### **2) PSB Annual Report**

The Committee suggested that future Annual Reports would benefit from highlighting more about the work that PSB partners are doing together. We appreciate that individual PSB statutory members are leading on the delivery of specific well-being objectives / work streams, and that is of course important to report on, but giving prominence to demonstrating the partnership / collaborative working to tackle issues, with examples of successes, would be more satisfying when assessing the difference that the PSB is making and added value.

You took the opportunity to talk about some of those things, such as work on developing Green Infrastructure, dealing with the impact of Wildfires, and partner commitments to Carbon Reduction. Contributions during the session from other PSB members painted a positive picture of effective networking and strong links / connections that have developed between partners, with the PSB helping to bring organisations together. For example, enabling Swansea Council for Voluntary Service to get more involved in supporting partner activities, such as work on Swansea as a Human Rights City, as well as develop closer connections with Swansea Council, the Local Health Board, and Fire & Rescue Service, and others.

The Committee also asked about the reference to National Well-being Indicators within the Annual Report. Of the 50 or so national indicators, it was unclear why the Annual Report included the specific ones highlighted in the section on 'Swansea's Local Well-being' (this included performance in relation to community safety and air quality), and how they relate to PSB objectives. It would help if national well-being indicators could more explicitly linked to PSB priorities / well-being objectives that are reported on, so the relevance and value of these is clearer.

### **3) Development of the new Well-Being Plan and Public Engagement**

We heard that the PSB's new Well-being Plan must be published by May 2023. The Committee will need to be consulted in the development of the Plan to give views on any draft Plan. Please ensure that this is factored into the PSBs decision-making timetable so that there is sufficient time for meaningful scrutiny.

As well as Committee input, the PSB will also need to engage the public. Whilst public consultation is never easy when it comes to strategic documents, the PSB should consider how opportunities to engage can be more accessible with methods will maximise reach, learning and building upon previous experience with the development of the Assessment of Local Well-being over the last year. We suggested looking at how social media can be best utilised and piggybacking off existing community events to talk to people about the Plan. The volume of information to review can be off putting, even for those most keen to input views, so would encourage you to consider producing 'executive summaries' and / or easy read documents to facilitate public feedback.

### **Your Response**

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any comments, however we do not expect you to provide a formal response. However, we do expect the PSB to consider our views. Please report our letter to the PSB Joint Committee. The Committee will follow up on progress in addressing these issues at our next PSB Scrutiny session.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Black', written in a cursive style.

**COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK**  
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee  
✉ [cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk)



**To/  
Councillor David Hopkins  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Services & Performance**

**BY EMAIL**

cc: Cabinet Members

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Scrutiny

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SPC/2022-23/4

16 December 2022

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 15 November 2022. It is about the follow up on the Workforce Scrutiny Working Group. A formal written response is required by 6 January.

Dear Councillor Hopkins,

### **Scrutiny Programme Committee – 15 November: Follow up – Workforce Scrutiny Working Group**

The Committee takes responsibility for following up on previous Scrutiny Working Groups, to check on progress with the topic / issue(s) and response to any specific suggestions or recommendations made and agreed action coming out of the scrutiny session.

At our Committee meeting in November, we followed up on the Workforce Scrutiny Working Group, which last met and concluded in Feb 2022 having originally met in March 2021. The Working Group included discussion on the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of staff; how the Council is supporting this; issues around home working; staff sickness; staff turnover; use of agency staff and pressures. We noted that the Working Group were positive about the way the Council was supporting the workforce and councillors had confidence that the Authority was progressing in the right direction.

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Thank you for the comprehensive report on progress since the Working Group, including update on issues raised by the Working Group, informing us of actions taken in the delivery of work and achievements on Workforce. We appreciated Rachael Davies, recently appointed Head of HR & Service Centre, taking the Committee through this report at our meeting. We heard about key developments including recent agreement by Cabinet of a Post Pandemic Working Model (and seven agreed principles), and Workforce Strategy 2022-27, which now provided a longer-term picture and clearer focus on workforce priorities. We agreed that there should be clarity around standards and expectations regarding future working and customer contact, given there is now an established mix of office and home working across the organisation. We noted that each service area should now be producing a set of principles and operational requirements, including public access, and analysis of job roles and their position regarding agile working taking account of the needs of the service, to provide a definitive picture for the longer-term.

