



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Panel Perfformiad Craffu – Newid yn yr Hinsawdd a Natur

At: Cyfarfod Aml-Leoliad - Siambr y Cyngor, Neuadd y Ddinas / MS Teams

On: Dydd Mercher, 8 Mawrth 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Convenor: Councillor Hannah Lawson

Membership:

Councillors: C M J Evans, E W Fitzgerald, J A Hale, O G James, M H Jones, S E Keeton, M W Locke, H M Morris, B J Rowlands a/ac W G Thomas

Agenda

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www.abertawe.gov.uk/DatgeluCysylltiadau
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Next Meeting: Dydd Mawrth, 2 Mai 2023 at 10.00 am

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Dydd Mercher, 1 Mawrth 2023

Contact: Liz Jordan 01792 637314

Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel - Climate Change and Nature**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 10 January 2023 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor H Lawson (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C M J Evans
M H Jones
B J Rowlands

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
S E Keeton

Councillor(s)

J A Hale
M W Locke

Other Attendees

Andrea Lewis
Andrew Stevens

Cabinet Member for Service Transformation
Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure

Officer(s)

Geoff Bacon
Mark Barrow
Stuart Davies
Bob Fenwick
Liz Jordan
Chloe Lewis
Rachel Lewis
Martin Nicholls
Jane Richmond
Mark Wade

Head of Property Services
Fleet Manager
Head of Highways & Transportation
Group Leader Highways Maintenance
Scrutiny Officer
Team Leader Highways and Transportation
Directorate Project Manager
Chief Executive
Project Manager Strategic Climate Change
Interim Director of Place

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): W G Thomas
Other Attendees: D H Hopkins

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

The Panel agreed the Minutes of the Meeting on 9 November 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

The following questions were received from members of the public and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure responded:

QUESTION 1:

Swansea Climate Action Network has recently formed a Glyphosate Alternatives Working Group. We have a number of members with many years of researching and campaigning in this area. Considering the evidence of the harmful effects of Glyphosates we don't think it is an option for the Council to continue using it. Given that we are in a Climate and Nature Emergency we feel the Council needs all the support it can get in finding valid alternatives. We are looking into the alternatives such as Foamstream (though some members have expressed concerns re the fossil fuels used to heat the foam), proper management of verges etc. **We would like to know how our working group can feed into the relevant Council discussions in a meaningful way going forward.**

RESPONSE:

Cabinet Member: "Regarding glyphosate potentially being harmful – it has been subject to hundreds of clinical trials and all concluded it is safe when used under label recommendation. The European Chemicals Agency Committee for Risk Assessment Action published results of the latest review on 30 May 2022 which recommended no change in the classification of glyphosate. We have in the past trialled alternative methods and found them to not be viable in the scale required for on street weeds.

As for inputting into the discussion we welcome views being submitted by all interested parties and encourage everyone to engage in the discussion."

Member of the public: "Is there a more productive way we can engage in on-going discussion?"

Cabinet Member: "Put your thoughts down in an email to me and I can take it up with the appropriate officers to find a way forward."

QUESTION 2:

Why is the Council still using Glyphosates instead of Foamstream?

(1) We have a report that Foamstream is 31% cheaper than glyphosates and more efficient. See [Appendix 1](#)

(2) Councils in England and the rest of the world are switching from Glyphosates to Foamstream (or other eco friendly alternatives), partly to avoid expensive court cases to defend from people who are claiming cancer through using such weedkillers. See [Appendix 2](#)

(3) Foamstream as opposed to Glyphosates doesn't kill off pollinators, vital for future generations, and is not harmful if it leaks into rivers, whereas glyphosates kill fish and pollute the rivers. See [Appendix 3](#)

4) Glyphosates are proven to be dangerous to human health, Foamstream is purely hot water and foam. See [Appendix 4](#)

RESPONSE:

Cabinet Member: "We believe some other local authorities do use Foamstream in small areas, but it goes alongside a spraying contract."

Member of the public: "This second question will be able to be debated through the on-going discussion."

QUESTION 3:

As one of my councillors in Castle Ward, I want you to know how disturbed I am that Swansea council is intending to continue with the use of Roundup to control weeds on our verges. I can't attend the meeting Tuesday morning as I am teaching but I wanted to explain my objections. We are learning more everyday about the importance to our health of our microbiome that was only discovered 15 years ago. Research shows the herbicide glyphosate can definitely harm our gut microbiome as I explain below. This is important - a damaged microbiome is indicated in all chronic disease including asthma, diabetes, heart disease, arthritis - in fact any disease associated with inflammation. Those most adversely effected by Covid were very likely to have a diminished microbiome. These findings are gradually being shared with the public through the pioneering work of multiple award-winning Professor of Genetic Epidemiology, Tim Spector. I summarise some key points reported in his latest book, "Food for Life" (2022).

Professor Tim Spector's has much to say about glyphosate and none of it is good. He reminds us that a Californian groundsman who regularly sprayed glyphosate (Roundup) and developed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma was awarded damages of \$87 million by the jury who ruled that it was 'likely' the herbicide was responsible. Currently there are thousands of lawsuits against the manufacturer, Monsanto, with regard to glyphosate and they have already made out of court settlements in nearly 100,000 lawsuits, paying out nearly \$11 billion dollars in compensation. Many governments and the WHO modified their position on Roundup as a probable carcinogen in 2015, adding it to the list of chemicals we should avoid.

What we know is that widespread use of herbicides like Roundup and pesticides is contributing to the gradual reduction in the diversity of our soil microbes. As we are learning that our bodies and our soils need a rich mix of bacteria and diverse fungi, we must change our practices.

Studies by the FDA show that glyphosate creeps into most foods tested at some level. Whether or not it causes some cancers if ingested in small quantities through our food is uncertain, but it definitely harms our gut microbes. We are all exposed to it over our lifetimes. The so-called safe limits proposed by government agencies for

glyphosate are highly controversial, as very little data exists in humans, and the chemicals can remain in soil for several months.

We know that herbicide chemicals including Roundup damage our soils and our human microbes. My question is: **Why would Swansea Council continue to use this substance which may cause such harm and endanger its own employees?** I ask they adopt the precautionary principle and cease use of Glyphosate immediately. Arguments that it is cheaper no longer wash - the true cost of using this chemical is currently unknown but indications are it will not turn out to be cheaper. Our health and the health of our soils cannot be bargained away in this manner.

Could you let me know your position on the use of this chemical in Swansea please.

RESPONSE FROM CABINET MEMBER:

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In terms of use of the Chemical, it is by far the most efficient method at this time for the broad spectrum treatment of common weeds and when addressing the scale required for street pavements, but that said we always keep an open mind on suitable alternatives and any emerging information to support a change in our processes."

QUESTION 4:

Referring to your comment in your 'Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure' for the Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel meeting on Tuesday 10th January 2023. Weed Management.

I have noted that under your paragraph 6.1 'Future Challenges & Opportunities' you express "increasing concern over the safety of the chemicals used." And that 'the Council will continue to review other options as they become commercially available.'

Further in paragraph 7.1 you stay that "Currently it is believed there is no other cost effective treatment to meet public demand".

Further to your paragraph 6.1, in a report on the Sustainable Foods Trust website by Patrick Holden on 5th February 2021 in Chemicals in Agriculture, Farming, "A new study published on 27th January in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*, conducted by an international team of scientists led by Dr Michael Antoniou of Kings

College London, found that exposure to glyphosate and its commercial Roundup formulation, can disrupt the function of the gut microbiome (bacteria and fungi) and internal body systems with the potential serious effects on human health. In controlled laboratory animal experiments, glyphosate was found to alter the composition, and more importantly, the biochemical function of the gut microbiome by the same mechanism through which the chemical acts to kill weeds. (Source: sustainablefoodtrust.org Sustainable Food Trust).

Pesticide Action Network stated: "Pesticides do not just harm the organisms they are designed to control, they also have a major impact on non-target organisms, including humans". They go on to say: "The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that over 350,000 people die every year from acute pesticide poisoning. Moreover, this figure does not include deaths from cancer or other chronic disease caused by pesticide exposure". Perhaps these unfortunate people didn't follow the precise instructions? (Source: www.pan-uk.org Key Issues - Pesticide Action Network UK).

Further to your paragraph 7.1, May I refer you, and your committee members, to the attached report by weedingtech.com [Glyphosate vs Foamstream – which form of weed control is right for your organisation?](http://weedingtech.com) Who state that not only are Foamstream's results immediately visible on the day of treatment, that there is also less weed growth. It goes on to say glyphosates are weather dependant, Foamstream isn't, and Foamstream can be used in all weathers. Most importantly, glyphosates have been found to be more expensive than Foamstream, and over a five year period, Foamstream works out to be 31% cheaper than glyphosates. This is contra to your assertion that "Currently there is no other cost effective treatment to meet public demands.

Regarding public demands, Glyphosates such as Roundup are contra to Swansea Council's Sustainable Development Policy as glyphosate use is not in the public interest as mentioned earners they may be carcinogenic, destroy pollinators, pollute the land they fall on such as being wind swept into trees, or leaking into river, where there is much evidence compiled by the Wildlife Trust.

Denbighshire County Council has been successfully using Foamstream M600 to control weeds since 2018, as have may other councils outlined by the attachment below.

