



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Scrutiny Programme Committee

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

On: Tuesday, 14 November 2023

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Peter Black CBE

Membership:

Councillors: A Davis, E W Fitzgerald, V A Holland, M Jones, W G Lewis, P N May, F D O'Brien, S Pritchard and T M White

Statutory Co-opted Members: Beth Allender and Elizabeth Lee

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

Watch Online: <http://tiny.cc/SPC1411>

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

Agenda

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1 Apologies for Absence.

2 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests

3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

4 Minutes.

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

1 - 5

5 Public Question Time.

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

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Next Meeting: Tuesday, 19 December 2023 at 4.00 pm

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Contact: Democratic Services - Tel (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 17 October 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
W G Lewis
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P N May
T M White

Councillor(s)

M Jones
F D O'Brien

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Beth Allender Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley P R Hood-Williams L R Jones

Public Services Board Scrutiny Co-opted Member(s)

C Bija

Officer(s)

Leanne Ahern	Public Services Board Support Officer
Steve King	Information, Research & GIS Team Leader
Sarah Lackenby	Head of Digital and Customer Services
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Richard Rowlands	Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Ben Smith	Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer
Ness Young	Director of Corporate Services

Also present

H Grey	Natural Resources Wales (Public Services Board Operational Lead) –
A S Lewis	Chair of Swansea Public Services Board / Deputy Leader, Swansea Council
J Richmond	Swansea Council (Public Services Board Operational Lead)
R Stewart	Leader, Swansea Council
R Thomas	Vice-Chair of Swansea Public Services Board / Chief Fire Officer, Chief Fire Officer, Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): V A Holland

Councillor Co-opted Members: S M Jones and S E Keeton

25 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

Councillors L R Jones and S Pritchard declared a Personal Interest in Minute 29 "Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board".

26 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

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

27 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 19 September 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

28 Public Question Time.

None.

29 Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of Swansea PSB, accompanied by the PSB representatives and lead officers, were present for Scrutiny of the Swansea Public Services Board (PSB).

Provided to the Committee in support of the session, for questions, were:

- An update report on the efforts by the PSB to review the development of the performance framework to help show the work being undertaken by the PSB, following on from the agreement of a new PSB Well-being Plan 2023-28.
- PSB Performance Framework / Action Plan 2023/24, including progress / status at Quarter 2 (Appendix A).
- Draft Population Measures (Appendix B).

Committee questioning and discussion regarding the performance of the PSB focussed on the following:

- The positive progress in developing a PSB Action Plan and challenges with the new performance framework;
- Action Plan progress
- Developments in partnership / collaborative working;

- Significant areas of work and challenges within the PSB Action Plan – noted as associated with Early Years and Climate Change Strategy activities;
- Well-being Step 4 – Making Swansea Safer, more cohesive and prosperous – the success of the pop up Community Village held on 3 June and the future development of this initiative across Swansea, including utilisation of community buildings;
- Efforts to increase community engagement.

The Chair thanked all concerned for the developments of the PSB performance framework and Action Plan, which the Committee can monitor in measuring the performance of the PSB and difference being made.

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Chair of the Public Services Board, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

30 Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operating Model.

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Service Transformation assisted by the Head of Digital and Customer Services, were present for pre-decision scrutiny of the Cabinet report on Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operating Model. The report was being presented to Cabinet on 19 October for decision, asking Cabinet to approve the £500,000 contingency budget for the project remaining in the earmarked Oracle Reserve to be used for the pending change requests from services and any additional in-year licence costs following review.

It was reported that the new Oracle System went live, as planned, on 1 April 2023, with major Council systems, such as Payroll, stable and operating smoothly. The new system was resilient and secure helping to mitigate cyber and ICT Disaster recovery risks on the corporate risk register. Examples were provided on delivery of Project objectives and benefits / improvements that have been realised and staff feedback had been positive. Some teething issues had emerged but had been worked through, mostly around integration with other systems. However, to date there is only one outstanding issue relating to integration with pensions system, but this has not affected the payment of pensions, and is close to resolution. The Project will then close and move into the new permanent operating model, as 'business as usual'.

The previous project board would be replaced by a Fusion Change Board going forward, comprising of service leads from across the Council. This new Board would oversee and approve any changes or new developments to the system as well as the quarterly patch releases from Oracle.

Oracle would develop and evolve the system, some based on recommendations directly from the public sector user group. In addition, the Council would work to maximise the new functionality within Fusion to improve business processes and operational efficiency.

The new Oracle Fusion Cloud system represented a major upgrade and would have regular updates with the potential to serve the Council for the next 20+ years.

Committee questions focussed on:

- the significant increase of the project cost;
- the contingency budget and future consideration of additional costs and funding options needing to form part of budget setting for 2024-2025 onwards;
- ongoing costs which would need to be built into base revenue budgets; and
- monitoring the on-going risk associated with the new operating model of managing capacity across the Council to deal with transformation and improving business processes and operational efficiency whilst dealing with 'business as usual'.

The Chair thanked Members and Officers.

Resolved that the Chair write to Cabinet Members outlining the view of the Committee ahead of Cabinet on 19 October 2023.

31 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Education (Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener).

Councillor Lyndon Jones provided the Committee with a progress report on the work / activities of the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel. He referred to various issues that have been discussed over recent meetings, including the practice of visiting a number of Schools over the course of the Panel's comprehensive annual work plan to help the Panel experience things 'on the ground', engaging with Chairs of School Governing Bodies, Teachers and Pupils, for example around school development and the new curriculum. He thanked all Panel members for their participation and 'teamwork' in carrying out this Scrutiny.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress report in respect of Education be noted.

32 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

Resolved that the membership of the Panels and Working Groups as reported, be agreed.

33 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Chair presented the a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24 which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.

The main items for the Committee on 14 November comprised:

- Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report.
- Children & Young People's Rights Scheme (annual report)
- Follow Up on Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group

- Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Final Report

Members noted that the Scrutiny Training & Development Programme for Swansea Scrutiny Councillors was underway, which was being facilitated by the Improvement Team at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The following Sessions were recently held:

- Introduction to Scrutiny
- Scrutiny Charing Skills

Upcoming Sessions:

- Questioning Skills for Scrutiny – to be held on 31 October / 1 November
- Scrutiny of Performance – to be held on 4 December / 6 December
- Self-Assessment of Scrutiny (two parts) – to be held on 17 January / 23 January

The Chair encouraged all to attend. All Sessions were being held online via MS Teams, with the exception of the final 'Self-Assessment' part 2 session which will be in-person only. As well as benefitting individual Councillors, the Programme will help to inform Scrutiny Improvement Objectives and actions going forward.

34 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.

The Chair referred upcoming Panel/Working Group/Regional Scrutiny meetings, for awareness.

The meeting ended at 5.11 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 6



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

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Final Report

Purpose:	To present the final report for the Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour
Content:	The final report is attached which concludes the inquiry.
Councillors are being asked to:	Agree the report for submission to Cabinet.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Terry Hennegan, Convener Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry
Lead Officer and Report Author:	Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer E-mail: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas
Access to Services Officer:	Catherine Window

1. Details

- 1.1 Within the Scrutiny Work Programme, the Scrutiny Programme Committee established an Inquiry Panel to look into Anti-Social Behaviour, and appointed Councillors to the Panel to plan and carry out this work, gather evidence, consider findings, and prepare a report for Cabinet. The final report arising from the Scrutiny Panel's Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour is presented to the Committee for agreement to submit the report to Cabinet for decision. The attached report presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Inquiry that sought to answer the following question:

How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?

- 1.2 The report is structured in the following way:

- Foreword: Why This Matters
- Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

- Why We Produced this Report
- Evidence Considered
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Acknowledgements
- About the Inquiry Panel

1.3 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is asked to agree the report for submission to Cabinet. In considering the report the Committee should satisfy itself that:

- Sufficient evidence has been gathered in order to address the question that the Inquiry aimed to answer.
- The conclusions of the Panel are supported by the evidence gathered by the Panel.
- The recommendations of the Panel follow from their conclusions and are reasonable, achievable and capable of being actioned and monitored.

If the Committee have any significant issues with regard to the report, these will need to be referred back to the Panel for further consideration, with the report then being re-presented to the Committee.

1.4 In considering the report the Committee may wish to emphasise aspects of the Inquiry to Cabinet. Points of this type can be included on the covering report that goes to Cabinet and will be attributed to the Committee. Additionally, the Committee may identify issues arising from this work that merit future Scrutiny.

1.5 As well as our recommendations for Cabinet the Inquiry Panel has also come across an issue that we feel requires further Scrutiny. We propose to the Scrutiny Programme Committee that it considers adding examination of the following topic to the Scrutiny Work Programme:

- Youth provision in Swansea including the provision and current issues like preventative work, funding and the difficulty in recruiting qualified youth workers.

1.6 Subject to the Committee's agreement, the Inquiry Report will be presented by the Convener to the earliest available Cabinet meeting. At that stage Cabinet will receive the report and the Cabinet Member with lead responsibility will be tasked to prepare a report for Cabinet within 2 months addressing the Inquiry recommendations and providing action plan for Cabinet decision. The Inquiry Panel will ordinarily reconvene within 12 months of Cabinet decision for the purposes of following up the implementation of recommendations agreed by Cabinet.

2. Legal Implications

2.1 There are no specific legal implications at this stage.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to this report. Any potential implications will be outlined in the Cabinet response.

4. Integrated Assessment Implications

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

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

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

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

- 4.2 There are no impact assessment implications associated with this report. Equality and engagement issues were formally considered at the scoping stage of this inquiry and borne in mind by the Panel throughout evidence gathering. The Cabinet Member will need to ensure that implications are considered via application of the corporate Integrated Impact Assessment process when considering the response to the recommendations.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel Final Report

Appendix 2 – Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Screening form

Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry

How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?



The Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel
City and County of Swansea - Dinas a Sir Abertawe

October 2023



Why This Matters by Councillor Terry Hennegan (Convener)



Foreword

We would like to thank all those people that took time to attend our Inquiry Panel meetings and give evidence and hope that this report reflects some of the key views raised.

We were impressed with the commitment of all the organisations and individuals that took part in the inquiry. We were particularly pleased to meet with a group of young people who told us what it was like from their perspective and how it affected them.

We heard about the many challenges that face the Council and its partners in tackling Anti-Social Behaviour, how the issue is multi layered and required input and commitment across a wide selection of organisations not just our statutory partners.

One of the key recommendations from our inquiry was to conduct a mapping exercise of Council Services but also of all those organisations that have a stake in improving ASB. We felt that this would help the Council, its partners and wider stakeholders including the public to see the bigger picture, therefore helping to address any cross departmental or organisation challenges.

We hope that this inquiry has helped to highlight the complexity and importance of the issues associated with Anti-Social Behaviour to a wider audience.

Our report contains a number of recommendations for Cabinet and the wider Safer Swansea Partnership that we believe will help tackle and prevent Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea.

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry

Inquiry Key Question: *How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in Swansea?*

Conclusions

1. Effective strategies, policies and procedures in tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) are in place and the Council is meeting its regulatory obligations in the area.
2. The support for tackling and preventing ASB must be adequately resourced in the Council, as well as more widely across the Safer Swansea Partnership.
3. The Council and its partners are working together effectively to tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour in Swansea but the overall picture of services and support is confusing.
4. Better information about ASB needs to be easily available and accessible. The Council and its partners must communicate with and feedback to the public and/or victims.
5. The Council along with its partner organisations are working hard to address the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour.
6. The Council, its partners, communities and other stakeholders will need to work together to overcome wider challenges and barriers to improvement.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to consider those recommendations that they are directly responsible for, but also make representation on behalf of the Council, where agreeable, in support of any recommendation that would require action from others, such as the Safer Swansea Partnership.

The Panel recommends that Cabinet:

- R1. Investigates options for appointing an independent chair for ASB Case Reviews and then put the most appropriate option put in place. This should be done as a matter of urgency.
- R2. Continues to build upon and embed the five key ASB Home Office principles into the work of the Council.
- R3. Looks at devolving the Community Protection Warning / Community Protection Notice powers to Housing Associations, with consideration being given to their use by other partners.

- R4. Carries out a Council wide mapping exercise to establish and provide clarity in relation to ASB. It should include, but not be restricted to the governance, roles, resources, regulatory powers and other tools used (or available), use of the referral process and equity of services provided to the public.
- R5. Looks into providing resources to do more targeted work with primary school aged children that includes ASB preventative matters.
- R6. Widens the current membership of the Public Services Board and Safer Swansea Partnership to include local Housing Associations.
- R7. Investigates the potential of developing a partnership hub/office where services to ASB across organisations can be co-located.
- R8. Works with key partner organisations to improve the understanding of each other's roles in order to help provide clarity and consistency of approach to ASB for the service user and the public. This should include a map of the services and powers available across the partnership.
- R9. Develops a Multi-Agency Strategic Forum where solutions to cross cutting themes and ways of working can be discussed.
- R10. Ensures that good feedback mechanisms for the public are in place across the Council and that we use that feedback to improve the services we provide.
- R11. Considers and reviews accessibility to information about ASB in order to ensure ease of access.
- Ensure key information is available in different languages, formats and in physical form.
 - That we look to have information available in different locations in the Council across the partner public locations.
 - Build on how we target information to suit those we are looking to reach i.e., young people.
 - Review the Council's website content in relation to ASB with a view to expanding what is available.
- R12. Maximises the opportunities to raise awareness of ASB, in particular:
- Publicise good news stories about work that is done by the Council.
 - Communicate and raise awareness of young people's positive activities in the community.
 - Look to influence and change the negative narrative and language used about young people in the media.
 - Provide information and raise awareness of the ASB Case Review.
 - Link up with the new Council's Community engagement office located at waterfront Museum.
- R13. Looks to further build upon the intergenerational work with young people and the older generation, do this in conjunction with the voluntary sector where appropriate.

- R14. Asks the Safer Swansea Partnership to investigate how to improve levels of reporting of incidents of ASB including asking South Wales Police to consider its response times in relation to the 101 non-emergency telephone line and to simplify the online reporting form.
- R15. Investigates the possibility of developing a multi-agency mediation resource.
- R16. Looks to counteract negative 'online world' impacts on children and young people by
- a) continuing to build on and share the expertise and information available.
 - b) resource the Contextual Missing Exploited Trafficked Team training that will support schools with understanding and preventing extra familial harm.
 - c) consider extending this training to Gower College and to others who regularly work with young people.
- R17. Looks to increase the number of Youth Workers in Swansea with the aim of every community across the City and County of Swansea having dedicated Youth Worker Support.
- R18. Work with Community Centres to encourage more use of facilities for/by young people and vulnerable groups.
- R19. Looks into the potential of Housing Associations contributing to some of our environmental services like noise abatement and fly tipping in order to increase their levels of service provision.
- R20. Cabinet ensures more regular deep cleans of the City Centre particularly in and around the Quadrant Bus Station.
- R21. Cabinet work with local businesses and the Business Improvement District (BID) with the aim of tidying up shop fronts and rubbish storage across the City Centre.
- R22. Cabinet carryout regular 'walk throughs' of the city centre and communities across Swansea to see the locations through the 'eyes of the public' and to identify issues of concern. This should be done in conjunction with appropriate officers and local ward members.
- R23. Develops and builds upon appropriate data collection processes in order to help plan future service provision and monitor effectiveness of strategies used. This monitoring process should be closely linked to the ASB Home Office 5 key principles (once they are formalised).
- R24. Make representations to Police and Crime Commissioner's Officer asking them to consider grant funding on a medium-term basis (i.e., 3 yearly).

WHY WE PRODUCED THIS REPORT

Overview

- 1.1.1 In selecting this topic and producing this report we wanted to see how the Council is meeting its duties under legal frameworks and to ensure it is collaborating with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea.

Selecting the topic

- 1.1.2 The Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour was proposed by the Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference in 2022. Following agreement of a Scrutiny Work Programme, the Council's Scrutiny Programme Committee established the Inquiry Panel, and appointed Councillors to the Panel to plan and conduct this work, gather evidence, consider findings, and prepare a report for Cabinet. A strategic overview of the matter was discussed in October 2022 and the Inquiry commenced on the 17 January 2023.
- 1.1.3 This topic was chosen because Scrutiny Councillors felt this was a wide-reaching subject that would benefit from Councillor's review and input.

Intended contribution

- 1.1.4 As a Panel, we believe that we can make a valuable contribution to the Council's role in appropriately and effectively tackling Anti-Social Behaviour. We recognise that the challenges in this area can often be complex. We also believe that, whilst no one has all of the answers, success will only come from a conversation that everyone is able to contribute to. It is in this spirit that our conclusions and recommendations are offered.
- 1.1.5 Specifically, this report aims to contribute to this vital debate by:
 - a. Providing a Councillor perspective on the issue
 - b. Providing evidenced proposals that will lead to more effective services
 - c. Gaining the views of the public and stakeholders
 - d. Considering and concluding on recommendations from national reports, legislation /directives, and their implications for Swansea
 - e. Identification of good practice/research elsewhere and whether there is any learning for Swansea's approach
 - f. Increased Councillor understanding about Anti-Social Behaviour
 - g. Greater public awareness of work in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 1.1.6 We are also happy to recognise the limitations of the inquiry. Given the complexity of the topic and the time that we had this report provides a broad view of issues and is not exhaustive.
- 1.1.7 Finally, many of our conclusions are in line with the Council's current direction of travel and these are offered to provide reassurance. Others may be either additional or contrary to what has already been agreed. These are intended to offer challenge and to stimulate debate. Where we

have made recommendations, these are intended to help improve the performance of the Council in this area.

Equalities

- 1.1.8 When planning this inquiry, we considered the public and stakeholders, how they might be affected and how we might engage them. We completed the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Screening form which formed part of the evidence pack for the inquiry.

Glossary of Terms

ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CMET	Contextual Missing Exploited Trafficked
CPN	Community Protection Notice
CPW	Community Protection Warning
CYP	Children and Young People
HA	Housing Association
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Local Area Co-ordinator
PCCO	South Wales Police and Crime Commissioners Office
PCSO	South Wales Police Community Support Officer
WG	Welsh Government
YJS	Youth Justice Team
PSPPO	Public Space Protection Orders

EVIDENCE

Evidence Collected

- 1.1.9 Evidence was collected between 17 January 2023 and 23 May 2023. The following evidence gathering activities were undertaken by the Panel:
- a. Strategic Overview by Cabinet Member and Lead Council Officer/s
 - b. Community Inclusion, Community Safety information and role of the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
 - c. South Wales Police and Community Policing
 - d. Cabinet Member/s and Director of Education
 - e. Cabinet Member/s and Lead Officers Youth Offending, CMET and EVOLVE
 - f. Cabinet Member and Lead Officer in Council Housing and Neighbourhood Support Unit
 - g. Lead Officers for Public Protection/fly tipping
 - h. Roundtable meeting with Registered Social Landlords/Housing Associations
 - i. Roundtable meeting with representatives for Equality Groups and Forums
 - j. Roundtable meeting with representatives from the Business Community and Swansea Council for Voluntary Service

- k. Session with Young People at Brynhyfryd Early Help Hub
- l. Public questions, Blog and Call for Evidence
- m. Performance and comparison data, customer satisfaction survey results
- n. Relevant legislation, policy, practice and other useful relevant information

1.1.10 For full details of how the evidence was gathered including details of all of the findings please see the findings report for this inquiry. This report can be downloaded [here](#) (pdf).

CONCLUSIONS

2.1 Effective strategies, policies and procedures in tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) are in place and the Council is meeting its regulatory obligations in the area.

2.1.1 There are many influences on how we deal with ASB as a Council and in partnership with others and this includes legislation and guidance. The Panel heard that the Home Office is responsible for making and implementing policies to tackle ASB across England and Wales. It convenes the 'National Anti-social Behaviour Strategic Board' which "keeps under review" the legislative framework for tackling ASB. It is also responsible for issuing statutory guidance on powers available to public bodies to tackle ASB.

2.1.2 With regard to devolution in Wales, ASB powers are a reserved issue for the UK Government. This means the UK Government, not the Welsh Government, is responsible for legislating for powers to tackle ASB. However, since the causes of ASB relate to many aspects of public policy which are devolved in Wales, in practice the Welsh Government has developed its own policies to prevent and reduce ASB.

2.1.3 The Panel understood tackling and preventing ASB is something that cannot be done by the Council alone and that we rely heavily on other organisations in order to play our part in this regulatory landscape. It heard that Swansea Council has the legislative powers to deal with ASB as outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The Panel were pleased that this includes a broad partnership approach to tackling ASB. They heard that in Swansea this is done in a co-ordinated way through the Safer Swansea Partnership, its partnership sub groups, structures and/or problem-solving task and finish groups. The Safer Swansea Partnership reports and is accountable to the local Swansea Public Service Board.

2.1.4 The Panel were informed that the Public Service Boards (PSBs) in Wales (and the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015) requires local authorities, local health boards, fire and rescue authorities and Natural Resources Wales to work together on local PSBs. The Boards are required to invite the local Chief Constable, South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, probation service and voluntary organisations to participate in their activities. They must also seek advice from "other partners" such as Higher Education

providers and cultural institutions where appropriate. Under the 2015 Act PSBs are required to assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area; set local objectives to improve local well-being and maximise their contribution to the Welsh national 'Well-being Goals'. PSBs do this by publishing 'Well-being Plans' for their area.

- 2.1.5 Swansea's Well-being Plan for 2023-2028 is called 'working together to improve wellbeing in Swansea'. This plan has four vision areas. The one most appropriate to this inquiry is *Strong communities - To build cohesive and resilient communities with a sense of pride and belonging*.
- 2.1.6 ASB is also Priority 1 Reducing Neighbourhood Crime and the Panel were told that progress with this is reported quarterly to the Safer Swansea Partnership and annually to the Public Service Board.
- 2.1.7 The Panel heard that Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines ASB as:
- a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,
 - b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or
 - c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.
- 2.1.8 The Panel were told ASB is reported via 101, through online South Wales Police portal or through a referral from Housing Offices or other Council service area.
- 2.1.9 The Panel were interested to explore the four-stage approach to ASB referrals, which includes
- Stage 1: Initial warning highlighting what would happen should behaviour continue.
 - Stage 2 visit: This is done by a South Wales Police officer and YJS officer when dealing with young persons. With adults it is a South Wales Police Officer and ASB Officer. Individual will sign personal warning letter and interventions will be discussed and agreed upon.
 - Stage 3: Acceptable Behaviour Contract. This is a Voluntary written agreement which includes both prohibitions and positive requirements. Potential further action is made clear so the person is aware of the consequences. Reviewed every 3 months.
 - Stage 4: Formal Sanction - Civil Injunction for anyone over ten. Includes prohibitions or requirements and power of arrest.
- The Panel agreed, from evidence they looked at, this process is suitable and fit for its purpose.
- 2.1.10 It was explained that Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) were also introduced in 2014 as part of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The Panel agreed that they are a useful tool to use in the right situation. They heard that they provide wide-ranging and flexible powers for local authorities to address anti-social behaviours in response to particular

issues affecting communities. The Panel heard that PSPOs are a Council-led tool to address certain issues in a specific location and are just one approach that can be targeted in the right way to achieve a reduction in ASB.

- 2.1.11 The Panel saw clear evidence of addressing and preventing ASB reflected in the different strategies, policies and practices used by Council services. They also recognise that ASB forms part of the Safer Swansea Partnership Strategy. Although this is the case the Panel did feel the overall plan in relation to ASB within the Council was unclear. With many aspects, rightly, in different plans and procedures. They did however feel this made it difficult for them and the public to understand how the overall picture in relation to ASB comes together. This, they felt, could result in duplication of effort, some inequity in service provision and make the response to the public and partners at time confused. We will outline this further in the report.
- 2.1.12 From the evidence gathered the Panel were satisfied that the Council does meet its statutory obligations in relation to ASB and that it does this as a Council and through a multi-agency approach. It was recognised that ASB is an issue that impacts on many of the Council's services to different degrees and this in turn means there are resources and different practices used across a range of our services. The Panel felt that this was good because it shows we tailor our activities to the needs of the situation, but in itself does not provide one coherent picture in terms of governance within the Council and how this links to our partners and other stakeholders.
- 2.1.13 One area the Panel agreed needs further consideration is local practice relating to the ASB Case Review (formally known as the Community Trigger). The Panel heard that this is an independent case review process that allows victims of ASB, who feel their case has not been dealt with appropriately, to ask for it to be reviewed. The Panel were told the process itself is robust and has been structured in partnership with other local authorities and South Wales Police. The structure of the actual Panel that conducts the review requires representation from statutory partners, however, how it is chaired is a local decision.

Community trigger and its use is very underused across Wales, but in my experience, it is actually a really powerful tool in terms of managing impact and the repeat reporting of something that cannot be dealt with. It could be used more often as an effective way of looking at difficult cases, where the threshold community trigger is actually quite low. The Community Trigger review is quite a valuable tool, a good mechanism for giving people assurance and to know the processes are working, are we following through on what our policies and procedures are etc. Raising of awareness is also needed for community trigger/review. Coastal Housing

The Panel found that currently the ASB Case Review applications are received and processed by the ASB Coordinator, who also chairs the Case Review Panel. Concern was shared by both the Panel and Officers about the ASB Coordinator being in the Chair of such reviews. The Panel agreed that it is a conflict of interest as he is often already involved in that specific ASB case and this in itself could be seen as them not being independent. The

Panel agreed that the current means of chairing the reviews needs to be looked at and an independent person appointed to that role. This would then provide a clear and transparent process which the Panel felt is essential in providing trust in process. The Panel understand that there are examples in other areas where this responsibility is led at a much higher level for example by lead Councillors, an independent officer from the Safer Swansea Partnership or Public Services Board or a lay person, rather than the officers who are involved in the ASB. The ASB Co-ordinator would then provide a more appropriate role of supporting this person with the legislative advice and ASB processes.

South Wales Police said that the management of the ASB Case Review is one area that may need some more focus particularly in how it is managed and the profile of its concept within communities.

- 2.1.14 The South Wales Police have a number of powers in legislation to tackle ASB including Civil Injunction, Community Protection Notice (CPN) and Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO). The South Wales Police suggested that further consideration could be given to CPN/ CBO and injunctions being applied for by the Local Authority. It was also suggested that Housing Associations would also benefit from the use of these powers and the Panel felt that this needs to be investigated further.

In terms of enforcement, we only have actions to injunct or to commence proceedings to end tenancies (rare, high evidence threshold). We cannot issue community protection warnings or orders or closure orders (South Wales Police and LA only) and we have yet to see a Community Trigger/ASB case review meet a threshold for action. Coastal Housing

The Panel also heard that there is also scope for wider involvement in ASB referrals direct from places like Environmental Health Departments or in relation Council Tenancy issues. The South Wales Police said they are more often best situated to progress these matters but the expansion elsewhere needs to be explored.

- 2.1.15 The Panel were pleased to find that the Council is consistently 'keeping an eye' on changing legislation, guidance and good practice in relation to ASB. They were particularly interested to hear about the introduction of the draft Home Office Guidance, Anti-Social Behaviour Principles. This is a set of five principles which seek to describe and assist in ensuring a consistent approach to understanding and addressing ASB in local communities. Councillors heard that the principles are not intended to fetter local decision making but rather to act as a guide in seeking to deliver the best possible outcomes for victims of ASB. The Panel were pleased to see that all the Council Departments and partners were aware of these draft principles and had started to consider them in terms of their service delivery.

- 2.1.16 It became clear to the Panel just how important it is for the Council and the Safer Swansea Partnership, as a whole, to understand the current ASB landscape in Swansea, in order to address it effectively. The Panel felt that

this must include the collection and analysis of relevant data, which we will touch upon later in the report. We heard that since lockdown there has been an increase in ASB, specifically youth related. In addition to this the implementation of a PSPO in the city centre has also seen a rise in reported ASB. We did hear that this trend is not isolated to Swansea and is in line with what is happening nationally but this still puts pressure on already limited resources locally.

2.1.17 The Panel recommends to Cabinet that it:

- Investigates options for appointing an independent chair for ASB Case Reviews and then put the most appropriate option put in place. This should be done as a matter of urgency. (R1)
- Continues to build upon and embed the five key ASB Home Office principles into the work of the Council. (R2)
- Looks at devolving the CPW/CPN powers to Housing Associations, with consideration being given to their use by other partners. (R3)

2.2 The support for tackling and preventing ASB must be adequately resourced in the Council, as well as more widely across the Safer Swansea Partnership.

2.2.1 The Panel considered whether the resources were adequate to support the Council to play its part in tackling and preventing ASB.

2.2.2 The Panel heard that the Council does not have a specific ASB team or service area. There is a wider ASB Coordinator, who sits within the Community Safety Team, which is under the Community Integration Partnership. His role is to respond to all referrals that come through, primarily to ensure there is a coordinated response and to be a link between all the various Departments and partner agencies in relation to ASB. He and other partners also conduct public engagement and information events like for instance the recent ASB Awareness Week.

The ASB Coordinator, Admin Support Officer and Community Safety Coordinator roles are externally funded on an annual contract through South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner's Office (PCCO). The Panel heard that this is a challenge in itself, as officers are uncertain on their future employment year on year and this has an impact on the ability to plan for the medium and longer term, as certain projects and programmes do take a number of years to realise positive outcomes. It was felt that if funding were awarded on a 3- to-5-year cycle, rather than annually this would be far better for long-term strategic planning and would provide better stability. The Panel recognised this is a key role in the Safer Swansea Partnership and asked whether a 'Plan B' should be considered, should funding by PCCO be reduced or cease.

2.2.3 Council Housing have their own staff, who deal with ASB, they are funded via the ringfenced Housing Revenue Account, which responds and manages all ASB reported in relation to Council tenants. The Panel heard that whilst Council tenants can be supported through the Housing Revenue Account

there is no budget elsewhere in the Council for additional support to private residents to support legal action for any enforcement such as injunctions. Although this type of action is a last resort, the Panel heard that without that in place many of the interventions are on an informal basis and are dependent on voluntary engagement by perpetrators. The Panel felt this was one area of inequity in the service provided to the public that needs to be considered and we will ask Cabinet to consider whether there is a way to resolve this as part of a suggested mapping exercise.