The latest position was also provided on wellbeing and sickness absence, agency workers, HR and Service Centre operations, Headcount/FTE, and Occupational Health Data. We noted that there has also been reporting to the Governance & Audit Committee following internal audits on Absence Management and the Employment of Agency Staff and improvement actions taken.

Staff wellbeing and sickness absence is clearly a big concern, and we noted that Covid related issues have had a significant impact on the level of absence over the past year but is hopefully on the decrease. We discussed the importance of approaches to helping those coming back from long-term sickness such as phased return, e.g., temporary reduction of hours, changes in work patterns, light duties, in conjunction with input from Occupational Health, and any medical advice.

With so much home working, it raises concern about how effectively we can monitor the mental health of staff who are working remotely and get support in place, but were given assurance about management processes in place and expectations that all members of staff have regular contact with managers about their wellbeing and performance, and clear lines of communication to talk about issues. We asked about training provision for managers on recognising and responding to mental health issues, to improve awareness and ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills to effectively support members of staff and make positive interventions. We noted there have been longstanding issues with training records because of weaknesses in existing Council ICT system reporting, but is expected to be resolved with the implementation of the new Oracle Fusion system from April 2023. We hope that the new system does deliver the anticipated improvements which should enable accurate and 'on demand' reporting on all learning and development training activity, including wellbeing and occupational health training. We welcome the availability of live 'day by day' reporting next year, but would

however appreciate any current data on the uptake of wellbeing / mental health training across the Authority if you are able to provide this.

### **Your Response**

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome comments on any of the issues raised within. Specifically, we would appreciate any data that tells us about the uptake of wellbeing / mental health training by staff.

Please provide your response to this and any other comments about our letter by 6 January. We will then publish both letters in the agenda of the next available Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Black', written in a cursive style.

**COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK**

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ [cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk)

Councillor Peter Black  
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

**(VIA EMAIL)**

*Please ask for:* Councillor David Hopkins  
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*Our Ref:* DH/JG  
*Your Ref:*  
*Date:* 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Councillor Black,

**RE: Scrutiny Programme Committee – 15 November: Follow up – Workforce Scrutiny Working Group**

Thank you for your letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> December summarising the findings of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> November regarding the progress of the Workforce Scrutiny Working Group.

In respect of the Committee's specific comments, I can advise that:

- Clarity around standards and expectations regarding future working and customer contact are being concluded by each service area, with CMT due to receive a full set in January 2023. These will set out the principles and operational requirements for each service, including public access, and an analysis of which posts are eligible for agile working, giving long term assurance to the workforce on their working arrangements.
- Covid related absence has continued to impact the organisation during 2022/23 but an improving picture is anticipated in Q4.
- Current weaknesses in the reporting arrangements for learning and development events are expected to be improved from April 2023 onwards with the rollout of Oracle Fusion's learning module.
- The Committee specifically asked for some data to be made available in relation to supporting employee wellbeing during 2022:
  - 1184 referrals were made to the occupational health service.
  - 689 were specifically for stress management support. Those referred for stress management would also have been supported with counselling.
  - 21 managers have been trained in 'Supporting Employee Wellbeing'.
  - 10 new volunteers expressed an interest in becoming part of the 'Helping Hands' programme, with 3 currently in training.

- In addition, Staffnet will shortly relaunch and promote the wellbeing training that is available to the workforce to continue our efforts to support the wellbeing of employees.