<http://www.pan-uk.org/pesticide-free-towns-success-stories/>

Therefore, I would like to suggest that Swansea Council consider using Foamstream on a trial basis in a specific area for a few years to determine its efficiency and cost effectiveness. I remind you that Swansea Council has declared a climate emergency and, during the UN Conference on the Human Environment, 'Stockholm 50' on 2-3rd June 2022, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned "Earth's natural systems cannot keep up with our demands". Asking all governments, national and local to, "lead us out of this mess" and "stop waging war against nature". Which Swansea Council is doing with it continual use of glyphosates. <http://www.stockholm50.global/>

RESPONSE FROM CABINET MEMBER:

“As stated earlier, a demonstration has been given in the past of this particular produce and some other alternatives. Found not to be as efficient nor as cost effective and not ideal for large broad spectrum treatment that footways require to ensure that they are safe and that damage caused by excessive weed growth is limited. From the demonstration it was clear that it was not suitable. So even if we overlooked the initial investment, it would be very time consuming and not effective in controlling perennial weeds. Our understanding from the demonstration is that the weeds targeted actually grew back within a fortnight and the same with the moss that was targeted, it also grew back within a fortnight. Also, the demonstration required the use of a petrol generator powering applicator, so there's the additional carbon impact to be considered should any alternative methods be put forward.”

Actions:

- Scrutiny Officer to pass on Cabinet Member's contact details to member of Swansea Climate Action Network.

5 Weed Management / Use of Glyphosate

This item was moved up the agenda.

Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure and the relevant officer attended to participate in the discussion and answer the Panel's questions.

Discussion Points:

- Panel feels glyphosate has an effect on pollinators that are essential to the eco system and queried how seriously the Authority is taking the biodiversity of Swansea when it is continuing to use glyphosate. Informed the biodiversity of Swansea is extremely important as is evident in the number of biodiversity schemes the Authority is doing across the County and the Council is open to alternative viable methods should they become available or should scientific evidence change.
- Panel asked about tilling and if there are alternative methods. Heard that from a farming perspective unless there is a suitable viable alternative, glyphosate is essential in commercial arable and has been safely used for over 40 years. Panel stated this timeframe matches up with the timeframe where we have seen a massive collapse in the numbers of insects in our biosphere.
- Member of the public queried if the Council would talk to a charity about using best practice for producing wildflower patches in Swansea, which does not involve using glyphosate. Informed the wildflower planting scheme is used to kill off grass before seeds are sown, otherwise the seeds will not take.
- Panel queried if it is an option for wards to opt out of the highways weed spraying scheme. Informed it is an option and any councillors who want to opt out or have a reduced programme in their ward need to inform Cabinet Member and officers.
- Member of the public stated a viable option to spraying is to have permanent planting. Heard the Council has a county wide tree planting strategy and

ward members can take up the wildflower planting schemes in as many areas as they want, paid from their community budget.

6 Climate Change Update

Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and relevant officers attended to give an update which included confirmation the Council has responded to all recommendations from the Wales Audit Office, has a fully costed delivery plan for Net Zero by 2030 and has received the bronze One Planet Standard accreditation (the first within the UK).

Discussion Points:

- Panel felt in terms of renewable energy, things that could work include use of micro hydro and repurposing car batteries for use in homes. Heard the Council is looking at all opportunities regarding renewable energy and micro hydro generation for rivers is being explored. The Council also supports the repurposing of car batteries for use in homes and can explore the possibility of undertaking a pilot.
- Member of the public queried why the tidal lagoon is not yet up and running in Swansea Bay. Informed that previously there was no national or Welsh Government funding for it but currently working with third party developer who intends to deliver the project entirely with private sector investment so will not need public subsidy.
- Member of the public queried why Council pension fund cannot be used to fund tidal lagoon so people of Swansea can benefit from the project. Heard pension schemes had been approached regarding investment in previous tidal lagoon schemes and were positive to the opportunity but had to consider the best interest for the pension fund itself and its members rather than the Council. They have not been approached for this new scheme as the private sector has come forward with what appears to be a fully funded project.

7 Green Vehicle Adoption

Panel informed the Council has one of the biggest public sector fleets in Wales and is facing a significant challenge to 'green' them. Progress is being made and by March 2023 10% of the fleet will be zero emission and will be the largest public sector green fleet in Wales with supporting infrastructure being installed across Council depots. A £55m cost has been estimated between now and 2030 and this is indicative. The Local Authority is a couple of years behind where it would like to be but is ahead of most. It is being supported by the Welsh Government.

Discussion Points:

- Panel queried if all Council vehicles (945) will become battery electric and how the Council will charge them all. Panel believes this would have a huge impact on the grid if everyone is moving to electric vehicles by 2030, and the public sector by 2025, and there is also the problem of battery disposal to consider. Heard that battery electric is not the solution to all zero carbon problems. Officers believe it fits the car and van sector which is 60% of the Council's fleet in terms of carbon emissions. Officers are aware of the impact on the grid and are exploring renewables and 'private wire'. The Council

anticipates it will probably need a couple of hundred charge points in its estate and then needs to come up with viable alternative fuel solutions and change its ways of working to fit the fact it now has to 'take the pump to the van'.

- Panel agreed that as the Cabinet Member was unable to be present for this item it will be added to the item 'Climate Change Update' at the 2 May meeting, so the Cabinet Member is present for further discussion and questions.

Actions:

- Add 'Further discussion on Green Vehicle Adoption' to 2nd May Panel meeting under the item 'Climate Change Update'.

8 Public / Residential Electric Vehicle Charging

Officers presented an update and answered the Panel's questions.

Discussion Points:

- Panel feel people who choose an electric car but do not have off road parking are forced to use public chargers which are three times more expensive. Informed the Council has installed a number of community charge points within local communities, as well as charge points run by a commercial operator. The Council currently has a contract with a third party commercial operator and the charge cost is 75p per kwh for 'fast' charging, domestic rates are currently capped at 34p per kwh but charge at a much slower rate.
- Panel feel this is a problem in certain parts of Swansea where lots of people do not have their own drives. Informed Council intends to install on street charging in Uplands, Sketty and Killay and hope to continue developing this to wider areas of Swansea.
- Panel believes one solution is to introduce community charging hubs as well as introducing more reliable and cheap public transport so people can move away from using cars.
- Panel expressed concern about the amount of street furniture currently. Panel mentioned a pilot scheme in Plymouth where charging points come up out of the street, which would prevent adding to street furniture. Officers will look into the project in Plymouth and consider this for future infrastructure of this nature if funding becomes available.

9 Work Programme 2022-23

The Panel considered the work programme.

The meeting ended at 11.40 am



To:
Councillor Andrew Stevens, Cabinet
Member for Environment and Infrastructure

Please ask for: Scrutiny
Gofynnwch am:
Scrutiny Office 01792 637314
Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
e-Mail scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
e-Bost:
Date 16 February 2023
Dyddiad:

BY EMAIL

cc Cabinet Members

Summary: This is a letter from the Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure following the meeting of the Panel on 10 January 2023. It covers Public Question Time and Weed Management/Use of Glyphosate.

Dear Cllr Stevens

The Panel met on 10 January 2023 and discussed Weed Management/Use of Glyphosate.

We would like to thank you and relevant officers for attending to respond to public questions, present the item on Weed Management / Use of Glyphosate and answer the Panel's questions. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learned from the discussion, share the views of the Panel, and, where necessary, raise any issues or recommendations for your consideration and response.

Public Question Time

The following questions were received from members of the public and you responded.

QUESTION 1:

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU
SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE
www.swansea.gov.uk / 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

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<http://www.stockholm50.global/>

RESPONSE FROM CABINET MEMBER:

"As stated earlier, a demonstration has been given in the past of this particular produce and some other alternatives. Found not to be as efficient nor as cost effective and not ideal for large broad spectrum treatment that footways require to ensure that they are safe and that damage caused by excessive weed growth is limited. From the demonstration it was clear that it was not suitable. So even if we overlooked the initial investment, it would be very time consuming and not effective in controlling perennial weeds. Our understanding from the demonstration is that the weeds targeted actually grew back within a fortnight and the same with the moss that was targeted, it also grew back within a fortnight. Also, the demonstration required the use of a petrol generator powering applicator, so there's the additional carbon impact to be considered should any alternative methods be put forward."

Weed Management / Use of Glyphosate

We feel glyphosate has an effect on pollinators that are essential to the eco system and queried how seriously the Authority is taking the biodiversity of Swansea when it is continuing to use glyphosate. We were informed that the biodiversity of Swansea is extremely important as is evident in the number of biodiversity schemes the Authority

is doing across the County. We heard that in respect of bees and other wildlife, results on toxicity of glyphosate are often conflicting. We disagree with this statement and feel that scientific data very strongly shows a positive correlation between the use of glyphosate and health issues within most insects, pollinators, amphibians, and zooplankton populations, particularly bees. We were informed the Council is open to alternative viable methods should they become available or should scientific evidence change.

We asked about tilling and if there are alternative methods. We heard that from a farming perspective, unless there is a suitable viable alternative, glyphosate is essential in commercial arable, has been safely used for over 40 years and reduces the need for tillage which reduces the carbon footprint and helps farmers retain healthier soil. We stated that this timeframe matches up with the timeframe where we have seen a massive collapse in the numbers of insects in our biosphere. Given that insects are a primary food source for many birds and small mammals and essential for healthy biodiverse ecosystems this is an important point.

A member of the public mentioned wildflower patches and stated that a book produced by a registered charity, titled Plant Life, recommends practices which do not involve using glyphosate, and that they work with councils. They queried if the Council would consider talking to the charity and using best practice for producing wildflower patches in Swansea. We heard that the wildflower planting scheme is used to kill off grass before seeds are sown, otherwise the seeds will not take. We also heard that regarding native wildflowers, there are a number of areas across Swansea which are designated as 'cut and collect' where the Council cuts and takes the grass off which encourages native wildflowers to come through.

We queried if it is an option for wards to opt out of the highways weed spraying scheme and were informed that it is an option and any councillors who want to opt out or have a reduced programme in their ward just need to inform you and relevant officers. However, spraying would still have to be carried out for any invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.

