



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Anti-Social Behaviour

At: Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

On: Tuesday, 23 May 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Convenor: Councillor Terry Hennegan

Membership:

Councillors: S Bennett, A Davis, A M Day, R Fogarty, V A Holland, Y V Jardine, A J Jeffery, M H Jones, M Jones, C L Philpott, B J Rowlands and M S Tribe

Agenda

Page No.

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests

3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

4 Minutes

1 - 2

5 Public Questions

Questions can be submitted in writing to scrutiny@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 with in a 10-minute period.

6 Roundtable Meeting with Equality Forums/Groups in Swansea

3 - 10

7 Inquiry Project Plan / Work Programme

11

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Huw Evans'.

Huw Evans

Head of Democratic Services

Date: 16 May 2023

Contact: Scrutiny Officer

Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Anti-Social Behaviour**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

Tuesday, 16 May 2023 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor T J Hennegan (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

V A Holland
M H Jones

Councillor(s)

Y V Jardine
M Jones

Councillor(s)

A J Jeffery

Other Attendees

Roxane Dacey – Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS)
Lisa Wells – City Centre Manager
Steven Gallagher – Business Crime Reduction
Ben Reynolds, Urban Foundry Ltd
Paul Whitaker, Mumbles Traders
Russell Greenslade, Swansea Business Improvement District
Alyson Pugh, Cabinet Member

Officers

Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer
Paul Thomas, Resilience Manager
Gareth Pritchard, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): M S Tribe

43 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

44 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None

45 Minutes

The minutes for the informal meeting on the 9 May 2023 were noted.

46 Public Questions

No public questions were received.

47 Roundtable Meeting with Local Business Community and Swansea Council for Voluntary Service

The Panel invited representatives from Swansea Council for Voluntary Service and local business representatives to the meeting to discuss the following questions:

1. How do you feel about Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea? (your perceptions)
2. Do you believe it is dealt with appropriately and effectively in Swansea?
3. Do you think that the council and its partners work together effectively to both prevent and tackle ASB?
4. How would you like to see Swansea Council and its partners improve how it prevents and tackles ASB in Swansea?

The Panel thanked those people who attended the meeting and also those who took time to send in a written submission.

The evidence from this meeting will form part of the inquiry findings report, which will be discussed by the Panel on the 29 June 2023.

48 Inquiry Project Plan / Work Programme

The up-to-date project plan was noted.

The meeting ended at 11.55 am

Chair

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Convener of the Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Panel

23 May 2023

Consultation with Equality Forums/Groups

Purpose	To gain the views of the public in Swansea in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour
Content	Key questions sent to equality forums and groups in advance of a Q&A at the meeting
Councillors are being asked to	To consider and discuss the issue as part of the scrutiny inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour
Lead Councillor(s)	Terry Hennegan, Convener of the Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel
Lead Officer(s)	Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer Michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

1. Context

The Panel agreed, as part of their inquiry into anti-social behaviour in Swansea, to speak to voluntary sector, equality forum and business community. The Panel have therefore invited members of equality forums in Swansea to the meeting today (and/or asked for written submission, see *attached those received*) including from

- Over 50s
- LGBTQ+ Forum
- Disability Forum.
- Black Minority Ethnic Communities Forum

2. Key Issues and Questions

The following questions/issues were sent to the representatives in advance, in preparation for the scrutiny meeting:

1. How do you feel about Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea? (your perceptions)
2. Do you believe it is dealt with appropriately and effectively in Swansea?
3. Do you think that the council and its partners work together effectively to both prevent and tackle ASB?
4. How would you like to see Swansea Council and its partners improve how it prevents and tackles ASB in Swansea?