Should you have any further enquiries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Y Cyngorydd David Hopkins / Councillor David Hopkins**  
**Dirprwy Arweinydd / Aelod y Cabinet dros Wasanaethau a**  
**Pherfformiad Corfforaethol**  
**Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Corporate Services &**  
**Performance**





**To/  
Councillor Louise Gibbard  
Cabinet Member for Care Services  
BY EMAIL**

cc: Cabinet Members & Chair of  
Governance & Audit Committee

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Scrutiny

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SPC/2022-23/5

04 January 2023

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 15 November 2022. It is about the Annual Report on Corporate Safeguarding. A formal written response is required by 25 January.

Dear Councillor Gibbard,

### **Scrutiny Programme Committee – 15 November**

We are writing to you following our scrutiny session to monitor and challenge Council action in relation to Corporate Safeguarding, which took place during National Safeguarding Week.

We thank you and officers for attending the Committee to present the Annual Report which reflected on activities during 2021/22. The Annual Report is a standing item within the Committee work plan given safeguarding is one of the Council's top priorities, so we can comment on progress, achievements, and implementation of policy. Previous discussion was in November 2021. The issues raised during discussion then were around: compliance by those carrying out work for the Council with the Council's Safeguarding Policies (paid or voluntary), and training / guidance; DBS checking for such persons; and progress against the work planned against each of the seven key areas of corporate safeguarding activity: Safe Governance, Safe Employment, Safe Workforce, Safe Practice, Safe Partnerships, Safe Voice, all contributing to Delivering Safe Performance.

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This letter reflects on what we learnt from the information presented, questions, and discussion. It shares the views of the Committee and highlights any outstanding issues / actions for your response - key issues summarised below.

You highlighted:

- the role of the Corporate Safeguarding Group which leads on the development of corporate safeguarding policy and monitoring of policy implementation.
- developments and achievements against the seven key areas of activity.
- revision to Corporate Safeguarding Policy with a greater focus on prevention and introduction of a duty to report placed on all Council staff, which has been incorporated into a revised mandatory training programme. The policy aims to make sure our work covers the full extent of potential, contextual safeguarding risks and concerns posed to vulnerable people, such as child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, radicalisation, etc.
- a positive internal audit report on corporate safeguarding and feedback from Estyn review on Council's Education Services which endorses the Council's approach to safeguarding.
- self-assessment activity (previously referred to as Section 135 Audit) to provide assurances that arrangements are robust in all the Council's main service areas, and to identify any additional improvements needed.
- update on issues arising from previous year's scrutiny session, including mandatory training compliance, the disclosure and barring service, contracting and procurement, and safeguarding leadership.
- the work programme for the year ahead, and management action plan following the recent Internal Audit report.

### **Working with Contractors and Suppliers**

Having raised this in previous Scrutiny sessions, the Committee recognised that a lot of work has been done on this. It is clear the Council expects that all staff employed by contractors (and sub-contractors) and suppliers, carrying out work on the Council's behalf, are fully aware of their broader responsibilities and duties and must confirm that they comply with Swansea Council corporate safeguarding policy, and when required checks are carried out and staff given safeguarding awareness training. We noted that we have a suitability questionnaire to ensure that all expectations, in relation to safeguarding, are fully understood.

We appreciate there are various levels of conditions depending on the nature of services contracted, but asked about monitoring arrangements in place to keep on top of this given the scale of wide-ranging activity across all departments. We were told that monitoring is a challenge and contractual expectations would be proportionate based on the type of service and extent of public contact. At a minimum contractors and suppliers will need to state

they comply with the Council's policy, but a more intensive level of monitoring would be in place, for example, for organisations providing personal care services, and more generally safeguarding compliance would be a consideration at contract review, etc. We welcomed using our Internal Audit team to carry out checks on compliance with process and procedures across the Council, and how well it is embedded, in addition to the Corporate Safeguarding Group's self-assessment activity.