- 2.2.4 The Panel heard about some of the examples of where the Council works and pulls together its resources for the benefit of the community, one of which is how the Youth Service and Evolve can act on and respond to support the prevention of community unrest. However, the Panel heard that it is important to understand that often to achieve this type of response the movement of resources from other areas is needed. There have been multiple examples of this in the last 12 months. One example was in January 2023 when a balloon release was arranged by young people to pay tribute to the sad passing of a young friend. There were worries around a potential escalation of anti-social behaviour and youth violence due to the considerable number of young people intending to attend the event. The youth service worked together with the South Wales Police and third sector agencies, listened to the young people and were able to ensure young people's voices were included in the planned response. This resulted in the service mobilising resources to open the nearby youth club and provide emotional health and wellbeing support as well as other issues such as substance use with a view to reduce concerns.
- 2.2.5 The Panel heard that younger and younger children are coming to the attention of services due to their behaviours in the community. The Panel heard that this can be challenging because for example, the Youth Justice Service can only work with young people from the age of ten, as do the Youth Service. Councillors heard that before the pandemic, these were not worries that were being seen. It was understood that staff who work with younger age range in early help areas are learning new skills to be able respond to these needs but agreed that consideration should also be given to exploring targeted work at a primary school level.
- 2.2.6 The majority of the people the Panel spoke to felt that resources are a massive challenge for the Council and more widely across the partnership. The Panel recognised that targeted work was considered to be one solution to this moving forward, given the resources available in some areas. The Panel also recognised the importance of strengthening community work together with our partners and local communities which, as the Panel heard, does not necessarily mean statutory partners needed to put in a lot of resources.
- 2.2.7 The Panel was pleased to hear about South Wales Police's development of a Neighbourhood Policing Team which is a resource made-up of neighbourhood beat managers whose job is to look after problem solving within Swansea. The Panel heard that by doing this they have put some South Wales Police resources into the beginning of the issue rather than the end. The South Wales Police told the Panel they have done a force-wide restructure splitting

the Neighbourhood and initial response capabilities and this has enabled them to concentrate dedicated resources into the problem-solving aspect.

South Wales Police said presently the working arrangements they have with the Local Authority are excellent and the processes that have been put in place have a sound basis in practice but said that further stability in this area would be welcome. South Wales Police said there are no current gaps in their provision currently but as a general observation would welcome some further elements of co-location of resources.

- 2.2.8 The Panel wanted to understand what resources went into areas where there may be high student populations in order to help tackle and prevent ASB in those localities. The Panel agreed there was a need for effective communication around this issue and were therefore pleased to hear that Officers have strong working partnerships with Swansea University, the University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD) and South Wales South Wales Police. This Safer Swansea Partnership funds a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) employed by Swansea University whose role includes working with students living in residential communities to ensure there is greater community cohesion. This can often involve responding to noise and waste complaints and invoking the universities' disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

The Panel heard from the Councils environmental services that the transient nature of the population in areas with high student numbers can be problematic. They told the Panel that work is done to educate and inform students, linking various Council services with the universities and student unions and this has to be done on an annual basis due to the regular churn of tenants. Public Health provide an on-call service for responding to noise and other pollution-related complaints. The Panel were told that access to this service has to be filtered due to staffing resources and noise that is of limited or sporadic duration cannot always be witnessed.

- 2.2.9 Evidence indicated that there has been an increase in ASB in Swansea City Centre. This and the issue of associated resources was raised by many of those people the Panel spoke to.

I have been doing this job for 13 years, so it has certainly got a lot worse over the period of time. Despite best efforts we do definitely need more resources. We need more teeth in order to tackle it as well, because with all the fantastic stuff we have got going on in the city centre. We have got to make sure that the safety of investors, residents and businesses is top of our minds. Alongside the large investment projects, we need to get the basics right too, like clean and safe communities. Russell Greenslade (Swansea BID)

The City Centre Manager did recognise what the representative from BID had said. She said that the increase in ASB has been reflected in some of the actions and measures that have been taken to tackle what is a really complex, challenging and difficult issue for Swansea.

The Panel heard that one of the resources available in the city centre are the Rangers. They were originally employed as ambassadors of the city centre, very much in a kind of visitor customer service capacity. Over the years, the role has understandably developed as things have changed over the last couple of years. The Panel heard that there is a team of five Rangers at the moment. They cover a significant area of the city, seven days a week, every day from 9am till 5:30pm. They also cover key evenings in the night time economy. So, resources are split and pressurised. The Panel heard that for example, typically within the course of half an hour on the radio, they have had twelve calls and there were two staff, so they are being pulled in all directions.

The City Centre Manager told the Panel that a lot of intelligence is shared through the Safer Swansea Partnership with South Wales South Wales Police. She told us that resources are prioritised and targeted in line with what is coming out of that intelligence, but resources are definitely an issue, but it is not a straightforward issue. She told us the key thing is that any action in relation to anti-social behaviour must be holistic. It has to be a cocktail of different measures that are taken, it is not just about enforcement, but resources are a critical part of that.

- 2.2.10 The Panel did feel that cleanliness of the City Centre can be an issue at times, particularly in and around the Quadrant Bus Station. This was also mentioned by the young people, the public and local businesses in the evidence gathering exercises. The Panel recognise by its very nature that cleanliness can vary at different times of the day depending on a number of factors but did feel that in some areas the dirt seemed ingrained and that regular deeps cleans would help to address this.
- 2.2.11 The Panel also felt it was essential that the City Centre and local communities are looked at from the perspective or from the 'eyes of the public' on a regular basis, so that issues of concern can be raised and addressed. The Panel felt that this should be carried out by Cabinet Members but it was important that local ward members be involved.
- 2.2.12 The Panel recognised that although the Council does not have a specific team for ASB that a vast array of activity takes place across the many Council services in Swansea. They felt it is difficult to see the full picture of how it is resourced and the linkages between activities. Value for money and the availability of resources is therefore hard to establish and the Panel felt the Council picture in relation to ASB needs to more clearly understood. The Panel would like to see a mapping exercise that evidences the Council's commitment to ASB. This mapping exercise should show resources used (or available), powers available, tools used and activities carried out in relation to ASB. They felt this would help to establish and show where and if further resources might be required. A mapping exercise may also identify areas where resources can be used more flexibly and be responsive to need. This should include those where we partially fund posts like for example the Student Liaison and City Centre Rangers.

The Panel also felt that this exercise may help identify and evidence areas where cost benefit analysis can be investigated. This being where a small investment can bring larger rewards in improved community cohesion and or reduction in ASB.

2.2.13 The Panel were interested to consider whether we are using all the tools 'in the box' to help to tackle and prevent ASB. The Panel felt that we do use a wide variety of tools across the Council to help to tackle and prevent ASB, example the use of legislative powers to the provision of support and assistance for perpetrators to modify their behaviour. We recognise that this a is large and complex picture and the mapping exercise would help to understand what is being used and whether practice can be shared more widely or effectively.

The Panel also recognised that the 'ability to resource' can also prevent the authority using some methods or tools, like for example: the Education Department told the Panel the greatest challenges in terms of securing impact and improvement are around funding and the implications on capacity and staffing. This is because many of the approaches focus on prevention and building capacity, this is then often about building positive relationships and that requires more resource than is currently available.

2.2.14 The Panel recommend to Cabinet that it:

- Carries out a Council wide mapping exercise to establish and provide clarity in relation to the ASB. It should include, but not be restricted to the governance, roles, resources, regulatory powers and other tools used (or available), use of the referral process and equity of services provided to the public. (R4)
- Look into providing resources to do more targeted work with primary school aged children that include ASB preventative matters. (R5)
- Completes more regular deep cleans of the City Centre particularly in and around the Quadrant Bus Station. (R20).
- Work with local businesses and the Business Improvement District (BID) with the aim of tidying up shop fronts and rubbish storage across the City Centre. (R21)
- Conduct regular 'walk throughs' of the city centre and communities across Swansea to see the locations through the 'eyes of the public' and to identify issues of concern. This should be done in conjunction with local ward members. (R22)
- Make representations to Police and Crime Commissioner's Officer asking them to consider grant funding on a medium-term basis (i.e., 3 yearly). (R24)

2.3 The Council and its partners are working together effectively to tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour in Swansea but the overall picture of services and support is confusing.

2.3.1 The Panel recognised that it is a complex and varied issue which often requires involvement of the Council, its partners, voluntary sector and the wider community to help address not only the incidents of ASB but in

endeavouring to prevent it from happening. It was made very clear from evidence gathered that success is based upon both the Council and partners taking a joined-up approach to tackling, preventing and addressing the causes of ASB.

2.3.2 The Panel agreed that not only a partnership approach is required but a much wider holistic approach, because, they heard, of the very complex nature of peoples situations, which one single organisation cannot deal with alone.

2.3.3 One example the Panel heard was from Social Services, who said without a partnership approach, they would not be able to reach the numbers of young people in the communities that they work with. The Panel were told about how they look to provide a wraparound service for young people and their families and partnership working is a priority in doing this. They gave the Panel examples of some of this work including, the Youth Service in Swansea which works in partnership with the Safer Swansea Partnership, CMET, South Wales Police forces, health agencies, and housing associations to identify areas of concern in relation to ASB across the local authority. When work is required, a targeted response is undertaken between agencies and responses have included workshops being delivered in school and youth clubs. The Panel were told that the focus of services must be supporting positive behaviours by working with the family and the community as well as in partnership with other organisations.

2.3.4 South Wales Police told the Panel that they believe the Safer Swansea Partnership and the whole approach nationally has matured over the last 20 years and that it now looks at the issues from a multi-agency problem-solving approach. They said some ASB issues are dealt with via Problem-Solving Groups (PSG) where partners attend and seek joint solutions to key issues. There is also an escalation process in place where matters can be escalated through to the Community Safety Board and ultimately to the Public Services Board should community problems present certain barriers that need a resolution.

<p>Example of Partnership working, South Wales Police</p>

<p><i>ASB in Broughton Avenue, Blaenymaes. To counter an escalation of ASB in this area Operation Dunlin was devised which concentrated on diversion and enforcement. Part of the project involved diversion attempts run by Army recruitment and attempts to engage youths via a local boxing club. An extensive working group was set up which included representation from the Local Housing Association, Local Authority, ASB outreach workers, Mid and West Wales Fire Service (MAWWF) and the local Councillor in order to continue diversionary initiatives and interventions.</i></p>

The Panel were pleased to hear that South Wales Police felt there are solid governance arrangements in place to manage partnership activity and the relationship with the Basic Command Unit coordinators and local authority staff is operationally sound.

- 2.3.5 The Panel was of the view that the commitment to multi-agency partnership working is strong across Council Departments and were pleased see it considered in the future planning of services. For example, the Education Department said that multi-agency working is a key feature of the work of the Directorate. One area this was evidenced was the newly developed Inclusion Strategy which encompasses priorities for supporting vulnerable learners over the next three years. Within this they are committed to working in multi-agency contexts to consider and respond to community issues. They also told the Panel that by considering their responses to significant events such as the Mayhill riot, they have strengthened their practice accordingly.
- 2.3.6 Another example the Panel considered was from the Council's Housing Service who said that joint working is absolutely key in the work they do in communities. They work together to try and keep people safe from harm, to sustain tenancies and communities. This happens against the backdrop of the multiple challenges. They told the Panel that it is important not to lose sight of the proportion of tenants who are the most vulnerable in our society and sometimes have significant challenges in respect of their behaviour, this is often multi layered. They look to strike a balance in supporting those affected by ASB and to help those carrying out ASB to modify their behaviour to sustain their tenancy. They achieve this through working together across Council teams and by working jointly with others like for example the South Wales Police, Community Mental Health Teams, Pollution Control and Social Services, and any other organisation that can help.
- 2.3.7 The Panel was reassured from the evidence it has received that the Council does recognise the importance of, and is committed to, working in partnership with not only its statutory partners but voluntary groups and the wider community. The examples given were a few of the excellent actions that are happening, which the Panel felt should be praised and shared.
- 2.3.8 The Panel did however feel improvements could be made in some areas. For example, ensuring the consistency of approach to the public no matter what the housing tenure of those reporting it is. The Panel heard that there seems to be a different service depending on tenure. This has been highlighted relating to some services for Housing Association Tenants, Council tenants and private tenants/owners.

I did get a sense from listening to your previous evidence sessions that it does feel a bit like coastal residents are not benefiting from the same joined up approaches that Council tenants are able to benefit from in terms of Council services and statutory services.

Why is it not the same if you are housing association tenant with the same problem as others when contacting and working with the Council, i.e., for noise pollution or access to the out of our service. It feels like there is a triage that happens and the first question is, are you a housing association tenant? If the answer is yes, everything goes to housing association. We do not provide that service and it does not feel like there would be much point in resourcing three or four different help lines. I would be very interested in talking about

how we might contribute resources into that team in order to be able improve that. We do contribute financially to other local authorities, in order to be able to be able to manage that partnership better. We in Coastal would be very comfortable having a conversation about how we might financially contribute towards environmental health in order to be able to support that activity.
Coastal Housing Association

The Panel would welcome Cabinet discussing with Housing Associations the potential of increasing our levels of environmental service provision via contributions potentially made by Housing providers.

- 2.3.9 Housing Associations told the Panel that the perceptions many people have is that they have the same powers, resources or access to services as the Council, but do not. So, they said they would like to be part of working out, along with partners, a more consistent approach to tackling ASB.

The Panel heard from Housing Associations that there is much they do to deal with ASB but a lot they cannot address. They said sometimes residents can feel like they are in a 'tennis match' between the South Wales Police and/or the Council, saying that is a Housing issue and Housing saying it is a South Wales Police/Council issue. The representative from Coastal Housing said they would like to see a Strategic Forum developed to cut across organisational boundaries and help to tackle issues like this and unlock those barriers to improvement at a strategic level.

Feedback from service users is that messages are often conflicting between partners, i.e., stating that the ASB is a South Wales Police matter/ South Wales Police stating it is a local authority matter. This at times becomes frustrating for the service users who then stop reporting. Victim support

- 2.3.10 The Housing Associations did say they felt that at ground level, staff across the agencies work well together to tackle ASB. They also said their relationships with the South Wales Police on the ground are very strong and they work well but that more work strategically would be of benefit.

- 2.3.11 The representative from Pobl Housing Association said that the resident facing stuff works quite well. It is the supporting elements of holding all of the information and making sure it is getting to the right place, escalating what the barriers might be are where better solutions are needed. This could be for example, more action planning and strategy around cases.

Both Coastal and Pobl also said that the threshold for South Wales Police and other agencies to get involved is quite high and they find that most of their challenges are in that bit just beneath that threshold. Coastal said, '*it is never quite there but causes a massive concern to a wider range of people. It is clear that perpetrators are often very vulnerable, as are the victims, but it is a rare day when any of our safeguarding referrals meets the threshold for service or intervention from social services. Some people are living in severely distressing situations, and we are finding we are struggling to pull in statutory services*'.

2.3.12 Coastal Housing told the Panel that wider access to services and support often happens at a major crisis points, of which eviction is one of these. At this point a lot will coalesce around preventing a homelessness, as is right, but they told the Panel that we all need to get further 'up stream' of this happening. *We know a tenancy is looking like it is going to end for several months, if not years beforehand, so I would be keen to see how we might be able to case conference some of those at an earlier stage to prevent them getting to that crisis point.*

2.3.13 Coastal Housing thought a good way forward in improving collaboration would be for them, the Local Authority and other partners to come together in, for example, workshops where certain aspects like information sharing, consistency and services to residents can be discussed. She said, *'we need to get in the room and just work through all the different ways in which we are operating and let us see where we are working well and where we can improve'*.

The Panel felt that wider representation on the Public Services Board and Safer Swansea Partnership would help address some of the issues raised but also the development of a multi-agency forum where solutions to cross cutting themes and ways of working can be discussed. This would help find solutions to things like the 'tennis match' mentioned around responsibilities. The idea of working groups to address some of the 'sticky issues' like the small group of consistent ASB offenders was also raised.

The Panel were interested to hear about the potential of the co-location of ASB services recognising that it is already the case for South Wales Police and the ASB Co-ordinator. The Panel felt a partnership office where ASB services can work together across organisational boundaries would be of benefit because it can then provide real time problem solving and direct access to available resources. It would also encourage and support a wider partnership response addressing ASB.

The Panel thought a wider mapping exercise should be conducted across the Safer Swansea Partnership with the purpose of improving the understanding of each other's roles which will help provide clarity and consistency of approach to ASB for the service user and the public, this again would help to avoid the 'tennis match' response to the public, which was mentioned earlier.

2.3.14 The Panel recommend to Cabinet that it:

- Widen the current membership of PSB and Safer Swansea Partnership to include local Housing Associations. (R6)
- Investigate the potential of developing a partnership hub/office where services to ASB across organisations can be co-located. (R7)
- Work with partner organisations to improve the understanding of each other's roles in order to help provide clarity and consistency of approach to ASB for the service user and the public. This should include a map of the services and powers available across the partnership. (R8)
- Develop a Multi-Agency Strategic Forum where solutions to cross cutting themes and ways of working can be discussed. (R9)

- Cabinet look into the potential of Housing Associations contributing to some of our environmental services like noise abatement and fly tipping in order to increase their levels of service provision. (R19)

2.4 Better information about ASB needs to be easily available and accessible. The Council and its partners must communicate with and feedback to the public and/or victims.

2.4.1 The Panel considered the relationship with the public, how available and accessible information was about ASB, whether the public understand what it is, how to report it and whether feedback is made. The Panel also explored whether we use feedback from the public to improve the services provided.

2.4.2 How we as a Council are engaging and supplying information to the public in a physical format, as opposed to online, came out strongly from the evidence gathered. The inquiry found that information on ASB could be found online but little was available in a physical format.

The Panel felt there was a clear need to have key information available in a physical format and accessible in various locations. The ASB Co-ordinator said that although we promote events and information well through online media there is a large element of reaching people offline that needs to be looked at (outside of our normal engagement days).

Finding information on things is difficult.

I do not know what is being done to work on Anti-social behaviour, I am not online, so if things are promoted and they are online then there is a number of people who do not use these platforms...promotion needs a blended approach.

I think a more visible presence in the city centre of services is vital, not just South Wales Police patrolling but a combined group of services.... a help bus during the day or a visible glass office space. Also, information more easily accessible and promoted.

Aging Well Participants

The Councils Community Engagement Transformation Lead Officer said there was clearly feedback that came in with regards to the need for information to be available in physical format, as well as online. The idea of an information zone was raised and he told the Panel that this is something which is being worked on currently more widely in the Council and that they are launching a new engagement office for the local authority shortly, which will be in the National Waterfront Museum. The Panel were supportive of this project and would be keen to see what it could do around providing information in relation ASB and promoting and linking with the LGBTQ+, disability liaison, ageing well and the children and young people's work.

The Local Areas Co-ordinators (LAC) were also mentioned and the role they could play, especially with the reach they have into communities across

Swansea. The Panel asked whether they could be used more in disseminating information relating to ASB in to communities. The LAC Manager said that they are definitely a team that are able to, not only help it get information out in to the community, but also, they have significant relationships with people in the community and are able to take some of those views and bring them back into meetings and appropriate forums.

The Panel also heard about areas of good practice taking place in relation to communicating and feeding back to our customers in relation to ASB. For example, the Council's Housing Service provides information regarding ASB in relation to social housing which is made available at the Area Housing Offices (AHO) and on the Council's social housing webpages. ASB can also be reported through both of these routes. Information on ASB is routinely shared on social media too. They told the Panel that most ASB is reported directly to the AHOs during office hours and to the NSU out of hours. New tenants are provided with a handbook containing information on how to report ASB.

- 2.4.3 The issue of wider accessibility was raised and, in particular, the availability of key information in different formats including languages and easy to read versions. The Panel felt that key information giving contact details, how to report ASB and the ASB Case Review process should be available in more languages and accessible formats moving forward.

What was mentioned as one of the barriers to reporting was language, so perhaps if there are new arrivals within the Community, we can maybe work with partners in sharing things like starter packs, introduction packs and how to report issues in your own language. If these packs are given to new arrivals when they newly arrive, issues can be reported straight away rather than, rather than, the next day. Also, when you use terminology like ASB, not everyone is going to know what that is.
Fun Wong (Swan Gardens 50+ Project)

- 2.4.4 We found that it would also be beneficial to have a more targeted approach to engaging with some of our community members. We were told about and recognised the importance of ensuring we are considering our audience in order to engage effectively. As an example, when we spoke to young people, they told us they tend to use different ways to access information nowadays. They do not tend to look at say the Swansea Councils website but they commonly use Tik Tok or Instagram and other social media platforms. And as we have heard earlier that some older people prefer information in physical format. So, we need to ensure we are tailoring our messaging in order to reach a wider audience.
- 2.4.5 We recognised and welcomed the vast amount of excellent work that is happening every day in relation to ASB within the Council and by our partners, but we did find little evidence of this good work being widely known or shared. We found there to be little communication and awareness raising being done by the Council or its partners. The Panel would like to see more activity in communicating that work, not only around how we are tackling ASB

but the work that is going on by the South Wales Police, in schools, the youth service and others to prevent it happening in the first place and to support the most vulnerable in our society when faced with ASB.

- 2.4.6 The Panel were also of the view that it is essential as a Council that we help to change the narrative in, and people's perceptions of, young people by communicating positive stories and language. The Panel would like to see more good news stories published about young people and their activities in our communities.

The Panel considers the language that is sometimes used for young people like for example 'undesirable' or 'problem' unhelpful. They heard that it looks to victimise them, and we heard using these blanket terms can result in missing some of those who need help. It can also become a self-fulfilling prophecy for young people who are labelled. We felt it is vital that young people feel a part of the community, and when they are they are more likely to have positive behaviours within it. We were pleased to hear that a language guide is being developed through the contextual missing exploited and trafficked (CMET) Team's Youth Council in Swansea. The Panel agreed with officers who are working with children and young people when they said language as a powerful tool, and when it is not used appropriately it can be dehumanising.

- 2.4.7 The Panel felt that the Council's website and contents around ASB could be improved. It could potentially provide more information for the public, partners and other stakeholders in relation to ASB, the partnerships and the role the Council plays. We also felt it could also be used to help address the issues raised around perception of ASB and also be a tool for promoting positive stories and things that are taking place in communities. It could hold frequently asked questions section, how to report ASB, links to relevant help, the wider partnership, other appropriate Council webpages and other useful websites etc. It could also detail the Council/partnerships aims and objectives in relation to ASB, outline the five key principles and eventually how the Council is progressing against those (when that is available). We heard from the ASB Co-ordinator that there is lots of information on there on how to report anti-social behaviour but there could be more on how we are dealing with it.

- 2.4.8 The findings of the inquiry indicate the need to improve how we raise awareness of the ASB Case Review (previously known as Community Trigger). It was suggested that we might use that name change as a vehicle by which to progress this as a partnership. We heard from the ASB Co-ordinator that work has begun on this with a community engagement week event held in July 2023.

We agreed the Council's website should importantly detail what ASB Case Review is, how to apply this process, links and contacts for the public and also for stakeholders who need to understand what it is and how to advise their service user about it. Evidence from the inquiry shows awareness of the ASB Case Review is low, so promoting it via the website and other media

sources, also through offline formats and events will be important to improving this understanding.

We need to improve on, as a service and from a partnership perspective, the community trigger. About 8 years ago nationally the community trigger was launched, it is now called the anti-social behaviour case review. It was a way that members of public could put up get a review if they believe ASB has not been dealt with correctly. There is more work to do to put that out to the general public, to actually hold elements of us to account on certain areas where we have not done what we should have done at a certain time. So, there is a bit more work there for us all to do. South Wales Police

2.4.9 Feedback and hearing the voices of victims and reporters (and potentially perpetrators) of ASB and how we collect and use wider feedback was explored by the Panel. We did find that there are a number of mechanisms in place to feedback in many of our Council Services but this is not across the board. The Panel felt that feedback to those reporting ASB needed to be more consistent across all services dealing with ASB and ideally across all partners. We heard from South Wales Police that they have identified one of their key challenges as improving the 'feedback loop' and they are working to develop this.

The Panel were pleased to hear that in many of our Council services we do have well embedded mechanisms to ensure we are feeding back and using information gathered to improve future services. As an example, the Panel heard that in Council's Housing Services ASB cases are recorded on a case management data case, a primary case officer is allocated and that officer is the first point of contact and whilst a case is live will provide an ongoing dialogue in respect of case progression. Following closure of the case a telephone interview is conducted to explore the individual's experience, this information feeds also into service improvement, including direct feedback to individual officers and for shared learning and informing best practice.

2.4.10 The Panel recommend to Cabinet that it:

- Ensure that good feedback mechanisms for the public are in place across the Council and that we use that feedback to improve the services we provide. (R10)
- Consider and review accessibility to information about ASB in order to ensure ease of access. (R11)
 - Ensure key information is available in different languages, formats and in physical form.
 - That we look to have information available in various locations in the Council across the partner public locations.
 - Build on how we target information to suit those we are looking to reach i.e., young people.
 - Review the Councils website content in relation to ASB with a view to expanding what is available.
- Maximises the opportunities to raise awareness of ASB, in particular: (R12)
 - Publicise good news stories about work that is done by the Council.

- Communicate and raise awareness of young people's positive activities in the community.
- Look to influence and change the negative narrative and language used about young people in the media.
- Provide information and raise awareness of the ASB Case Review.
- Link up with the new Council's Community engagement office located at waterfront Museum.

2.5 The Council along with its partner organisations are working hard to address the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour.

2.5.1 The Panel recognise the importance of prevention and early intervention work and were pleased to see the amount of activity that is happening across the Council. We were encouraged by how the Council and its partners work across organisational boundaries to address the underlying causes of ASB.

The Panel agreed that prevention and early intervention was a key aspect for both the Council and its partners to focus upon moving forward. Recognising it is better for ASB to be dealt with at its early stages or for it not to take place in the first place. The Panel were keen that this inquiry shows its supports for improving social cohesion and the actions being taken to build upon early intervention and prevention services.

The South Wales Police Foundation - The Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales - Taking Prevention Seriously: The case for a crime and harm prevention system
"The case for prevention makes intuitive sense. It is better to stop a bad thing from happening in the first place than to deal with the deleterious effects afterwards. Not only does this make intuitive sense, but there is also a strong evidence base showing that preventative measures can reduce harm at the individual and population levels in a way that is superior to later interventions and achieves wider economic and social benefits."

Whilst we recognise that dealing with the underlying causes of ASB is complex and requires a holistic and varied person-centred approach, it is vital that we work across organisational boundaries to use all the skills, tools and experience that affords. We were pleased to see this reflected in the Home Office ASB five key principles, where it says *agencies and practitioners will work across boundaries to identify, assess and tackle ASB and its underlying causes and we were keen to see this continuing to be built into the long-term strategy for future development of all services dealing with ASB.*

2.5.2 We heard as the nature of ASB is varied, so too are the causes and that one of the aims of the Safer Swansea Partnership is to improve the collective understanding of ASB in order to deliver a more informed approach to tackling the underlying drivers of demand.

2.5.3 We recognise and strongly support the wide-ranging work that is taking place within the Council services that are helping to address the underlying causes of ASB. Some examples were evidenced, including

- Evolve youth service take a targeted, voluntary approach, in creating early intervention opportunities that aims to deter anti-social behaviour. Evolve youth workers also deliver group work sessions with young people on becoming active members of their communities.
- Key objectives for education in relation to ASB as outlined in the draft Inclusion Strategy. It will have a strong focus on prevention by supporting school communities to build safe and healthy relationships. The three priorities that specifically focus on ASB are increasing attendance, promoting inclusion and supporting emotional health and wellbeing.
- In relation to preventing fly tipping, prevention is regarded as better than cure. It offers information and advice to those it regulates and seeks to secure cooperation avoiding bureaucracy and excessive cost using the three E's, Education, Engagement and Enforcement.
- This element of work for youth justice is preventative and across the board they work to address ASB at the earliest possible opportunity.

2.5.4 We also wished to highlight some of the good work of our partners in looking to address the underlying causes of ASB. A couple of the examples the Panel heard about include

- South Wales Police told the Panel that their role is to engage the community and to prevent and intervene in all forms of Anti-Social Behaviour. Their approach is intervention at the earliest opportunity and only moving to enforcement or other forms of ASB intervention when necessary. They stated that the causes of ASB with young people are complex and varied and offering only solutions that are based on enforcement will not necessarily address some of the causation factors.
- The Panel heard that the Coastal Housing Association aims for Coastal residents to live a life free from ASB and nuisance. They told the Panel are committed to a restorative approach to building and maintaining relationships between neighbours and communities, and in repairing relationships where necessary and work across with others to do this.

2.5.5 The use of Community Centres for all sections of the community was raised. We recognise that for whatever reason young people and some vulnerable adults under use these venues. The Panel felt that Community Centres should be just that, and more use could be encouraged for the benefit of all sections of the community.

I was involved with the drop-in centre, the Brunswick Church and that worked very well, on a Wednesday, Friday and the Saturday night, we would have at least 40 and up to 70 people in attendance. They were mainly homeless in one form or another and many had drug and alcohol dependencies. It was a place for them to go and something for them to do. I mean, we played drafts, cards, we sit down and talked. There does not seem to be anything like that within the city anymore. I am wondering whether that could be a means of prevention and tackling anti-social behaviour. Councillor Alan Jeffrey

The Panel heard from the YMCA representative that there is an issue of funding of community groups, but also how people can be supported in the Community to set up new initiatives providing a consistent service. She also

said what is also really challenging is finding a venue that will be willing to have youth clubs/activities. This may be down to negative perceptions around behaviour particularly in relation to young people.

- 2.5.6 Attitudes in communities to young people was raised consistency throughout the Panels evidence gathering. Particularly in relation to where young people gather and it is assumed that they are up to no good.

Young people are not wanting to cause fear or anti-social behaviour. They are hanging around in large groups because that is often how they feel safe. We need to breakdown these perceptions between older people and younger people. I think older people need to be understood by younger people, and also young people need to be understood by older people. And I think once that comes together it will break down a lot of the barriers. Could look at some intergenerational projects and forums that are combined with older people and younger people. Both need to understand the fears, the risks, and the barriers that each of those communities are facing this is something I believe the YMCA would be glad to help with. YMCA

The Panel thought more intergenerational work would be a good way to break down such barriers and helping older and younger people to develop an understand of each other's lives. We would be keen to see more of this type of work taking place and the council linking in more widely with organisations like the YMCA. We heard that some intergenerational work has been started to be planned and will include Evolve workers and part of the CMET team, it will also involve the communities and local Councillors.

The Panel felt that more access by young people to centres like Brynhyfryd Early Help Hub and Youth Club would be of huge benefit, but what was essential was the access to trained Youth Work support. The Panel agreed that more resources may be required to ensure that all young people across the City and County of Swansea can, if they choose, have access to such support. The Panel recognised the limitation on council resources but felt that this is key. The Panel were happy to see many activities made available by voluntary organisation and volunteers but felt the availability of trained youth workers was essential.

- 2.5.7 The Panel recommend to Cabinet that they:
- Work with partner organisations to improve the understanding of each other's roles in order to help provide clarity and consistency of approach to ASB for the service user and the public. This should include a map of the services and powers available across the partnership. (R8)
 - Look at providing resources to do more work with primary school aged children that includes ASB matters. (R5)
 - Develop a Multi-Agency Strategic Forum where solutions to cross cutting themes and ways of working can be discussed. (R9)
 - Looks to increase the number of Youth Workers in Swansea with the aim of every community across the City and County of Swansea having dedicated Youth Worker Support (R17).