A member of the public stated a viable option to spraying is to have permanent planting. We heard the Council has a county wide tree planting strategy and ward members can take up the wildflower planting schemes in as many areas as they want, paid from their community budget. We noted the report you provided to the Panel specifically talks about the highways/footway spraying programme.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised, however in this instance, a formal written response is not required.

Yours sincerely

HANNAH LAWSON
CONVENER, CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURE SCRUTINY PANEL
CLLR.HANNAH.LAWSON@SWANSEA.GOV.UK



To:
**Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member
for Service Transformation**

Please ask for: Scrutiny
Gofynnwch am:
Scrutiny Office 01792 637314
Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrchol:
e-Mail scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
e-Bost:

BY EMAIL

Date 16 February 2023
Dyddiad:

cc Cabinet Members

Summary: This is a letter from the Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation following the meeting of the Panel on 10 January 2023. It covers Climate Change, Green Vehicle Adoption and Electric Vehicle Charging.

Dear Cllrs Lewis,

The Panel met on 10 January 2023 and received an update on Climate Change and discussed Green Vehicle Adoption and Public/Residential Electric Vehicle Charging.

We would like to thank you, the Chief Executive and relevant officers for attending to present items and answer the Panel's questions. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learned from the discussion, share the views of the Panel, and, where necessary, raise any issues or recommendations for your consideration and response.

Climate Change Update

We received confirmation from you that the Council has responded to all recommendations from the Wales Audit Office, has a fully costed delivery plan for Net Zero by 2030 and has received the bronze One Planet Standard accreditation (the first within the UK). We were very pleased to hear this.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

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

www.swansea.gov.uk / 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

We felt that in terms of renewable energy, things that could work include use of micro hydro and we also mentioned that there is a company that re-purposes car batteries for use in homes. We heard that the Council is looking at all opportunities regarding renewable energy, micro hydro generation for rivers is being explored, particularly the River Tawe and that there has been a successful project at Penllergaer Woods. We also heard the Council supports the re-purposing of car batteries for use in homes and this is something the Council can explore further and possibly undertake a pilot on. Officers added that there is a paper going to the Climate Change Corporate Delivery Committee shortly on the Council's requirement to produce a local area energy plan, which will cover all aspects about 'greening the grid' and they would welcome Cllr Evans' comments on it if he is available.

A Member of the public queried why the tidal lagoon is not yet up and running in Swansea Bay. We heard that previously there wasn't any national or Welsh Government funding for it, but the Council is currently working with a third party developer who intends to deliver the project entirely with private sector investment and it will not need public subsidy. We noted that the intention is for a report to go to Cabinet in February 2023 which will set out next steps and timeline for delivery, for planning applications to be launched later this year and a start on site within 18 months. We heard that it is a phased programme and the lagoon itself is a much longer delivery timeline, due to the statutory process required to achieve a development consent order but it looks very positive. We noted that further details will be brought to Scrutiny when you are at the point of taking the report to Cabinet.

A member of the public queried why the Council pension fund cannot be used to fund the tidal lagoon so the people of Swansea can benefit from the project. You stated that there is no need for public investment as there is enough private investment. Officers added that pension schemes had been approached regarding investment in the previous tidal lagoon schemes and they were positive to the opportunity but had to consider it in terms of what was in the best interest for the pension fund itself and its members rather than the Council. We heard that they have not been approached for this new scheme as the private sector has come forward with what appears to be a fully funded project, but this does not mean the pension fund won't have the opportunity to invest as it broadens its portfolio. We were pleased to hear that any developer will be required to ensure that the opportunity for green and cheaper electricity would benefit the residents of Swansea and the surrounding area. We were informed that the Welsh Government has indicated it is supportive of the project, but no direct request has been made from the developer for financial support to fund the project.

Green Vehicle Adoption

Officers gave a short briefing on this and informed us that the Council has one of the biggest public sector fleets in Wales and is facing a significant challenge to 'green' them. We heard that progress is being made and by March 2023, 10% of the fleet will be zero emission and it will be the largest public sector green fleet in Wales, with supporting infrastructure being installed across Council depots. We noted that a £55m cost has been estimated between now and 2030 and that this is indicative, that the Local Authority is a couple of years behind where it would like to be but is ahead of most and that it is being supported by the Welsh Government.

We queried if all Council vehicles (945) will become battery electric and how the Council will be able to charge them all. We believe this would have a huge impact on the grid if everyone were to move to electric vehicles by 2030, and the public sector by 2025, and there is also the problem of battery disposal to consider. We heard that battery electric is not the solution to all zero carbon problems. Officers believe it fits the car and van sector which is 60% of the Council's fleet in terms of carbon emissions and that you are aware of the impact on the grid and are exploring renewables and 'private wire'. We noted that the real carbon emitters are heavy goods vehicles and there are developments in the hydro motive sector with hydrogen and low carbon emission fuels. We heard the Council anticipates it will probably need a couple of hundred charge points in its estate and then needs to come up with viable alternative fuel solutions and change its ways of working to fit the fact it now has to 'take the pump to the van'.

The Panel agreed that as you were unable to be present for this item, and would like to be, it will be included under the item 'Climate Change Update' at the 2 May meeting, so that you can be present for further discussion and questions.

Public / Residential Electric Vehicle Charging

We stated that people who choose an electric car but do not have off road parking are forced to use public chargers which are three times more expensive, so they are seriously financially disadvantaged. We feel very strongly about this and queried if the Council could consider installing various devices that are available, which allow people to charge on the road from their own properties. We were informed that as with other local authorities, the Council has installed a number of public charge points so people have the opportunity to charge within their local community and that this is part of a wider provision of charge points offered by commercial operators. We heard the Council currently has a contract with a third party commercial operator and the charge cost is 75p per KWh for a 22kW 'fast' charge and is based on open market comparisons of 'fast' charging costs, whilst domestic rates are currently capped at 34p per KWh but will generally be charging at a much slower rate of between 3.4kW and 7kW. We heard people are not allowed to use private electric vehicle charging cables to charge vehicles on street locations in Swansea due to the risk this poses to the public, which is the norm, but the Council is keeping abreast of new developments that could potentially make that possible in the future.

We feel this is a particular problem in certain parts of Swansea where lots of people do not have their own drives. We heard the Council intends to install on street charging in Uplands, Sketty and Killay and hope to continue developing this to wider areas of Swansea. We believe one solution is to introduce community charging hubs as well as introducing more reliable and cheap public transport so people can move away from using cars.

We expressed concern about the amount of street furniture currently, which affects people with mobility issues and discourages walking, and that this could increase if on street charging was introduced. We mentioned a pilot scheme in Plymouth where charging points come up out of the street, which would prevent adding to street furniture. A Panel Member agreed to provide a photo of this to relevant officers (which has been done). Officers agreed to investigate the project in Plymouth and consider this in options for future infrastructure of this nature if funding becomes available.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised, however in this instance, a formal written response is not required.

Yours sincerely

HANNAH LAWSON
CONVENER, CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURE SCRUTINY PANEL
CLLR.HANNAH.LAWSON@SWANSEA.GOV.UK

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance

Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel – 8th March 2023

Conclusion of Natural Environment Scrutiny Inquiry Recommendations

FOR INFORMATION

Purpose	To present progress in delivering the recommendations following the Natural Environment Scrutiny Inquiry in 2019
Content	This report includes a summary of actions taken to meet the recommendations
Councillors are being asked to	Endorse the conclusion of the recommendations
Lead Councillor(s)	Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance
Lead Officer(s)	Phil Holmes, Head of Planning and City Regeneration
Report Author	Paul Meller paul.meller@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer	Jonathan Wills
Finance Officer	Peter Keys
Access to Services Officer	Not applicable

1. Background

- 1.1 Long-term project recommendations arising from the Natural Environment Scrutiny Inquiry in 2019 have been monitored and reported to Scrutiny Panel for the past 3 years with a March 2023 target conclusion date.
- 1.2 Progress has monitored biannually via an Action Log the latest version of which is included as **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 Seventeen of the twenty seven recommendations were concluded by March 2022 (shaded grey in the Appendix). The remaining ten have now either been concluded during 22/23, or are ongoing projects being

monitored in their own right and no longer linked to the Scrutiny recommendations.

2. Conclusion

2.1 All the recommendations of the 2019 Scrutiny Inquiry have been satisfied and no longer need to be reported back to this Panel.