### **Mandatory Training Compliance**

We asked whether there was now effective oversight of training compliance across the Council. We noted that this included safeguarding awareness training, and violence against women, sexual violence, and domestic abuse training. We heard that work is still underway in the development of management information to evidence compliance in achieving mandatory training standards across all service areas. There are issues in how we report compliance across the whole Council as there have been other systems in use, for example in Social Services and Education to support regional approaches and national demands. We noted that delayed implementation of the new Cloud based corporate ICT system (Oracle Fusion) has held up support for real-time reporting of staff training records and employee data checks – the system has a revised go-live date of April 2023. However, based on manual checks which the Corporate Safeguarding Group has reviewed, indicates a compliance level of around 80%, which is considered as good. Managers were currently responsible for compliance, in terms of how many of their staff are completing mandatory training, within their own teams.

We can see that Internal Audit has also recommended (arising from their audit of Corporate Safeguarding) that work should continue to develop the recording of all employee Safeguarding training on the Council's new Oracle Fusion system. You reported that this is a priority action for the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

The Committee asked about progress in ensuring that all work roles and responsibilities are risk assessed and, where necessary, DBS compliant. We also queried whether there were issues in relation to DBS checks, e.g., processing timescales.

You reported that the Service Centre Helpdesk is now responsible for all ID applications and verifications, previously carried out in the Contact Centre. Alongside this, there is daily monitoring of compliance to ensure that verifications are tracked to completion. Lists of renewals and overdue DBS checks are sent to Heads of Service, every month reports and copied to Human Resources to allow them to raise any queries/issues. We heard that the DBS is currently working well, including communication with the

processing authority, which is Powys Council, and that the Corporate Safeguarding Group is satisfied with processing arrangements.

We noted that the DBS Policy has recently been reviewed and updated, and is awaiting final agreement. We asked about DBS requirement criteria, and the challenge it provides for organisations, and noted an understandably cautious approach within the Council around who should have a DBS check. The Committee would appreciate information about the rules / guidance and expectations around what staff across the Council would require a DBS check and what level of check, to better understand things.

### **Advocacy**

You reported that there is work on promoting collaborative practice at the front door, within frontline teams and across all Council services. This work contributes to 'Safe Voice' aims of placing the adult / child firmly at the centre of their concern, and engaged with decisions in their own best interests, whether directly or through advocacy.

We noted that both Child & Family and Adult Services are improving the Council's advocacy offer made to vulnerable children, adults and their families, who can now access Independent Professional Advocacy to help ensure that they are fully informed and engaged in decisions about their care and support and that plans are in their best interests and with regard to safety. For the year ahead the report stated intention to continue development of advocacy offer and independent support to promote citizen rights and best interest decision within safeguarding and deprivation of liberty safeguards.

The Committee noted that advocacy arrangements within Child & Family Services were well established nationally and embedded locally / regionally and under regular review. It was more challenging to develop and expand an all-encompassing Adult Advocacy Service in a similar fashion to Child & Family Services, given the numbers of people many of which would have capacity to advocate for themselves or through carers, but was clearly needed for people in certain circumstances, e.g., deprivation of liberty, and would be commissioned for those individuals. You talked about other approaches and potential opportunities through co-production for people's voices to be heard, aside from formal independent advocacy.

### **Work for the Year Ahead**

We look forward to next year's Annual Report when we can follow up on these issues. We can also follow up on work you have identified within this year's report for the year ahead:

### Safe Employment

- To complete work on updating and finalising policies relating to recruitment and selection, DBS checks and volunteers, to reflect the latest corporate safeguarding policy
- To ensure corporate safeguarding policy, responsibilities and expectations are reflected in all work commissioned or contracted on the Council's behalf

### Safe Workforce

- Development of management information: employee / elected member compliance in completion of mandatory training
- Ensure there are named safeguarding officers in each service area, and representation at the Corporate Safeguarding Group meetings
- Continue roll out of revised mandatory training across Council through hybrid programme of e-learning, virtual and face to face options to meet diverse needs of service areas and employees
- To work with Fusion team to ensure safe and accurate transfer of current staff records and to look at solutions to tackle reporting issues

### Safe Practice

- To implement quality assurance frameworks within child and family and adult services
- To undertake next self-assessment (Section 135 audit) cycle, involving leads from all Council Departments