Comments received from Ageing Well participants

ID	How do you feel about Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?	Do you believe it is dealt with appropriately and effectively in Swansea?	Do you think that the council and its partners work together effectively to both prevent and tackle ASB?	How would you like to see Swansea Council and its partners improve how it prevents and tackles ASB in Swansea?
1	<p>I feel the cleanliness and street furniture around the city centre needs to be improved, having a number of closed down shops with shop windows not looking good impacts on people's perceptions of the area ... particular areas like castle gardens and Oxford Street attract large groups of people drinking and using substances it would be nice to have some form of pop up glass booths in the area with services visible to the public.</p>	<p>I don't know what is done to tackle anti social behaviour in Swansea.. I am not online therefore if things are done they don't filter through to people who don't use online services..</p>	<p>No I do not feel they do, it would be nice to see more visibility of staggs or anti social behaviour teams made up of various organisations staff working together..</p>	<p>More visibility of staff, more information sharing and looking at how areas could be improved , cleaned and preventative things put in place in particular areas especially busy areas of the city centre..</p>
2	<p>I think all cities get pockets of anti social behaviour and areas have hot spots, but it's about how that is dealt with....</p> <p>having outreach and regular patrols from organisations and being in the heart of those areas working is key..</p> <p>I have noticed several areas within swansea where people gather at central points and it can be uncomfortable for older people definitely certain locations could be improved..</p>	<p>Its hard to tell I don't know what proposes are in place to deal with it..</p>	<p>I do not know finding information on things is difficult I wouldn't know what is done to tackle it.</p>	<p>More awareness of projects and programmes that are taking place, a blend of promotion and projects to tackle and break down barriers</p>

Comments received from Ageing Well participants

3	You see it every time you enter the city centre when shopping...	I don't see police or others that much in the city and more visible presence would improve what people think..	No	Being seen more
4	Disgusting, people are supposed to look out for fellow citizens and they don't it's a culture thing.. It scares people, It makes people not want to attend the city centre in particular locations..	I don't think public serve visibility is enough in main towns and cities... more services present and visible in prime locations it's more than just covering wind street in the night..	I cant comment as I am not aware of what is being done to tackle it....how is it communicated what is done? Is it just social media that it gets promoted on?	More visible literature, campaigns around positive promotion and also promoting what being done and how people can report issues if needed....physical permanent fixtures....
5	I see asb as I walk everyday around swansea city centre and surrounding wards such as uplands sketty and Castle wards.. I see groups of people in particular locations drinking swearing, St Mary's Church I have noticed an increase in issued over recent months..	I think services are too soft on offenders with incidents I have witnessed since the start of January 2023 in the city centre...	I don't know what's being done to work on Anti social behaviour, I am also not online so if things are promoted and their online then there is a number of people who don't use these platforms...promotion needs a blended approach.	I think a more visible presence in the city centre of services is vital, not just police patrolling but a comvined group of services.... a help bus during the day or a visible glass office space...information more easily accessible and promoted..
6	I think there is a number of areas where its particularly bad...I reside in the marina area and in the summer it's extremely bad the police do increase patrols however due to the location a more permanent presence or physical space is needed due to the beach and dunes.	No I don't, the reason being is the police are working hard in summer months but it needs a blended permanent presence all year around from all organisations things need to be changed...	No I don't think they do if I am honest, because I witness incidents first hand regularly. I live in a area that suffers with ASB and I wouldn't know what is a actually done to tackle issue as I have never had any information through the door to promote how asb is tackled.	Make it safer by increased presence of all organisations and setting up a visible working space for organisations along the beach somewhere...canvassing areas with literature to promote reporting mechanisms and what is being done to improve things.

Comments received from Ageing Well participants

7	Its terrible, I run a local establishment and we have had problems with people going to the toilet many times on the premises during early hours of the morning it's unpleasant having to clean up human waste.	Not at all...for a number of reasons.	No they don't I couldn't tell you what is done as I don't see promotion and police are busy but I don't understand why there isn't organisation working together responding to asb	Answering calls, visible presence and better promotion
8	<p>I think the anti social behaviour is heavily linked to drink and drugs especially on the sea front which has increased dramatically by housing vulnerable people in the same place without a managed complex..</p> <p>Ultimately these places are b&b's not supported living complexes like it appears they are being treated as asb then spills out from these location to the surrounding area.</p>	No because their is not enough resources in place to deal with it and pcsos aren't gifted their full amount of powers to deal with asb..	I think more could be done especially in summer month, I am not aware of how asb is dealt with in Swansea and see no promotion of how it is dealt with.	A more cohesive visible approach across areas especially in busy periods, more awareness and a better Partnership in terms of housing.
9	I don't think its tackled appropriately and I see alot of it when I travel around the county.	<p>Not as well as it could be, the pcso needs more powers to disperse people..</p> <p>There needs to be a more visible presence from police and council and deal with it...</p>	I think there needs to be a better connection between partners to tackle it, looking at outreach and prevention methods.. in terms of awareness then I think alot more could be done to raise how to report buy also to raise what is being done.	<p>Awareness raising, promotion and being seen by community members..</p> <p>An outreach van or a base in the community for partners to work from..</p>

Submission from Volunteer at Congolese Development Project

1. How do you feel about Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?

Antisocial behaviour is behaviour that disturb the peace of people or cause harm to them. In Swansea such behaviour includes illegal drawing of graffiti, being loud in public places, dumping among many others. Most of this behaviour is influenced by drugs and alcohol.