3. Legal implications

3.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

4. Finance Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Background papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Action Log (March 2023)

APPENDIX 1: Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Action Log (March 2023)

Scrutiny Inquiry Projects Completed During 2022/23

Inquiry Recommendation Ref	Project	Comment/Update	Target date
3.	Preparation of Swansea Local Nature Recovery Action Plan	<p>Preparation of draft plan ongoing – work to be taken forward by Local Nature Partnership (LNP) Coordinators – 2 x part time officers employed April 2022.</p> <p>Feedback received on initial framework draft by Swansea Local Partnership members. Two workshops also held in the autumn 2022 with members from 15 different organisations</p> <p>Plan is currently being re-drafted by Local Nature Partnership Coordinators to incorporate input from LNP members.</p> <p>Target of preparation by March 2023 met. Plan expected to be finalised and adopted Summer 2023.</p> <p>Plan preparation and adoption progress now being reported to and monitored by Climate Change Corporate Development Committee</p>	March 2023

5.	Prepare a County wide GI Strategy	<p>This collaborative project has fallen behind the preparation programme due to unforeseen staffing resource issues in Natural Resources Wales, with whom the Strategy is being jointly prepared. Delayed community engagement recommenced in Feb 2023. and a draft strategy produced later this year. Date for commencement of preparation met</p> <p>Strategy preparation and adoption progress now being reported to and monitored by Climate Change Corporate Development Committee</p>	March 2023
10.	Develop and deliver biodiversity training for Council staff, elected Members and PSB Members	<p>Ongoing action by biodiversity officer and others. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and addressing biodiversity training needs • Identification of opportunities and actions within each relevant Service Area to maintain and enhance biodiversity • Identifying Service Areas where advisory support could be provided by the Nature Conservation Team • Development of on and offline training packages including further development of web pages • Development and implementation of a Comms Strategy for biodiversity • Ecological advice and support provided for Development Management Section on planning and SUDs applications ranging from 	Ongoing

		<p>advice on the installation of bird and bat boxes to carbon literacy training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other specific training delivered over the past year includes grassland management of parks/verges; cut and collect; right tree in right place; nature emergency • Two CC&NR non-mandatory introductory courses have been published on e-learning staff website for all staff and councillors, publicised through staff news and Chief Exec blog • Forthcoming training includes 3 x grant funded green wall and roof regional webinars for Council staff during March and April 2023 <p>Training will always remain an ongoing requirement for staff and Members and future opportunities will be reported to the Climate Change and Nature Recovery Programme Board and Steering Group to ensure it is targeted at the right audience and where it is needed most.</p>	
15.	Co-ordinate and deliver the Local Places for Nature Grant programme (2020-2023)	<p><u>2020/21</u> Successfully bid for and delivered capital projects worth over £190k, including tree planting in various parks and other sites, green infrastructure enhancements e.g., green roofs and walls, establishment of a new tree nursery; as well as local events, habitat management and flood alleviation works</p>	March 2023

		<p><u>2021/22</u> Successfully bid for and delivered projects worth over £240k, including request for additional £53k to cover increased costs. These projects to be delivered by end of financial year include the City Centre Pop up Park; green wall at Pier Street; green bin shelters; and tree planting; biodiversity enhancements to school grounds.</p> <p><u>2022/23</u> Successfully bid for and delivered projects worth £439k, including revenue costs. Includes proposals to restore existing and create new natural capital assets within Swansea focussing on urban and peri-urban areas. The aim is to facilitate, support and deliver an increase in biodiversity and ecological resilience across Swansea by increasing the diversity, extent condition, connectivity and adaptability of Swansea's natural assets and contributing to the enhancement of Swansea's Nature Network.</p> <p>Projects have included tree planting, nature improvements in schools, supporting wildlife-friendly food growing schemes, Green infrastructure such as rain planters and green walls, habitat creation and restoration (bird/bat boxes, fencing on Swansea Bay sand dunes, etc), and wildflower plants/seeds.</p>	
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17.	Co-ordinate and deliver the ENRAW Green Infrastructure grant programmes	<p>Grant finally awarded in full Nov 2021. Part time Woodland Officer recruited Dec 2021.</p> <p>Recruited 3 temporary posts in April 2022 to deliver programme, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Community Green Space Officers to work with local communities to develop and delivery green infrastructure improvements • Natural Environment Volunteer Co-ordinator to develop and support opportunities for environmental volunteering <p>Works undertaken have included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting orchards, trees, bulbs, plants and providing hand tools to community centres and friends of groups. • Installing a polytunnel for community growing • Providing interpretation for city centre nature. • Designed nature friendly landscapes in Penderry. • Working on the first Bio-solar roof to be installed in Swansea. • Working with The Wildlife Trusts to improve community spaces in Uplands. • Enhancing Glynollen woods with a nature trail, sculptures, natural play, remedial tree work and orchard. <p>Current funding for this project ends June 2023 and the posts will temporary posts will not be extended unless further revenue grant funding is obtained – awaiting outcome of further 3-year grant bid March 2023</p>	March 2023
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20.	Undertake a preliminary biodiversity audit of Council owned land and where possible manage our corporate assets for the benefit of biodiversity and natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity audit of Swansea Central Area commissioned • Countywide as well as Council owned land tree canopy cover surveys and opportunity mapping ongoing. • SINC and Local Nature Reserve being reviewed. Habitat Management Plans for the reserves being prepared <p>All due for completion May 2023</p>	March 2023
22.	Develop a set of 'Wild about your Ward ' maps and packs	<p>Being delivered in through grant funding by Community and Nature Project officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped existing Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision, and identifying areas, which provide the best opportunities for improvement and will seek, where appropriate, match funding opportunities afforded by Member's community fund • Schemes being prepared for Townhill and Morriston wards. Future roll-out will depend on continuation of grant funding 	March 2023
23.	Deliver and provide support for school biodiversity awareness activities and practical initiatives and opportunities for schoolchildren to access and learn about their natural environment	<p>Seek to identify an environmental link within all school governing bodies e.g., premises committee or schools eco-committee, etc</p> <p>Not yet fully achieved but engagement being pursued through Climate Change and Nature Recovery Programme Board and Steering Group</p>	March 2023

24.	Investigate and secure grant funding for tackling biodiversity and climate emergencies	<p>Apply for Local Places for Nature grant annually (details in recommendation 15 above)</p> <p>Latest application for Welsh Government Nature Networks Round Two grant, through Heritage Lottery. Seeks to keep 3.5 temporary staff employed for 3 further years. Grant requested £904.5k. Progressed through first stage, awaiting decision in March 2023</p>	March annually
27.	External Environment Enhancement on Council owned Housing land	<p>Enhancements to Housing land greenspace within Estates as part of an environmental works programme to meet the Council's commitment to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and to address deficiencies in access to natural greenspace. Being successfully rolled out. Includes ongoing Japanese Knotweed control programme within Penlan, St Thomas, Port Tennant and Bonymaen</p>	Ongoing

Previously Reported Completed Projects

1.	Facilitate, co-ordinate, deliver and monitor the steps in the Corporate Plan Objective for Maintaining and Enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity	Steps monitored by Climate Change and Nature Steering Group and Programme Board. Currently being reviewed for 23/24 Corporate Plan.	Completed Monitored every 6 weeks and reviewed annually
2.	Prepare Corporate Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Action Plan	<p>Section 6 duty monitoring report agreed and submitted to Welsh Government in Dec 2019 and again in Dec 2023</p> <p>Links with other relevant cross organisational policies at a strategic level being monitored by Climate Change and Nature Programme Board which includes representatives dealing with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Environment • Green Infrastructure • Local Development Plan • Sustainable Development Policy • Sustainable Transport Plan • Energy Strategy • Waste Management • Parks • Housing • Education • Procurement 	Completed Bi-monthly meetings

4.	Adopt Swansea Central Area Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy and Green Space Factor Tool	<p>Adopted by Cabinet Feb 21.</p> <p>The Green Space Factor Tool provides practical guidance to help assess the level of green space required for developments in urban areas. The tool is now being used by applicants for planning applications in the city centre. Advice is being given regarding GI throughout the planning process, including how to meet target GSF tool scores.</p>	Completed Feb 2021
6.	Develop and adopt a Council tree policy	<p>Suite of tree policies/protocols developed over the past couple of years, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected Tree Protocol • Ash Die-back guidance • City Centre GI Strategy • Tree Planting checklist and consultation protocol • Local Development Plan Tree protection policy • Supplementary Planning Guidance (Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands) <p>In Feb 2022 a Tree Management Strategy was approved by Cabinet setting out protocols relating to management of trees on /affecting property land in Council ownership and setting out the Council's duties in relation to protected trees. All above documentation is cross referenced in this document</p> <p>https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/13807/17-February-2022</p>	Completed Feb 2022

		Ongoing work in support this year includes mapping all sites on Council land that may be suitable for tree planting as well as mapping all trees planted in celebration of designation as a Queen's Green Canopy Champion City.	
7.	Prepare and adopt Trees and Development Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	Guidance prepared and adopted by Planning Committee https://www.swansea.gov.uk/ The SPG is referred to in consults on planning applications, including the requirement to use the Tree Replacement Standard where necessary.	Completed Oct 2021
8.	Prepare and adopt Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	<p>SPG Adopted by Planning Committee https://www.swansea.gov.uk/biodiversityspg</p> <p>The SPG is referred to in consults on planning applications, including the requirement to provide ecological enhancements.</p> <p>The requirement for biodiversity conservation and enhancement has also been included in the following SPG which have been adopted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gower AONB Design Guide • Placemaking Guidance for Residential Development • Placemaking Guidance for Infill and Backland Developments • Placemaking Guidance for Householder Developments <p>All available to view here: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/spg</p>	Completed Feb 2021

9.	Prepare and upload Biodiversity SPG guidance notes onto Council webpages	Guidance available on Council webpages https://www.swansea.gov.uk/biodiversityspg	Completed Nov 2021
11.	Develop, promote, and deliver a programme of public environmental events and activities	Annual programme of events published online to improve awareness and understanding of our natural environment	Completed May annually
12.	Appoint new Section 6 Duty Biodiversity Officer	Permanent appointment made to 0.5 Post	Completed June 2021
13.	Appoint new Planning Ecologist	<p>Additional Planning Ecologist now in permanent full time post to complement previous 0.8 post on the structure. Planning Ecologist has weekly open session with Planning Officers for the officers to raise any biodiversity queries when needed. Queries being used to determine further training requirements.</p> <p>Planning Ecologists also provide services and advice to Council Highways, Parks, Drainage and Housing teams as well as local councillors, external developers, ecologists and planning applicants. Fee-earning works are also undertaken.</p> <p>Planning ecologists attend Local Nature Partnership meetings, Association of Local Government Ecologist (ALGE) meetings and Welsh Govt Biodiversity & Planning Forum meetings.</p>	Completed June 2021