### Safe Partnerships

- To continue to embed corporate safeguarding policy procedures into how we work with suppliers in carrying out checks, specifying contracts, building awareness in the wider workforce and contract monitoring

### Safe Voice

- Continued development of advocacy offer and independent support to promote citizen rights and best interest decision within safeguarding and deprivation of liberty safeguards
- Working within families, communities, and schools to promote safeguarding awareness

### Safe Performance:

- To review performance framework for corporate safeguarding and agree set of measures for 2023/24

We noted that a Corporate Safeguarding Working Group has been set up to ensure that the work programme keeps moving forward and operates within timescales – with named safeguarding lead working closely together to drive improvements in all seven of the key areas - and is reporting progress to the Corporate Safeguarding Group which is chaired by the you, as lead Cabinet Member, and the Director of Social Services.

### **Your Response**

Overall, the Committee thanked you and lead officers for a very good report and were pleased to see the progress made. We commend the continuing efforts of the Corporate Safeguarding Group across the Council to make safeguarding everyone's business – not just a matter for Social Services and Education.

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful and would welcome comments on any of the issues raised within. Specifically, we would appreciate information about the criteria for DBS checks as stated. We also asked for confirmation whether the recent Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding has been reported (or is due to be reported) to the Governance & Audit Committee, otherwise would appreciate sight of the report. Please provide copy with your response, as appropriate.

Please provide your response to these, and any other comments about our letter by 25 January. We will then publish both letters in the agenda of the next available Committee meeting.

We will make sure that consideration of the next Annual Report is scheduled into the Scrutiny Programme Committee's work plan for 2023/24.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK**

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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*Our Ref:* LG/WN  
*Your Ref:*  
*Date:* 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Councillor Black

**Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2022, Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2021/22 - Response to Feedback**

Thank you for your letter dated 4th January 2022, which was your committee's response to the annual report that myself and Officers presented on 14th November 2022, during, as the Chair noted, National Safeguarding Week.

Presenting the annual report to the Committee, was a valuable opportunity to pause and reflect on how collectively we are working in the interests of the most vulnerable in our communities. How we have come through the challenges of the pandemic, and we are now faced with deep social impacts of the emerging cost of living crisis.

I am pleased to note that the Committee acknowledges the quality of the report, and the work programme taking place to achieve corporate safeguarding. As a Council, we can be proud not only of our ambition, and efforts in taking forward a strategic, whole system approach to safeguarding our most vulnerable children and adults. We can also be proud of our work, reflected in the annual report's many positive examples of how we are continually striving to improve our support to citizens, families, and communities.

The report also reminds us that as public officials and officers we have an individual duty to report concerns, where we are alerted to, or are ourselves concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult.

We are facing unprecedented times, and many more families are experiencing pressures just to survive, yet the Council remains focused on improving prevention and our wellbeing offer through an excellent range of services such as early help and local area coordination.

As Cabinet Member for care services, I believe it is vital that people are listened to, that public services focus on what matters most, and by giving an informed, compassionate, and fair response.

## Page 2

In December, Swansea was declared as Wales's first Human Rights City, reflecting our ambition, and vision of a vibrant, diverse, fair, and safe communities built on the foundations of universal human rights. I believe that achieving our ambition will require the positive culture and leadership so well demonstrated within the Council's approach to corporate safeguarding.

Firstly, I was pleased that the report and the Committee's questions, generated such a supportive, yet challenging discussion. Secondly, I welcome your comments on the report's highlights, and work programme for the year ahead:

- how we work with contractors and suppliers so that they fully embrace our values and awareness of safeguarding issues.
- how we maintain oversight of compliance in staff undertaking mandatory training
- how we ensure that all necessary work roles and responsibilities are subject to the right level of DBS checks
- as I have mentioned above that through our 'Safe Voice' approach, we are working with the vulnerable person in mind, at the centre of everything we do and fully engaged with decisions that impact their lives and striving to further develop our advocacy offer.

As a Council, we clearly still have work as lots of areas of our business impact on the lives of many, and in particular those most vulnerable.