2. Do you believe it is dealt with appropriately and effectively in Swansea?

ASB is dealt properly in Swansea. There is heavy police presence and cameras everywhere. The police as always present at Wind Street, and this may deter people from engaging in any antisocial behaviour. Similarly, there have been designated graffiti sites where people draw. However, there are still areas which illegal graffiti around the city. There are several dustbins around the city preventing people from dumping.

3. Do you think that the council and its partners work together effectively to both prevent and tackle ASB?

Yes.

4. How would you like to see Swansea Council and its partners improve how it prevents and tackles ASB in Swansea?

By clearly designating areas for drawing graffiti and adding dustbins to areas where there are none.

ASB Scrutiny Enquiry - Victim Support Response

How do you feel about Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?

It is my belief that there is definitely an issue with ASB. I support many service users within the Swansea area and have heard their personal experiences and how they have been affected. I am often told by service users that there is often little or no support or they are unaware of any help that they may be entitled to. My service users have expressed their frustration at this and often feel that they have nowhere to turn. The anxiety and drip effect can be torture for the person living with it and the victim often adapts their day to accommodate the perpetrator.

The issues are prevalent with neighbours, as well as within the town centre. I feel as though ASB has increased over the last few months, consequently leaving service users feeling intimidated and vulnerable when entering the city centre. Some service users have informed us that they will avoid particular areas of the town centre and have changed their routines to only enter the city at certain times. (This is more so the older and more vulnerable service users)

It is often not seen as a 'priority' amongst the list of crimes that SWP are having to respond to in Swansea. ASB is often very difficult to evidence and can be perceived as an 'invisible' crime as perpetrators are often not caught in the act, nor leave behind a trail of evidence. Although we experience high levels of referrals of ASB for the Swansea area I do feel that there is an equally high proportion of ASB in the city going unreported.

Do you believe it is dealt with appropriately and effectively in Swansea?

Through experience of supporting service users I can see that there have at times been support that has often been given to people, this has usually come from the police. Service users have expressed at times that the police have been 'helpful' but everything seems to take so long. I believe that many service users who are in council/social housing accommodation are unaware of their rights and if the council/housing can provide additional advice/ support. I feel that perpetrators are not dealt with a heavy enough deterrent in the first instance leading to ongoing ASB or progressively more violent behaviour.

Having attended various meetings, I was surprised at both the lack of rehabilitation and resources available for those behaving in an "anti-social" manner and the amount of victim blaming that occurs within these meetings. I don't believe the root cause is being addressed and I feel victims' needs are being neglected. Having said that, I have worked with some committed ASB workers who are doing everything they can to tackle the problems.

I think that in the main SWP and the LA are doing their best to combat ASB reports in the City. Our service-users regularly report that these agencies are doing 'nothing' to resolve their issues but looking at the facts it would be very difficult for them to make arrests or bring other resolutions when there is very little or no

evidence. I do feel that they do not treat the victims of ASB in an efficient way in terms of often not keeping them updated on cases, or being far too slow to respond to complaints.

The majority of my cases in Swansea involve housing associations so I don't have much experience of working with Swansea Council's ASB team so I don't know how well I can answer this question. I would say that I do think it is very useful that Swansea Council has Local Area Coordinators as I can signpost victims who have become isolated as a result of ASB and the Coordinators have a good local knowledge to help our clients recover.

Do you think that the council and its partners work together effectively to both prevent and tackle ASB?

From my current experience I can see that there are steps in place to help prevent/tackle ASB but I do believe there could be greater help for people who are victims of ASB. I believe that more support groups maybe beneficial and more information to help guide people who have been victims of ASB. I believe that working together is crucial to preventing ASB and can be a great way of sharing knowledge through organisations.

I have worked with various council staff and partners over the years and I feel they are doing everything possible in an attempt to tackle the issue. However, they are under-resourced and not able to make enough of an impact. In my experience, the council and partners have a better attitude towards ASB.

However, feedback from service users is that messages are often conflicting between partners, i.e. stating that the ASB is a police matter/ police stating it's a local authority matter. This at times becomes frustrating for the service users who then stops reporting.