14.	Facilitate and support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) meetings and projects	Meetings held quarterly on an ongoing basis. Covered initially by temporary appointment to LNP post during 21/22. Permanent appointment agreed Feb 2022 (2 x part time posts)	Completed Feb 2022
16.	Co-ordinate and deliver the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) grant programmes	Annual NRW grant programme coordinated by AONB team and split between AONB, Countryside Access and Nature Conservation Teams	Completed March annually
18.	Plan, support and deliver new tree / woodland/hedgerow/orchard planting initiatives	No. of trees planted on Council land is a Corporate Performance Indicator Measured annually. During 20/21 a total of 230 heavy standard trees and 2800 whips were planted on Council land. Through 21/22 up to 1000 trees and over 5600 whips are planned to be planted across all Council land by various services and departments. Recorded to date during 22/23 around 260 heavy standard trees have been planted	Ongoing Monitored end of March annually
21.	Promote and support community biodiversity projects /initiatives, green projects for well-being, facilitate environmental voluntary groups, etc	Despite the impact of the pandemic, considerable support for, and collaboration with, community groups and other partners has been maintained and increased over the past year. This includes support for the Swansea Local Nature Partnership, Clyne Community Volunteers, Rosehill Quarry, various Friends of Parks Groups, the Environment Centre, etc.	Ongoing annually through grants and volunteer work

		Recent grant awards have targeted greater engagement with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking action to enhance and maintain and enjoy their local greenspaces and wildlife sites	
19.	Deliver new wildflower meadow planting and management initiatives	<p>Extent of wildflower planting is an annual Performance Indicator</p> <p>On the ground the Council's wildflower planting programme has now extended to around 40,000sq.m (about 6 football pitches) of wildflowers across approximately 190 sites. In support of this new grant funded cut and collect machinery has been trialled to help better manage grass cutting and help boost wildflowers and pollinators by maintaining species-rich vegetation. Plans are being prepared for extending this method of cutting next season using lessons learned and further public and stakeholder engagement.</p>	Ongoing. Monitored end of March annually
25.	Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) funding of Green Infrastructure (GI) projects	<p>GI Projects undertaken: Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal Office High Street - green roof • Potter's Wheel - green roof <p>Being delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragon Hotel - green walls <p>Green roof bin shelters around the city centre</p>	Completed March 2022

26.	City Centre GI improvements	Wind St: Public realm improvements include additional tree planting and large planting beds along whole length of street with a mixture of trees shrubs and pollinator attracting herbaceous species	March 2022
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Agenda Item 7



Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance

Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel 8th March 2023

An update on Air Quality in Swansea

Purpose	To brief the Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel on work related to air quality.
Content	An update on air pollution levels measured across Swansea and policy/practical options for reducing such levels
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided and give views
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor David Hopkins
Lead Officer(s) & Report Author	Tom Price Team Leader Pollution Control and Private Sector Housing Tel: 01792 635600 E-mail: tom.price@swansea.gov.uk

1. Air Quality in Swansea Council

- 1.1 Swansea Council is required to submit an Annual Progress Report (APR) to Welsh Government (WG) each year advising upon the assessment of ambient air quality in accordance with the EU objective concentrations. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the APR has not been submitted in 2020, 2021 or 2022. Confirmation has been received from WG that a combined APR for 2020 & 2021 can be submitted along with the 2022 APR. These reports are currently being finalised by a third-party consultant (Bureau Veritas) for submission to WG.
- 1.2 The draft conclusions reached for the 2019, 2020 & 2021 datasets are that the objectives for benzene, lead and sulphur dioxide have been met and that there is no requirement to proceed any further in reporting upon these pollutants. The council no longer monitors for benzene and lead but continues to have two monitoring locations for sulphur dioxide.

- 1.3 All monitoring sites remain compliant with both the annual mean and daily mean exceedance (35 days permitted) for particulate matter PM10.
- 1.4 There are also three fixed monitoring locations for particulate matter PM2.5 in Swansea.
- 1.5 The main pollutant of interest, for exceeding the National Air Quality Objective Concentration in Swansea, is Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), for the annual mean Objective of 40µgm⁻³.
- 1.6 Monitoring data collected during 2019, 2020 and 2021 indicates that compliance with the annual mean concentration for NO₂ continues.
- 1.7 Acknowledgment is made to the Coronavirus pandemic and the effect of lockdown periods upon people's activities.

2. Air Pollution Concentrations Measured Across Swansea

2.1 Real-time monitoring data is available via <http://swansea.airqualitydata.com/> and data can be downloaded from this site. This website is scheduled for review and upgrade if resources allow. The Council's data can also be viewed and downloaded via the Welsh Air Quality Forum (WAQF) website <https://airquality.gov.wales/>

2.2 Nitrogen Dioxide

2.2.1 Swansea Council utilises both automatic and non-automatic monitoring methods when undertaking its Local Air Quality Management duties. Appendix A includes a map showing the location of the automatic monitoring sites and Appendix B includes a map showing the location of the non-automatic monitoring sites in Swansea.

2.2.2 The ratified 2019, 2020 and 2021 datasets show that there continues to be no exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ Objective at locations within Swansea.

2.2.3 Appendix C includes the annual mean data for the continuous monitoring locations.

2.3 Particulate Matter (PM10)

2.3.1 PM₁₀ is monitored at five locations in Swansea. The map in Appendix A shows their locations.

2.3.2 The National Air Quality Objective Concentration, for PM10, is annual mean of 40µgm⁻³.

2.3.3 Monitoring data collected during 2019 and 2020 indicates that compliance with the annual mean concentration for PM10 continues. Appendix C shows the annual mean data for the continuous monitoring locations.

2.4 Particulate Matter (PM2.5)

2.4.1 PM_{2.5} is monitored at three locations in Swansea. The map in Appendix A shows their locations.

2.4.2 Currently, in Wales, there is no Air Quality Objective Concentration for PM_{2.5}

2.4.3 The World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline concentration for PM_{2.5} is 5µgm⁻³. These guidelines are of a high methodological quality and are developed through a transparent, evidence-based decision-making process. In addition to the guideline values, the WHO Global air quality guidelines provide interim targets to promote a gradual shift from high to lower concentrations ([https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health))

2.4.4 See Appendix C for the annual mean data for the continuous monitoring locations.

3. Policy/Practical Options for Reducing Air Pollution

3.1 The Pollution Control & Private Sector Housing Team continues to monitor air quality across Swansea. During the Coronavirus pandemic, the demand upon provision of Environmental Health services increased dramatically and as teams progress through the recovery phase, more resources will be redirected towards collaborative air quality approaches.

3.2 Whilst Swansea is currently compliant with WG's Air Quality Objectives, in-line with WG policy, the Council will continue to work towards reducing exposure where possible.

3.3 Air quality is considered as part of the Planning consultation processes by the team on a case-by-case basis.

3.4 Officers continue to respond to complaints regarding burning of waste, domestic combustion appliances and provide advice on the appropriate usage of fuels.

3.5 The Council has made a commitment to 'work with others to provide sustainable and low carbon transport and infrastructure, providing improved and cheaper connectivity and mobility and associated benefits at reduced environmental cost and improved air quality'.

- 3.6 Previous WG consultations, White Paper on a Clean Air (Wales) Bill and Reducing emissions from domestic burning of solid fuels, provided opportunities for all stakeholders to respond to the questions asked by WG on their future plans to tackle air quality. The council are currently involved in working groups providing input into proposed new Clean Air Powers.
- 3.7 The team continues to collaborate with outside organisations to look at funding possibilities to carry out research in the air quality field. Having been awarded financial assistance from the WG Local Air Quality Support Fund, collaborative research work is being carried out with Swansea University, Think Air and Vortex IoT to measure local air quality and noise within the city and to test potential interventions. The outcomes of these projects will be reported to WG and will potentially be submitted to peer reviewed publications.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 None

5. Finance Implications

- 5.1 Revenue to fund the existing monitoring set out in this report is contained within existing budgets. Additional development of interventions would need to be addressed for additional funding opportunities.

6. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 6.1 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.

- 6.1.1 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'.

6.1.2 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.

6.2 There are no implications with regards to this report, which is for information and therefore an IIA screening form has not been completed.

Glossary of terms:

APR – Annual Progress Report

NO₂ – Nitrogen Dioxide

ugm⁻³ – micrograms per metre cubed

PM₁₀ – Particulate Matter <10microns

PM_{2.5} – Particulate Matter <2.5microns

WAQF – Welsh Air Quality Forum

WG – Welsh Government

WHO – World Health Organisation

Background papers: None

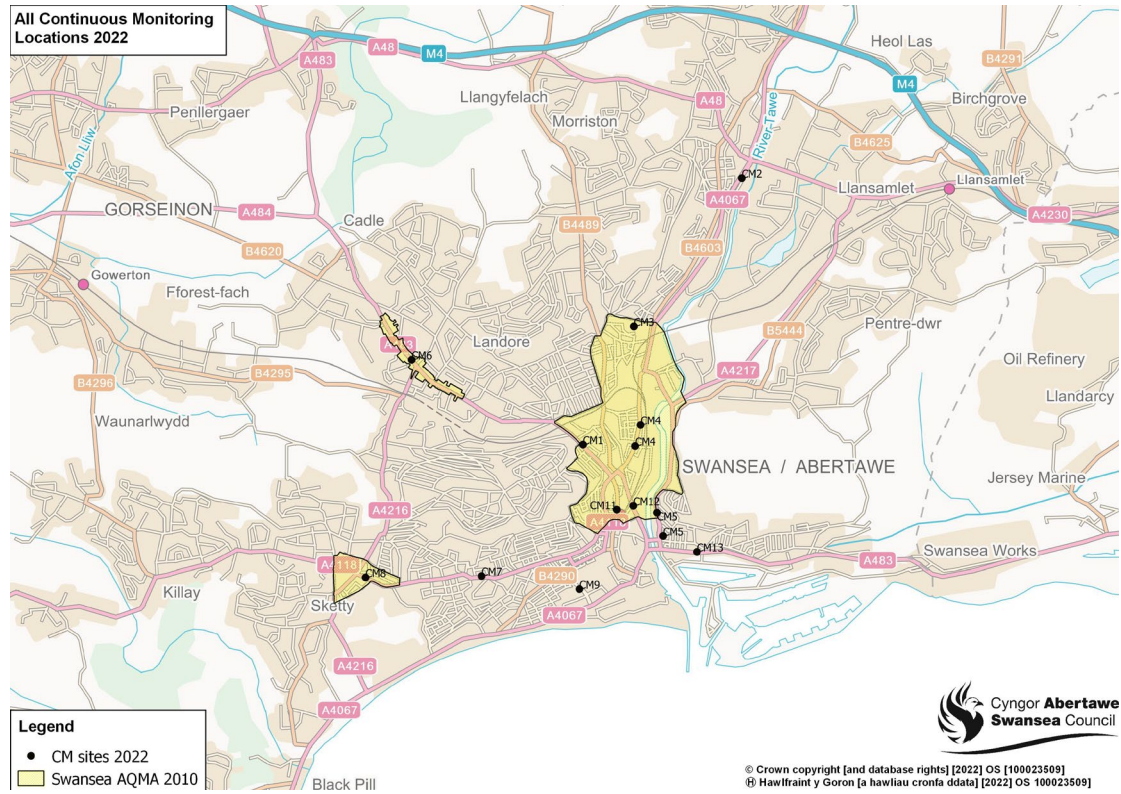
Appendices:

Appendix A - Map to show the location of the automatic monitoring sites in Swansea

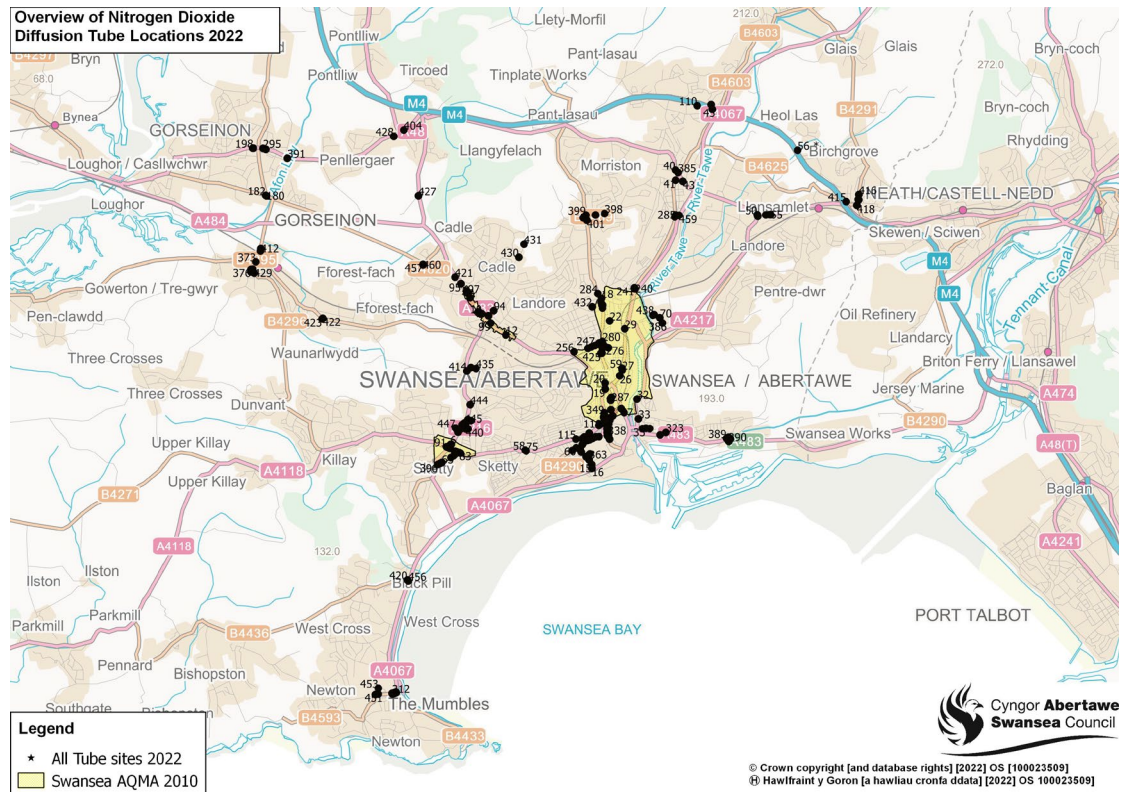
Appendix B: Map to show the location of the non-automatic monitoring sites in Swansea.

Appendix C: The annual mean data for the continuous monitoring locations.

Appendix A: Map to show the location of the automatic monitoring sites in Swansea



Appendix B: Map to show the location of the non-automatic monitoring sites in Swansea.



Appendix C: The annual mean data for the continuous monitoring locations.

Table to show annual mean NO₂ concentrations (µgm⁻³)

	CM1	CM2	CM3	CM4	CM5	CM11	CM12	CM13
2014	25	21.1	17.08	48.99	35.83	56.85	-	-
2015	23	20.5	14.75	40.24	33.71	50.9	-	-
2016	24.4	22.3	16.39	45.59	35.83	48.3	-	-
2017	20	20.6	13.41	40.04	32.19	44	25.73	-
2018	18.7	18.1	14.46	37.29	30.3	37.7	26.18	27
2019	24	23.5	13.1	34.8	34.6	44.5	27	28.5
2020	17.6	11.4	10.5	28.8	25.6	31.2	21.7	10.8
2021	19.2	21.3	11.3	31.4	35	35.3	26.2	23.8

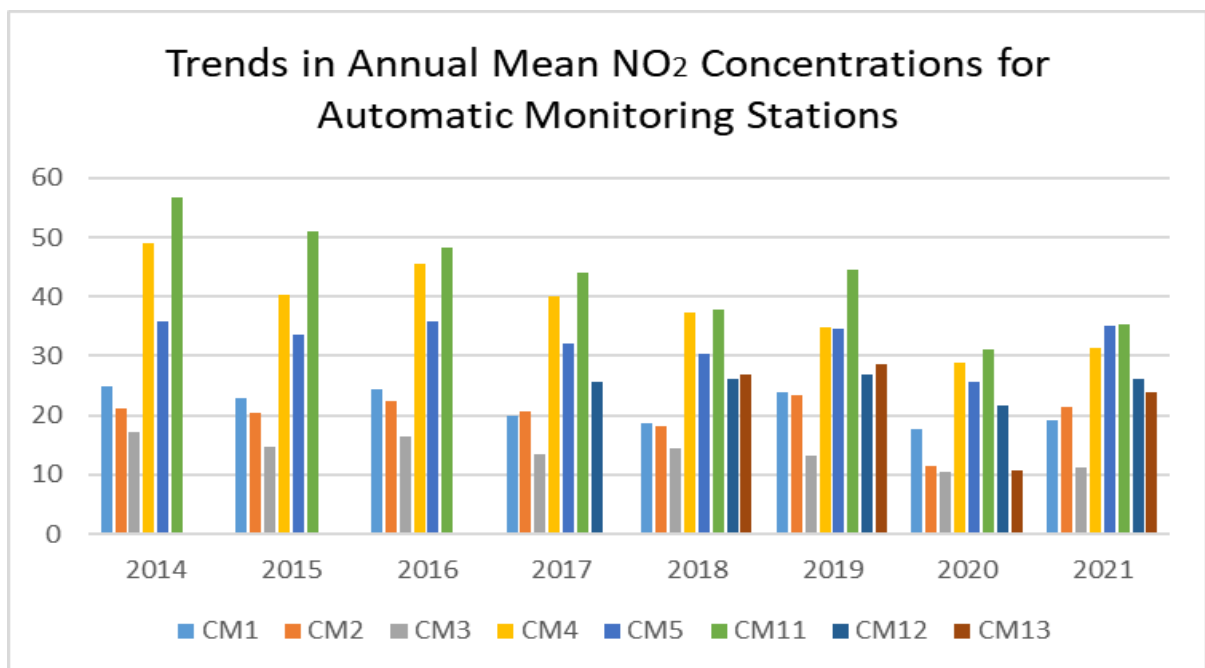


Table to show annual mean PM₁₀ concentrations (µgm⁻³)

	CM1	CM2	CM6	CM7	CM8	CM9	CM10
2014	20.29	13.18	19.02	17.18	18.28	17.27	14.49
2015	20.2		16.25	14.76	18.72	16.62	11.98
2016	19.14		12.91	13.2	15.28	14.4	11.93
2017	18.9		10.61	11.13	11.43	9.74	12.11
2018	19.69		9.9	12.46	14.65	11.39	
2019	18.38		17.35	15.13	18.55	15.47	
2020	18.28		17.7	15.9	14.9	18.3	
2021	18.1		16.5	14.5	15.2	15.4	