In answer to the additional matters raised, I would make the following comments:

### 1. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

As you noted, Council Officers have prepared the final draft of a revised Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) policy, and wider consultation is underway. This updated policy will contain full detail on how to apply criteria for carrying out DBS checks, and how to risk assess whether a position needs a DBS check.

Here is a link to the national tool the Council currently uses to apply DBS criteria:

[Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-out-which-dbs-check-is-right-for-your-employee)

### 2. Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding

I can confirm that the Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding audit was completed in September 2022, and this gave a High Assurance rating. A brief summary of the results, though not the whole report, were included in the Q2 Monitoring Report presented to the Governance & Audit Committee in November 2022. I have arranged for the full report to be made available, and this will be forwarded alongside this letter.



**Page 3**

I trust my responses address the issues raised, and I look forward to presenting the next Annual Report 2022/23, as part of the Committee's work plan in 2023/24.

Yours Sincerely,



Cllr Louise Gibbard

**Cynghorydd / Councillor Louise Gibbard** Dyfnant a Chilâ  
Cyd-aelod y Cabinet dros Gwasanaethau Gofal  
Cabinet Member Care Services



## Final Internal Audit Report

### Social Services

## Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 An audit has been carried out of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.
- 1.2 Safeguarding is one of the Council's Corporate Priorities, and the safeguarding of both vulnerable children and adults is seen as one of the most important functions that the council is required to deliver.
- 1.3 The scope of the review covered the following areas:
- Corporate Policy Development
  - Corporate Safeguarding Group
  - Staff Training
  - West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board
  - S135 Self-Assessment Questionnaires
  - Performance Monitoring
- 1.4 The objectives of the audit were to ensure that the Council's Safeguarding arrangements are robust and are subject to regular monitoring and review.
- 1.5 The findings arising from this review and the audit opinion are stated in the report below. The recommendations made to address the findings are included within the attached Management Action Plan.

### 2 Work Done / Findings

#### 2.1 Corporate Policy

- 2.1.1 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been complied to protect the most vulnerable people in the community. It is a statement of corporate expectations, a record of policy commitments and gives detail on the arrangements in respect of safeguarding actions to be taken.
- 2.1.2 The Policy sets out how the City and County of Swansea will meet its statutory obligations towards the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.
- 2.1.3 The Policy was reviewed, and it was found that it had last been updated in June 2022. We were informed that it is revised when required by the Social Services Strategy & Performance Improvement Officer and further analysis highlighted that the roles and responsibilities of responsible officers were clearly defined.

## **2.2 Corporate Safeguarding Group**

- 2.2.1 It was confirmed that the Corporate Safeguarding Group meets on a quarterly basis. This group is co-chaired by the Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well, and by the Director of Social Services.
- 2.2.2 It is a management and leadership group which oversees the implementation of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. The group provides 'safe governance' as set out in the Council's Policy, and through an agreed work programme aims to ensure that all Council services are operating effectively in accordance with the Corporate Policy.
- 2.2.3 Task Groups have been set up to deliver the seven key themes set out in the Corporate Policy and these are headed by Safeguarding Leads from within Social Services who report back to the Group.
- 2.2.4 The remaining membership of the Corporate Safeguarding Group is made-up of designated lead managers from other services across the Council.
- 2.2.5 An annual report is prepared by the Group and it was established that the report for 2020/21 was presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 19 October 2021, and to the Audit & Governance Committee on 9 November 2021.