My experience of PSG meetings is that the LA and its partners have strong appetite to reduce instances of ASB but may be hindered by a lack of resources to actually put plans into action.

I know in other areas of South Wales the police and local authority regularly attend Problem Solving Group meetings, I find these are useful to tack ASB and ensure that victims are receiving the appropriate support. (I'm not sure if these meetings are in Swansea already but if not they would be helpful I believe).

How would you like to see Swansea Council and its partners improve how it prevents and tackles ASB in Swansea?

I would like to see more support for victims as well as advice/drop in centres for people who are suffering with the effects of ASB .I would also like to see more training groups/courses available to help with the awareness and understanding of ASB which could be run via the local community. I believe that educating people at a younger age may also be of benefit (courses in schools). I believe that the council have a duty to impose stricter rules for tenants who are ASB perpetrators.

I think there needs to be a review of all services supporting ASB across South Wales. For an issue that is so prevalent, there is a definite lack of support available. From a SWVF perspective, we are one of few agencies that offer support to victims of ASB.

It would be good to see a more proactive approach to ASB rather than reactive and to give a consistent message to those reporting and being impacted by ASB. Feedback from service users has also highlighted that more CCTV maybe required around the outskirts of the city centre. Some service users have advised they have reported incidents whereby they thought there was a camera but have been told that the CCTV camera is no actually in use.

An improved communication process with victims: One of the big issues reported to us by victims is that they have not been contacted to discuss the issues or that there is no ongoing dialogue.

I (Hate Crime Team) haven't received any referral's from Swansea Council so I would like this to be addressed so that more victims are able to access our service. I think to be able to prevent and tackle ASB in Swansea we all need to improve our partnership working within the area.

If the behaviour doesn't meet the criminal threshold in individual incidents, such as staring to intimidate, taking images of a person's daily life, comments or behaviour that are made to provoke a reaction, relentless commenting, noise making or tampering with property without damage, using animal faeces in letterboxes, on door steps etc. or purposely blocking in cars to create an opportunity for interaction in which to use to be abusive. For these incidents it would be good if there could be more severe first warnings or injunction style reprimands issued to the perpetrator by the council. In my experience the victims of ASB just want to be left alone and to be able to use their gardens freely. I also think that the council should use the tenancy agreement more often to remind people that they may be compromising their accommodation if they continue to attack neighbours.

Cardiff Local Authority fund a specific ASB Champion that works alongside Victim Support and Cardiff Council ASB team to provide tailored support to victims of ASB for Cardiff Council housing tenants. If this could be mirrored in other Local Authorities then it would help with the efforts to support victims of ASB across South Wales.

14 March 2023

Agenda Item 7

Project Plan – Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour

Date/Venue	Evidence Gathering Activity
Pre-Inquiry Scrutiny Working Group 24 Nov 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of subject area with Lead Council Officer/s and Lead Cabinet Member. They will provide a strategic overview of Anti-Social Behaviour including details of the legal frameworks we work under and identifying who the key influencers are. Discuss and agree the Terms of Reference and Project Plan for the Inquiry. Agree public call for evidence and IIA for inquiry
Evidence gathering	
Session 1 17 Jan 23	Community Inclusion Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
Session 2 2 Feb 23	Police and Community Policing
Session 3 27 Feb 23	Education
Session 4 1 Mar 23	Youth Offending EVOLVE
Session 5 9 Mar 23	Council Housing Neighbourhood Support Unit Public Protection services including noise abatement; and Place/environmental services including fly tipping
Session 6 13 Apr 23	Registered Social Landlords / Housing Associations <i>Confirmed</i>
Session 7 9 May 2023 6.00PM	Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People CMET youth panel and young people from youth clubs. <i>In Person only meeting at East Early Help Hub, 495 Llangyfelach Rd, Brynhyfryd, Swansea SA5 9EA</i>
Session 8 16 May 23 10am	Round table meeting with Voluntary Sector SCVS rep and Local Business <i>Confirmed</i>
Session 9 23 May 23 10am	Roundtable meeting with Equalities Forums/Groups <i>Confirmed</i>
Concluding Inquiry	
Meeting 10 29 Jun 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk based research – some practice elsewhere Findings report and discussion
Meeting 11	Draft final report – informal meeting of Panel members only
Meeting 12	Final Report – agreement for submission to Cabinet