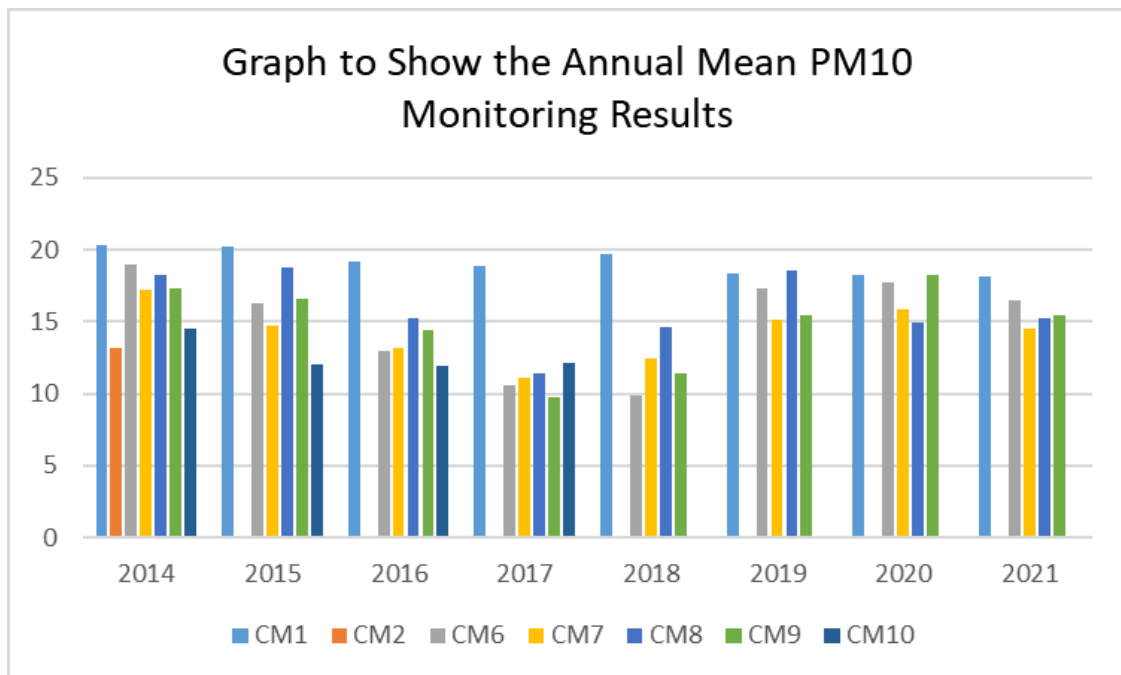
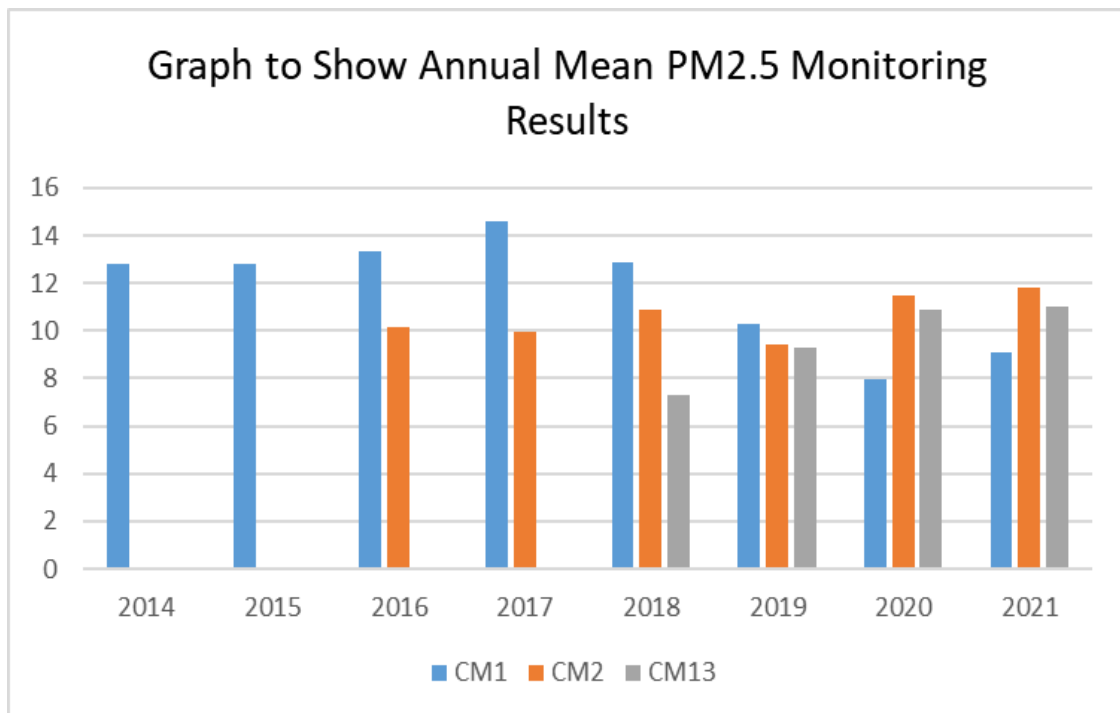


Table to show annual mean PM_{2.5} concentrations (µgm⁻³)

	CM1	CM2	CM13
2014	12.8		
2015	12.8		
2016	13.37	10.14	
2017	14.6	9.95	
2018	12.86	10.86	7.28
2019	10.27	9.39	9.31
2020	7.97	11.47	10.89
2021	9.1	11.8	11



Agenda Item 8



Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure

Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel – 8th March 2023

Local Flood Risk Management

Purpose	To provide an update on the policy/service area
Content	Update on Flood Risk Management in the City and County of Swansea
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the report, to give their views and make recommendations to Cabinet Member as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure
Lead Officer(s)	Stuart Davies Head of Highways and Transportation
Report Author	Mike Sweeney
Legal Officer	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer	Ben Smith
Access to Services Officer	Rhian Millar

1.0 Background

1.1 The Drainage Section is part of the Highways and Transportation Section. It covers a wide range of services within Flood Risk Management with the main role for overseeing compliance to statutory duties and the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. This report will focus on the current work ongoing in order to comply with the national objectives which include:-

- Reducing the consequences of flooding to individuals
- Raising awareness of and engaging people in response to flood and coastal erosion
- Providing an effective and sustained response to flood and coastal erosion events
- Prioritising Investment in the most 'at risk' communities.

1.2 To implement these objectives will be the responsibility of everyone involved in or affected by Flood and Coastal erosion risk management. From Welsh Government to the Welsh risk management Authorities in Wales, including Natural Resources Wales, Swansea Council as Lead Local Flood Authority and Welsh Water. The Authority continues to work closely with these organisations to ensure that best practice is achieved with opportunities to share information and joint funding is continuously ongoing.

2.0 The key activities which are ongoing include:-

2.1 The Authority will need to produce a new Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) which will incorporate an action plan to manage the Local Authority's expectations for managing flood risk from local sources for another cycle of 6 years . The action plan will replace the Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP), with the requirement that the new draft LFRMS produced by October 2023 with the final published in March 2024. This will supersede the existing FRMP produced by the Authority, which introduced measures for reducing flood risk in our most at risk communities between 2015-21 with another 6 year plan to manage flood risk.

To ensure consistency across Wales the Welsh Local Government Association had arranged for a good practice workshop in February this year to ensure that the production of the new LFRMS aligns with an all Wales approach, in how Lead Local Authorities in Wales manage flood risk to those communities subjected to significant flood risk. The major difference will be that instead of using individual Wards for areas where mitigation measures have been applied and this can be seen in the existing FRMP, the All Wales approach will be using data from Natural Resources Wales, Communities at Risk Register (CARR) where hydrological boundaries will set out new high flood risk areas in Swansea. This means that instead of having 32 wards with measures implemented to manage flood risk for each specific ward, the likelihood is that this will be replaced with a number of high flood risk areas across the region based on CARR boundaries. This work is at an early stage of development.

2.1 Welsh Government Grant funding

Opportunities for external funding is continually being explored. Welsh Government FCERM Grant awards have been given to the following flood affected areas which have incurred significant and repeated flooding from local sources/surface water flooding.

Current grant supported schemes

Brockhole Stream Blackpill – Detailed Design
400 Birchgrove Road – Outline Business Case

Llys Ddol Morryston - Outline Business Case
Capel Road Clydach - Business Justification Case
Kingrosia Park Clydach - Outline Business Case
Killay Square Killay - Business Justification Case
West Street Gorseinon BJC
Beryl Road Clydach- BJC

The above Business Cases provide Welsh Government with a steer on schemes to be taken forward to the next stage of the grant process.

3 Stages of Grant Process

- First stage BJC/OBC
- Second Stage FBC or Detailed design
- Third Stage- Construction

The current trend is that some Business cases are taking longer than expected due to complexity of the study. This is causing some frustration within communities due to the time being taken to complete the assessments. To note that funding is not guaranteed, as the FCERM Capital Programme and grant allocation is provided on a priority basis to those communities who rank highest across Wales.

2.2 **Small Works Grant 22/23**

An assessment made in 2021 and a design completed to improve the headwall arrangements for one of our critical watercourses at Birchtree Close Sketty. The Authority had received grant monies in the sum of £168k to undertake improvement works to protect properties on Derwen Fawr Road with the works providing an enhanced protection to reduce flood risk at this location. The works will be completed early March 2023.

2.3 **Capital Drainage Budget**

The Drainage Section is responsible for works required to improve drainage systems for the purpose of preventing flooding to the highway and risk to properties. The budget is also used for flooding complaints received from other departments which has increased the workload to this section.

With collaboration with the operational highways team and other internal departments works are identified to capture works which need to be undertaken to prevent flooding to the highway and properties. In addition works are identified via complaints received from Members and members of the public should flooding be reported which is over and above routine maintenance requirements.

Particular examples of works completed include ditching works, gabion works , introduction of new improved drainage systems, land drainage

systems, sink holes or any other works. Twenty five drainage schemes have been completed to date this year

2.4 Reservoir Act 1975 compliance

The Drainage Section is responsible with the safety measures for the two raised reservoirs we have in Swansea, namely Brynmill and Lower Swansea Valley reservoirs to ensure that in the interest of safety the reservoirs comply with the Reservoir Act 1975. There is ongoing annual works to be carried out to satisfy the recommendations of the inspection reports carried out by independent Panel Reservoirs' engineers.