## **2.3 Training**

- 2.3.1 The Council's Safeguarding training includes face-to-face, e-learning and class based training to meet the needs of the whole workforce, with officers being required to carry out mandatory training courses every three years.
- 2.3.2 The learning available to employees includes:
  - a) e-Learning
    - "Safeguarding Adults": this course looks at different elements that contribute to keeping vulnerable adults safe, and how to recognise and report concerns.
    - "Safeguarding and Protection of Children": this course helps staff learn how to recognise when a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect and what can be done to help.
  - b) Training Levels 1 to 3 in accordance with national guidance for officers with role specific requirements within Social Services.
  - c) Named Safeguarding Lead training. This programme enables service area Safeguarding Leads to gain knowledge for their own needs, and which can also be passed on to other officers in their service.
  - d) Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). The training provided to employees is one of the key mechanisms for delivering the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015. As part of this act, the Council has a duty to train all of its workforce and elected members. The Council strives to meet this target with a combination e-learning and face-to-face sessions.

e) Elected Members. The Council aims to ensure all elected members complete the eLearning awareness training on Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, and VAWDASV. There is an expectation is that each Councillor completes this training within each electoral cycle.

2.3.3 Service Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff complete the Council's mandatory training, and for keeping a record of its completion. Reminders regarding the completion of staff training should be issued periodically by the Safeguarding lead in each service.

2.3.4 Absolute numbers of staff who have completed training are no longer recorded centrally due to the turnover of employees across the Council, and due to variances in how staff training was being recorded in different services and schools. This was leading to inconsistencies in the reporting of completion figures for the Council as a whole.

2.3.5 It is planned that the development of the new Oracle Fusion system will include the ability to record the Safeguarding training undertaken by each employee. This will enable accurate records and statistics on the completion of Safeguarding training to be available for all services of the Council.

## **2.4 West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board**

2.4.1 The West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board (WGSB) promotes and supports multi-agency safeguarding for Children and Adults across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. It is a statutory mechanism for agreeing how organisations will co-operate to safeguard the welfare of children and adults living in the region.

2.4.2 The Board is responsible for agreeing on how different services and professional groups should co-operate to safeguard children and adults. Its members include Swansea Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, South Wales Police and a number of other public bodies and charities.

2.4.3 The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group provides updates to the West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board and the following Council officers are members of the Board:

- Director of Social Services
- Head of Adult Services
- Head of Child & Family Services
- Principal Officer for Safeguarding and Performance Quality
- Head of achievement and Partnership

2.4.4 The Board publishes an Annual Plan with its priorities for the year and all partners have shared accountability for its implementation.

2.4.5 There are several sub-groups and membership, with structures regularly being reviewed and updated. Work plans for the sub-groups are aligned with the Annual Plan and include strategic priorities, the actions to achieve these, and success measures to be used to monitor effectiveness. The work plans are regularly reviewed and amended through the year and reports outlining progress are presented to the Board on a quarterly basis.

2.4.6 Outcomes for the year are subsequently included in an annual report, and the most recent West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board annual report published was for 2020-21.

## **2.5 S135 Audit**

- 2.5.1 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group has carried out annual safeguarding self-assessment audits in 2020/21 and 2021/22 in order to satisfy the requirements of Section 135 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
- 2.5.2 It was confirmed with officers that the 2022/23 exercise was underway at the time this internal audit was being carried out.
- 2.5.3 A questionnaire is sent to each of the Council's service areas and satisfactory responses provide the Group with assurance that the Council's safeguarding procedures are sufficiently robust.
- 2.5.4 It was noted that while responses had been received from most service areas across the Council, returned questionnaires had not been received from Highways & Transportation, Legal, Communications & Marketing and Digital & Customer Services.
- 2.5.5 The findings from this exercise are presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group and are included in its annual report. Any findings are also reported to the West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board on an exception basis.

## **2.6 Monitoring of Performance**

- 2.6.1 Headline performance reports in relation to adults and children are presented at Social Services P&FM meetings, which are chaired by the Director of Social Services.
- 2.6.2 Safeguarding performance is also one of the key performance indicators (KPI's) which are reported to the Corporate Management Team on a quarterly basis.
- 2.6.3 There are regular updates to both the Adults and the Child & Family Scrutiny Performance Panels, and the Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report is reported to the Scrutiny Programme Committee and the Governance & Audit Committee annually (see 2.2.5).
- 2.6.4 Safeguarding is also included in the Director of Social Services' Annual Report which is presented to the Council.