- Look to further build upon the intergeneration work with young people and the older generation, both within the Council and with our voluntary sector. (R13)

2.6 The Council, its partners, communities and other stakeholders will need to work together to overcome wider challenges and barriers to improvement.

2.6.1 The Panel recognise the complexity of ASB and how there are many influences on how we progress and ultimately improve the services we provide. The Panel have therefore detailed, from the evidence gathered, some of the challenges faced by the Council and its partners in relation to ASB that have not been mentioned elsewhere in this report, including any suggested ways forward.

2.6.2 **Low levels of reporting of ASB incidents** was raised as an issue throughout the inquiry. The Panel wished to explore why this was the case and the potential consequences of it. Councillors were pleased to see it recognised and represented in 5 Anti-Social Behaviour Principles in the Home Office Guidance, where it says, '*encouraging the reporting of ASB, taking it seriously and adopting a restorative approach when dealing with it*'. It is hoped that this will help to consistently assist and drive organisations to encourage victims to report ASB.

The feedback from our service users is that messages are often conflicting between partners, i.e., stating that the ASB is a South Wales Police matter/ South Wales Police stating it is a local authority matter. This at times becomes frustrating for the service users who then stops reporting it.
Victim Support

We were interested to explore why people do not report. One of the main reasons we heard was a feeling that nothing happens when it is reported. We found that this may be down to the lack of feedback to the victim rather, than no action actually taking place. We would like to see all Council services and partner organisation have processes in place that enable feedback to reporters of ASB.

If reporting is not taken seriously or acted upon the trust may be lost, you go down this spiral of underreporting, not trusting the agencies involved and this can make the whole thing more difficult to deal with. Pobl Housing Association

Another reason that was mentioned was the time it can take and the frustration caused in trying to report it, as the Panel heard that getting through to South Wales Police 101 telephone line can be at times lengthy and that there is complicated form if you wish to report online. We would encourage South Wales Police to look at the resourcing of the South Wales Police 101 telephone line and to consider simplifying the online form, where possible.

While these reasons have been highlighted, we do also realise that there may be a whole array of reasons people do not report including their own vulnerabilities or situation and the fear of retribution.

I think what we get reported is just scratching the surface of what people are experiencing and that is something I think we can do more about certainly in terms of identifying where those issues are occurring across the different agencies. This would be particularly useful for targeting things locally, not just identifying where there are issues in terms of what is reported by the under reporting. Pobl Housing Association

2.6.3 Increase in ASB since the Pandemic. The Panel heard that there had been an increase in low level crime and/or nuisance since the pandemic. We heard that it tends to be the sort that does not meet South Wales Police or agencies thresholds for action but is still distressing for victims and communities.

We heard from Coastal Housing that one of their biggest issues is neighbour complaints into each other's conduct, noise, drug use, visitors, parking, pets. We were told that these are the persistent issues, they are often quite low level so the threshold is not met for action, but we recognise that they are not low level for the people experiencing them, for the people experiencing them it is still incredibly stressful. The Panel heard from Coastal Housing that it does feel like agencies might sometimes not treat the information from housing association staff as evidence or consider it as criteria for action or intervention, which can be frustrating.

The representative from Pobl Housing shared a report by about the impact of ASB on victims (Author Baroness Newlove) called ASB: Living a Nightmare - ASB Help Nottingham Trent University April 2019. It says:
It is disrespectful to hear ASB being referred to as 'low level crime', and that this description illustrates how ASB is often treated as a series of isolated incidents, rather than taking into account the cumulative effect that it has on its victims. Police and Council staff are failing to appreciate the cumulative impact of persistent ASB on its victims – with each incident being treated in isolation and the underlying causes being ignored. Police, local authorities and social housing landlords all have responsibility to tackle anti-social behaviour by working together to help victims. Too often, victims are being passed from one to the other and feeling as if no one is listening. The failure of Police, Councils and housing associations to advertise the Community Trigger and provide a cohesive response is a dereliction of duty to residents.

The Panel recognised the cumulative effect of what is considered as low-level crime can be extremely difficult for victims to live with. For example, Pobl told us that *'drug and substance misuse is a problem, not necessarily the high-level kind of serious cases you would imagine to be, i.e., cannabis use but we do often have quite a 'back and forth' with the South Wales Police where it is not a landlord issue but South Wales Police won't investigate as it does not meet their threshold'*.

We do also understand that it can sometimes be difficult or undesirable to address some low level anti-social behaviour through the courts. This is either because the burden of proof cannot be reached, or because it will not be in the public interest to do so. We therefore heard that civil or informal remedies are often favoured above criminal sanctions.

- 2.6.4 **Mediation** was mentioned as one such possible remedy. We heard from Coastal Housing this is a useful tool to assist those residents involved to listen to each other in a neutral space, so they are able to understand the impacts on each other, cooperate, compromise and hopefully reach agreement. It was mentioned that it can be complex and difficult to access some services/support and that this can be a contributing factor, particularly in terms of mental health, substance misuse, social care. Housing Associations told us that this feels like it is getting harder, particularly terms of eligibility thresholds.

I would love to see a time in Swansea where we are able to have highly trained restorative mediators to work working alongside all the partner agencies to be able to tackle those very difficult disputes. It can be an incredibly powerful tool that gets sustained outcomes. Coastal Housing

The Panel agreed with Coastal Housing when they said that it would be good if organisations could come together with a shared agenda looking at how we can get a trained group of restorative practice facilitators in order to get to that sticky group of challenges that is not meeting a threshold for any kind of help. So as Coastal Housing representative said, *'instead of us all doing our own thing we could we look at how we might do that together'*.

- 2.6.5 **School Attendance.** One of the key challenges identified by the Education Department was around low attendance, persistent non-attendance and a rise in behaviours leading to school exclusions. It is not just Swansea but a national issue, although Swansea is performing better than some currently local authorities in Wales. The Panel heard that attendance is still a high priority for improvement locally. An action plan to address this and engagement was in the latter stages of development at the time the Panel spoke to them. Although the Panel were told this is set against challenging budgetary constraints for both schools and the local authority. The Panel were also pleased to hear about the Inclusion Strategy that was being finalised which encompasses the priorities for supporting vulnerable learners over the next three years.

- 2.6.6 **Perception and expectations in relation to ASB.** The Panel found the issue of perception and the expectations around ASB mentioned frequently throughout the inquiry. Hearing the public perception of what ASB is, can vary. The Panel heard that public perception of ASB and the fear of crime is, and has always been, a challenge and does not always match with reality.

We heard that the South Wales Police historically have not published data that highlights successful intervention and support, which would inevitably provide the community with reassurance and confidence in how ASB is dealt

with. The Panel agreed with Wales Police when they said that this would be beneficial to improving that issue of perception vs reality. We did hear that South Wales Police alongside the ASB Co-ordinator conduct public engagement and information events like White Ribbon Day, this helps them get an idea of what the perception in relation to crime at that time.

I would just like to say that to be perfectly honest, a lot of older people feel very, very vulnerable, especially in the evenings, walking around in Swansea and in the local areas, because we just feel that there is no one around and we do not know where to go to if we need help. For older people, I do think that this issue really needs to be looked at. Aging Well Member

The clash between perception and reality came out most strongly in relation gatherings of young people. The perception that if there is a gathering of young people for whatever reason that they are always up to no good. We heard that young people found this most upsetting and those services and organisation working with young people raised it as a problem. Councillors agreed that there needs to be more understanding across communities about young people and how communities engage with each other. We heard from social services that the next steps are to develop an understanding of what they do that causes most upset in communities. Also, awareness raising was needed and the encouragement of a positive narrative on the issue, it is important young people are seen as part of the community.

The Panel heard that the Council's Children's Rights and Participation Officer is undertaking preparation work with the young people with a view to setting up a Youth Forum to consider the perception of the young people in the community to address and negatives.

The Panel heard that all young people want is somewhere safe, light, ideally with Wi-Fi, where they can sit down and be with their friends. The Panel agreed with the Head of Care Services when she said there are opportunities for us to strengthen our community work together and this does necessarily mean we need statutory partners putting in substantial amounts of resources.

2.6.7 Young People Views. After speaking to young people at an inquiry specific engagement event the Panel wanted to include a section of the report dedicated to what they thought was an extremely useful and beneficial session. They were impressed with knowledge and commitment of the young people who attended. Some of issues raised by Young People include:

- Need more places to go for young people that are safe. Youth clubs open more, leisure centres etc.
- Need to educate PCSOs to understand what it is like to be a young person.
- More help for mental health.
- All young people labelled the same, as problem, it is only a small number that cause the problems.

'Designing out Crime' is considered to be an important part of the planning function.

- 2.6.9 **Monitoring and measuring ASB.** The Panel agreed that there is a need to ensure that the right data is collected that can measure and monitor ASB fully and correctly to form a base for future financial and service decision making, not only for the Council but also its partners.

There needs to be data that can be interrogated so that underlying trends can be fully recognised and resources targeted. Pobl Housing

It was recognised that ASB data was predominantly based on South Wales Police information. ASB data is monitored and collated via the South Wales Police NICHE system. Niche allows for data to be collated and analysed for any developing trends. The ASB Coordinator has direct access to this system in order to update, endorse, process referrals and run reports to analyse specific trends, hotspots and perpetrators. It was felt that although this data is useful it does not always provide a wider picture of ASB. The low reporting rate and involvement of other agencies who may deal with issues without raising a referral can make the data unrepresentative of the true picture of ASB in Swansea. For example, we heard from social services the challenge was that the concept is large, and behaviours considered anti-social can be broad and wide ranging and of different levels and severity. Capturing data can therefore be difficult to collect and pinpoint.

I think if I were to propose one thing that would be particularly useful is some kind of wider partnership analyst type role or resource or things that we can all contribute to understand better what that data is in Swansea and how we can react to it locally. Pobl Housing Association

The Panel were told that, for example, the quantitative data received by CMET provides little context to the type of worries in areas or communities; and anti-social behaviour reports are often different depending on the communities the teams are working within. To be able to target early prevention, it is important to understand what the anti-social behaviour looks like. Similarly, in YJS the qualitative information is not received until the young person is on a stage 2. This could mean there is the potential to be missing opportunities to deliver sessions in schools and in groups at much earlier stages. The Panel were told that ASB is a broad term that incorporates a vast range of behaviours, by categorising in this way it can be difficult to respond to specific worries and often the opportunity to tackle specific concerns is missed.

The Panel felt that good comprehensive data collection would help us all target resources and plan future services far better, both as individual organisations and as a partnership.

We heard from the Housing Associations that there has also been some complexity around data sharing agreements within the world of ASB and safeguarding. They said that this is incredibly sensitive data that really needs

to be held with the highest level of confidentiality and they explained how they have struggled in the past in terms of some getting to a place where they just see the data they need to and not the data that is related to residents of other housing associations or elsewhere.

The Panel found that some partners were experiencing difficulty regarding data sharing protocols and confidentiality. Effective data controls for data sharing should form part of the wider mapping exercise that the Panel recommends takes place in relation to ASB governance. The Panel recognised data must be processed and shared within the confines of the law and would encourage all partners to ensure they have agreements in place and are they are up to date.

2.6.10 **Online world impacts on young people.** The Panel shared the collective concerns of CMET, YJS, Evolve and early help teams who are worried about how the online world impacts on young people including the online influences of social media and the response to ASB. For example, Facebook community groups can escalate issues significantly. They heard, for example: Under section 49 of the Children and Young Person Act 1933 there is an automatic restriction on reporting information that identifies or is likely to identify any person under 18 who is involved in youth court proceedings. Despite this children are often identified online; this is difficult to monitor however it has a significant impact on restorative work and also has a detrimental effect on a child's wellbeing.

We asked whether all those involved with children and young people including families understand all the online influences experienced and how to keep them safe online. The Panel heard inappropriate online content can be difficult to monitor. Internet challenges are different and they change very quickly.

The evidence suggests the need to develop 'digital resilience' among young people. If young people know what to look out for, they can avoid things that do not seem right. Teaching the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and give young people the tools to spot warning signs and get out of potentially harmful situations is vital. The Panel heard that services must keep a focus on the young person and supporting positive behaviours by working with families and the community.

We were pleased to hear about the project to *support schools with understanding and preventing extra familial harm*. The Panel heard that the feedback from the initial school work (as part of contextual safeguarding approach and work that the youth service has co-ordinated) has been successful and schools have been asking for this to be rolled out further using this multi-agency approach, utilising the skills and commitment of our partner agencies. The intention has been to roll this out across Swansea; however, all agencies are experiencing resource issues that could impact on this being delivered across all areas. We would like to see this developed and continued to be rolled-out across all schools in Swansea.

We also recognise the wider work being done by Contextual Missing Exploited and Trafficked and Evolve will help in building children and young people's resilience to the online threat.

2.6.11 **Complexity of people's lives.** We recognise that it is important to understand the often-complex situations of both victims and perpetrators of ASBs and how important it is to deal with people in a holistic manner using all the skills agencies have that can help.

South Wales Police told the Panel that, for example, the vast majority of cases ASB where it involves young people are committed by a nucleus of individuals who are well known to services. Their lives are complex, and the interventions put in place also span a number of partnership services and their peer influence can be significant.

We heard from Housing that as a social landlord the objective to support people to sustain their tenancies and to help create communities which are safe and secure. They said some tenants have complex needs and present challenging behaviour. They work closely with those tenants and with other services as appropriate, in an effort to modify that behaviour. Engagement is often challenging and it is complex and influenced by many different factors. The Panel were pleased to hear that Housing will engage with people in whatever way works for them and by accessing services of partners to support that.

What we see and what can be difficult, is the small cohort of people who are transitioning in and out of supported housing, in and out of general needs, in and out of prison, in and out of mental health institutions or detox or rehab. It does not feel like the right thing has been designed for and/or works for this group of people across the services. It is quite a small group in the number, but they are costly to services and costly to their lives. They are not getting what they need in terms of a therapeutic intervention. And I think the model for them has yet to be designed. Coastal Housing Association

The Panel heard that some individuals may have experienced adverse childhood experiences which can lead to substance dependency, mental health issues, chaotic lifestyles etc. Individuals with complex needs can be victims themselves and vulnerable to coercion, cuckooing and exploitation. We heard that the Council works both locally and at a strategic level to ensure the right support and advice is available to such individuals whilst also trying to minimise the impact of their behaviour on the wider community.

We heard from Coastal Housing that many of the causes of ASB are much bigger than they or any social landlord can solve. Indeed, they felt that the Council is more able to exert influence over some of the wider issues like poverty, social inequality, childhood trauma, institutionalisation, trauma within systems, you know, prisons, criminal justice, mental health and looked after children.

Coastal Housing Association told us they use an ASB risk matrix which helps determine vulnerability and risk. This is key to determining what is the most proportionate response in this situation and to understand the real impact. They said it would be interesting to see if there was a way using this so there is more consistency across services.

2.6.12 **Engaging with support.** Panel members heard that as much as individuals are encouraged to engage in support and prevention work, this is all voluntary. The anti-social behaviour process is not able to enforce statutory involvement with services.

2.6.13 The Panel recommend to Cabinet that it:

- Ask the Safer Swansea Partnership to investigate how to improve levels of reporting of incidents of ASB including asking South Wales South Wales Police to consider its response times in relation to the 101 non-emergency line and to simplifying the online reporting form. (R14)
- Investigate the possibility of developing a multi-agency mediation resource. (R15)
- Look to counteract the negative 'online world' impacts on children and young people by (R16)
 - continuing to build on and share the expertise and information available.
 - Resource the CMET training that will support schools with understanding and preventing extra familial harm.
 - Consider extending this training to Gower College and to others who work with young people.
- Work with Community Centres to encourage more use of facilities for/by young people and vulnerable groups. (R18)
- Develop and build upon appropriate data collection process in order to help plan future service provision and monitor effectiveness of strategies used. This monitoring process should be linked to the ASB Home Office 5 key principles (once they are formalised). (R23)

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel commends Cabinet to consider all issues and ideas raised by this inquiry and, in particular, the recommendations set out below.

The Panel recognises that the Authority

- (a) will need to ensure that any subsequent actions are legal and meet the requirements of any relevant legislation.
- (b) has a responsibility to make the best use of limited resources and that any additional costs will need to be considered carefully as part of the annual budget setting process.

The Panel has kept these principles in mind in the course of its investigations.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to consider those recommendations that they are directly responsible for, but also make representation on behalf of the Council, where agreeable, in support of any recommendation that would require action from others, such as the Safer Swansea Partnership.

The Panel recommends that Cabinet:

- R1. Investigates options for appointing an independent chair for ASB Case Reviews and then put most appropriate option put in place. This should be done as a matter of urgency.
- R2. Continues to build upon and embed the five key ASB Home Office principles into the work of the Council.
- R3. Looks at devolving the Community Protection Warning / Community Protection Notice powers to Housing Associations, with consideration being given to their use by other partners.
- R4. Carries out a Council wide mapping exercise to establish and provide clarity in relation to ASB. It should include, but not be restricted to the governance, roles, resources, regulatory powers and other tools used (or available), use of the referral process and equity of services provided to the public.
- R5. Looks into providing resources to do more targeted work with primary school aged children that includes ASB preventative matters.
- R6. Widens the current membership of the Public Services Board and Safer Swansea Partnership to include local Housing Associations.
- R7. Investigates the potential of developing a partnership hub/office where services to ASB across organisations can be co-located.
- R8. Works with key partner organisations to improve the understanding of each other's roles in order to help provide clarity and consistency of approach to ASB for the service user and the public. This should include a map of the services and powers available across the partnership.
- R9. Develops a Multi-Agency Strategic Forum where solutions to cross cutting themes and ways of working can be discussed.
- R10. Ensures that good feedback mechanisms for the public are in place across the Council and that we use that feedback to improve the services we provide.
- R11. Considers and reviews accessibility to information about ASB in order to ensure ease of access.
 - Ensure key information is available in different languages, formats and in physical form.
 - That we look to have information available in different locations in the Council across the partner public locations.

- Build on how we target information to suit those we are looking to reach i.e., young people.
 - Review the Council's website content in relation to ASB with a view to expanding what is available.
- R12. Maximises the opportunities to raise awareness of ASB, in particular:
- Publicise good news stories about work that is done by the Council.
 - Communicate and raise awareness of young people's positive activities in the community.
 - Look to influence and change the negative narrative and language used about young people in the media.
 - Provide information and raise awareness of the ASB Case Review.
 - Link up with the new Council's Community engagement office located at waterfront Museum.
- R13. Looks to further build upon the intergenerational work with young people and the older generation, do this in conjunction with the voluntary sector where appropriate.
- R14. Asks the Safer Swansea Partnership to investigate how to improve levels of reporting of incidents of ASB including asking South Wales Police to consider its response times in relation to the 101 non-emergency telephone line and to simplify the online reporting form.
- R15. Investigates the possibility of developing a multi-agency mediation resource.
- R16. Looks to counteract negative 'online world' impacts on children and young people by
- d) continuing to build on and share the expertise and information available.
 - e) resource the Contextual Missing Exploited Trafficked Team training that will support schools with understanding and preventing extra familial harm.
 - f) consider extending this training to Gower College and to others who regularly work with young people.
- R17. Looks to increase the number of Youth Workers in Swansea with the aim of every community across the City and County of Swansea having dedicated Youth Worker Support.
- R18. Work with Community Centres to encourage more use of facilities for/by young people and vulnerable groups.
- R19. Looks into the potential of Housing Associations contributing to some of our environmental services like noise abatement and fly tipping in order to increase their levels of service provision.
- R20. Cabinet ensures more regular deep cleans of the City Centre particularly in and around the Quadrant Bus Station.

- R21. Cabinet work with local businesses and the Business Improvement District (BID) with the aim of tidying up shop fronts and rubbish storage across the City Centre.
- R22. Cabinet carryout regular 'walk throughs' of the city centre and communities across Swansea to see the locations through the 'eyes of the public' and to identify issues of concern. This should be done in conjunction with appropriate officers and local ward members.
- R23. Develops and builds upon appropriate data collection processes in order to help plan future service provision and monitor effectiveness of strategies used. This monitoring process should be closely linked to the ASB Home Office 5 key principles (once they are formalised).
- R24. Make representations to Police and Crime Commissioner's Officer asking them to consider grant funding on a medium-term basis (i.e., 3 yearly).

FURTHER SCRUTINY NEEDED

As well as our recommendations for Cabinet we have also come across an issue that we feel requires further scrutiny. We propose to the Scrutiny Programme Committee, therefore, that it considers adding examination of the following topic to the Scrutiny Work Programme:

- Youth provision in Swansea including the provision and current issues like preventative work, funding and the difficulty in recruiting qualified youth workers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Panel is very grateful to everyone who contributed to the inquiry.

The Panel would, in particular, like to thank the following people for all of their help and for the information provided.

South Wales South Wales Police
Coastal Housing Association
Pobl Housing Association
Young People and Youth Workers at Brynhafryd Early Help Hub Event
Cabinet Members: Alyson Pugh, Hayley Gwilliam, Louise Gibbard and Andrea Lewis
Council Department's including Education, Social Services (including CMET, YJS and Evolve) and Place
Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator
Local Area Co-ordination
Community Engagement Transformation Lead Officer
Aging Well representatives
LGBTQ+ Forum representatives
Disability Forum representatives
Black Minority Ethnic Communities Forum representatives
Swansea Against Business Crime representative
Business Improvement District (BID) representative
City Centre Manager
Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS)
Urban Foundry Ltd representative
Mumbles Traders representative
Victim Support written submission

ABOUT THE INQUIRY PANEL

The **Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel** is a team of Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet, appointed by the Council's Scrutiny Programme Committee. Inquiry Panels will examine a strategic issue of concern and make recommendations about how policies and services can be improved.

Members of the Panel

Terry Hennegan (Convener)

Sam Bennett

Adam Davis

Mike Day

Victoria Holland

Yvonne Jardine

Alan Jeffrey

Matthew Jones

Mary Jones

Cheryl Philpott

Brigitte Rowlands

Mark Tribe

The inquiry was supported by Michelle Roberts from the Council's Scrutiny Team.

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Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Scrutiny

Directorate: Legal and Democratic Services

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

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

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

The Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel will look at how the Council and its partners are tackling Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea, see attached Terms of Reference.

The Panel will at the end of the Inquiry write a report to Cabinet with recommendations for service improvement, Cabinet if they agree the recommendations, will be responsible for taking forward those recommendations (at that time they will complete full IIA)

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

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

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?

Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

Councillors will speak to relevant departments, cabinet members stakeholders/partners through a roundtable meeting, panel meetings and through a call for evidence. All meeting will be recorded and made available online and every public meeting will have a section for public questions. The Panel will use any appropriate departmental consultation information already available to inform this piece of work.

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

a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?

Yes No

b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?

Yes No

c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?

Yes No

d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?

Yes No n/a

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

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

x Recommendations only

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

Yes x No If yes, please provide details below

Recommendations only at this stage. When/if recommendations from the Inquiry are accepted by Cabinet this will be established.

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

This is a Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour, the Inquiry itself will produce recommendations for service improvement based on the Terms of Reference but does not make the decisions. Cabinet, when they receive the recommendations at the end of the Inquiry, will look at each recommendation made and either agree or reject it. The recommendations that are agreed will then be taken forward and a full IIA will be produced accessing their impact and implications.

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

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

No impacts at this stage as not decision making.

The Panel will involve Council Departments, Councillors, providers of services via meetings and the public via Call for Evidence, they will also look at any survey consultation information departments and partners have collected and supplied to the Inquiry. Public panel meetings with public questions section on agenda.

The Inquiry aligns to the principles of the WFG

No risks identified but this will need to be considered when if recommendations are taken forward by Cabinet.

Cumulative impact will be assessed when recommendations are taken forward by Cabinet.

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

Full IIA to be completed after decision made on recommendations resulting from the Inquiry. This will be done by Cabinet.

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

Screening completed by:
Name: Michelle Roberts
Job title: Scrutiny Officer
Date: 24 November 2022
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Tracey Meredith
Position: Chief Legal Officer
Date: 24/11/22

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Cabinet Member for Community

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14th November 2023

Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme Progress Report 2021-2023

Purpose	To present the report on the progress of the Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme in Swansea 2021-2023.
Content	<p>The report includes details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An overview of the refreshed Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme in Swansea.• A summary of the Countywide priorities identified by Children & Young People• Progress via the “Right Way” five principled approach.• Recommendations
Councillors are being asked to	Give their views on the progress in relation to the Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme and how the UNCRC has become embedded within the Council.
Lead Councillor	Cllr Hayley Gwilliam, Cabinet Member for Community
Lead Officer	Jane Whitmore, Strategic Lead Commissioner
Report Author	Julie Gosney, Partnership & Involvement Team Manager Tel: 07814 105956 E-mail: Julie.gosney@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer	Chris Davies

1. Background

- 1.1 As outlined in the Children & Young People's Rights Scheme the Council's Scrutiny Programme Committee will assess the work undertaken and the implementation of the Scheme across the Council.

2. Progress Report

- 2.1.1 This report is the fifth progress report on the due regard duty for embedding the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) into the local authority policy framework and specifically focuses on progress made during 21-23 within the 5 "Right Way" principles of the Children's Rights Scheme in Swansea.

- 2.1.2 The full progress report of the Children & Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea can be found at **Appendix 1**.

- 2.1.3 This report includes details of:

- An overview of the refreshed Children & Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea.
- A summary of the Countywide priorities identified by Children & Young People
- Progress across all the Council via the "Right Way" five principled approach framework covering the following areas of:
 - Participation
 - Empowerment
 - Embedding
 - Accountability
 - Non-discrimination
- Identified recommendations going forward.

3. Key Points

- 3.1 It was agreed that the Council would use the 5 principles of the Nationally recognised "Right Way" approach to report progress made in relation to upholding the Children's Rights commitment in Swansea. Alignment to the National process has provided clear guidance, and tangible benchmarks for council departments to embed a whole council approach. (Five Human Rights Principles – Participation, Empowerment, Embedding, Accountability, Non-Discrimination)

- 3.2 The Children's Rights Scheme "Plan on a Page" has been recognised as best practice by the Children's Commissioner for Wales, who suggested use as a national model. The "Plan on a Page" provided a definition to each of the "Right Way" principles to ensure its meaning was clearly understood and provided a "We Will" section that clearly identified Council commitments, providing clear actions and opportunity to report outcomes for departments

across the Council which also informs and aligns to the “Human Rights City” work.

- 3.3 As part of the Children’s Rights Scheme consultation, Children and Young People identified six County wide priorities to be addressed by Swansea Council and its partners of the Public Service Board. Priorities were:
- Protecting the Environment and Green Spaces
 - Quiet Voices
 - Supporting Disabled Children
 - Equality for LGBTQ+ Children & Young People
 - Politics
 - Listening to Learners
- 3.4 Following the Covid pandemic thought was given to how and where we engaged with children and young people and so the “Big Conversation” Countywide model was temporarily put on hold and teams reverted to more regular and direct group work within schools and community settings as evidenced within the report.
- 3.5 The “Big Conversation” has recently been reviewed and remodelled to provide the overarching countywide structure to frame the local participation and engagement work with children and young people. Reintroduction of the “Big Conversation” infrastructure will involve a mix of Countywide engagement opportunities held within school and community settings. The “Big Conversation” will ensure an overarching platform to promote local, regional and national opportunities to participate and feedback to children and young people in relation to how their voice is being heard and influencing decisions.
- 3.6 Strong Children’s Rights foundations have been created within schools through the previous UNICEF contract to deliver “Rights Respecting Schools. Many schools embrace the principles that underpin the work of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and as a result have shared confidence when transitioning to the new curriculum that sees children’s rights embedded within day-to-day practise. School leaders have been using this knowledge to plan worthwhile activities that aim to further support the rights of children.
- 3.7 Welsh Government will soon be launching new Children’s Rights Training, on-line resources and “Train-the-Trainer” which will also be framed using the “Right Way” Human Rights principled approach and this will assist us locally to continue to promote Children’s Rights and further upskill and support services to embed within practise.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 In order to clearly identify development needs, recommendations have been separated via the 5 “Right Way” principles that shape the Children’s Rights Scheme in Swansea.

4.2 Participation:

- 4.2.1 The refresh and remodel of the “Big Conversation” to provide a Countywide infrastructure, to enable improved communication of opportunities for children and young people to be heard locally, regionally and nationally and provide a platform for regular feedback and updates to take place.
- 4.2.2 Develop on-line opportunities to engage with children and young people in this ever-increasing digital age via increased use of social media & seeking opportunities to develop a “Have your Say/Participation” page on Hwb to enable the reach of young people via school-based platforms.
- 4.2.3 Further develop opportunities to involve children and young people in the recruitment of officers with responsibilities that impact the lives of children and young people.

4.3 Empowerment:

- 4.3.1 Engage with Welsh Government regarding the soon to be launched Children’s Rights Training and on-line resources to continue to promote Children’s Rights and support services to embed within practice.
- 4.3.2 Continue to seek opportunities to increase accessibility of decision makers to children and young people.
- 4.3.3 Explore opportunities for greater use of simple language/accessible reporting to ensure children and young people can engage in opportunities to shape local services.

4.4 Embedding:

- 4.4.1 Continue to raise awareness and increase knowledge of children’s rights (UNCRC) within Council Teams by developing an on-line training module and linking with the wider “Human Rights City” work.
- 4.4.2 Re-establish the “Children’s Rights Network” as a “Children’s Rights Information Network” with use of Mail Chimp to allow for monthly news updates and signpost to local, regional & national opportunities for practitioners.

4.5 Accountability:

- 4.5.1 Improve opportunities for children and young people to get in touch with the Council to share thoughts and ideas or to share if they feel their rights are not being met.
- 4.5.2 Follow the Welsh Government model of reviewing the Children’s Rights Scheme which is based on a 5-year cycle with progress reporting midway through the cycle and at the end of the five years.

4.6 Non-Discrimination:

4.6.1 Ensure Children's Rights is embedded throughout the refreshed "Strategic Equality Plan" in Swansea.

5. Legal implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Finance Implications

6.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, it may lead to decisions being taken at a later date that may have costs attached. Any such costs will need to be managed within departmental resources at that time with due regard to the Council's medium term financial plan.

Background papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Progress Report of the Children & People's Rights Scheme in Swansea
2021 - 2023



*This report offers an update of the progress the Council has made of embedding children & young people's rights-based work and engagement in Swansea over the past 2 years.
(September 2021- 2023)*



If you have any questions regarding the content of this report, please contact UNCRc@swansea.gov.uk



Swansea Councils Children and Young People Rights Scheme Progress Report

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Background

In September 2013, Swansea Council agreed that children’s rights should be embedded within the Council policy framework, and that a duty be placed on the Council’s Cabinet to have ‘due regard’ to the UNCRC when making decisions. This means that when Swansea Council develop new policies or strategies, review or change existing policies and strategies, or develop or change Council services, thought must be given to how those decisions affect the rights of children in Swansea.