Significant works have been completed at Brynmill Park this year in the sum of 100k circa to introduce improvements to the supporting embankment to the water body in order to comply with statutory requirements.

2.5 SAB function

Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 came into effect on 7 January 2019. It requires new developments with more than one dwelling, or a construction area of at least 100 square meters, to include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS must be designed and built in accordance with the Statutory Standards and construction must not commence until proposals are approved by the SuDS Approving Bodies (SABs). SABs are required by the legislation to adopt and maintain SuDS under certain conditions.

The SAB function is currently being carried out by 2 officers who approve drainage strategies to ensure compliance to the National Standards. New developments will now incorporate good suds design within their drainage strategies to ensure that the wider benefits to the environment are achieved, whilst ensuring that flood risk is not increased as the result of the development. For the year 2022 the SAB team had received 82 SAB applications with approvals granted for 29 applications. The other applications remain pending with further information required to progress with the application.

Good collaboration with internal stakeholders through working groups has been essential in order to ensure that projects consider suds components at an early stage so that timelines and project deliveries are achieved. This is the case for many projects such as the More Homes Projects, Active travel schemes, 21st Century Schools programme and City Centre Regen developments where SAB officers have been attending stakeholder meetings at an early stage to ensure that submitted drainage schemes comply with National Standards. All new projects are delivering good suds systems which does not only manage the flood risk from proposed development but provide more wider benefits to improve the environment.

All developers have access to a pre-application service which offers early engagement in the smooth delivery of drainage strategies to meet the suds standards

In terms of planning and the potential impacts of new developments, there is close and good collaborative work being undertaken between internal departments and external risk management authorities. This is to ensure that flood risk is not exacerbated as the result of new development proposals. Compliance to the requirements of Planning Policy Wales and Tan15 ensures that national guidance is adhered to. Across the 2022 financial year we were consulted by the Planning department 354 times over a range of differently sized sites. These vary from large strategic sites that are proposed, to small windfall sites that comprised of no more than 3 or 4 units. We have provided assessments in relation to local flood risk from all sources and the management of surface water arising from additional impermeable areas.

Going forward the new TAN 15 will be implemented on the 1st June 2023 to ensure that the decisions made by the Planning department has due regard to the updated Flood Map for Planning which makes allowances for climate change predictions. Consequently, the Authority is required by the Welsh Minister to complete a Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment to identify flood mitigation measures/pipeline of schemes as the result of climate change predictions in order to inform planning decisions. This work is ongoing.

2.6 Coastal Risk Management Programme

As part the National Coastal Erosion Risk Management Programme (CRMP) construction works of the flood defence walls at Mumbles has recently commenced. The scheme will not only provide a sustainable flood defence in Mumbles but will seeking to maximise multiple benefits i.e. increase tourism, green infrastructure and other benefits.

2.7 Operational Update

The Service have been running a very successful Economic Regeneration fund Project in relation to drainage. Additional gully tankers have been brought in and been tasked with clearing the backlog with gulley emptying. In excess of 30,000 additional drains have been cleaned. This has also allowed us to pro-actively clean certain at risk sites and had helped prevent a number of Highway flooding. The project has also carried out improvements corporately on high risk watercourses and allowed a small amount of assistance to be given over and above the services statutory responsibility. Recent update, economic recovery funding has allowed an additional drainage and flooding response team to be set up. This includes three additional

teams of tankers for the highway and a water course team to look after all Council flood risk culverts..

Sandbags – The Authority has additional funding to assist with private flooding to deliver sandbags to flood affected properties. However, it is to be noted that there is no statutory duty to provide or distribute sandbags to residents, and unfortunately would not be able to respond quickly in an emergency to all the requests it receives. In general sandbags will only be delivered where flooding is imminent and if the Council has available resources. Consequently, the delivery of sandbags should not be relied upon and the Authority will not deliver in advance of severe weather warnings unless there is a liability to do so.

Road Sweeping - Additional funding is provided for leaf clearance during the Autumn months over and above regular maintenance regimes, when cleansing staff will work overtime on the road sweepers where flood risk areas are targeted in accordance to priority. i.e. combination of high leaf area with known flooding issues and slip hazards. This is in addition to the regular cleansing works when clearing of leaf fall to prevent flooding in high priority areas is undertaken.

In addition to this all cleansing operatives as part of their street cleaning duties will inspect gullies and if covered in leaves or general detritus they are instructed to clean to ensure that the drain works effectively. If gullies need further work then this is reported to Highways for further investigation.

The Highways department has a policy in place on watercourse inspection procedures. Watercourses are checked at the frequencies below depending in weather conditions and level of flood risk. During dry periods inspections will not be carried out if deemed unnecessary.

	Sept to March	April to August
Blackpill & Birchtree Close	Daily	Weekly
Red List	Weekly	Monthly
High Priority	Fortnightly	Monthly
Low Priority	Monthly	Bi-Monthly

Red List to be checked following notification of a severe weather warning to wet weather. Red list to be rechecked following severe wet weather.

3.0 Future Challenges & Opportunities

- 3.1. The production of the new Local Flood Risk Management Strategy will place an additional financial burden of the Authority to deliver the measures and actions which will be outlined in the new LFRMS. Should Welsh Government Grant funding not be made available for future business cases and the construction of flood alleviation schemes, then the responsibility for managing flood risk for our communities will solely rest with the Authority to deliver. Consequently, the LFRMS will need to have the appropriate governance in place to consider, where available, allocation of appropriate resource, design and construction of potential flood measures/interventions going forward and also, the internal staff to support the delivery of the plan.
- 3.2 The trend on the demand of delivery the SAB function is increasing and the need to deliver the service will incur additional pressures in managing the SAB process and the adoption of sustainable drainage features.
- 3.3. The introduction of the new Tan 15 in June 2023 will increase the workload on the Drainage Section, as Planning Consultations will need to be responded to have due to regard, to the updated flood maps and climate change predictions to inform Planning decision.

4.0 Risks

- 4.1 Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Swansea Council became a lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and was given a series of new responsibilities to co-ordinate the management of local flood risk for surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. Failure to fulfil this statutory duty will result in increased flood risk within the administrative boundary of Swansea Council and non-compliance to the expectations of Welsh Government.

This may lead to increased risk to life and property and critical infrastructure with the Authority being subjected to claims and public criticism

Shortage of Drainage Engineers is being felt across the water industry where appointments of suitable candidates for drainage roles are being found difficult to fill in across many Authorities and other sectors.

5.0 Legal implications

The Flood Risk Regulations came into force in December 2009 and the Flood and Water Management Act became law in April 2010. Under this legislation, the Council has been identified as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and has been given a number of key responsibilities including the preparation of a Local Flood Risk

Management Strategy (LFRMS). Policy guidance associated with flood risk and development is also contained within Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and Technical Advice Note 15 (TAN15). Although PPW and TAN15 do not dictate the requirements for, or provide any guidance on, preparing a LFRMS, the strategy is consistent with the requirements of this Guidance. Implementation of specific measures shall also take into consideration other legislation including the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the Coast Protection Act 1949.

6.0 Finance Implications

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report and in the meantime, costs will continue to be contained within existing budgets.

7.0. Integrated Assessment Implications

This is an information only report, with no implications, therefore no IIA required

Background papers: None

Appendices: None.

Agenda Item 9

CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

Meeting 1 13 September 2022 10am	CANCELLED
Meeting 2 9 November 2022 10am	Role of the Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel Water Quality and Water Management <i>Cllr David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance</i> <i>Relevant Officers (Tom Price / Carol Morgan/ Sam Naylor / Paula Livingstone)</i> <i>Representatives from Natural Resources Wales - Hamish Osborn / Sarah Bennett</i> Overview of Climate Change and Nature in Swansea (including key priorities and challenges) <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllrs Andrea Lewis / Andrew Stevens / David Hopkins</i> <i>Relevant Officers</i> Draft Work Programme 2022-23
Meeting 3 10 January 2023 10am	Climate Change Update (including action plan for 2030 and Response to WAO report: Public Sector readiness for net zero carbon by 2030) <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</i> <i>Officers - Geoff Bacon / Rachel Lewis</i> Green Vehicle Adoption <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</i> <i>Officers - Stuart Davies / Mark Barrow</i> Public / Residential EV Charging <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</i> <i>Officers - Stuart Davies / Matthew Bowyer / Chloe Lewis</i> Weed Management / Use of Glyphosate <i>Invited to attend:</i>

	<p><i>Cllr Andrew Stevens – Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure</i> <i>Bob Fenwick, Group Leader Highways Maintenance</i></p>
<p>Meeting 4 8 March 2023</p> <p>10am</p>	<p>Nature Conservation – Project updates <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance</i> <i>Deborah Hill – Nature Conservation Team Leader</i> <i>Paul Meller – Natural Environment Section Manager</i></p> <p>Air Quality Management <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr David Hopkins</i> <i>Carol Morgan, Head of Housing and Public Health</i> <i>Tom Price – Team Leader, Pollution Control</i></p> <p>Local Flood Risk Management – Annual Update <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr Andrew Stevens – Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure</i> <i>Stuart Davies – Head of Highways and Transportation</i> <i>Mike Sweeney – Team Leader, Highways and Transportation</i></p>
<p>Meeting 5 2 May 2023</p> <p>10am</p>	<p>Climate Change Update (further discussion on ‘Green Vehicle Adoption’ to be included under this item – continuing from 10 January meeting) <i>Invited to attend:</i> <i>Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</i> <i>Relevant Officers</i> <i>Mark Barrow for Green Vehicle Adoption</i></p> <p>Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments <i>Cllrs Andrew Stevens / Andrea Lewis / David Hopkins</i></p> <p>End of Year Review</p>

Future work programme items:

- Environmental Tourism (from work plan 2021-22)