### 3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Internal Audit Section operates a system of Assurance Levels which gives a formal opinion of the achievement of the service's/system's control objectives. The Assurance Levels vary over four categories: 'High', 'Substantial', 'Moderate' and 'Limited'.
- 3.2 Recommendations arising from this review are detailed in the attached Management Action Plan. Each recommendation has been prioritised according to perceived risk – High, Medium, Low and Good Practice. The overall Assurance Level is based on the recommendations made in the report.
- 3.3 The description of each type of recommendation, and the basis for each of the Assurance Levels is noted in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Based on the audit testing undertaken, it was found within the scope of our review that almost all of the procedures were operating satisfactorily.
- 3.5 As a result, an Assurance Level of “**High**” has been given. This indicates that there is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve the system objectives and the controls are being consistently applied.
- 3.6 This audit was conducted in conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

## Classification of Audit Recommendations

Recommendation	Description
High Risk	Action by the client that we consider <b>essential</b> to ensure that the service / system is not exposed to <b>major risks</b> .
Medium Risk	Action by the client that we consider <b>necessary</b> to ensure that the service / system is not exposed to <b>significant risks</b> .
Low Risk	Action by the client that we consider <b>advisable</b> to ensure that the service / system is not exposed to <b>minor risks</b> .
Good Practice	Action by the client that we consider <b>no risks</b> exist but would result in better quality, value for money etc.

## Audit Assurance Levels

Assurance Level	Basis	Description
High Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are not High or Medium Risk. Any recommendations are mainly Good Practice with few Low Risk recommendations.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve the system objectives and the controls are being consistently applied.
Substantial Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are not High Risk. Occasional Medium Risk recommendations allowed provided all others are Low Risk or Good Practice.	There is a sound system of internal control but there is some scope for improvement as the ineffective controls may put the system objectives at risk.
Moderate Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are at least Medium Risk.	The ineffective controls represent a significant risk to the achievement of system objectives.
Limited Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are High Risk.	The ineffective controls represent unacceptable risk to the achievement of the system objectives.

**CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA  
MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN  
CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING 2022/23**

<b>REPORT REF</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>AGREED ACTION/ COMMENTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION DATE</b>
<b>Training</b>					
2.3.5	Work should continue to develop the recording of all employee Safeguarding training on the Council's new Oracle Fusion system.	LR	This is a priority action in the Corporate Safeguarding Group and work is currently underway to ensure that safeguarding training is being accurately recorded in all areas.	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Spring 23
<b>Self-Assessment Questionnaires</b>					
2.5.4	All services should be required to return their self-assessment questionnaires	LR	This will be reviewed at the Corporate Safeguarding Group where membership and representation will be reviewed.	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Spring 23



# Agenda Item 12



## Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 January 2023

### **Date and Time of Upcoming Scrutiny Panel / Working Group / Regional Meetings**

#### **17 January – 14 February**

- a) 17 January at 10.00am – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel (remote only)
- b) 17 January at 2.00pm – Anti-Social Behaviour Inquiry Panel (remote only)
- c) 19 January at 4.00pm – Education Performance Panel (remote only)
- d) 23 January at 10.00am – Development & Regeneration Performance Panel
- e) 24 January at 4.00pm – Child & Family Services Performance Panel
- f) 27 January at 10.00am – South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee (regional arranged by Neath Port Talbot Council; remote)
- g) 31 January at 4.00pm – Adult Services Performance Panel
- h) 2 February at 2.00pm – Anti-Social Behaviour Inquiry Panel
- i) 7 February at 10.00am - Co-Production Working Group
- j) 13 February at 9.30am – Joint Adult Services & Child & Family Services Performance Panel (budget)
- k) 13 February at 10.00am – Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group (regional arranged by Swansea Council; remote)
- l) 13 February at 3.00pm – Education Performance Panel (budget)
- m) 14 February at 10.00am – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel (budget)

Scrutiny Meetings will be multi-location meetings, held in the Gloucester Room, Guildhall or accessed remotely via MS Teams, unless otherwise stated