Remodel of Children & Young People’s Rights work

The original Scheme was published in 2014, with a second version published in 2021, which was updated following public consultation and ensures the revised scheme compliments the ‘Right Way’ [‘The Right Way’](#) principled approach that is being embedded nationally and led by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales.

The “Right Way” approach is framed around five Human Rights principles and includes Participation; Empowerment; Embedding; Accountability; and Non-Discrimination. Alignment to the National process means opportunity to provide clear guidance, and tangible benchmarks for council departments to embed a whole council approach and evidence outcomes. It was agreed that Swansea Council would use the 5 principles to report progress made in relation to upholding the Children's Rights commitment.

A copy of the ‘plan on a page’ which outlines what the Council will do to ensure that Children’s Rights are at the heart of decision making is included in **Appendix A**. (Recognised as good practice in terms of its accessibility and usability by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales)

County wide priorities for Children & Young People

As part of the Children’s Rights Scheme, Children and Young People identified six County wide priorities to be addressed by Swansea Council and its partners of the Public Service Board. Progress relating to many of the priorities is captured throughout the report through the five principles and progress is shared with children and young people at Universal Children’s Day in November each year.

Priorities are:

- ✓ Protecting the Environment and Green Spaces
- ✓ Quiet Voices
- ✓ Supporting Disabled Children
- ✓ Equality for LGBTQ+ Children & Young People
- ✓ Politics
- ✓ Listening to Learners

Progress via the “Right Way” five principled approach

Section 1: Participation

Participation means making sure good quality arrangements are in place to ensure children and young people (CYP) are listened to, and that their opinion is heard in decisions that are being made that affect them. Ensuring that mechanisms for participation are in line with the National Participation Standards.

Swansea Council has committed to:

- ✓ Involve children directly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services they receive.
- ✓ Learn how other organisations are doing this and develop plans that meet the needs of children and young people in Swansea.
- ✓ Develop clear targets to listen to children and young people from marginalised groups.
- ✓ Involve children in the recruitment of staff who have responsibilities that impact on children.

In Swansea, meaningful and inclusive opportunities for children and young people to be heard in decisions that affect them is a priority. Since 2014, the county mechanism to ensure this has been called the Big Conversation and over the years has offered thousands of children and young people aged 5–25 year opportunities to engage in accessible and meaningful sessions to shape services and have a voice on issues that impact their lives.

The pandemic meant that thought had to be given to how and where we engaged with children and young people and so the “Big Conversation” model was temporarily put on hold during this reporting period. Teams reverted to more regular and direct group work within schools and community settings as evidenced within this report.

The “Big Conversation” has recently been reviewed and remodelled to provide an overarching structure with a mix of opportunities to facilitate participation and feedback to children and young people in relation to how their voice is being heard and influencing decisions. (Due to be launched at the end of November 23).

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the first principle of **participation**.

Social Services Directorate

Universal Children's Day:

Swansea's Commitment to Children's Rights is celebrated annually with an event for all Swansea schools on Universal Children's Day. The celebration in November 2022 focussed on the importance of hearing the voices of children and young people and providing a "You said, we did" section to feed back to children and young people about what Swansea had been doing in relation to the priorities they had set.

In total 152 children and young people attended from primary and secondary schools, along with 23 organisations who provided interactive stalls that the children and young people could look around, receive information, and take part in various activities.



Votes @ 16 and Democracy Grant Partnership with Swansea MAD:

Throughout 2022 Swansea Democratic Services and the Partnership & Involvement Team worked together to ensure young people aged 14+ years were aware that laws had changed in Wales enabling young people aged 16+ years to vote in Welsh elections. Swansea MAD were procured to run sessions to ensure young people had the tools to enable them to a) register to vote and b) understand how to access information about politics and how to participate in the voting process.

The program saw 19 Young Ambassadors recruited from 10 Secondary Schools as "Votes at 16 Ambassadors" and a film produced by young people to show the voting process. The role of the ambassadors was to promote and encourage their peers to register to vote for the forthcoming elections. Ambassadors were supported in schools and youth settings to promote votes at 16 and registration to vote.

A Swansea "Votes @ 16" film was produced bilingually by 30 pupils from Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr and Ysgol Bryn Tawe who participated in several workshops supported by Swansea MAD, to generate film ideas, storyboard, write scripts, act, direct and edit a short film to promote Votes at 16. The video can be found at: <https://www.swanseamad.com/vote/>



In June 2023 Swansea Council partnered with Swansea MAD to access a "Democracy Grant" from Welsh Government Democratic Engagement Fund, which will support school and community sessions continuing the work of how to register and how to vote but also exploring the need for new Voter ID. Sessions will be done through creative means such as DJing, Virtual Reality and Stop Motion for example.

Junior Safeguarding Board (JSB) – A regional partnership

Established in January 2019, the Junior Safeguarding Board (JSB) comprises of representatives from secondary schools and community groups from across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, including schools for children and young people with additional and complex needs.

The purpose of the JSB is to provide a platform for children and young people to have the opportunity to participate and have their voices heard regarding safety at school, at home, online and in their communities.

In 2021, young people highlighted ‘Equality & Discrimination’ as an issue and decided to focus on raising awareness and championing LGBTQIA+ rights. The JSB which consisted of 26 young people made the decision to develop a resource that could be shared with schools, community groups and key stakeholders and with the support of staff, the ‘Equali-Tea’ resource was produced. The resource pack included a quiz; conversation starter teapots and scribble pads. In 2022 the resource pack was hand delivered to all secondary schools across NPT and Swansea and workshops were delivered to school pupils, community groups and those who work with young people.

During January and February 2022, 7 young people delivered online training sessions to 29 decision makers from across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, and during Safeguarding week in November 22 a further 3 training sessions were delivered to 50 participants who worked with CYP.

Throughout events and sessions in 2022 young people shared that they want the Local Authority, Children’s Commissioner and the Police to prioritise “Young Women’s Safety” and more broadly “Safe Spaces” in their work.



Setting the JSB Priority for 2023: 17 Young people from the Junior Safeguarding Board came together to choose the theme for 2023. They met in Climbing hangar where they took part in a climbing session alongside creative brain storming. The theme set by the young people for the JSB for 2023 is Sexual Harassment. Young people have since been working on projects across Swansea that look at reducing gender-based violence, sexual harassment in schools, and safe spaces.

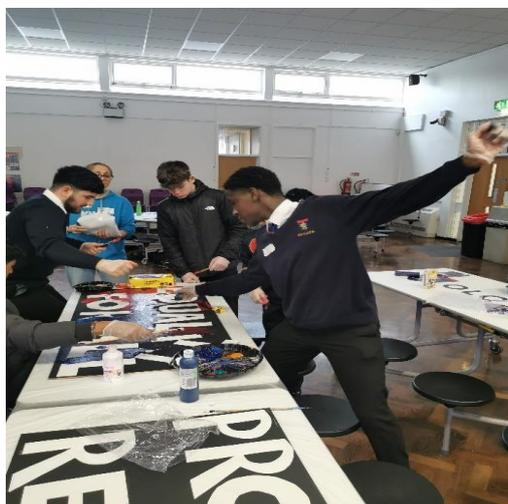
White Ribbon Day:

Every year on White Ribbon Day (November 20th) young people are invited to various events to raise awareness. November '21 focused on “All men can” 15 young boys came together to discuss what they could do to reduce gender-based violence.



White Ribbon Day 2022 saw 14 young people from Swansea come together to make a plan and a pledge on what we can do. After a number of workshops young people created a TikTok video displaying silhouette images of themselves with messages around young women's safety.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 a joint project with the Partnership and Engagement Team (Community Safety) saw the co-design and facilitation of a series of workshops with young people across Swansea, aimed to address and explore concerns that young people had raised in relation to Hate Crime, Discrimination and the Safety of Women and Girls.



Sessions involved key note speakers, creative outputs, opportunities for discussion, critical thinking and problem solving around these topics, all of which helped to promote and uphold children and young people's right to education, receive information that they can access in an understandable way, be involved in decisions that affect them, as well as their right to grow up in a safe and healthy environment in which they can thrive.

Feedback during "White Ribbon Day" sessions and at workshops on "Celebrating Similarities and Understanding Differences" (Countering Right Wing Extremism and Hate Crime) where 27 young people from across Swansea attended, was that the issue of Violence Against Women, Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse is increasing in prevalence among younger communities and that young people wanted opportunities to discuss the issues in a safely facilitated, controlled environment with a view to creating lasting change for themselves and others.

Plan UK – May 23

A funded opportunity which directed the work towards younger teenage boys aged 13-14 to highlight and explore some of the avenues of masculinity (positive and toxic) that young people are exposed to. The 10 young men who participated in the project have requested to showcase their learning and display the work at an exhibition for an invited audience to continue the promotion of everyone's human right to be kept safe. This exhibition will take place in November '23 for White Ribbon Day.



Corporate Parenting

Corporate parenting pledges - Children and young people who are open to child and family “Permanence Teams” have engaged with the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) to understand the role the CPB have in the lives of care experienced young people. Young people worked with the “Participation & Children's Rights Worker” to establish a set of 7 pledges they would like the board to make, to help them live their best life. The pledges are based on children's rights and were signed off by CPB in July 23 and will be used to measure against in future decisions made by the CPB.

The 6 areas

Area
Happiness - Articles UNCRC Article 12 – You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously Article 15 – You have the right to meet with friends and join groups Article 6 – You have the right to grow up and reach your full potential
Good mental health - Articles of UNCRC Article 24 – You have the right to clean water, healthy food, a clean environment and good health care Article 8 – You have the right to an identity
Love, family and friendship – Articles of UNCRC Article 15 - Article 15 – You have the right to meet with friends and join groups Article 18 – You have the right to be brought up by both parents if possible Article 20 – You have the right to be looked after properly if you can't live with your own family Article 21 – If you <u>cant</u> live with your <u>parents</u> you have the right to live in the best place for you
A safe place to live – Articles of UNCRC Article 19 -You have <u>rhte</u> right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated Article 21 – If you can't live with your <u>parents</u> you have the right to live in the best place for you
Good education/good job – Articles of UNCRC Article 28 – You have the right to an education
Having enough money and games and access to technology “no barriers to opportunity” – Articles UNCRC Article 6 – You have the right to grow up and reach your full potential

Children and young people engaged in a series of 3 podcasts to discuss the ways in which the pledge areas will influence their lives and associated rights. Young people will soon present the podcasts for the CPB to discuss and hold a “You said, We did”.

Lost Voices Project

The Lost Voices project has been creatively empowering the lost voices of young people who have not traditionally been heard. Young people with experience of the care system, young people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, young people experiencing mental health and young people struggling to find their path. This creative opportunity has been supporting young people to find their voice, develop, shape and create their own large-scale artwork.

Young people connected to Llamau and Swansea Children's Services have worked alongside artists to explore in depth their own lives, experiences, thoughts and feelings. This final artistic experience will amplify the participants voices and ensure they are heard. The audience will engage with the world the participants create on the terms the participants define. The young people hope this experience will change the way you see and support young people in your work and wider lives.

The interactive project took place over 2 sessions in June 2023 and decision makers attended to listen to the real-life experiences of the young people who took part.

Swansea Accommodation Pathway (SAP)

Young people/young adults views have been explored via a what matter's conversation (WMC) into the way that young people are referred and assessed for supported accommodation in Swansea. Findings of the WMC have been delivered to the Strategic SAP panel with the aim of young people working co productively with officers to develop new referral and assessment forms.

Child & Family Services Interview Panels

Young people across child and family services have participated in young person interview panels for leadership and management jobs. Young people have been provided with in house training based on interview techniques. Young people's decisions are weighted and final decisions largely based on what the young people want from workers within the teams.

When I'm Ready Scheme

What Matters Conversations - Children, young people and providers are involved in the "When I'm Ready Scheme" to ascertain what matters to them regarding life after leaving care whilst in a WIR placement.

Special Guardianship Order

What Matters Conversations - Children, young people and Special Guardianship carers are involved throughout the process to ascertain what matters to them regarding experiences of kinship care.

Early Help Hubs

All Early help assessment processes and planning of work specifically captures the 'what matters' and voice of the child throughout its intervention. Children and young people are fully integrated. Once Gillick competent, young people are encouraged to make their own decisions on support that involves them.

Evolve Youth Service

The Evolve Youth Service undertook a large consultation with YP in 2022 which helped design and shape our "Youth Work offer. Each Evolve Youth Club has a youth committee that oversees and has decision making responsibilities on our youth work offer inclusive of summer of fun, winter of wellbeing and other activities as well as educative programmes of work throughout the year.

Evolve Youth Service have recently completed a consultation, with young people on what they would like to see, from the creation of “Teen Spaces” across Swansea parks, where young people can go and hang out with their friends with equipment for them to enjoy.

Service Quality Unit



For care experienced children within the service quality unit, there are regular participation events with the participation officer to listen to young people and use this information to help achieve better outcomes.

Staff encourage children and young people to attend meetings if they want to, so that they are central to decision making. This includes meetings to discuss their looked after care plans or attend child protection conferences and children's voices are captured in the written paperwork produced.



Appreciative enquiries with care experienced children are completed to listen to and learn from their experiences of having an independent reviewing officer.

Children and young people over 5yrs old are supported if they would benefit from an advocacy or an independent visitor and promote this in our practice.

Young people have also been part of interview processes to recruit new staff and have been supported to build different skills like asking questions and building self-esteem. One young person shared, “I have never interviewed or offered someone a job before, it has made my day”.

Play Sufficiency

As part of the Play Sufficiency Assessment 22 (PSA) engagement sessions facilitated across several schools (Glais/Clwyd/Hafod/Sketty) to measure and consult on various issues around play and access to play opportunities.

Childcare Sufficiency

As part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 22 (CSA) - Engagement sessions were undertaken at schools, day nursery and Flying Start settings to gain an understanding of what children enjoy about the childcare they attend. These comments and observations were feed into the CSA.

Play Area Improvement Programme

The Play Area Improvement Programme is a programme that will upgrade and/or refurb every play area in the county. The programme intends to run until 2026. Engagement sessions have been held both onsite and within schools and have included Brynmill, CwmLevel, Hafod School, TirCoed, Dunvant, Gypsy/Traveller Community and Pontlliw.

Engagement sessions help inform us and reflect the play needs in the community.

Engagement sessions with young people in Brynhyfryd areas were carried out at the with teenagers to gain views on what would make a good space for older children.

A consultation session was held at Clwyd School 'Play Through a Child's Eye'. This was to help understand how children view play.



Supporting the work of the Friends of Morryston Part a consultation took place with Morryston Comprehensive school. This gave year 8 and 9 pupils the opportunity to share the type of space they feel is needed within the park.

Good Vibes LGBTQIA+ consultation sessions have been carried out to explore the play experiences and/or barriers to play that the LBBTQIA+ young people may have experienced. 10 young people took part in these in-depth consultations.

National Play Day

An annual event which celebrates children's right to play and allows partners a platform for engagement and consultation. The event in 2023 was held at the Waterfront Museum with the theme "Play on a Shoestring". Activities included circus skills, arts and crafts, sports, lots of different types of games, a toddler zone and Welsh language led songs and rhymes.

There were over 2500 attendances by children, young people and families who all benefitted from the launch of Swansea's tackling summer hunger scheme where over 1000 packed lunches were provided to children in attendance.



Early Years

Planning in the moment - Planning in the Moment training, emphasises the critical role of the adult in promoting child-led learning, giving early years practitioners the confidence and insight to work and plan in the moment. Planning in the Moment with young children maintains a strong link to practice and examples of how practitioners can integrate spontaneous planning and rich adult-child interactions into their everyday practice. This training session is for practitioners who work with children aged between 2 and 4 years of age and has been delivered to over 250 Swansea practitioners.

Education Directorate

Hearing the voices of children and young people is detailed as a step to meet the Education & Skills well-being objective in the Corporate Plan 2022/23, which highlights 'Pupil Voice and stated the need to "Continue to involve children and young people in their education and community through Schools Councils and engagement events". The importance is detailed under '*Involving People – by involving learners in their education through a range of engagement mechanisms to demonstrate we value these key stakeholders*'. Specific strategies also detail this, e.g., the Inclusion Strategy will promote learner participation in decision-making. Please see a recent report to the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel here: [Education Scrutiny Performance Panel Apr 23 - Hearing the voices of CYP](#)

Post-16 Learner Voice

During March 2023 – June 2023 the Education Directorate, with support from University Wales Trinity St. David's (UWTSD), took part in learner voice engagement with post-16 learners, and those in years 10 and 11, as part of its Post-16 Strategy for Curriculum Collaboration. A wide range of learners across Swansea were consulted through an extensive questionnaire survey for post-16 learners, and smaller focus groups for years 10,11 and 12. We wanted to understand their experiences of the provision on offer at post-16, to make sure it meets the needs of all learners.

317 questionnaire response were obtained, which is approximately 20% of the sixth form cohort in Swansea. The survey was complemented by focus groups of 10 to 15 learners in years 10, 11 and 12 from both 11-16 schools and 11-18 schools.

Education Inclusion

A temporary and seconded post has been created to provide creative solutions for vulnerable learners at risk of non-engagement with education. Learner voice is pivotal in providing bespoke educational experiences. The post is pivotal to providing early identification and prevention of non-engagement in education. This role is unique as it brings together a host of agencies to ensure engagement and lifelong learning.

Secondary School Network Group

Led by Bishopston Comprehensive School for pupil voice. The Network meets twice a year with representatives from every secondary school. This network aims to share best practice, pass on key information and discuss pupil voice.

Involving Children who are Looked after within their Personal Education Plan - The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a record of the child's education and training. It documents the agreed actions to help them to fulfil their educational potential, it is an integral part of the care and support plan. The PEP is a key mechanism through which pupil voice around education can be captured and monitored. Cross-directorate working is robust and is embedded through PEP quality assurance processes which are undertaken every school term.

Children and young people were consulted on the redesign of the PEP and requested a version of their own to keep. The 'my PEP' was developed as a result and is now an embedded process.

Looked after children who were previously identified as having “Special Educational Need” (SEN) or who are currently identified as having an “Additional Learning Need” (ALN) have their views, wishes and feelings gathered during the person-centred meeting/review process and this enables schools and the LA to identify the best way of supporting their progress.

Hearing the Voice of Learners within Safeguarding in Education

The Local Authority safeguarding audit includes a section on learner voice. Officers meet with children both in planned sessions and in a more ad-hoc way as they complete the audit, which provides assurance that learners feel safe and have the opportunity express their views clearly.

Pupil Referral Unit

Maes Derw PRU has a very active school council where learners are involved in decision making. Most recently learners at Maes Derw have been invited to share their views on the education provision they receive to inform potential plans to review the offer available.

Accessibility Strategy

The Education Directorate is currently redeveloping its statutory Accessibility Strategy which sets out plans and priorities to improve access to schools for disabled learners. As part of the initial scoping exercise the views of disabled learners have been gathered via a questionnaire which was circulated to Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators in schools. These views, together with those of parent carers and schools have been used to inform the draft strategy.

School Organisation Proposals

The Education Directorate is currently consulting on the future of Special Schools in Swansea. Ensuring the views of learners are captured and carefully considered is an absolute priority within the consultation process. A bespoke, easy to read pupil consultation paper has been created, and an online pupil survey has been made available. Pupils have been encouraged to feed back in any form that they feel comfortable with. We are working closely with the schools to ensure that all pupils have the proposal explained to them in a way they can understand by their class teacher, with whom they are familiar and are able to communicate with fully. For pupils with the most significant special needs, the schools have well embedded communication strategies, and use their own bespoke communication tools so that even learners who are non-verbal can communicate their feelings around the proposal.

Place Directorate

Community Sport Team

The Community Sport Team co-ordinate the Young Ambassador scheme across the city. Pupils voice in primary and secondary schools is used to steer the sports and activities children wish to participate in.



Engagement days at schools, and opportunities at festivals and events are used to consult with young people regarding their views on sport and activity. This practice continues into the school holidays, where we ask the children that attend holiday camps to have an input into activities that are provided at future sessions.

Dylan Thomas Centre (DTC)

Children & young people attending workshops at the Dylan Thomas Centre have opportunities to provide feedback on sessions and inform future plans. Work with partner organisations such as Unity in Diversity, National Autistic Society, Kids in Museums and Platform increases opportunities for discussion and shaping of future programmes.

Libraries

In November 2022 a children's survey was conducted in all libraries to find out the views of children who attend libraries in Swansea. Children were asked to select aspects of the library service that they thought were good, to rate the service out of 10 and tell us about their library. The survey results were used to report to Welsh Government but also to identify development needs for the service. The Summer Reading challenge, DofE and Welsh Bac volunteering opportunities benefit young people as these enable young people to have more insight into the library service and see how it functions and contribute to feedback for improved provision.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

All workshops and events for families are shaped around the feedback received from participants. Sessions are free and the Glynn Vivian provides pre-paid bus tickets for people on low incomes and those seeking Asylum and Refugees.

The Schools Programmes offer visits and workshops linking to the new national curriculum, allowing groups of school children to explore and respond to an exhibition or a specific piece of work and linking it to their own experiences. We seek feedback on these sessions both during the session and after and use this to shape future sessions.

Swansea Museum

During 2023 a consultation was held with the public including children regarding content of a new permanent gallery to replace one of the two temporary exhibition spaces. Educational activities were also piloted with schools and feedback obtained will help shape future sessions. Annually a customer survey is carried out with a prize draw for children taking part.

Section 2: Empowerment

Empowerment means promoting rights to children and young people so that they feel able to exercise them.

Swansea Council committed to:

- ✓ Give children and young people the training or information they need to do this properly.
- ✓ Give children the information they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g., simple language reports).
- ✓ Give children the opportunities they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. giving young people the chance to ask questions directly to a key decision-maker) .
- ✓ Establish relationships with groups of young people to allow them to consistently scrutinise work. E.g., youth groups/forums

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the second principle of **empowerment**.

Social Services Directorate

Children’s Rights and Participation Sessions

“Children’s Rights and Participation” workshops have been run across primary & secondary schools allowing children & young people (CYP) to expand their knowledge of Children’s Rights and take part in discussions about what rights mean to them, how rights are embedded through school, home and community life, how we ensure CYP have a voice on issues that impact their lives and what can be done if they feel their rights are not being upheld.



Between February and June 2022 there were 11 Children’s Rights workshops delivered in Swansea Schools with 233 children taking part. Between February and July 2023 Children’s Rights workshops were delivered in 18 schools with 2121 children participating. Total for reporting period: 29 schools, 2354 children participating.



Schools from across Swansea have been visiting the Council Chambers along with meeting some local Councillors. In July '22 34 children met with Cllr Gibbard and Cllr Gwilliam where they asked lots of questions about the council. In June '23 24 children visited with Cllr Gwilliam and took part in their own debates which included topics such as School Uniform and Single use plastic.

These opportunities provide children and young people opportunities to learn about their rights, democracy and see where and how decisions are made in Swansea Council.

Human Rights

In 2021 Swansea's Public Service Board (PSB) declared their intention to become a Human Rights City. Early engagement took place to gather a baseline knowledge of Human Rights awareness of the residents and visitors of Swansea and to establish the Human Rights City priorities. In December 2021 an invitation was sent via schools and the Children's Rights Network offering an opportunity for children and young people to meet with Cllr. Gibbard and members of the Partnership and Involvement Team to discuss what a "Human Rights City" would mean to them. 133 children and young people from 2 secondary schools and 7 primary schools took part and shared their views.



In June 2023, once the Human Rights City priorities were established and Human Rights City status had been declared, an action plan engagement event took place to consider the potential actions under each Human Rights City priority. People with lived experiences, community members and leaders, business and 3rd sector leaders were invited to the event, along with 20 young people from secondary schools at this in-person event. The results from the engagement event fed directly into the Human Rights City Action plans which are due to be published on the 10th of December 2023.



Early Help

Embedding Children's Rights Within Early Help - All interventions with young people in Early Help build on developing resilience with YP, giving them the tools/strategies or knowledge to feel confident in knowing and exercising their rights.

Evolve Youth Services

Evolve have run a 12-month calendar on various themes aimed at empowering young people, these subject matters have included sexuality, identity and issues around LGBTQ+, wellbeing and mental health, sign language, Black History, sustainable living and recycling.

Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET)

The Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET) Youth Panel - Have been working on a language guide which considers victim blaming language and the impact this has. The CMET youth panel have shared this with local councillors and the Children's Commissioner for Wales, they have

created a video to share their views with their presentations planned to be shared on the commissioner's website.

CMET Language guidance for professionals - The young people from the CMET (Contextual Missing Exploited Trafficked) youth panel in Swansea have been working extremely hard over the last few months in developing a "changing the narrative" guidance for professionals that focusses on the language we use to discuss young people in our everyday work. The young people have delivered a short presentation at a local level to our elected members in Swansea and feedback was well received. The video can be found here: [Youth Panel Language Hearing 2.mp4 \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

CMET Youth Panel: The CMET Youth Panel meet monthly and discuss issues that affect young people who have and are at risk of extra familial harm, the purpose of the panel is for young people to have a voice in the services and support that Swansea young people receive. The youth Panel will support with the co-design of aspects of projects. They help us to understand the worries in Swansea from their perspective and support us in understanding what they feel will work and not work regarding intervention.

Celebrating Similarities and Understanding Differences



29 Young people from Swansea joined together in March 2023 to undertake discussions and activities that aimed to celebrate the group's similarities, respectfully discuss differences and promote shared values.

Workshop sessions were arranged based on requests from young people to discuss topics within a safe facilitated environment, in addition to addressing requests from school staff for young people to have opportunities to respectfully express differing views and raise their awareness of the risks of radicalisation. Young People were happy with the opportunity to discuss hard topics such as right-wing extremism, discrimination, and gender stereotyping in a safe environment.

Anti-social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry

CMET along with Evolve Youth Service supported young people in having an input into a public scrutiny inquiry into anti-social behaviour. The feedback from the scrutiny panel will be given back to the young people and is an example of young people being supported to have their voices heard on issues impacting their lives in the necessary formal structures within local authority and supports their understanding in relation to how their voices are impacting decision making processes.

Education Directorate

Many schools embrace the principles that underpin the work of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). As a result, most pupils know their rights. School leaders use this knowledge to plan worthwhile activities that aim to further support the rights of children. For example, some school-based pupil voice groups support staff to plan work centred around the celebration of the Right's Articles in right of the month. Class charters are used to further promote and develop this work. Rights respecting mascots are used well for younger pupils to help them make sense of their rights and responsibilities.

Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team (ALNIT)

The Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team (ALNIT) has a team of caseworkers who play an important role in promoting children's rights and ensuring communications between schools, the local authority and families are open and solution focussed. Person centred approaches are central to the work of the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team with all decisions being centred around children's needs. Children's views and voices are central to decision making.

UNCRC Training

UNCRC Training to Schools is targeted and provided to teachers around the rights of children and young people, and several quality checks are in place which provide assure that schools are promoting the UNCRC and Children's Rights effectively.

Awareness of Children's Rights

Direct support is provided to children and their families if a child is excluded, and their right to appeal is advised upon. Safeguarding and child protection training supports the rights of the child, and the Local Authority safeguarding audit provides reassurance that schools are committed to the promotion of these rights. Advice and support to children and families is provided by the Education Welfare Service to ensure children are aware of their rights at all stages.

Advocacy within Educational Settings

Advocacy information has been provided to schools via the education newsletter. Schools in turn display this information so that children who are looked after are aware of their right to advocacy and can exercise that with the support of their staff. The PEP is also quality assured to provide oversight that the rights of the child is being promoted by the school.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health

“Us Girls” holidays camps have empowered girls aged 8-14 to try new sporting activities alongside consultation sessions to find out which activities they enjoy. These have taken place every half term, Easter and Summer holiday periods. Thus, upholding Article 31” Right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities etc.

Libraries

Swansea libraries support Empathy Labs - This involves work with schools to deliver information skills and opportunities for young people to talk and express themselves. Empathy Lab workshops assist young people to try to listen and understand where people’s feelings and views are coming from. This is achieved through a reading programme and activities and profiling empathy related reading titles.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

Young Art Force silvers group (12-16) plan deliver and assess sessions as part of their arts award's projects, with support and mentoring from GVAG staff, the group have gone on to take up higher education and developed leadership skills while undergoing their arts award.

Swansea Museum

A new session on the history of children’s rights was piloted on International Children’s Rights Day. A full pilot of the session will take place autumn 2023.

In the past year the museum has secured a Kids in Museums audit grant. This resulted in changes to make museum more accessible and enable further opportunities to receive feedback from children and young people.

Section 3: Embedding

Embedding means having systems in place to write down and evidence how we give thought to the impact of decisions on children's rights. Making sure workers understand the UNCRC and how their work impacts on children's rights.

The Council has committed to:

- ✓ Make sure that leaders and staff have a good knowledge of children's rights (UNCRC) and help them understand how it can benefit our organisation's work.
- ✓ Use our resources to deliver training on children's rights, set up a network of champions with responsibility to promote children's rights and set targets for how to embed children's rights in all work.
- ✓ Make sure there are HR/financial resources to support and promote children's rights.

The Children's Rights Scheme has changed how we work. We have one shared approach to making sure the UNCRC is part of all our plans and policies. This includes thinking about how decisions may affect children and young people's lives.

Extending learning from children's rights-based approaches more broadly to think about every person's human rights by involving children and young people within the Human Rights City developments and action planning, ensuring Swansea is a city for all, where every person has the opportunity to have the best start in life and live and age well.

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the third principle of **embedding**.

Corporate Services Directorate

Across the Council we have worked together to consider how rights-based approaches underpin practice by ensuring children's human rights are included in key policies such as:

- ✓ PSB Well Being Objectives
- ✓ Strategic Equality Plan Consultation
- ✓ Poverty Strategy
- ✓ Swansea Co-production and Engagement Strategy

Access to Services

The council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process incorporates the Council's commitment to the UNCRC by having a designated section within the IIA which fully examines the impact of the proposed initiative on children and young people. It also ensures that children and young people are involved in decision making, including engagement and consultation on council proposals.

The partnership and involvement team are involved in the IIA process by offering support and advise to officers on how to engage with young people to seek their views on new initiatives.

Social Services Directorate

Embedding the “Right Way Approach”

In April '22 work began with Pen y Bryn school who were supported with staff training on the Right Way approach, and they supported us on how to better improve our practice of working with children and young people with additional needs. The partnership started with no formal sessions within the school but opportunities to get to know the pupils informally.



This included joining them for their THRIVE breakfast sessions where staff met with 13 young people, then attending summer fairs and open evenings in 2022 and 2023. Work has included structured sessions such as “Children’s Rights” workshops, “Keeping Safe” sessions run by Safer Swansea, “Observation” sessions and “What Matters” sessions.

Observation of school classes we’re made in May 2023 where staff visited 12 classes and met with 90 children and young people which was an opportunity to see how lessons were formed and how staff adapted the setting and the sessions to suit the needs of all those in their classes. Conversations had with pupils at Pen y Bryn sparked the summer programs that run during the summer school holidays of 2022 and 2023.

Children’s Rights Training for Early Years Practitioners

During September 2022 the Partnership & Involvement Team facilitated 4 workshops to 43 early years workers which was delivered as part of an Early Years Conference. These workshops helped practitioners learn about rights and gather ideas on how they can embed rights into their settings,

Child & Family Services Measuring Outcomes and Staff Training

All work is evaluated in terms of the using a distance travelled tool to measure young people’s outcomes, this is their score their voice.

Staff undertake all mandatory training and the Evolve Youth Service Team have their own specific youth training which embeds the 5 pillars of youth work approach, throughout their engagement, with young people, via their blended model of youth work.

Early Help

Early Help teams undertake Quality Assurance measures to ensure that children's rights are being embedded in practise. Monthly QA meetings which are assisted by the learning and innovation team ensure the voice of the child is captured.

Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET)

The CMET panel ensure that Children and young people’s Voice is central to the project and their views are considered throughout the project time frame. The multi-agency purpose was developed

based on a system review that was carried out with young people who have experienced Extra Familial Harm. One young person shared that what's important is for "Me and My Family to have the information and advice that can keep us safe from Extra Familial harm, At the right time, in the right place, from people we trust".

Play Sufficiency

To ensure play sufficiency work continues with various schools about play related objectives e.g. Article 31. Which impacts on play times, access to school grounds and advocating good play practices (eg Loose Parts) and the right to play across the school team and its pupils.

Education Directorate

The UNCRC is embedded in all local and national policy and guidance. It underpins all values, is covered in training and quality assured through several quality assurance methods.

Personal Education Plans quality assurance is robust and cross directorate working ensures learner voice is embedded in the process.

Safeguarding processes are checked via weekly meetings, and decisions / audits are quality assured.

Welfare issues are quality assured during supervision sessions.

Admission applications are scrutinised at a weekly inclusion panel to ensure that all decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

Additional Learning Needs

Children who are either supported by the SEN legislation or who have transferred to the new ALNET legislation have their thoughts, wishes and feelings gathered and considered during person centred meetings and reviews of their IDPs.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health

All new staff receive information regarding the rights of the child through their induction period.

Young Ambassadors

The recruitment of young ambassadors has provided a workforce of young people who deliver sporting activities underpinned by children's rights and through leadership and coaching of other pupils in their individual schools. Since Oct 2021 over 260 young ambassadors have received training, gained qualifications and have taken part in CPD workshops in a variety of leadership skills and sports specific coaching courses. The Silver YA's have planned school transition events and produced termly written reports on their progress.

Dylan Thomas Centre

Staff attend specialist training offered through Kids in Museums Training. Recent sessions from Kids in Museums Cymru were based on the New Curriculum for Wales and in particular the addition of Black History as a compulsory element which focused on the rights of children in learning and heritage settings.

Swansea Museum

The Learning and Outreach Officer at Swansea Museum has a background in children's rights and ensures the museums policies and practises are aligned to the UNCRC and that Children's Rights are embedding within initiatives and activities provided.

Swansea Museum has undertaken a review of sessions in view of the new curriculum. Changes have been made to several sessions and new sessions developed.

Section 4: Accountability

Accountability means having systems in place to report on what we are doing to make children's rights a reality in Swansea.

Swansea Council have committed to:

- ✓ Publish an accessible annual update showing how we've worked towards making children's rights real in Swansea.
- ✓ Feedback regularly to children in a suitable format.
- ✓ Provide children with accessible information on how to provide feedback about what we're doing well or what we could improve, make complaints or hold staff to account.

Swansea Council have a duty under the Children's Rights Scheme to report on how children's rights are being made a reality in Swansea and this is carried out in several ways:

Progress reports are produced every two years and shared through formal processes within the local authority, via partnership forums and networks and to children and young people via the development of an accessible version. (Planned for development following this report)

Feedback on progress around the commitments of the children's rights scheme and the identified priorities of children and young people are shared throughout the year at the various forums and networks shared in section one of this report around "Participation" and at an annual event to mark "Universal Children's Day on the 20th of November each year.

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the fourth principle of **accountability**.

Social Services Directorate

May 2023 saw the creation of a "Children's Rights & Participation" cross directorate working group to:

- ✓ Support the Children's Rights commitment & contribute to a Children's Rights Scheme Implementation Plan
- ✓ Assist in the co-ordination of the statutory responsibility of Local Authorities to promote and facilitate participation by children and young people in decisions which might affect them. (Section 12 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010)
- ✓ Review and Refresh the "Big Conversation" model for a cluster/area model to hear the voice of CYP within their communities – linked in with early help hubs, youth provision, Primary & Secondary schools as well as wider community groups & forums etc.

This working group has worked to establish a model that includes opportunities for community and school-based priorities for children and young people to be heard.

The group will co-ordinate the feedback of progress to children and young people via multiple mechanisms and forums across Swansea,

Evaluation following funded activities

After the COAST (Creating Opportunities Across Swansea Together) funded sessions in Summer 2023, children, young people and families who attended we're asked for feedback; this information was be fed back to the Commissioning Team to evidence impact and need for increased ALN specific holiday provisions and to also help shape future work. See below quote:

"It was really lovely to be able to take part in activities as a family, we felt welcomed and included. My children were able to engage at a level that was comfortable for them and still felt like they had achieved something by the end of the session. We were able to laugh, learn and play together in a way we would have afforded to if it wasn't for the session." Parent Carer

UNCRC in Commissioning Teams

The UNCRC is embedded in all contracts as a requirement. This means any service that is funded can be held to account to ensure they are including children and young people's voice within their service planning, delivery and development. This is also a method statement question when assessing tenders and a part of the ongoing evaluation and monitoring.

A number of reviews are currently taking place and these include additional learning needs, Youth Homelessness prevention and the schools counselling service and children and young people will form part of the review, to ensure they inform changes and recommendations going forward.

Childcare and Play Sufficiency

We facilitate the production of the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Childcare Sufficiency Assessment every 3 years and annual review update and action plans. This is a statutory duty by Welsh Government that require the assessment of play sufficiency across the authority and children, young people and families are involved within the process. 22 surveys gave CYP the opportunity to feed back about what is going well, what could be improved and any further ideas that they have to do with play and childcare opportunities in Swansea.

What Matters in Autism Conversations



Colleagues in Child and Family and within the Partnership & Involvement Team have worked alongside The National Autistic Society, and the parent carer forum to hold What Matters in Autism conversations – gaining feedback from parents/carers, young people and professionals on how to improve the What Matters in Autism conversation through meetings, events and forms.

This work will feed into and help shape strategic policy within the Local Authority. In March 2023 we met with 7 professionals to start the 'What matters in Autism' Conversation. Since then, conversations have been had with 70 parent/carers and 40 Children and Young People. The finding so far will be discussed with the National Autistic Society before being reported along with further in-depth What Matters Conversations with CYP with Autism.

Quality Mark in Youth Work

Evolve is going through the application of gaining a Quality Mark in Youth Work which is an opportunity to share and report on what we do, as well as being part of Estyn inspections.

Youth Club Committees

Evolve Youth Service has youth club committees established, young people are consulted, minutes of meetings produced from their meetings, evaluations and reflective sessions recorded. The same applies for Early Help and CIW inspections.

Education Directorate

Outcomes of the post-16 learner voice review have been discussed with sixth form leaders through a working group. This gives the group the opportunity to discuss what is working well and what needs to be improved. Learner responses will help to shape curriculum provision and delivery methods during the academic year.

Examples of key group information and opportunities for improvement include:

- ✓ Admission forum to oversee the admissions arrangements.
- ✓ Section 135 evaluation to feedback safeguarding information.
- ✓ WGSB
- ✓ Scrutiny reports
- ✓ Corporate Parenting
- ✓ Corporate safeguarding

Education Directorate/Disabled Learners

The Accessibility Strategy seeks to progressively improve access to schools for disabled learners. The draft strategy is currently under development and includes key priorities which have been informed by the views of a number of stakeholders including the voice of disabled learners. The draft strategy will be subject to consultation this autumn.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health School Sports Survey 2022

5704 pupils completed the school sports survey providing pupil voice across the whole of Swansea. Pupils reported their activity levels in school and in extra-curricular time, enjoyment levels, demographic status, barriers to participation, latent demand for sports activities and other relevant information. Teachers also provided their views on physical literacy, confidence to teach and support levels. The Sport and health team utilise this data to plan their work and projects to ensure the service we provide meets the needs of the young people it is for.

The Sport and Health Team contribute to a Learning log to provide insight and Learning for our service. Rights of the child are highlighted for consideration in all areas of our work with young people.

Dylan Thomas Centre (DTC)

The DTC has specially designed feedback forms for children to share their opinion on the exhibition and engagement activities. An easy read version is available.

In 2023 the DTC was shortlisted as one of the Best Family Friendly Museums in the UK thanks to feedback from children, young people and their families who act as undercover judges. All feedback is provided to us to act upon.

Libraries

Libraries are required by Welsh Government to conduct a children's survey every 3 years. The results of the survey are fed into a return to the Welsh Public Library Standards, which assesses the performance of each individual library service in Wales.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery (GVAG)

GVAG conduct Community Learning panel meetings bi-annually to discuss the progress, success and areas of improvement with all groups that the gallery works with, including young people and families that attend community programmes. This information is used to further develop the learning programme and apply for funding to support these initiatives.

Swansea Museum

The museum regularly undertakes access audits, when possible, for example Kids in Museum Audit.

Section 5: Non-Discrimination

Non-discrimination means making special efforts to ensure children and young people who may be less likely to access their rights, have an equal opportunity to be able to do so.

The Council have committed to:

- ✓ Provide information to children in a language or format appropriate to their age and maturity, culture, or disability.
- ✓ Make sure staff have up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act and receive regular training to increase their awareness of different groups of children and young people's needs.
- ✓ Use information we have about children and young people's need to consider whether our services reach all groups of young people.

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the fifth principle of **non-discrimination**.

Social Services Directorate

Disability equality and Inclusion

Feedback from Children and young people (CYP) with additional needs has been that the school summer holidays can be long and boring. Young people felt there is lack of suitable places that they can go that will be adaptive and accepting of them. Families shared that they find it difficult to find suitable spaces for them to go and spend time as a family.

Funding from the Summer of Fun grant was received to run a pilot program for CYP with additional needs during Summer 2022. A total of 9 sessions were run with 40 children and young people taking part.

As a result of positive feedback further funding was applied for from COAST funding to run further sessions between July and September 2023. A total of 20 sessions were held with 68 families attending, which included 125 children and young people along with 64 adults.



Homophobic Language Sessions

During January 2022 Homophobic Language sessions we're held with 137 young people to enable discussions around what is homophobic language, what are its impacts and what we can all do to stop it.

During February 2023 a large event was held at the Waterfront Museum in partnership with Sadie's Butterflies to raise awareness of Trans issues and offer support to those in the Trans and LGBTQIA+ Community. The event saw 951 visitors which included many children, young people and their families.

During summer 2023 COAST funding was received to hold intergenerational LGBTQIA+ Family sessions.



Sessions were primarily arts and craft sessions, where participants were encouraged to explore their identity and their community. A total of 6 sessions we're held 107 participants.

At the end of Summer an LGBTQIA+ Pizza Party was held for the families involved to have fun and feel secure to ask questions, while enjoying pizza and crafts and allowed for the safety & inclusion for quiet voices with 27 participants attending.

Officers within the Partnership & Involvement Team have regularly been attending "Good Vibes" youth club held at the YMCA to build relationships with the staff and young people and to ensure all voices in the community are heard.



There are approximately 30 young people that regularly engage in the Youth Club and staff have recently supported a trip with the club to St Fagans to attend a queer tour of the site with 16 young people attending this trip.

Child & Family Services

All of the work in child and family services is underpinned by equal opportunities. Work is bespoke to the needs of each child, ensuring their plans of work meet their needs.

Evolve Youth Service

All youth work is inclusive and where required we have developed specialised opportunities for young people (YP) if they feel marginalised e.g targeted work with YP who have neurodiversity, gender or other protected characteristics. e.g we run a specific group for YP with neuro diverse issues. There are also partnerships in place with external agencies, ensuring all young people get the same opportunities across the city

Play Sufficiency

Communication Boards - Through requests and listening to CYP and families, a partnership project with the Swansea Bay Health Boards bought about the creation of communication boards using symbols to point in English and Welsh.

Through the project a request was raised for BSL boards which have also been created in English and Welsh. The Communication Boards are being placed in every play area across Swansea to support the communication needs of CYP and families.



The feedback has been positive with boards being donated to schools that specialise in additional needs ...upon their request.

“The children’s parks are looking amazing, there’s a little one near our house in Sketty Park on Parkway...and it has a communication board. My son goes to it every time he enters the park, he’s only 3, he is delayed but in his short life has been through so much, Kawasaki disease, heart

failure and a heart transplant. He’s been hospitalised for so long he has global delay but these boards are a god send...and he does exactly that...he communicates with us with these boards...I’d love to know if they are available in print for our own home?”

Play Access Group - This group of parent/carers, officers and 3rd sector partners meet regularly and ensures the voices of CYP with additional needs are given a voice and heard.

Play Area Improvement Programme - Whilst working on the on-going Play Area Improvement Programme it was recognised that additional grant funding was needed to meet inclusivity and accessibility needs across play areas.

The additional grant funding and cross directorate partnership work throughout the programme has supported increased inclusive and accessible play opportunities. More than 50 playgrounds have been upgraded so far, taking inclusivity and accessibility into account wherever practicable. This has included flush roundabouts, trampolines, mirage (bucket) swings, basket swings, easier access routes onto multi-units and wide slides wherever possible along informed by local consultation and engagement with children, young people and families.

Commissioning Teams

The Commissioning Teams support various organisations across all themes of work including EYST/ACC/SASS/Race Council Cymru for example...advocating the right to play as well as article 12 and 15 wherever appropriate in their delivery and practice.

Education Directorate

Post-16 Learner Voice Review

The review consisted of an online questionnaire and smaller focus groups. Learners were able to participate through these different mechanisms in order to gain a broader response.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Differentiated by need and age, the PEP co-ordinator monitors all returns to make sure they are within timeframes and that they are appropriate to need. Officers will make home visits to provide additional support where necessary. The Education Inclusion Officer provides bespoke engagement opportunities to ensure the plan meets the needs to the learner.

Child Centred Involvement

Schools and the LA have a range of strategies to enable children and young people to contribute to their person-centred meetings and reviews. These include learning passports, ICT options, adult support etc.

Most schools use a range of innovative strategies to ensure that all pupils have equitable opportunities to develop an understanding of their rights. For example, pupil voice groups, rights mascots, class charters and displays, all help to support a rights respecting model. For some of the most vulnerable learners, schools have made effective use of digital technology to ensure they can access work to develop a better understanding of their rights. E.g. specialist applications using tablets.

Minority Ethnic and Multilingual Learners

Ensuring the voice of learners who are from minority ethnic and multilingual backgrounds are gathered to inform development of provision is promoted through evaluation and improvement work with schools. Schools have access to interpreting and translating services to support communication with learners and parents/carers who have limited skills in English. Translation apps and tools are promoted within schools to support day-to-day access for learners who have limited skills in English.

A number of schools also run the Young Interpreters Scheme which trains up children and young people to act as buddies and interpreters for learners who are new arrivals and new to English.

The Schools of Sanctuary award scheme encourages schools to listen and act upon the voice of refugee and asylum seekers learners.

The Education Directorate is currently developing a number of workstreams linked to the vision of anti-racist Wales 2030 which will be formulated into an action plan. The voice of those with lived experience is central to current training opportunities for Education Directorate and school staff and will inform workstreams and developments moving forwards.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health

Wheelchair Users within Schools - Public Service Groups within schools have attended sessions which educate them on wheelchair users within schools. They have taken part in wheelchair basketball sessions for enjoyment alongside finding accessible routes around their schools. This has provided a greater understanding of how wheelchair users feel in their school and the surrounding area.

Pupils identified inaccessible routes which raised discussions and ideas from them to overcome barriers faced by wheelchair users. A summary of the project can be found here: [Wheelchair Basketball Snapshot - Updated.docx](#)

Disability Sport Festivals



2 Disability sport festivals have taken place over the past year to engage with clubs and groups to provide signposting opportunities to young people. The Sport & Health Team have also supported the para tri event held in Swansea this year.

Funded Opportunities

As per an annual agreement with Sport Wales the Sport & Health Team have funded the following:

- ✓ BAME Sport Swansea programme led by EYST
- ✓ Support community sports clubs to become more inclusive through the implantation of INSPORT for clubs and other community organisations.
- ✓ Dylan Thomas changing facilities configuration was made possible following a Sport Wales grant – resulting in greater attendance in PE lessons and more engagement in extra-curricular sports sessions.
- ✓ Year 9 girls from Dylan Thomas school took part in 6 sessions of consultation identifying barriers to sport and physical activity leading to sessions being set up for them to take part. They spoke about their environment, their likes and dislikes, the influence of social media and family influences. The girls who were previously disengaged took part in physical activity, confidence workshops and were provided with opportunity to engage in “Us Girls” holiday camp sessions.
- ✓ Climbing sessions in Flashpoint for disengaged children– Penyrheol/ Pontarddulais – identified by the young people.
- ✓ Climbing sessions in LC for pupils from Maes Derw / basketball / badminton – identified by the young people.

Peer Led Engagement

Young Ambassadors consult with children in their school to assess what activities children want. This is based on discussion and allowing all children to put forward ideas. Mentored by Sport and Health staff.

Dylan Thomas Centre

In partnership with National Autistic Society and Your Voice Advocacy, the DTC has developed sensory backpacks and sensory area to enhance enjoyment of the exhibition for those with additional sensory needs. We're trialling a pre-bookable Quiet Workshop during autumn half term and have been invited to present our work as a case study for Kids in Museums at a sharing day in November.

Libraries

The library service is actively working towards "Library of Sanctuary" status for Swansea Central Library. Central Library have committed to consulting with those seeking sanctuary in Swansea, including children and have provided story times and crafts in other languages, held drop-in sessions, offered library tours for all newcomers to Swansea. Our aim is to ensure that our library spaces are a safe and welcoming space for all.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery work with partners across Swansea to ensure that diversity and accessibility are prioritised. Currently working with the African community centre on projects that promote young people's mental wellbeing, while delivering high quality workshops that promote a diverse range of artists and careers within the creative sector.

The Gallery are also working with Disability Arts Cymru, promoting the work of disabled artists and ensuring that programmes are representative of all communities. Work includes a long term 5 year project with GS artists to develop a network for artists who are deaf, improving access, awareness and opportunities.

Theatres

Currently engaging with commercial and community partners to facilitate the provision of free and discounted tickets for cultural events for children, especially those who are disadvantaged.

Working with partners to facilitate the engagement and participation in cultural activity for children with additional learning needs.

Partnership with community and arts organisations to host ethnically diverse cultural events. Currently participating in the World Re-imagined project, hosting young people's exhibits and promoting culturally diverse arts.

Provision of assisted performances eg BSL, captioned, audio described and relaxed.

Swansea Museum

The museum regularly participates in themed months and days via social media. Project work with specific targeted groups have included work with:

- ✓ World Reimagined – school-based project on Black History.
- ✓ Mixtup – video project working with 11 – 25-year-olds of mixed ability on their own museum concept.
- ✓ YMCA - legacy project working with young people from young cares and Good Vibes the LGBT youth group.

Libraries

Libraries stock books that represent all our communities positively including LGBTQ + community members and those with physical or hidden disabilities etc...

All libraries are working towards being autism friendly and have purchased equipment such as ear defenders and fidget toys for parents and children to loan while in the library to improve and help their experience in the library. We are working on providing social stories for our libraries so that parents can prepare their children in advance of their visit to the library.

Recommendations

In order to clearly identify development needs, recommendations have been separated via the 5 “Right Way” principles that shape the Children’s Rights Scheme in Swansea.

1. Participation:

- 1.1. The refresh and remodel of the “Big Conversation” to provide a Countywide infrastructure, to enable improved communication of opportunities for children and young people to be heard locally, regionally and nationally and provide a platform for regular feedback and updates to take place.
- 1.2. Develop on-line opportunities to engage with children and young people in this ever-increasing digital age via increased use of social media & seeking opportunities to develop a “Have your Say/Participation” page on Hwb to enable the reach of young people via school-based platforms.
- 1.3. Further develop opportunities to involve children and young people in the recruitment of officer with responsibilities that impact the lives of children and young people.

2. Empowerment:

- 2.1. Engage with Welsh Government regarding the soon to be launched Children’s Rights Training and on-line resources to continue to promote Children’s Rights and support services to embed within practise.
- 2.2. Continue to seek opportunities to increase accessibility of decision makers to children and young people.
- 2.3. Explore opportunities for greater use of simple language/accessible reporting to ensure children and young people can engage in opportunities to shape local services.

3. Embedding:

- 3.1. Continue to raise awareness and increase knowledge of children’s rights (UNCRC) within Council Teams by developing an on-line training module and linking with the wider “Human Rights City” work.
- 3.2. Re-establish the “Children’s Rights Network” as a “Children’s Rights Information Network” with use of MailChimp to allow for monthly news updates and signpost to local, regional & national opportunities for practitioners.

4. Accountability:

- 4.1. Improve opportunities for children and young people to get in touch with the Council to share thoughts and ideas or to share if they feel their rights are not being met.
- 4.2. Follow the Welsh Government model of reviewing the Children’s Rights Scheme which is based on a 5-year cycle with progress reporting midway through the cycle and at the end of the five years.

5. Non-Discrimination:

- 5.1. Ensure Children’s Rights is embedded throughout the refreshed “Strategic Equality Plan” in Swansea.

Appendix A – Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme Plan on a Page

 	
<p>This Means:</p> <p>Making sure good quality arrangements are in place to ensure children and young people are listened to, and that their opinion is heard, in decisions that are being made that affect them.</p>	<p>Participation</p> <p>We Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve children and young people directly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services they receive. • Learn about how other organisations are doing this, and develop plans that meet the needs of children and young people in Swansea. • Develop clear targets to listen to children and young people from marginalised groups. • Involve children and young people in the recruitment of staff who have responsibilities that impact on them. • Adopt the National Participation Standards, to make sure when children and young people participate, their experience is a quality one.
<p>Promoting rights to children and young people so that they feel able to exercise them.</p>	<p>Empowerment</p> <p>We Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children and young people the information they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. simple language reports). • Give children and young people the opportunities they need to influence decisions that affect them(e.g. opportunities to scrutinise decision makers e.g. giving the chance to ask questions directly to a key decision-maker and/or co-produce work). • Establish relationships with children and young people to allow them to consistently scrutinise work. • Give citizens the training or information they need to do this properly.
<p>Having systems in place to write down and evidence how we give thought to the impact of decisions children's rights.</p> <p>Making sure workers understand the UNCR and associated treaties, and how their work impacts on children's rights.</p>	<p>Embedding</p> <p>We Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that leaders and staff have a good knowledge of Children's Human Rights, and help them understand how it can benefit our organisation's work. • Use our resources to deliver training on children's human rights. • Set up a network of champions with responsibility to promote the rights of children and young people and set targets for how to embed this in all work. • Make sure there are HR/financial resources to support and promote the rights of children and young people
<p>Having systems in place to report on what we are doing to make rights a reality for children and young people in Swansea</p>	<p>Accountability</p> <p>We Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an accessible annual update showing how we've worked towards making rights real for children and young people. • Feedback regularly in a suitable format. • Provide accessible information on how to provide feedback about what we're doing well or what we could improve, make complaints or hold staff to account.
<p>Making special efforts to ensure children and young people who may be less likely to access their rights, have an equal opportunity to be able to do so.</p>	<p>Non Discrimination</p> <p>We Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure staff have up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act and receive regular training to increase their awareness of different groups of children and young people's needs. • Use an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to consider how individual decisions (e.g. projects/services) could impact different groups of children and young people. • Use information we have about the needs of children and young people to consider whether our services reach all groups, particularly those who possess protected characteristics. • Provide information in a format appropriate to people's age and maturity, culture, or disability

Agenda Item 8



Joint Report of the Cabinet Member for Care Services and Director of Social Services

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2022-23

Purpose: This is the latest annual report on the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements. This report summarises the work programme of the Corporate Safeguarding Group during 2022-23, and highlights improvements carried out in support of the Council's corporate safeguarding policy.

Content: The Cabinet Member for Care Services and Director of Social Services will attend to present the report, to respond to questions about the report and in follow up to the letter sent by the Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Care Services, following last year's report dated 15th November 2022

Councillors are being asked to: Consider the information provided, ask questions, and make comments and recommendations as necessary.

Lead Councillor/Member: Cllr Louise Gibbard, Cabinet Member for Care Services

Lead Officer: David Howes, Statutory Director of Social Services

Report Author: Simon Jones - Social Services Strategy & Performance Improvement Officer

Finance Officer: Chris Davies

Legal Officer: Debbie Smith

Access to Services Officer: Catherine Window

For Information

1. Background

- 1.1 This latest Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23 (attached as Appendix 1) aims to update the Scrutiny Programme Committee on the work programme to implement safeguarding across the whole Council during the past year. The Annual report was prepared by the Corporate Safeguarding Operational Group, on behalf of the Corporate Safeguarding group, jointly chaired by the Cabinet Member for Care Services and the Director of Social Services.
- 1.2 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group was first set up in 2014 to lead on the development, implementation and monitoring of corporate safeguarding policy and practice.
- 1.3 The Annual Report focuses on the following key areas of activity:
 - Safe Governance & Performance,
 - Safe Employment,
 - Safe Workforce,
 - Safe Practice,
 - Safe Partnerships,
 - Safe Voice,
- 1.4 The attached report also identifies work for the year ahead. It is a routine report to the Scrutiny Programme Committee for awareness and comment on progress, achievements and implementation of policy.
- 1.5 At the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 15th November 2022, Cabinet Member Louise Gibbard and the Director of Social Services, David Howes presented the previous annual report, questions were raised, and a letter was sent by the Chair on behalf of the Committee in response.
- 1.6 Letter of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee, dated 4th January 2023, picked up a number of themes within the current, and previous reports:
 - Working with Contractors and Suppliers
 - Mandatory Training Compliance
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
 - Advocacy
 - Work for the Year Ahead
- 1.7 Response by Cabinet Member- Care Services, dated 6th January 2023, provided with additional commentary on:
 - The revised corporate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) policy
 - Council's Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding completed in September 2022 with a High Assurance rating, and this report was later forwarded to the Chair for the Committee to consider.

2. Latest Developments

The main annual report (*appended*) contains updates on the broad range of safeguarding activities undertaken within and on behalf of the Council, in support of the Corporate Plan and corporate safeguarding policy. This section outlines some of the key developments in the report covering the past year 2022-23:

2.1 Corporate Plan 2023/28

There are several major challenges facing the world, UK, Wales and Swansea. Many of these challenges are having a major impact and require the Council to work in different ways, and this uncertainty in the lives of citizens is likely to continue. Safeguarding people from harm - so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation remains a key strategic priority. The Plan details the steps we will take to meet this well-being objective.

2.2 Safeguarding as 'everyone's business'

Safeguarding our most vulnerable people is 'everyone's business' across the council, within schools, with partners, and through West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board and partnerships, we will undertake a review of post-pandemic care and support provision.

2.3 Corporate Safeguarding policy

Swansea Council's updated policy has a greater focus on prevention and duty to report placed on all public service officers. The policy aims to make sure our work covers the full extent of potential, contextual safeguarding risks and concerns posed to vulnerable people, such as child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, radicalisation, etc. Reflected in the new corporate safeguarding policy are the key elements needed to ensure safeguarding remains "everyone's business".

2.4 All Wales Safeguarding Procedures

The Welsh Government introduced a set of safeguarding guidelines for children, young people and adults in November 2019. These revised procedures standardise practice across Wales and set out the roles and responsibilities of those working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm. The Wales Safeguarding Procedures are available for everyone to view from the official website: [Safeguarding Wales](#). Also, there is a free Wales Safeguarding Procedures app available to download to your phone to refer to at any time.

2.5 Corporate Safeguarding training

The fully updated programme implemented to reflect the National safeguarding training, learning and development standards (October 2022): [National safeguarding training, learning and... | Social Care Wales](#) It is important to note that within the new, national safeguarding training framework there is now a practitioner groups hierarchy.

Group A Safeguarding awareness training is mandatory for all staff and elected members Group A covers the core safeguarding principles:

- I know what the term safeguarding means
- I know what to look out for
- I know who to report to

2.6 **Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23** - our own internal audit team has recently carried out a recent review of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23, and their final report was published September 2022. The overall assurance given within the scope of the review is 'High'.

2.7 **Estyn review** – the findings from Estyn's Inspection report on Education in Swansea (June 2022) were referenced last time, but the report reflects well on the Council's approach to corporate safeguarding, noting strong leadership, a positive culture and collaboration between service areas.

2.8 **Corporate Safeguarding operational group** – Named Safeguarding persons from all service areas are working closely together to drive improvements in all seven key areas (Swansea Model), and reporting progress to the Corporate Safeguarding group chaired by the Cabinet Member for Care Services and Director of Social Services.

2.9 **Self-Assessment / work programme**

Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding group requested that the section 135 audit, now called a self-assessment, be carried out this year to provide assurances that arrangements are robust in all the Council's main service areas, and to identify any additional improvements needed. This latest self-assessment used a regional tool with a clear set of standards for corporate safeguarding, which was adapted by Safeguarding Leads to better reflect the 'Swansea model' and seven key areas as shown above. The tool was completed by **15** service areas (last year = 8).

3. **Issues arising from previous year**

3.1 **Work with contractors and supplier** – as the Chair's letter noted that corporate safeguarding extends to how we work with suppliers and contractors to ensure safety of vulnerable children and adults. We expect that all staff employed by suppliers and contractors carrying out work on the Council's behalf are fully aware of their broader responsibilities and duties. When required that checks are carried out, and staff are given safeguarding awareness training. We carry out a suitability questionnaire to ensure that all expectations, in relation to safeguarding, are fully understood. As the letter notes, there are different levels of conditions and monitoring, depending on the nature of services contracted.

3.2 **Mandatory Training Compliance**

New mandatory Group A safeguarding eLearning has recently been launched for all Council employees, which combines the previous eLearning's for both Children and Adults Safeguarding into one module. It also incorporates the new Social Care Wales National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Standards. These Standards have been introduced in Wales to help to ensure that we can all work together to safeguard people to the best of our ability and that all staff, carers and volunteers receive consistent and good quality Safeguarding People training. [New mandatory safeguarding training for staff and councillors - Staff portal \(swansea.gov.uk\)](http://www.swansea.gov.uk).

3.3 **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** - Swansea Council must ensure DBS checks are undertaken for all roles that have identified as needing one. The DBS Policy has recently been reviewed and updated and is awaiting final agreement. Alongside policy development, work is underway reviewing the procedure guide and letters for Managers/Schools. work in this area is carried out within the Council by a dedicated service centre, to assist Council managers, School Governors, Head teachers in making safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

3.4 **Advocacy**

Swansea aims to ensure all citizens have a “safe voice” on safeguarding matters by providing stronger voice, meaningful control over the support they receive and remove any barriers to achieving their wellbeing outcomes.

Both Child and Family and Adult Services continues to improve the Council’s advocacy offer made to vulnerable children, adults and their families, who can now access Independent Professional Advocacy to help ensure that they are fully informed and engaged in decisions about their care and support and that plans are in their best interests and with regard to safety.

4. **Work Programme for year ahead**

4.1 Focus on Quality Assurance/ Safe Voice through the Corporate Safeguarding Operational group and within Child and Family Services and Adult Services.

4.2 Focus on Safe Employment, through the deployment of updated HR policies and procedures such as DBS, Recruitment & Selection and Volunteers

4.3 Focus on rolling out updated Training programme in support of Safe Workforce.

- 4.4 In addition, there is work on promoting collaborative practice at the front door, within frontline teams and across all Council services. This work contributes to 'Safe Voice' aims of placing the adult/child firmly at the centre of their concern, and engaged with decisions in their own best interests, whether directly or through advocacy.
- 4.5. The work programme across key areas (Swansea model) is focused on tackling the above (section 3: issues), as on-going challenges. The new Corporate Safeguarding operational group ensures that the work programme keeps moving forward and operates within timescales, where possible.

5. Integrated Assessment Implications

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

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.

An Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed (**Appendix B**), with the agreed outcomes as follows:

- Summary of Impacts (Q2) Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.
- Summary of involvement (Q3) Swansea Council works closely with Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards. The Councils also works co-productively on what matters most to people, how services are developed and within commissioning plans. This collaborative, co-productive approach and the involvement of others has been involved in his report.
- WFG considerations (Q4) Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the corporate plan and Council's transformation programmes, which are working towards safe, sustainable approaches to corporate safeguarding. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified public sector workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable people. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support employees in their professional development, in their duty to report on safeguarding concerns, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with Swansea citizens.
- Any risks identified (Q5) The work programmes referred tot within this report is risk managed closely. Any risks identified within one or all of the Council services, are agreed, mitigated and checked as routine at service, directorate and corporate levels, for example through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting and the Corporate Safeguarding group. Risks are then escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.
- Cumulative impact (Q7) There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens though corporate safeguarding of our most vulnerable people, including children, and the benefits this brings to the local area, economy and workforce.

The screening exercise concluded it is not necessary to complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment on this report.

- 5.3 The annual report of corporate safeguarding sets out progress towards the Council's wellbeing objective on safeguarding people from harm, as described in the Corporate Plan 2023-28, as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and associated statutory guidance.

- 5.4 The Annual Report takes into account the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by outlining how Swansea Council is committed to taking forward these rights forward through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board, and action plan.
- 5.5 The Council's approach to corporate safeguarding, and practice across all functions and services, must comply with Welsh Language Standards.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

For Information

Background papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix A. Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment screening



Appendix A Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23

Report of the Director of Social Services & Cabinet Member – Care Services on behalf of the Corporate Safeguarding Group

1. Introduction

- 1.1 **Purpose** - this annual report aims to update Scrutiny Programme Committee on the work undertaken in relation to corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the whole Council, during the year 2022/23.
- 1.2 **Corporate Safeguarding** - Swansea Council expects that vulnerable people in Swansea are kept safe and protected from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children is both a corporate priority, and well-being strategic outcome within the new Corporate Plan (2023-28). This is now -widely understood as “everyone’s business”, by our leaders and elected members and our workforce, partner organisations and the individuals who are carrying out work on behalf of the Council,
- 1.3 **Corporate arrangements-** - by implementing a corporate wide approach to safeguarding vulnerable people the Council has to ensure there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability in all service areas of the Council, and that we are involving representatives of partner organisations in this work. We have a public duty to ‘Spot it, Report it!’, and the arrangements are ensuring everyone is clear about how we work together in response to shared concerns
- 1.4 **Safeguarding our most vulnerable people** – The Council, and Social Services and Education, in particular, have faced some major challenges the past two years through the recent pandemic, war and climate changes leading to mass migration and the cost-of-living crisis. This report also places what the Council is achieving in the wider context of the Corporate Plan, corporate priorities and policy commitments, looking across the range of services we provide, making use of evidence with the annual review of performance, particularly in the steps taken towards achieving the corporate priority of safeguarding vulnerable people.

- 1.5 **Director Of Social Services Annual Report 2022/23**
As a statutory requirement, the Council must have the opportunity to consider the Director of Social Services Annual Report. The latest report contains summary information about activity performance and service developments:
[Links to Director Of Social Services Annual Report 2022/23](#)
- 1.6 **Corporate Safeguarding Policy** – Swansea Council’s corporate safeguarding policy has been updated to give greater focus on prevention work, and to extend the duty to report to all public service officers. Our policy aims to make sure our focus is on the full extent of potential, contextual safeguarding risks and concerns posed to vulnerable people, such as child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, radicalisation, etc. Reflected in the new corporate safeguarding policy are the key elements needed to ensure [Corporate Safeguarding Policy - Swansea](#)
- 1.7 **All Wales Safeguarding procedures** – Swansea’s corporate safeguarding arrangements procedures and training programme have all been updated on the revised national guidance (Sept. 2020). [Safeguarding Wales](#).
The new national procedures detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The Procedures helps practitioners apply the relevant legislation, such as Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and replaces previous statutory safeguarding guidance Working Together to Safeguard People.
- 1.8 **Swansea Model for effective corporate safeguarding arrangements.**
Whilst the Wales Safeguarding Procedures provide guidance for anyone working with children or adults in Wales, whether in a paid or unpaid role; in the statutory, third (voluntary) or private sector; in health, social care, education, police, justice or other services. Our Swansea’s Corporate Safeguarding Policy also sets out a **council-wide approach**, driving continuous improvement in the key policy areas (Fig. 1). Named safeguarding officers from all service areas of the Council are fully trained, and regularly come together to share learning from their experiences in carrying out this work, overseen by the Corporate Safeguarding group.
- 1.9 **Seven Key Areas for effective Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.**
Swansea Council’s model covers our key areas of activity, and these are managed within a work programme, with lead officer reporting into the Corporate Safeguarding group.
- Safe governance & performance
 - Safe employment
 - Safe workforce

- Safe practice
- Safe partnerships
- Safe voice



Figure 1. "Safeguarding is Everyone's Business" Swansea's Model

1.10 **Safeguarding as Everyone's Business** - Our corporate safeguarding policy continues to promote "a "Safeguarding as everyone's business" approach, and this applies to:

- our employees
- elected members
- volunteers
- contractors (specific conditions may also apply within contracts)

Only by working together as a whole Council, we can ensure that all our activities and services are carried out by elected representatives, paid staff, partners, volunteers and providers who are all fully up to date and aware of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities to help protect our most vulnerable citizens.

1.11 **Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.** This Act was implemented in April 2016, and brought about changes in safeguarding arrangements and responsibilities, in particular the introduction of a 'Duty to Report', now placed on all Council staff. Clearly to address the new statutory requirements, and the wider range of safeguarding issues and concerns now present in our communities, it is necessary to ensure that the whole workforce, elected members, volunteers and partners are fully informed, and

each is aware of their public duty to work together to keep our most vulnerable people safe and protected. This wider public responsibility is fully reflected in corporate safeguarding policy arrangements and supplemented a mandatory training programme. The code of safeguarding practice (updated Jan 2022) provides more detail about the full range expectations placed on Councils: [working-together-to-safeguard-people--code-of-safeguarding-practice](#)

1.12 **Other Legislation**

The Council aims to ensure that everyone working with, or on behalf of, children and/or adults is competent, confident and safe to do so, by working within the full range of legal and statutory frameworks, as set out in the following:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Principles for Older Persons
- UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (CRDP)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Equalities Act 2010
- Regulations and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

1.13 **What do we know about quality standards across the whole Council?**

As well as the named safeguarding persons and lead officers meeting regularly through the Corporate Safeguarding group, there is now an operational steering group to drive progress on a work programme and to highlight good practice and issues to the main group. In addition, an annual self-assessment exercise is undertaken within all main service areas (previously section 135 audit), using a specially developed tool addressing the full set of quality standards across all seven key areas (Swansea model).

1.14 **Corporate Safeguarding Annual Reporting** aims to showcase the progress made during the previous year. This annual report, with the accompanying appendices, intends to act as a broad summary of the range of corporate safeguarding activities and as a record of the Council's improvement journey towards a fully corporate approach to safeguarding our most vulnerable people from harm, which applies across the whole Council. This annual report picks up highlights from the work programme, annual self-assessment exercise and any feedback the Council has received.

Appended to this report are:

- **Appendix 1.** Corporate Safeguarding Governance chart

2. Activities and progress made this year.

This next section highlights progress within each of the seven key areas of activity as set out in the Swansea model (Fig. 1), using the findings from this year's self-assessment carried out in **June 2023** by safeguarding leads within the Council's key service areas:

No. of corporate safeguarding self-assessments completed = 15 (2020 = 13).

2.1 Safe Governance & Performance

As mentioned, safeguarding is seen as 'everyone's business' and within the Council's Corporate Plan, a corporate strategic priority. As an organisation, we are confident that we have a set of robust, effective arrangements for responding to and managing all safeguarding concerns. Through sound arrangements, we can show a 'golden thread' running through everything we do. From the corporate objective to safeguard our most vulnerable people, through service planning and extending to help each employee to act on their duty to report.

2.1.1 Corporate Leadership –

Swansea has strong, effective corporate leadership in place to ensure that all staff know, understand their wider responsibilities, and they are well supported to apply what they know about safeguarding, in all circumstances. We can demonstrate 'safe' leadership through the 'safeguarding as everyone's business' culture, an established governance structure, clear policy framework, effective management and lead roles across the whole Council, and most of all by taking action as and when needed. Safe governance operates across the whole Council and within all committee and meeting structures, including Cabinet, Corporate Management Team, scrutiny boards, corporate policy development and partnership structures (see Appendix 1).

2.1.2 Swansea Council and Cabinet - the Council continues to review assurance around its governance, strategic priorities, accountability and risk management to drive forward shared corporate priorities, including safeguarding our most vulnerable people. Cabinet Member portfolios are reviewed regularly with the Cabinet Member for Care Services as lead for safeguarding. Cabinet receives regular performance updates from Child and Family Services and Adult Services.

2.1.3 Corporate Management Team—all Corporate Directors, Chief Officers and Heads of Service – through their Management Teams – are jointly responsible for ensuring that all the statutory requirements in terms of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults receive due consideration. Each Director must ensure there is a named safeguarding officer in their service area, who regularly attends the corporate safeguarding group and ensures the quality, content and frequency of training provided to their own

staff, and by maintaining a sufficient staff training record. Also, named safeguarding officers are there to ensure all statutory duties are carried out with regard to the duty to report within the Council, and Swansea's corporate safeguarding policy is being implemented.

2.1.4 Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group - An effective corporate safeguarding culture requires strong, visible, leadership presence, ensuring that senior officer and their workforce receives positive, professional and consistent backing in carrying out Council activities. This has been evident during this most difficult, challenging period, and though the vast range of actions taken in keeping people safe and well. All named safeguarding officers are working effectively together under the direction of a Corporate Safeguarding group, which meets quarterly, and is jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services David Howes and the Cabinet Member for Care Services –Cllr. Louise Gibbard.

2.1.5 Local Authority Designated Officers

Every local authority has a statutory responsibility to have at least one Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), who holds primary responsibility for co-ordinating the response to concerns that an adult who in working with children may have caused them or could cause them harm. The LADO is expected to coordinate the safeguarding and investigative process in response to allegations made against people working with children. Also, to provide advice/guidance to other employers or voluntary organisations when there are concerns or allegations about individuals who work with children.

To liaise with police, human resources and other agencies including CiW, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and other professional bodies. In Swansea, the LADO within Child and Family Services is currently the Principal Officer for Single Point of Contact and Early Help.

2.1.6 Scrutiny Performance Panels - Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel receives the Monthly Child and Family Services Performance report, and a work programme looking in more depth at key issues. Similarly, Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel receives the Monthly Adult Services performance report and has a work programme to cover off key issues.

2.1.7 Regional Safeguarding <http://www.wgsb.wales/>

Swansea Council is working within effective regional safeguarding board arrangements. Regional Safeguarding board publishes an annual plan setting out priority areas for the coming year. There is shared accountability for this plan across a range of partners, with targeted focus on preventative approaches, improving quality, performance reporting and learning lessons from practice reviews. [wgsb-annual-report-2022-23-final-24072023.pdf](#)

2.1.8 **Social Care and Tackling Poverty Service Transformation Committee** has been reconstituted to support the impact of the Council's Transformation Programmes and policy commitments. Chaired by Cllr Ceri Evans, this new Committee has put together a work programme to focus on development work on targeting help and support to the most vulnerable people in Swansea.

2.1.9 **Recent finding-** from Estyn's Inspection report on Education in Swansea (June 2022) endorses the Council's approach to corporate safeguarding, noting strong leadership, a positive culture and collaboration between service areas (p16-17). [Inspection report City and County of Swansea 2022 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/inspection-report-city-and-county-of-swanse-2022)

2.1.10 **Corporate Parenting**

When a child has experience of care, they become 'looked after' by a local authority under a Care Order, the council becomes a 'corporate parent' with legal and moral responsibility for safeguarding that child's welfare and rights. Swansea's Corporate Parenting Board is a group of councillors who have a lead role in promoting the role of corporate parenting within and outside the local authority and additional formal responsibilities relating to corporate parenting.

<https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/corporateparenting>

Welsh Government has just produced a Corporate Parenting Charter: [Corporate Parenting Charter – A Promise from Wales \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/corporate-parenting-charter-a-promise-from-wales)

Swansea Council is the first Local Authority in Wales to sign up to this Charter, and through the Corporate Parenting Board has coproduced with Children and Young People, our own set of corporate parenting pledges.

Swansea's Corporate Parenting Pledges

- No barriers to opportunity
- Good education/good job
 - Healthy relationships
 - Safe place to live
 - Mental health
- Love, family, and friendship
 - Happiness

'As corporate parents we have a collective responsibility to ensure that care experienced children, young people and care leavers can have the outcomes every good parent would want for their children

2.1.11 **Other**

National Safeguarding Week: West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board and Swansea Council support a range of campaigns and learning events throughout the year, and with focused activities during National Safeguarding Week, this year taking place between 20th - 26th November 2023.

Housing & Public Health Safeguarding group

Housing and Public Health hold own safeguarding group meetings to share good practice, discuss difficult, sensitive cases, training opportunities etc

2.7.6 Work identified for year ahead:

- To continue the annual review of performance, quarterly performance monitoring of key indicators, performance reporting at service level (to P&FM and scrutiny performance panels) and annual reporting on corporate safeguarding.

2.2 Safe Employment

Safe employment is a set of corporate practices that help make sure our staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. For example, all employees, volunteers and contractors are committed to safeguarding and the 'duty to report' when they join the Authority or work on its behalf. It's a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to keep children safe from harm.

2.2.1 The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006). This Act still applies in England and Wales. This Act aims to promote safe recruitment and to prevent those deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults, from gaining access through work (whether paid or unpaid). The Act also addressed failings identified by the Bichard Inquiry (2004). Safe employment is a continuing process of policy and practice improvement, reaching across all Council Services, into business or organisations who carry out work or services, on the Council's behalf, and that may involve contact with vulnerable children or adults.

2.2.2 Swansea's safe recruitment and selection - In working safely with Swansea citizens, the Council has recently updated the Recruitment and Selection Policy and working on updating the safeguarding elements within all HR policies within the staff handbook. The updated policies will aim to ensure that the new national safeguarding guidance is fully embedded into our procedures. Safeguarding roles responsibilities and expectations are now reflected with the Council's job descriptions, and staff expected to undertake the mandatory safeguarding awareness training (children and adults)

2.2. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)-

The Council has to ensure DBS checks are undertaken for all roles that have been risk assessed as needing one. Safeguarding policy expects that job requirements for all new starters, for each position to be filled, are risk assessed to ensure a DBS check is completed where a requirement has been identified. The DBS Policy has recently been updated and published. Alongside this, work is underway reviewing the procedures, guidance and standard letters for Managers/Schools. Work in this area is carried out by a dedicated DBS service centre, to assist Council Headteachers, School Governors, and Managers in making safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. A subgroup is looking at improvements for ensuring DBS checks for contractors are completed in line with new DBS Policy and Risk Assessment.

2.2.3 DBS Service Centre/ helpdesk – in early 2020, the Service Centre Helpdesk took over all ID applications and verifications previously carried out in the contact centre. Alongside this, there is daily monitoring of compliance to ensure that verifications are tracked to completion. Lists of renewals and overdue DBS documentation are sent to Heads of Service, every month reports and copied to Human Resources to allow them to raise any queries/issues directly with the business areas and to School Challenge Advisors.

2.2.4 Volunteers – Tackling Poverty Services have been working with Swansea Council for Voluntary Service to complete a corporate policy and resources for employing, supporting volunteers. Progress is being reported to the Social Care and Tackling Poverty Service Transformation Committee.

2.2.5 Work identified for year ahead:

- To publish, communicate and implement revised HR policies relating to recruitment and selection, DBS reflecting national procedures.
- To ensure council-wide volunteering policy currently in development led by Tackling Poverty Service and to reflect wider safeguarding responsibilities expectations and training offer.

2.3 Safe Workforce

All staff employed by Swansea Council, including new staff are expected to have an awareness and understanding of their own corporate safeguarding role, as a Council employee, and as a citizen. All Council workers, and any individual, business or organisation we commission work from, have a vital role in ensuring that we work closely together to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect through, both, responses to specific situations through a duty to report, and, also, by putting in place broader prevention measures.

2.3.1 **Named Safeguarding Persons** – all Council staff are expected to be aware of the Named Safeguarding Persons in their respective service area. This group of trained lead officers provide support to their staff teams in helping them identify, discuss and raise any signs of potential abuse, and to access the training and support they need. [Named safeguarding persons](#)

2.3.2 Corporate Safeguarding Operational Group

This is now an established cross-Council working group that reports directly to the Corporate Safeguarding group to ensure that the work programme is progressing, communication on safeguarding issues and good practice is shared across all service areas.

2.2.3 Communication

There are some imaginative examples of how messages on corporate safeguarding are communicated to our staff, some who are as yet are unable to regularly access the intranet. **For example: Waste, Parks & Cleansing.**

Waste, Parks & Cleansing Safeguarding News

May 2023

www.swansea.gov.uk/safeguarding

Safeguarding is Everyone's Business.

Doing nothing about abuse is not an option - See it, Report it

Whether you are in work or outside of work.

If there is an immediate risk of harm to the person or you believe a crime may have been committed, you must call the Police immediately on 999.

Adult Services Safeguarding Team - Phone on 636854 or email them on adultsafeguardingteam@swansea.gov.uk

Children Safeguarding Team - The Emergency Duty Team is available outside normal working hours on: 01792 775501. During working hours 01792 635700

Staying Safe Online

www.staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/staysafeonline

MENTAL HEALTH & MONEY WORRIES

Having so much to deal with can affect your mental health. The charity, MIND, can't fix the cost of living crisis, but they can help you feel more able to cope.

If this speaks to you, speak to MIND.

www.mind.org.uk/cost-of-living

Waste, Parks & Cleansing Safeguarding News

January 2023

The Family Information Service (FIS) is a free impartial information and advice service for ALL parents / carers of children and young people aged between 0-20

They can provide information, assistance and advice to help you find and choose:

- Registered childcare
- Unregistered childcare
- Children and young people's activities
- Family support organisations.
- Help with the costs of childcare

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/fis>



Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth Ddiwyddol Abertawe
Swansea Family Information Service

NSPCC

Together we can make sure it's safe for every child to go online. The NSPCC are there to support parents/carers with online safety advice, and they're here for children – to protect them and help them recover from abuse.

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

Help for problems with gambling

Be Gamble Aware offer free, confidential help and support to anyone who's worried about their – or someone else's – gambling.

www.begambleaware.org/

Thank you to Steve Emmett from the Waste Collections Team who raised a Safeguarding concern he had about a resident last month. The concern was raised to his Supervisor, Darren Morgan, who then contacted the Waste, Parks & Cleansing Safeguarding Person, Rebecca Tribe.

The Adult Safeguarding Team were immediately notified of this concern. **Have any concerns? Spot it, Report it!**



Named safeguarding persons are in place to make sure that teams and services are kept informed about Council policy and safeguarding expectations.

2.3.4 Training Programme

The fully updated programme implemented to reflect the National safeguarding training, learning and development standards (October 2022): [National safeguarding training, learning and... | Social Care Wales](#)

It is important to note that within the new, national safeguarding training framework there is now a *practitioner groups hierarchy*:

- Group A (basic)- increased awareness of safeguarding
- Group B (intermediary) to know what to look for and clear knowledge of reporting process, and own responsibilities.
- Group C (advanced) to become involved in protection planning and decisions around individuals in these processes.
- Group D (specialist)- mainly statutory agencies or professionals with a specific duty to safeguard through child or adult protection process.
- Group E (consultancy or sector leader)- as above. mainly statutory
- Group F (all public service leaders)

Swansea Council has been actively involved in the development of this framework and a timetable for the new training programme consistent with this approach is being drawn up.

2.3.5 New Mandatory Training

Our safeguarding awareness training offer has also to include face to face, e-learning and class-based training approaches to meet the needs of a diverse workforce, for example to staff that do not have regular PC access. Staff are required to attend these mandatory courses a minimum of every 3-years. New mandatory Safeguarding e-Learning has just been launched (**Oct 2023**), and all staff and all councillors are expected to complete the adults and children courses, regardless of whether or not they have done the previous course recently. With fully refreshed content, the courses will help everyone understand their duty, in line with the new Social Care Wales Safeguarding Standards.

2.2.6 Named Safeguarding Persons Lead Training – this new programme is vital to Swansea’s approach in supporting service areas leads to gain knowledge and know- how which can be passed through to their own teams. This training has now been transferred to virtual training and delivered this year.

2.6.7 Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) training within a National Training Framework is one of the key mechanisms for delivering the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015. As part of this act, the Council has a duty to train all our workforce, which is also a mandatory expectation on staff and elected members. We need to ensure that the training offer is accessible to all staff across the Council and within schools.

2.3.8 Oracle Fusion

Oracle is the Council's system for managing staff employment and training records, together with other resources such as budgets and assets. The new system was launched in April 2023. Through Oracle Fusion employees and managers can access their own and their teams corporate learning account eLearning training and report on progress. The new Safeguarding e-learning courses, covering Group A (basic awareness) and Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) training are all now available on Oracle Fusion Learn.

2.3.9 Compliance

Swansea's corporate safeguarding policy states that all managers are responsible for ensuring compliance in ensuring that all staff within their own teams, are completing mandatory training. The roll out of the new mandatory training programme, and the implementation of Oracle will be important enablers progressing to full compliance.

2.3.10 Workforce Strategy

Effective workforce planning is vital to ensure we are looking to the future, to ensure there are appropriate numbers of high-quality staff, with the right skills, experience and professional competencies to deliver safe, and effective public services. A Council-wide workforce strategy and plan have been published: Workforce Strategy and Plan: [Workforce Strategy and Plan](#)

2.3.11 **New Workers** - all staff employed by Swansea Council, including new staff are expected to have an awareness and understanding of their own corporate safeguarding role, as a Council employee, and as a citizen. On commencement of employment, all Council employees have a corporate induction and to undertake a mandatory corporate safeguarding training; to be ready to prevent or report their concerns of possible abuse, when they work for the Authority or work on its behalf.

2.3.12 Work identified for year ahead:

- Continue roll out of new blended programme of mandatory and progression training courses across Council available to meet diverse needs of service areas, employees learning needs and responsibilities.
- Managers to work within Oracle Fusion to ensure safe and accurate reporting on staff learning records, keeping records updated and tracking compliance.

2.4 Safe Practice

Safe practice is applying the standards expected within the All-Wales Safeguarding procedures, and corporate safeguarding policy. The Council can be assured that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that all safeguarding practice within the wider workforce (including partners, providers and volunteers) is continuously improving and working towards enhancing the lives well-being and safety of Swansea citizens.

2.4.1 Safeguarding as “everyone’s business” Swansea Council expects that vulnerable people in Swansea are kept safe, protected from abuse and neglect. To best achieve this, safeguarding vulnerable adults and children is seen as “everybody’s business” Safeguarding practice has to be delivered timely and effectively, to expected standards and with consistency in practice. The Council can be assured that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that all safeguarding practice within the wider workforce (including partners, providers and volunteers) is continuously improving and working towards enhancing the lives well-being and safety of Swansea citizens.

2.4.2 Duty to Report

A concern may involve any child or young person under the age 18 years old or a vulnerable adult. There is a statutory duty places on all Council workers and elected members to report their concern regardless of whether the child or adult is living permanently in the Swansea area or not. If you think, there are child protection concerns, then you should seek immediate advice from your safeguarding lead, or from the Child and Family Service Single Point of Contact. Similarly, there is a duty to report any concerns about an adult at risk, and for a local Authority to make enquiries if it has reasonable cause to suspect that a person within its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there) is an ‘adult at risk’.

2.4.3 Person at the centre of each concern- We have to ensure all agencies, services and individuals work together to give timely and proportionate responses, where possible occurrences of abuse or neglect of children and adults at risk has been noticed. In Swansea, safeguarding practice and process aims to be fully focused on the needs of the child or person as the subject of the concern, and on working towards a set of agreed safe outcomes. By working collaboratively, firstly on how we identify and prevent abuse and neglect, then how we understand and achieve safety goals and in reach decisions collectively with the safeguarded person at the centre.

2.4.4 Swansea as a Human Right City

Swansea Council has been committed to the 1945 Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. In December 2022, Swansea become Wales's first Human Rights City, following a year of action to recognise their importance to the lives of all residents and organisations.

Together with Swansea University, the council had produced a guide to help organisations embed human rights into their day-to-day activities and there would be a series of training events with the British Institute of Human Rights which will be on offer to organisation across Swansea.

- 2.4.5. **Rights of a Child-** the Council is committed to the 1945 Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) has recently reviewed national guidance on safeguarding practice in Wales to ensure that children are safe and protected, and vulnerable people are able to live their lives fully, and to achieve their own wellbeing outcomes.

2.4.6. Work with Children, Young People and Families

To be successful in making a difference we must continue to work collaboratively with children, young people and families, fully understanding what matters to them. This will enable us to better allocate work so that *service users get the right service, from the right person at the right time* and are more engaged and involved in the decisions that affect them. Child and Family Services has developed a strategy that describes the way we work and demonstrates our commitment to this strategic priority. It outlines how we have and will continue to develop our services to support children, young people and their family network - ensuring that individual needs can be addressed as quickly and as well as possible in order to attempt to prevent children and young people from entering, or remaining within, the care system wherever safe alternatives can be identified:

[Strategy to support children and young people to live safely at home with their family.](#)

By working in new ways, the Council is in a stronger position to focus resources on more preventative and contextual approaches. Child and Family Services places practice excellence at the centre of our work with the most vulnerable children: <https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/cfssafeguarding>

2.4.7 Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding -the lives of hundreds of young people are being made safer, thanks to the Contextual Safeguarding pilot led by our service, but involving a whole range of partners. Swansea Council are working with Bedford University on Contextual Safeguarding Risk to improve our child exploitation work and practice, in the area of risks to children outside of the family (such as criminal or sexual exploitation). The Covid-19 lockdown has not stopped the

project from pressing ahead with preventing exploitation and disrupting criminal networks and behaviour within the context in which the harm occurs.

A contextual approach to safeguarding requires us to look beyond the family to assess neighbourhood and peer group factors in considering risks to children and young people. Swansea's Contextual Missing Exploitation Trafficking multi-agency forum (CMET) tackles referrals, which can potentially impact on hundreds of young people. Youth workers have been doing vital outreach harnessing their skills to identify contextual risks and potential solutions.

2.4.8 Rights of Adults

The embedding of human rights as part of the Council's approach. This can be demonstrated by our commitment to the Dublin Declaration which requires a whole Council approach to involvement, engagement and coproduction. The Pandemic means that more thought needs to be given to how we live and how we safeguard our wellbeing both as individuals and within communities. We are continuing to work closely with the Older Person's Commissioner's Office and CADR at Swansea University to ensure meaningful mechanisms for engagement of citizens 50+ within the "Live Well, Age Well Forum".

2.4.9 Adult Safeguarding Team

The new Adult Safeguarding team are working hard to ensure that all concerns are addressed at the earliest opportunity, risks are managed effectively with partners using our practice approaches that place the person at the centre, with full involvement and engagement. More cases are being closed and Safeguarding concern investigations are now more likely to be followed through to conclusion, and where necessary supporting police to achieve a conviction.

2.4.10 Collaborative Communication

A 'What matters to you' conversation is now central to how we work, across social services. Through a 'warm' front door we can help promote wellbeing and prevent rapid escalation of needs. In Adult Services there is the Common Access Point (CAP), which is set up to help people explore what they need to enhance their personal wellbeing, taking in their strengths as well as risks in their situation, and the outcome they are looking for. Adult Services are using collaborative communication and narrative based approaches to help professionals and service users reflect together on their experiences, the outcomes achieved and what could be done better.

<https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/collabcommscaseexample>

2.4.11 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were introduced in 2009 to protect against arbitrary deprivations of liberty in hospitals and care homes. These safeguards provide a legal framework that helps to ensure that human rights are protected. Once notified by a Managing Authority, the Local Authority has a duty to assess whether the restrictions are necessary in order to prevent harm to the person and proportionate to their needs. Swansea has significantly improved performance in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) through implementing these dedicated team arrangements. Feedback suggests this has not only improved professional knowledge but is driving up standards and response times.

2.4.12 Capturing stories of good practice

Safeguarding and protecting our most vulnerable citizens whilst ensuring their own voice is at the centre of our work remains a priority. Within a sustainable model of social care, we must target our efforts to where there is significant risk of harm and abuse and ensure we are working in a timely way, with the vulnerable person at the centre. The Director of Social Services Annual Report sets out more detail on the achievements and stories of impact in many of the areas highlighted in this report:

2.4.6 Work identified for year ahead:

- To continue to implement quality assurance frameworks within child and family and adult services.
- To continue to refresh the work programme using self-assessment and involving leads from all Council Departments within the Corporate Safeguarding Operational group.

2.5 Safe Partnerships

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It's fundamental to high-quality health and social care. By working together with citizens, and other agencies, we better support children, their parents, carers and vulnerable adults to achieve the best possible outcomes.

2.5.1 Cost of Living Crisis -a community response

Swansea Council's Tackling Poverty Service with the support of the Poverty Partnership group and Poverty forum have a coordinated a city and county wide response to recently challenges that are pushing families, adults and children below poverty threshold. More families are struggling to pay for increasing housing, food, fuel and energy costs, and being forced into debt. These intense pressures can lead to more family and social problems and place additional demand for public and voluntary services, which are also under pressures as budgets are constrained and impacted by inflationary pressures. During this time, services have adapted and transformed themselves and used funding to support new ways of working, and to safeguard vulnerable people and families, such as Swansea Spaces, COAST (Creating Opportunities Across Swansea Together) and the Holiday Food Fund.

2.5.2 Safer Swansea strategy

Harm is sometimes more related to place than people, and this also requires a more joined up approach. Harm, exploitation or victimisation may target or impact on the most vulnerable in our communities and the Council has access a range of approaches from prevention, duty to report, and possible criminal investigation. Swansea Housing Service are working in partnership with social services, the police, community safety and other housing providers to safeguard the vulnerable by highlighting issues, concerns and taking necessary action: [Safer Swansea advice - Swansea](#)

2.5.2a Hate Crime - the prevention and reduction of Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring is one the five strategic priorities identified, which aims to prevent Hate Crime, support victims and improve our multi-agency response to the problem. Our Hate Crime Stakeholder Action Plan' continues to be managed and monitored through the Hate Crime Stakeholder Group and the Safer Swansea Partnership Steering Group.

2.5.2b Victim Support- the Council continued to support Hate Crime awareness week in October 2020 and signed up to Victim Support's Charter. The Charter sets out in detail the rights of victims, and the commitments of organisations such as the Council in tackling Hate Crime, providing support and information for victims, and raising awareness of Hate Crime.

2.5.2c **PREVENT** Our PREVENT strategy and interventions programme target support to vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism. This is managed through a multi-agency (channel) partnership made up of organisations that have a legislative duty under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015

2.5.3 Working with contractors and suppliers- - We expect that all contractors to confirm that they comply with Swansea Council corporate safeguarding policy, their staff and/or their sub-contractors staff are aware of their responsibilities and duties and when required provided or able to provide safeguarding awareness raising and training. We carry out a suitability questionnaire to ensure that all expectations, in relation to safeguarding, are fully understood. We have also developed a Safeguarding policy specifically for Contractors of the City and County of Swansea to detail the Council's expectations of partners and providers, and this is annexed to the contract. Safeguarding clauses are placed in all social care contracts and inserted into other contracts where there are seen as relevant. All external employees working on our behalf are therefore expected to be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and duties; and when required provided with safeguarding awareness raising training.

2.5.4 Lessons Learned events (Regional Safeguarding)

To coincide with National Safeguarding week, West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board are to host an annual Learning Event where learning from recent practice reviews is shared and discussed to help shape and influence future practice. This year's event will be held at Mercure Hotel, Llansamlet, Swansea on Thursday, 16 November.

2.5.5 Work identified for year ahead:

- To continue to embed corporate safeguarding policy procedures into how we work with suppliers in carrying out checks, specifying contracts, building awareness in the wider workforce and contract monitoring.

2.6 Safe Voice

Swansea is aiming to ensure individuals have a “safe voice” on safeguarding matters by providing stronger voice, meaningful control over the support they receive and remove any barriers to achieving their wellbeing outcomes. Each citizen must feel that they are an equal partner in their relationship with Professionals, in discussions about their safety and well-being.

2.6.1 Making safeguarding personal

In all, of the above, service developments and safe practice, Swansea is aiming to ensure individuals have a “safe voice” on safeguarding matters within the safeguarding and protection processes, the care and support they receive and to remove any barriers to achieving their safety goals and wellbeing outcomes. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a UK wide initiative which aims to develop an outcomes-focus to safeguarding work, and a range of responses to support people to improve or resolve their circumstances. The development of Making Safeguarding Personal is not simply about a focus on personalised, safe practice at the front line. It requires a whole system approach across and within organisations, to promote the voice and control of the person at the centre. We want to ensure we are treating people with 'lived experience' as equal partners and with dignity and respect.

2.6.2 Junior Safeguarding Board

Established in January 2019, the JSB comprises of representatives from secondary school across the West Glamorgan region including schools for children and young people with additional and complex needs. The purpose of the JSB is for children and young people to have the opportunity to voice their concerns about safety in their school, online, at home and in their communities.

“I like the JSB because they are very real. They don't try to sugar coat issues that affect children & young people, and they seriously care about trying to fix the problems.” Oisín, JSB member. [Junior Safeguarding Board \(wgsb.wales\)](http://wgsb.wales)

2.6.3 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Becoming ACE aware and promoting trauma informed responses will also require a whole system shift in public services approach to ensuring all people are listened to and treated with kindness and compassion. Building on work undertaken by the People P.D.C, and then incorporated into the Council's Integrated Well-being Strategy for Children and Young People 2018 – 2021. The Safeguarding Operational group has now set a Task group to reconsider how we are applying ACE framework and practice within our work, and to set a vision to shape future practice.

Our ACEs Vision

How we respond to situations matters, it is our aim to promote trauma informed responses in all circumstances.

We want all officers to be provided with ACES awareness training and practical support in order to break down barriers and create a kinder and tolerant society.

All people should be treated with respect, kindness and understanding and this should be reflected in the language we use, both in written documents and when providing advice verbally.

We will create a language guide document and share good practise across departments and directorate. We are mindful that trauma informed practises should be applied between officers as well as to the public.

2.6.4 LGBTQ+ Awareness

Within their work on “Equali-Tea” Junior Safeguarding Board have been raising awareness about LGBTQIA+ issues. They have co-created, listened to young people, delivered sessions online, shared a colourful resource to young people, schools, Councillors & Senior Managers across Swansea.

Adult Services Service Provision in line with the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales have developed our own LGBTQ+ strategy/action plan to ensure individuals from the LGBTQ+ community that work, attend, or live in services, feel a sense of security and confidence to be themselves. [ASnews - Adult Service Provision LGBTQ+ Action Plan](#)

2.6.5 Quality Assurance

Adult Services and Child and Family Services are implementing a quality assurance framework that articulates the high standards of service we expect in all work with vulnerable children and adults. Recognising that we need to focus on understanding the lived experience of those who receive a service. To achieve this, Child and Family Services are expanding how we get information both qualitative and quantitative to help identify improvements.

2.6.6 Advocacy

Both Child and Family and Adult Services continues to improve the Council’s advocacy offer made to vulnerable children, adults and their families, who can now access Independent Professional Advocacy to help ensure that they are fully informed and engaged in decisions about their care and support and that plans are in their best interests and with regard to safety.

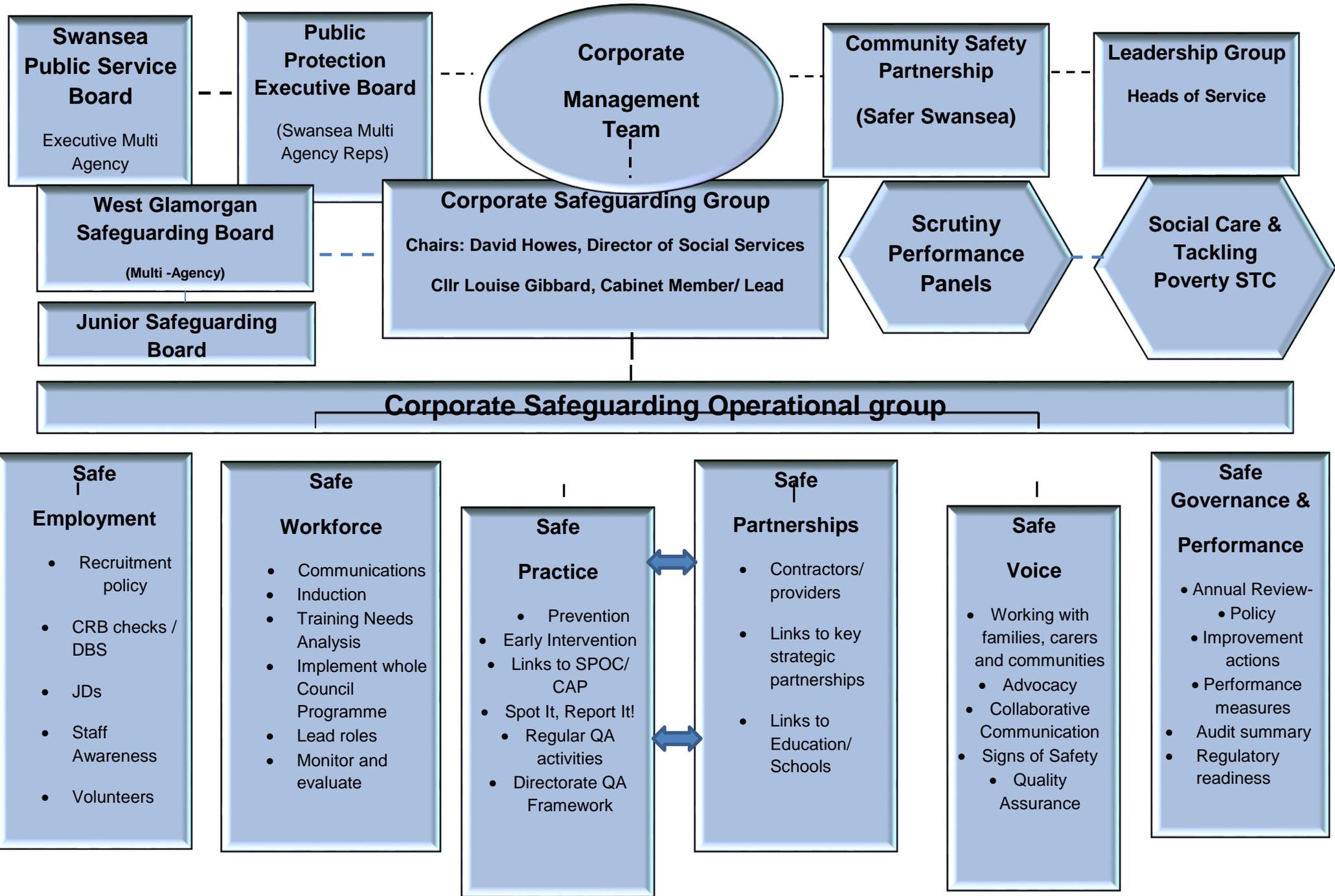
2.6.5 Work identified for year ahead:

- Working within families, communities and schools to promote safeguarding awareness.
- Continue to develop language and communication guidance and training opportunities for Council employees to support ACE awareness, promote inclusivity and embed trauma informed practice.
- Continuing to improve our advocacy offer, best interest decisions, equalities, inclusion and promote human rights.

Appendices:

Appendix 1. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING GOVERNANCE CHART

Appendix 1. Corporate Safeguarding Governance Chart (updated July 2023)



Safe Employment

- Recruitment policy
- CRB checks / DBS
- JDs
- Staff Awareness
- Volunteers

Safe Workforce

- Communications
- Induction
- Training Needs Analysis
- Implement whole Council Programme
- Lead roles
- Monitor and evaluate

Safe Practice

- Prevention
- Early Intervention
- Links to SPOC/ CAP
- Spot It, Report It!
 - Regular QA activities
 - Directorate QA Framework

Safe Partnerships

- Contractors/ providers
- Links to key strategic partnerships
- Links to Education/ Schools

Safe Voice

- Working with families, carers and communities
- Advocacy
- Collaborative Communication
- Signs of Safety
 - Quality Assurance

Safe Governance & Performance

- Annual Review-
 - Policy
 - Improvement actions
 - Performance measures
- Audit summary
- Regulatory readiness

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Swansea Council

Directorate: Social Services

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

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

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Annual Report on Corporate Safeguarding 2022-23

The purpose of the Annual Report -Corporate Safeguarding 2022-23 is to present a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Council’s Corporate Safeguarding policy, which promotes a “Safeguarding as everyone’s business” approach.

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

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

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?

Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

Safeguarding is the council's number one priority. Swansea Council is committed to ensuring that citizens live their lives free from harm and exploitation. Safeguarding vulnerable people is seen as everybody's business within every service within the council, by all elected members and by those who do work on behalf of the council. Safeguarding is one of six well-being objectives, within Swansea Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28. The annual report on corporate safeguarding produced jointly on behalf of the lead Cabinet Member – Care Services and Director of Social Services, sets out the evidence-based view of the Director, on progress within a work programme led by the Corporate Safeguarding group, and the priorities for further improvement including promoting 'safe voice' and 'safe practice' within the implementation of corporate safeguarding procedures.

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

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

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

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

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

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

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

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

The report reflects the views of the lead Cabinet Member- Care Services and Director of Social Services in Swansea, to whom people are entitled to express their views of how effective the services are:

- In meeting wellbeing and needs of targeted populations
- In delivering on priorities set in past annual report
- Achieving a sustainable model of social care
- In providing assurances about the quality of services, against national standards

The report provides elected members, the public and stakeholders with the summary of the Council's approach to corporate safeguarding, progress within the work programme, and priorities for future improvement. This report is informed by the work of Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding group which is jointly chaired by the lead Cabinet Member and Director of Social Services.

The Corporate Safeguarding group includes representatives, and named safeguarding officers from all service areas within the Councils the

The report also contains a summary of Swansea Council's progress in implementing the changes arising out of the Audit Wales follow up review of corporate safeguarding children. It sets out some improvements for corporate safeguarding which, if implemented, could have a positive impact on future generations.

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

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

• **Summary of Impacts (Q2)** Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.

• **Summary of involvement (Q3) Social Services work closely with other** Swansea Council services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards and works co-productively on services development and commissioning plans. This development work and the involvement of others has been involved in this report.

• **WFG considerations (Q4)** Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall approach, and as part of the transformation and improvement programmes within Council services, which are working towards a sustainable model of service. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified workforce, who have a duty to report safeguarding concerns, is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for Swansea citizens, and in achieving the corporate objective – safeguarding people from harm.

• **Any risks identified (Q5)** The improvements and transformation programmes set out within this plan are risk managed closely. Any risks identified and agreed, are mitigated as routine within social services at service, directorate and corporate levels through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting and Corporate Safeguarding group escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.

• **Cumulative impact (Q7)** There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens though the continuous improvement of corporate safeguarding arrangements, and the benefits this brings to the social care economy and wider social care workforce.

Full IIA to be completed

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

Screening completed by:
Name: Simon Jones
Job title: Social Service Strategic Performance & Improvement Officer
Date: 20th October 2023

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Approval by Head of Service:	
	
Name:	David Howes
Position:	Director of Social Services
Date:	23rd October 2023



**To/
Councillor Louise Gibbard
Cabinet Member for Care Services
BY EMAIL**

cc: Cabinet Members & Chair of
Governance & Audit Committee

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637257

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

SPC/2022-23/5

04 January 2023

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 15 November 2022. It is about the Annual Report on Corporate Safeguarding. A formal written response is required by 25 January.

Dear Councillor Gibbard,

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 15 November

We are writing to you following our scrutiny session to monitor and challenge Council action in relation to Corporate Safeguarding, which took place during National Safeguarding Week.

We thank you and officers for attending the Committee to present the Annual Report which reflected on activities during 2021/22. The Annual Report is a standing item within the Committee work plan given safeguarding is one of the Council's top priorities, so we can comment on progress, achievements, and implementation of policy. Previous discussion was in November 2021. The issues raised during discussion then were around: compliance by those carrying out work for the Council with the Council's Safeguarding Policies (paid or voluntary), and training / guidance; DBS checking for such persons; and progress against the work planned against each of the seven key areas of corporate safeguarding activity: Safe Governance, Safe Employment, Safe Workforce, Safe Practice, Safe Partnerships, Safe Voice, all contributing to Delivering Safe Performance.

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

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

You highlighted:

- the role of the Corporate Safeguarding Group which leads on the development of corporate safeguarding policy and monitoring of policy implementation.
- developments and achievements against the seven key areas of activity.
- revision to Corporate Safeguarding Policy with a greater focus on prevention and introduction of a duty to report placed on all Council staff, which has been incorporated into a revised mandatory training programme. The policy aims to make sure our work covers the full extent of potential, contextual safeguarding risks and concerns posed to vulnerable people, such as child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, radicalisation, etc.
- a positive internal audit report on corporate safeguarding and feedback from Estyn review on Council's Education Services which endorses the Council's approach to safeguarding.
- self-assessment activity (previously referred to as Section 135 Audit) to provide assurances that arrangements are robust in all the Council's main service areas, and to identify any additional improvements needed.
- update on issues arising from previous year's scrutiny session, including mandatory training compliance, the disclosure and barring service, contracting and procurement, and safeguarding leadership.
- the work programme for the year ahead, and management action plan following the recent Internal Audit report.

Working with Contractors and Suppliers

Having raised this in previous Scrutiny sessions, the Committee recognised that a lot of work has been done on this. It is clear the Council expects that all staff employed by contractors (and sub-contractors) and suppliers, carrying out work on the Council's behalf, are fully aware of their broader responsibilities and duties and must confirm that they comply with Swansea Council corporate safeguarding policy, and when required checks are carried out and staff given safeguarding awareness training. We noted that we have a suitability questionnaire to ensure that all expectations, in relation to safeguarding, are fully understood.

We appreciate there are various levels of conditions depending on the nature of services contracted, but asked about monitoring arrangements in place to keep on top of this given the scale of wide-ranging activity across all departments. We were told that monitoring is a challenge and contractual expectations would be proportionate based on the type of service and extent of public contact. At a minimum contractors and suppliers will need to state

they comply with the Council's policy, but a more intensive level of monitoring would be in place, for example, for organisations providing personal care services, and more generally safeguarding compliance would be a consideration at contract review, etc. We welcomed using our Internal Audit team to carry out checks on compliance with process and procedures across the Council, and how well it is embedded, in addition to the Corporate Safeguarding Group's self-assessment activity.

Mandatory Training Compliance

We asked whether there was now effective oversight of training compliance across the Council. We noted that this included safeguarding awareness training, and violence against women, sexual violence, and domestic abuse training. We heard that work is still underway in the development of management information to evidence compliance in achieving mandatory training standards across all service areas. There are issues in how we report compliance across the whole Council as there have been other systems in use, for example in Social Services and Education to support regional approaches and national demands. We noted that delayed implementation of the new Cloud based corporate ICT system (Oracle Fusion) has held up support for real-time reporting of staff training records and employee data checks – the system has a revised go-live date of April 2023. However, based on manual checks which the Corporate Safeguarding Group has reviewed, indicates a compliance level of around 80%, which is considered as good. Managers were currently responsible for compliance, in terms of how many of their staff are completing mandatory training, within their own teams.

We can see that Internal Audit has also recommended (arising from their audit of Corporate Safeguarding) that work should continue to develop the recording of all employee Safeguarding training on the Council's new Oracle Fusion system. You reported that this is a priority action for the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The Committee asked about progress in ensuring that all work roles and responsibilities are risk assessed and, where necessary, DBS compliant. We also queried whether there were issues in relation to DBS checks, e.g., processing timescales.

You reported that the Service Centre Helpdesk is now responsible for all ID applications and verifications, previously carried out in the Contact Centre. Alongside this, there is daily monitoring of compliance to ensure that verifications are tracked to completion. Lists of renewals and overdue DBS checks are sent to Heads of Service, every month reports and copied to Human Resources to allow them to raise any queries/issues. We heard that the DBS is currently working well, including communication with the

processing authority, which is Powys Council, and that the Corporate Safeguarding Group is satisfied with processing arrangements.

We noted that the DBS Policy has recently been reviewed and updated, and is awaiting final agreement. We asked about DBS requirement criteria, and the challenge it provides for organisations, and noted an understandably cautious approach within the Council around who should have a DBS check. The Committee would appreciate information about the rules / guidance and expectations around what staff across the Council would require a DBS check and what level of check, to better understand things.

Advocacy

You reported that there is work on promoting collaborative practice at the front door, within frontline teams and across all Council services. This work contributes to 'Safe Voice' aims of placing the adult / child firmly at the centre of their concern, and engaged with decisions in their own best interests, whether directly or through advocacy.

We noted that both Child & Family and Adult Services are improving the Council's advocacy offer made to vulnerable children, adults and their families, who can now access Independent Professional Advocacy to help ensure that they are fully informed and engaged in decisions about their care and support and that plans are in their best interests and with regard to safety. For the year ahead the report stated intention to continue development of advocacy offer and independent support to promote citizen rights and best interest decision within safeguarding and deprivation of liberty safeguards.

The Committee noted that advocacy arrangements within Child & Family Services were well established nationally and embedded locally / regionally and under regular review. It was more challenging to develop and expand an all-encompassing Adult Advocacy Service in a similar fashion to Child & Family Services, given the numbers of people many of which would have capacity to advocate for themselves or through carers, but was clearly needed for people in certain circumstances, e.g., deprivation of liberty, and would be commissioned for those individuals. You talked about other approaches and potential opportunities through co-production for people's voices to be heard, aside from formal independent advocacy.

Work for the Year Ahead

We look forward to next year's Annual Report when we can follow up on these issues. We can also follow up on work you have identified within this year's report for the year ahead:

Safe Employment

- To complete work on updating and finalising policies relating to recruitment and selection, DBS checks and volunteers, to reflect the latest corporate safeguarding policy
- To ensure corporate safeguarding policy, responsibilities and expectations are reflected in all work commissioned or contracted on the Council's behalf

Safe Workforce

- Development of management information: employee / elected member compliance in completion of mandatory training
- Ensure there are named safeguarding officers in each service area, and representation at the Corporate Safeguarding Group meetings
- Continue roll out of revised mandatory training across Council through hybrid programme of e-learning, virtual and face to face options to meet diverse needs of service areas and employees
- To work with Fusion team to ensure safe and accurate transfer of current staff records and to look at solutions to tackle reporting issues

Safe Practice

- To implement quality assurance frameworks within child and family and adult services
- To undertake next self-assessment (Section 135 audit) cycle, involving leads from all Council Departments

Safe Partnerships

- To continue to embed corporate safeguarding policy procedures into how we work with suppliers in carrying out checks, specifying contracts, building awareness in the wider workforce and contract monitoring

Safe Voice

- Continued development of advocacy offer and independent support to promote citizen rights and best interest decision within safeguarding and deprivation of liberty safeguards
- Working within families, communities, and schools to promote safeguarding awareness

Safe Performance:

- To review performance framework for corporate safeguarding and agree set of measures for 2023/24

We noted that a Corporate Safeguarding Working Group has been set up to ensure that the work programme keeps moving forward and operates within timescales – with named safeguarding lead working closely together to drive improvements in all seven of the key areas - and is reporting progress to the Corporate Safeguarding Group which is chaired by the you, as lead Cabinet Member, and the Director of Social Services.

Your Response

Overall, the Committee thanked you and lead officers for a very good report and were pleased to see the progress made. We commend the continuing efforts of the Corporate Safeguarding Group across the Council to make safeguarding everyone's business – not just a matter for Social Services and Education.

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful and would welcome comments on any of the issues raised within. Specifically, we would appreciate information about the criteria for DBS checks as stated. We also asked for confirmation whether the recent Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding has been reported (or is due to be reported) to the Governance & Audit Committee, otherwise would appreciate sight of the report. Please provide copy with your response, as appropriate.

Please provide your response to these, and any other comments about our letter by 25 January. We will then publish both letters in the agenda of the next available Committee meeting.

We will make sure that consideration of the next Annual Report is scheduled into the Scrutiny Programme Committee's work plan for 2023/24.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk

Please ask for: Councillor Louise Gibbard
Direct Line: 01792 636141
E-Mail: ollr.louise.gibbard@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: LG/WN
Your Ref:
Date: 6th January 2023

Dear Councillor Black

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2022, Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2021/22 - Response to Feedback

Thank you for your letter dated 4th January 2022, which was your committee's response to the annual report that myself and Officers presented on 14th November 2022, during, as the Chair noted, National Safeguarding Week.

Presenting the annual report to the Committee, was a valuable opportunity to pause and reflect on how collectively we are working in the interests of the most vulnerable in our communities. How we have come through the challenges of the pandemic, and we are now faced with deep social impacts of the emerging cost of living crisis.

I am pleased to note that the Committee acknowledges the quality of the report, and the work programme taking place to achieve corporate safeguarding. As a Council, we can be proud not only of our ambition, and efforts in taking forward a strategic, whole system approach to safeguarding our most vulnerable children and adults. We can also be proud of our work, reflected in the annual report's many positive examples of how we are continually striving to improve our support to citizens, families, and communities.

The report also reminds us that as public officials and officers we have an individual duty to report concerns, where we are alerted to, or are ourselves concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult.

We are facing unprecedented times, and many more families are experiencing pressures just to survive, yet the Council remains focused on improving prevention and our wellbeing offer through an excellent range of services such as early help and local area coordination.

As Cabinet Member for care services, I believe it is vital that people are listened to, that public services focus on what matters most, and by giving an informed, compassionate, and fair response.

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In December, Swansea was declared as Wales's first Human Rights City, reflecting our ambition, and vision of a vibrant, diverse, fair, and safe communities built on the foundations of universal human rights. I believe that achieving our ambition will require the positive culture and leadership so well demonstrated within the Council's approach to corporate safeguarding.

Firstly, I was pleased that the report and the Committee's questions, generated such a supportive, yet challenging discussion. Secondly, I welcome your comments on the report's highlights, and work programme for the year ahead:

- how we work with contractors and suppliers so that they fully embrace our values and awareness of safeguarding issues.
- how we maintain oversight of compliance in staff undertaking mandatory training
- how we ensure that all necessary work roles and responsibilities are subject to the right level of DBS checks
- as I have mentioned above that through our 'Safe Voice' approach, we are working with the vulnerable person in mind, at the centre of everything we do and fully engaged with decisions that impact their lives and striving to further develop our advocacy offer.

As a Council, we clearly still have work as lots of areas of our business impact on the lives of many, and in particular those most vulnerable.

In answer to the additional matters raised, I would make the following comments:

1. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

As you noted, Council Officers have prepared the final draft of a revised Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) policy, and wider consultation is underway. This updated policy will contain full detail on how to apply criteria for carrying out DBS checks, and how to risk assess whether a position needs a DBS check.

Here is a link to the national tool the Council currently uses to apply DBS criteria:

[Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-out-which-dbs-check-is-right-for-your-employee)

2. Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding

I can confirm that the Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding audit was completed in September 2022, and this gave a High Assurance rating. A brief summary of the results, though not the whole report, were included in the Q2 Monitoring Report presented to the Governance & Audit Committee in November 2022. I have arranged for the full report to be made available, and this will be forwarded alongside this letter.

Page 3

I trust my responses address the issues raised, and I look forward to presenting the next Annual Report 2022/23, as part of the Committee's work plan in 2023/24.

Yours Sincerely,



Cllr Louise Gibbard

Cynghorydd / Councillor Louise Gibbard Dyfnant a Chilâ
Cyd-aelod y Cabinet dros Gwasanaethau Gofal
Cabinet Member Care Services



Final Internal Audit Report

Social Services

Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An audit has been carried out of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.
- 1.2 Safeguarding is one of the Council's Corporate Priorities, and the safeguarding of both vulnerable children and adults is seen as one of the most important functions that the council is required to deliver.
- 1.3 The scope of the review covered the following areas:
 - Corporate Policy Development
 - Corporate Safeguarding Group
 - Staff Training
 - West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board
 - S135 Self-Assessment Questionnaires
 - Performance Monitoring
- 1.4 The objectives of the audit were to ensure that the Council's Safeguarding arrangements are robust and are subject to regular monitoring and review.
- 1.5 The findings arising from this review and the audit opinion are stated in the report below. The recommendations made to address the findings are included within the attached Management Action Plan.

2 Work Done / Findings

2.1 Corporate Policy

- 2.1.1 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been complied to protect the most vulnerable people in the community. It is a statement of corporate expectations, a record of policy commitments and gives detail on the arrangements in respect of safeguarding actions to be taken.
- 2.1.2 The Policy sets out how the City and County of Swansea will meet its statutory obligations towards the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.
- 2.1.3 The Policy was reviewed, and it was found that it had last been updated in June 2022. We were informed that it is revised when required by the Social Services Strategy & Performance Improvement Officer and further analysis highlighted that the roles and responsibilities of responsible officers were clearly defined.

2.2 Corporate Safeguarding Group

- 2.2.1 It was confirmed that the Corporate Safeguarding Group meets on a quarterly basis. This group is co-chaired by the Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well, and by the Director of Social Services.
- 2.2.2 It is a management and leadership group which oversees the implementation of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. The group provides 'safe governance' as set out in the Council's Policy, and through an agreed work programme aims to ensure that all Council services are operating effectively in accordance with the Corporate Policy.
- 2.2.3 Task Groups have been set up to deliver the seven key themes set out in the Corporate Policy and these are headed by Safeguarding Leads from within Social Services who report back to the Group.
- 2.2.4 The remaining membership of the Corporate Safeguarding Group is made-up of designated lead managers from other services across the Council.
- 2.2.5 An annual report is prepared by the Group and it was established that the report for 2020/21 was presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 19 October 2021, and to the Audit & Governance Committee on 9 November 2021.

2.3 Training

- 2.3.1 The Council's Safeguarding training includes face-to-face, e-learning and class based training to meet the needs of the whole workforce, with officers being required to carry out mandatory training courses every three years.
- 2.3.2 The learning available to employees includes:
 - a) e-Learning
 - "Safeguarding Adults": this course looks at different elements that contribute to keeping vulnerable adults safe, and how to recognise and report concerns.
 - "Safeguarding and Protection of Children": this course helps staff learn how to recognise when a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect and what can be done to help.
 - b) Training Levels 1 to 3 in accordance with national guidance for officers with role specific requirements within Social Services.
 - c) Named Safeguarding Lead training. This programme enables service area Safeguarding Leads to gain knowledge for their own needs, and which can also be passed on to other officers in their service.
 - d) Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). The training provided to employees is one of the key mechanisms for delivering the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015. As part of this act, the Council has a duty to train all of its workforce and elected members. The Council strives to meet this target with a combination e-learning and face-to-face sessions.

e) Elected Members. The Council aims to ensure all elected members complete the eLearning awareness training on Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, and VAWDASV. There is an expectation is that each Councillor completes this training within each electoral cycle.

2.3.3 Service Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff complete the Council's mandatory training, and for keeping a record of its completion. Reminders regarding the completion of staff training should be issued periodically by the Safeguarding lead in each service.

2.3.4 Absolute numbers of staff who have completed training are no longer recorded centrally due to the turnover of employees across the Council, and due to variances in how staff training was being recorded in different services and schools. This was leading to inconsistencies in the reporting of completion figures for the Council as a whole.

2.3.5 It is planned that the development of the new Oracle Fusion system will include the ability to record the Safeguarding training undertaken by each employee. This will enable accurate records and statistics on the completion of Safeguarding training to be available for all services of the Council.

2.4 West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board

2.4.1 The West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board (WGSB) promotes and supports multi-agency safeguarding for Children and Adults across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. It is a statutory mechanism for agreeing how organisations will co-operate to safeguard the welfare of children and adults living in the region.

2.4.2 The Board is responsible for agreeing on how different services and professional groups should co-operate to safeguard children and adults. Its members include Swansea Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, South Wales Police and a number of other public bodies and charities.

2.4.3 The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group provides updates to the West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board and the following Council officers are members of the Board:

- Director of Social Services
- Head of Adult Services
- Head of Child & Family Services
- Principal Officer for Safeguarding and Performance Quality
- Head of achievement and Partnership

2.4.4 The Board publishes an Annual Plan with its priorities for the year and all partners have shared accountability for its implementation.

2.4.5 There are several sub-groups and membership, with structures regularly being reviewed and updated. Work plans for the sub-groups are aligned with the Annual Plan and include strategic priorities, the actions to achieve these, and success measures to be used to monitor effectiveness. The work plans are regularly reviewed and amended through the year and reports outlining progress are presented to the Board on a quarterly basis.

2.4.6 Outcomes for the year are subsequently included in an annual report, and the most recent West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board annual report published was for 2020-21.

2.5 S135 Audit

- 2.5.1 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group has carried out annual safeguarding self-assessment audits in 2020/21 and 2021/22 in order to satisfy the requirements of Section 135 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
- 2.5.2 It was confirmed with officers that the 2022/23 exercise was underway at the time this internal audit was being carried out.
- 2.5.3 A questionnaire is sent to each of the Council's service areas and satisfactory responses provide the Group with assurance that the Council's safeguarding procedures are sufficiently robust.
- 2.5.4 It was noted that while responses had been received from most service areas across the Council, returned questionnaires had not been received from Highways & Transportation, Legal, Communications & Marketing and Digital & Customer Services.
- 2.5.5 The findings from this exercise are presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group and are included in its annual report. Any findings are also reported to the West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board on an exception basis.

2.6 Monitoring of Performance

- 2.6.1 Headline performance reports in relation to adults and children are presented at Social Services P&FM meetings, which are chaired by the Director of Social Services.
- 2.6.2 Safeguarding performance is also one of the key performance indicators (KPI's) which are reported to the Corporate Management Team on a quarterly basis.
- 2.6.3 There are regular updates to both the Adults and the Child & Family Scrutiny Performance Panels, and the Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report is reported to the Scrutiny Programme Committee and the Governance & Audit Committee annually (see 2.2.5).
- 2.6.4 Safeguarding is also included in the Director of Social Services' Annual Report which is presented to the Council.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Internal Audit Section operates a system of Assurance Levels which gives a formal opinion of the achievement of the service's/system's control objectives. The Assurance Levels vary over four categories: 'High', 'Substantial', 'Moderate' and 'Limited'.
- 3.2 Recommendations arising from this review are detailed in the attached Management Action Plan. Each recommendation has been prioritised according to perceived risk – High, Medium, Low and Good Practice. The overall Assurance Level is based on the recommendations made in the report.
- 3.3 The description of each type of recommendation, and the basis for each of the Assurance Levels is noted in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Based on the audit testing undertaken, it was found within the scope of our review that almost all of the procedures were operating satisfactorily.
- 3.5 As a result, an Assurance Level of “**High**” has been given. This indicates that there is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve the system objectives and the controls are being consistently applied.
- 3.6 This audit was conducted in conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Classification of Audit Recommendations

Recommendation	Description
High Risk	Action by the client that we consider essential to ensure that the service / system is not exposed to major risks .
Medium Risk	Action by the client that we consider necessary to ensure that the service / system is not exposed to significant risks .
Low Risk	Action by the client that we consider advisable to ensure that the service / system is not exposed to minor risks .
Good Practice	Action by the client that we consider no risks exist but would result in better quality, value for money etc.

Audit Assurance Levels

Assurance Level	Basis	Description
High Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are not High or Medium Risk. Any recommendations are mainly Good Practice with few Low Risk recommendations.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve the system objectives and the controls are being consistently applied.
Substantial Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are not High Risk. Occasional Medium Risk recommendations allowed provided all others are Low Risk or Good Practice.	There is a sound system of internal control but there is some scope for improvement as the ineffective controls may put the system objectives at risk.
Moderate Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are at least Medium Risk.	The ineffective controls represent a significant risk to the achievement of system objectives.
Limited Assurance	Recommendations for ineffective controls affecting the material areas of the service are High Risk.	The ineffective controls represent unacceptable risk to the achievement of the system objectives.

**CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA
MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN
CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING 2022/23**

REPORT REF	RECOMMENDATION	CLASS	AGREED ACTION/ COMMENTS	RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	IMPLEMENTATION DATE
Training					
2.3.5	Work should continue to develop the recording of all employee Safeguarding training on the Council's new Oracle Fusion system.	LR	This is a priority action in the Corporate Safeguarding Group and work is currently underway to ensure that safeguarding training is being accurately recorded in all areas.	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Spring 23
Self-Assessment Questionnaires					
2.5.4	All services should be required to return their self-assessment questionnaires	LR	This will be reviewed at the Corporate Safeguarding Group where membership and representation will be reviewed.	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Spring 23

Agenda Item 9



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Follow Up: Scrutiny Working Group – Bus Services

Purpose:	This report provides background and advice to the Committee in following up on the Scrutiny Working Group which looked at issues relating to Bus Services. Lead Cabinet Member / officers have been asked to report on progress since the Working Group, including issues raised by the Working Group.
Content:	<p>The Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure, Councillor Andrew Stevens, has provided a report which is appended for questions and discussion.</p> <p>The Committee is provided with the correspondence between the Working Group and Cabinet Member following its meetings which contain the views / concerns of Scrutiny councillors. The Committee should follow up on agreed action in response to any Working Group suggestions for improvement.</p>
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the information provided, ask questions, and make comments and recommendations as necessary.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Andrew Stevens (Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure)
Lead Officers:	Mark Wade, Director of Place Stuart Davies, Head of Highways & Transportation
Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee has overall responsibility for the Scrutiny Work Programme. Each year, the Work Programme includes several 'one-off' topic-based Scrutiny Working Groups to look at specific issues of concern. These are usually set up as single meetings

to call in relevant Cabinet Member(s), officers, and other relevant persons, to examine the issue and feedback views and recommendations to the Cabinet Member(s). As such the Committee takes responsibility for following up on Working Groups, to check on progress with the topic / issue(s) and response to any specific suggestions / recommendations made and agreed action coming out of the Scrutiny session.

2. Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group

- 2.1 The Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group originally met on 7 July 2021 to discuss issues including bus network coverage and levels of service, community transport provision and integration with other forms of transport. The Working Group met with the then relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Mark Thomas, and Senior Officers. Representatives of First Cymru and Cardiff Bus also participated to give their perspective on things. The Working Group was given the opportunity to meet again by the Committee, and a second meeting took place on 14 March 2022 to conclude the Working Group's activity. It has now been 18 months since the Scrutiny Working Group, and therefore the Committee should follow up on progress on the issue(s) and action following any suggestions coming out of the Scrutiny session and find out how things have progressed / developed.
- 2.2 Main Working Group Findings: The Working Group highlighted the need for regular bus services to all areas of Swansea to reduce isolation and start a shift away from car use to using public transport. It emphasised the importance of bus companies and public transport more generally contributing to carbon emission reduction. The Working Group recommended that regular meetings are held between Councillors and First Cymru to raise and discuss issues and felt it was very important for the Authority and bus companies to listen to people who currently do not use buses in Swansea, as well as people who do, to help shape current and future bus services. The importance of joining up bus and rail times so services are more coordinated and the introduction of cross ticketing between bus and rail were also issues emphasised. The further meeting in March 2022 enabled discussion on developments including a trial of hydrogen buses, improvements to bus shelters, and the possibility of Council playing a bigger role in providing bus services. Councillors were pleased to hear about various projects and improvements planned, though felt that public dissatisfaction with services and their reliability remained a big issue.
- 2.3 The correspondence between the Working Group and Cabinet Member following these two meetings is **attached**, showing the range of issues that were discussed, feedback and concerns, and Cabinet Member's response provided at the time.

2.4 Link to the two Scrutiny Working Group meetings:

7 Jul 2021

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=701&MIId=9507&Ver=4&LLL=0>

14 Mar 2022 -

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=701&MIId=10680&Ver=4&LLL=0>

2.5 Current Scrutiny Councillors who participated in the Working Group: Lyndon Jones (Convener), Chris Holley, Lynda James, Paul Lloyd, Cheryl Philpott, and Mike White.

2.6 By carrying out a follow up the Committee can then close off this Scrutiny activity and work, as appropriate.

3. Cabinet Member Report

3.1 The current lead Cabinet Member, Councillor Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure, has provided a report on progress, in the context of the Scrutiny activity, on Bus Services. See ***attached***.

3.2 Lead officer(s) will be present to assist and facilitate the discussion. Bev Fowles, Director of South Wales Transport / Vice-Chair of Coach and Bus Association Cymru, has also been invited along by officers to give the Committee a perspective on things from a local SME bus service operator, particularly in terms of Welsh Government proposed reform / legislation on how bus services are provided in the future, including franchising local bus services. Coach and Bus Association Cymru is a trade association representing the interest of smaller bus operators in Wales.

3.3 The Committee will hear from the Cabinet Member / officers before questions and discussion. At the conclusion of the session the Committee may wish to write to the Cabinet Member with any observations, views and recommendations arising from the follow up discussion.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications from this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

- Letter correspondence between the Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group and Cabinet Member: Letters dated 9 August 2021; 17 August 2021; 8 April 2022; and 27 April 2022
- Cabinet Member Report on Bus Services



To:

**Councillor Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for Environment
Enhancement and Infrastructure
Management**

BY EMAIL

CC Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Scrutiny Office
Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrchol:*

01792 637314

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

*Date
Dyddiad:*

09 August 2021

Summary: This is a letter from the Bus Services Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management following the meeting of the Working Group on 07 July 2021. It is about bus services in Swansea.

Dear Cllr Thomas

The Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group met on 07 July 2021 to look at bus network coverage and levels of service, community transport provision and integration with other forms of transport etc.

This letter provides you with feedback from that meeting.

We would like to thank you, Stuart Davies and Cath Swain for attending to present the report and answer questions. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We would also like to thank Jane Reakes-Davies of First Cymru, Cllr Christopher Lay and Cllr Gavin Hill-John of Cardiff Bus for taking the time to attend the meeting and present to the Group. We are very grateful for their engagement and input.

Public Question Time

The following questions were received from members of the public:

QUESTION 1:

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

In the 2011 Census, Swansea had the lowest proportion of short journeys made by public transport in the whole of the UK. We have a bus network that does little more than take people to a shopping mall that has increasingly few shops, which less and less want to go to. It costs £2 to park in the city centre all day yet costs £5 for 1 person to go there by bus. It costs £4 to park in Mumbles for 3 hrs, yet costs £5 for 1 person to go there by bus.

Most of the city does not have direct bus services to the train station or the Liberty Stadium on match days. We need direct bus services that link different parts of the city. We need to move away from the idea that all buses must go to the Quadrant.

Every year since 1978, the Netherlands has carried out a nation travel survey. Citizens are asked to record each journey they take, and this information is used to help ensure viable alternatives to travelling by car are provided.

Rather than focusing on the experience of bus users, the Council should switch its focus to the vast majority who are not bus users, and determine what changes are required for more people to choose public transport. We need the Council to conduct a study to assess what services residents actually need, and to commit to providing competitive alternatives to car travel, whilst setting out targets to increase the number of people using buses (and active travel) and targets to reduce the number of car journeys on our roads.

RESPONSE -

Cabinet Member:

“Bus services into city centre run on a commercial basis. They are not there just to take people into the shops. They are also used for getting to work etc.

The comparison of parking charges is a bit unfair as the prices quoted are because of offers on at the moment with car parking. This is a temporary measure to aid recovery. It is the same for the offer in Mumbles; it is a temporary measure. Therefore, it is not a true comparison to compare with bus journeys.

Buses to the Liberty Stadium – bus companies run buses predominantly where demand is as they are a commercial operation.

With regards the nationwide survey carried out in the Netherlands, I am not saying this is something we cannot or should not do. The current journeys carried out would give us a road map of the type of journeys that people want to make.

Focussing on bus users, we have probably got the most funding of any local authority in Wales, to improve and increase our active travel routes throughout and across Swansea for that very purpose. We need to make a modal shift from total reliance on cars into other forms of transport – active travel and bus services are included in that. It is something we intend to do despite opposition in some quarters. It will future proof us. In order to get people out of cars we need to find the alternative to that.

Eighty percent of bus services in Swansea are run by commercial companies. We as an Authority have continued to maintain a subsidy for bus services to subsidise routes that are not viable on a commercial basis.”

Managing Director, First Cymru:

“The cost in the illustration is not correct. Many incentives are provided. This is the worst case scenario.

Many services go across the City. For example, Service 25 Blaen Y Maes – City, stops at the train station and the Kingsway. Some stops can get congested so we cannot for example, run all buses through the train station.

It would be interesting to understand the concern more from the person who asked the question for specifics about where they are travelling from.

In terms of commuters, we carry a lot of retail workers as well as people in the caring industry. One main service is from Singleton Hospital to Morriston Hospital. There are a number of services that do not directly go into the Quadrant for shopping purposes.

We have very sophisticated software that shows the use of bus stops across the City. Happy to share with the working group more information about where people are travelling in the City, which may help you on that position.

Swansea is one of the most congested cities I have seen in Wales. Given the Welsh Government’s agenda on climate change, we do all need to take responsibility for trying to move people into public transport.

The one challenge we have as an industry, is that it has diminished. The number of people who are now travelling by bus has reduced dramatically. Every decade we see a diminishing market, particularly amongst the younger generation many of whom have their own vehicles.

To deal with the climate change agenda a modal shift is required. We do all we can to contribute by improving our vehicles, getting the most efficient vehicles and using technology on our vehicles to improve the climate agenda, but there is a huge risk in Wales as we haven’t had investment like other places. We need to move forward more progressively in my opinion.”

Head of Highways and Transportation:

“There is a lot of ongoing work as an Authority and regionally looking at the Metro with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales, and there is a strong commitment in terms of modal shift to high quality public transport. There is a lot of development going on to see how we can get proper integration between modes of transport, ticketing etc.

We work with First Cymru to look at challenges on the network on a regular basis.

In terms of active travel, the Authority has got an extremely strong commitment. It is important that everyone gets behind that sort of move. For example, the Pentre Road Bridge and Gowerton, we are trying to provide a safe place for everyone to use but

have had resistance to this. We need to change hearts and minds to get support behind schemes.”

QUESTION 2: (this question was raised by 4 members of the public)

Re Bishopston Bus Service. No14: Pennard to Swansea

This is our ONLY bus with direct link to Swansea.

It is important that it is regular and if late it does not miss coming through Bishopston and Murton. (I was waiting in Bishopston recently No bus appeared, but my friend was able to pick the bus up on the Mayals which was on time. Obviously driver decided NOT to take in the Bishopston loop).

We should have an hourly service which takes in the hospital on all journeys, is reliable and is as punctual as possible.

RESPONSE –

Managing Director, First Cymru:

“We have had a lot of feedback on this route. The basics that should be expected are that it should be on time and would not be expected to miss bits of routes out. Be interesting to have the full details on this question (regarding the bus missing out Bishopston) to fully investigate this concern.

It is one of the services that is not covering its costs of drivers’ time let alone cost of vehicle, fuel and maintenance. That is not even looking at the potential for profit. We either need to look at increasing patronage of the vehicle or look at how we can offer this service in a different way. There are many examples of us being innovative. We would like to look at this service in a little more detail and look at whether the service bus in its current guise is the best solution. We are committed to work with the Local Authority to look at alternative solutions to that particular proposition and see if we can improve the offering for the customer that meets the demand and cost implications to the company.”

Working Group Convener:

“Happy to meet with First Cymru about this outside of the meeting.”

Cabinet Member:

“This is a commercial route so it is not directly to do with us but we will try to meet with First Cymru and try to find a way forward.”

Councillor for Pennard:

“If there are any meetings about Number 14 can I be included.”

“Many people are giving up using the bus because the timetable is confusing. So whatever we use needs to be regular.”

Managing Director, First Cymru:

“We are currently carrying about 130 passengers per day on this service. Over the last 18 months the service has not been regular due to Covid.

We are determined we will improve communication to customers when we come out of this. Growing customer numbers on all our services is important to me.”

Following Public Question time, Jane Reakes-Davies presented an overview of First Cymru to the Working Group. Following this Cllr Christopher Lay and Cllr Gavin Hill-John similarly presented an overview of Cardiff Bus including Who they were, How it works, challenges, benefits and the future.

As the Cabinet Member, you presented the Bus Services Report and confirmed that the Local Authority is able to consider taking on a route through a subsidised method if a commercial operator is unable to. The Local Authority also supports community transport through subsidised methods. You also confirmed that currently the Local Authority is unable to run its own bus services.

Members of the Working Group raised a number of questions that First Cymru, Cardiff Bus, yourself and officers responded too.

The following main issues were discussed:

We stated the importance of getting a regular bus service to all areas to tackle residents' isolation. People who have given up driving need to be able to access public transport otherwise they become prisoners in their own home.

We felt funding for active travel has been used to make it easier for people to cycle or walk, but not everyone is able to do this and that accessibility has to be the main point, for the elderly etc.

We felt strongly that buses are an important service and that if we are going to have a modal change, public transport has to be the backbone of what we are going to do.

We felt that more dialogue is needed between councillors and bus companies, particularly First Cymru, to discuss where changes can be made for the benefit of residents of Swansea and also help bus companies to increase passenger numbers.

We also felt that there is a need ask why people are not catching buses and why numbers are diminishing and equally and importantly there is a need to listen to local knowledge. We gave the example that if we are looking to support Council policy we should be looking to support local shopping district centres, for example in Sketty, the Service 29 bus does not go through the local shopping centre. Jane Reakes-Davies of First Cymru confirmed she is keen to talk to relevant councillors and officers about some services, particularly Service 14 and 29 and about growing patronage.

The Chairman of Cardiff Bus, Cllr Christopher Lay stated that we need to publicise to our customers what we are doing right with public transport in Swansea, for example, how quickly you can get into the City Centre by bus in peak times compared to a car.

You agreed that we do not publicise the benefits of taking the bus often enough and added that we also need to change the perceptions of the public.

We queried how First Cymru works out its price when tendering to the Council for open tender subsidised routes. First Cymru confirmed that when submitting a tender to the Local Authority they look at the cost of that particular service, based on the driver, the vehicle, number of driving hours, fuel and maintenance costs etc.

We queried how Cardiff Bus set their fares. It was confirmed that it is done on a commercial basis. They still have to be in the black and have to charge fairly. They look at their competitor's prices and look at their own internal costs and come up with a price. They are the dominant operator in Cardiff but not the only operator. They have a number of competitors who tend to operate on the more profitable routes and Cardiff Bus compares its prices to them.

We raised the issue of air quality. We were pleased to hear that First Cymru is committed to becoming a clean air operator by 2035 and to cease all diesel forms from 2025. We were also impressed to hear that Cardiff Bus has made a significant investment in electric buses and would like to see this in Swansea as soon as possible. First Cymru stated that some electric vehicles, in other parts of Wales, had been funded by a Department of Transport fund for areas defined as clean air zones (including Cardiff). However, there are not any of these areas within First Cymru's operating area, which means they have not been able to bid for such vehicles. Officers stated with regard to the Metro, the Authority is working closely with the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to secure funding for a number of improvements, and that low emission vehicles (whether electric or hydrogen) is very high on the agenda.

We stated that in some places, like Exeter, buses switch off engines when stopping at red traffic lights until lights go green. We queried with First Cymru if this is something they have thought about and are prepared to introduce, as from an emissions point of view it would be a tremendous step in the right direction. First Cymru stated they have a number of vehicles that have stop-start technology, which reduces idling. In terms of switching engines off, they stated they would need to speak to engineering colleagues outside of the meeting, as it takes some time for buses to re-start, and would then provide members with a full response.

We asked First Cymru for examples of ticket incentives that they offer. First Cymru responded that for daily tickets, for example, if you buy five tickets in advance you get discount via a mobile app. They do not currently have off peak offers. We felt incentives should be available via other means not just via the app. First Cymru stated they are open minded to looking at ticketing offers.

We raised the issue of cross-ticketing and queried why tickets cannot be accepted by all operators. First Cymru responded that this is high up the agenda for Welsh Government and Transport for Wales. They stated that there are currently no clear systems that all operators use. Currently all ticket machines are very different so it is not possible to split out the revenue. We heard Transport for Wales are keen to

improve the offering for all bus companies to have consistent ticket machines and be able to have multi-operator and integrated transport ticketing between bus and rail. First Cymru believe this is something that will be introduced as part of bus reform.

We asked First Cymru if they will consider doing circular routes in Swansea. First Cymru responded saying they are keen to understand more about this and it would need to be discussed outside of the meeting. They stated they are happy to hear representations and look at how they can build this into the network if it will deliver an improved patronage.

We queried the difference in journey cost, for the same length of journey, in Cardiff and Swansea. We were informed this is difficult to answer as all areas offer different incentives. However, in terms of the daily ticketing offer, it is 60p cheaper in Swansea than Cardiff.

We felt there are a number of areas where the bus services provided can be maximised, for example patronage. We felt we had made such suggestions to First Cymru in the past but that nothing had been done about it. We also felt that there is no joined up thinking between bus and train times and asked if the Authority can examine where services can be coordinated, for example, transport hubs and cross-ticketing for rail-bus. First Cymru stated that this is a frustration of theirs and that they have worked with train companies to align services but then timetables have changed. They informed the Group that they have 60 buses that go past the main train station in High Street every hour and that many of the smaller stations do not have the infrastructure to turn buses safely. They added that where they had seen transport hubs introduced, for example Port Talbot it had not attracted the volume of people to board or alight the bus that they expected. You added that the Authority has received funding from the Welsh Government for feasibility studies to look at hubs in Pontarddulais and Gowerton to make it more accessible for buses to get down to the station.

First Cymru added that Transport for Wales is committed to having this integrated travel system and First Cymru will do everything it can to work with them on this agenda going forward. You and the Vice Chair of Cardiff Bus agreed that a holistic approach across Wales with Transport for Wales is the way forward and you are hopeful for change. Officers stated that integration is the cornerstone of what the Metro is trying to achieve, to have bikes and walking routes etc at the hubs and all these things will be progressed by the Metro.

Cllr Gavin Hill-John of Cardiff Bus suggested to us that if we really want to see a change to bus services in Swansea, we really need to encourage the Authority to work with First Cymru to move buses around the City as easily as possible and improve the infrastructure, as to grow patronage there is a need to increase reliability. Officers stated that Swansea does have a lane bus system, which is there to give priority through junctions at congestion hot spots and that a lot of money is being invested to improve reliability.

Working Group Members then discussed progress and made the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. We would like to give our thanks to all bus drivers and personnel who have carried on working through the pandemic carrying key workers to their jobs. They have played a vital role.
2. We wish to emphasise the importance of bus companies and public transport more generally contributing to carbon emission reduction. We are expecting our bus companies to move quickly and radically away from fossil fuels. We were told First Cymru would be a clean air operator by 2035. Can they try and move quicker and deliver this by 2030, so they are making a contribution in line with Swansea Council's commitment to being net zero by 2030.
3. We feel that there needs to be a regular bus services to all areas of Swansea. This is particularly important to reduce isolation and start a shift away from car use to using public transport.
4. We recommend that regular meetings are held between Members and First Cymru to raise and discuss issues such as changes to routes, timetables, increasing patronage etc and would ask that this is arranged.
5. If there is going to be a modal change, we feel elected Members need to be involved in discussions on how the Authority is going to do this. We would like your assurance on this.
6. We feel it is very important for the Authority and bus companies to listen to people who currently do not use buses in Swansea, as well as people who do, to help shape current and future bus services.
7. We would like to see bus companies offering more incentives for regular travel and offering incentives in a number of forms not just via mobile apps.
8. We feel that there is no joining up between bus and rail times, and ask that the Authority examine where services can be co-ordinated. We were pleased to hear that two feasibility studies are taking place to look at transport hubs in two areas of Swansea but a lot more needs to be done.
9. We wish to emphasise the importance of cross ticketing being introduced between bus operators and bus and rail for the convenience of the residents of Swansea and to increase patronage. We would like assurance that the Authority is doing all it can to move the travel reform agenda forward with the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales as quickly as possible.
10. We agree with the suggestion by Cardiff Bus that the Authority and First Cymru work together to move buses around the City as easily as possible, to help improve reliability. As there are only a few ways in and out of Swansea,

congestion points are always going to be an issue. We feel to help overcome this that bus lanes will need to be improved.

11. We are concerned that a scrutiny committee produced a report around 2012/13 which went into many of the same problems and came up with the same conclusions as this Working Group but sadly no action was taken. We hope that the Authority will now listen to our concerns and work towards achieving solutions.

12. We will be recommending to the Scrutiny Programme Committee that a follow up meeting of this Working Group is held in six months, to see what changes/improvements have been made and following it decide if the Working Group need to meet again six months after that. We believe that it is vitally important that we see positive changes taking place to benefit Swansea residents.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We are interested in hearing your thoughts about the issues raised and would ask that you respond to the points in our conclusions by 30 August 2021.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES
CONVENER, BUS SERVICES SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP
CLLR.LYNDON.JONES@SWANSEA.GOV.UK

Cllr. Jones,
Convener of the Bus Services Scrutiny
Working Group

(By email)

Please ask for: Councillor Mark Thomas
Direct Line: 01792 63 6926
E-Mail: cllr.mark.thomas@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: MT/JG
Your Ref:
Date: 17 August 2021

Dear Cllr Jones,

**Re: - Convener's letter to Cabinet Member - Scrutiny Working Group Bus Services
7 July 2021.**

Thank you for your feedback from the Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group on 7 July 2021. I note your recommendations and conclusions and would provide the following comments in response to the points raised.

1. Thank you for recognising the efforts of drivers and personnel, with which we agree and we will be sure to pass that on.

2. First Cymru outlined their intention to be a clean air operator by 2035. The Welsh Government has a target of 2050 for net zero carbon emissions and in the New Wales Transport Strategy (2021) they set out their plans to achieve this which include reducing the need to travel by encouraging home working and the provision of local services, making public transport more attractive and promoting active travel. They also intend to roll out the technology and infrastructure to deliver ultra-low emission buses and to work with bus providers to help deliver these priorities.

As part of First Group, First Cymru's move to low emission vehicles will be part of a wider programme which will be determined by priority decisions made by the Group. However, the Welsh Government has indicated that it intends to work with the bus groups to encourage investment in their Welsh services, with longer-term funding horizons.

Swansea Council submitted a bid to the Welsh Government this year for Local Transport Funding to investigate the possibility of improving a strategic bus corridor as part of the S W Wales Metro programme. This bid was successful and feasibility studies are underway which include the possibility of introducing alternative fuelled vehicles as part of this scheme in conjunction with First Cymru.

The Council is also working with Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government on a scheme which could see the introduction of hydrogen buses on a network of key services in the Swansea Bay area.

3. The current legislation under which bus services operate puts the primary decisions on when and where bus services are provided with the commercial bus companies. Their decisions are primarily based on how profitable they feel the services will be. The Council's role is to identify where there are gaps in the services provided commercially and if it is felt that there is a social need for a service, then it can fund something to meet that need.

Swansea Council funds numerous bus and community transport services and has shown continued commitment to supporting public transport by maintaining its own revenue support of bus routes at £1.1 million over several years, in addition to the £0.5 million contribution from the Welsh Government in Bus Services Support Grant. Due to budget pressures, a number of other local authorities have reduced or removed their revenue support as it is not a statutory duty for Councils to fund these services.

4. The Council has signed a Quality Partnership Agreement with First Cymru which sets out the actions that both parties propose to improve bus services and make them more attractive and reliable in the Swansea area.

The Quality Partnership Board meets quarterly and comprises of Senior Officers from the Council and First Cymru together with the Cabinet Member and other Councillors who have a specific interest in public transport. The QPB considers bus service matters at a strategic level and receives regular updates from Transport for Wales on changes proposed to the national and regional bus service network.

Where bus companies propose significant changes to services locally, officers from the Transport Team ensure that the local ward Councillors are made aware of these. Regular Public Transport Bulletins have been produced throughout the period of the Covid 19 Pandemic and issued electronically to all Councillors to ensure that all are informed of the frequent, short notice changes that have been taking place to bus services in the past year.

5. / 6. / 7. The current legislation puts the Council in a position where it reacts to changes and decisions about bus services that are made by commercial operators and severely restricts the control that the Council has over bus services in the area. The Welsh Government has recognised this and alongside the new Wales Transport Strategy (2021) is intending to bring forward legislation which will give the public sector more control over local bus services. In future it is intended that much of the strategic transport planning of bus services will be undertaken through CJsCs who will prepare Regional Transport plans. In the meantime Council officers are working with Transport for Wales to develop Regional Bus Networks which will form the basis of the bus services that the Welsh Government will recognise and support in future.

8. Where bus services are funded by the Council, we try wherever possible to provide connections with rail and other bus services. In some cases this is not possible where bus routes are for multiple purposes, for example carry school / college pupils and commuters, and therefore need to arrive at these points at fixed times which may not fit with train times. Train operators set their timetables up well in advance but do not consult with commercial bus operators as a part of this process. The integration of bus

and rail services is one of the aspects that TfW and Welsh Government are looking at as part of the Bus Service Reform and Metro development process.

9. The Welsh Government is keen to develop an all Wales ticketing scheme for bus services which will make it easier and more attractive for customers. Transport for Wales and local authorities are looking at possible ways that this can be taken forward so that interchange between services becomes easier and tickets are accepted across the Country by multiple operators.

Locally operators have their own ticket schemes and promotions but there is no ticket inter availability between different bus companies.

10. The Council has been successful in obtaining funding for bus priority improvements on key corridors in the past and constructed a number of bus lanes. Bus priority is also provided at traffic signals. More recently the Council is implementing Latebus technology at busy signalised road junctions which detects whether a bus service is running late and if it is, gives it priority. If the bus is on time, no adjustment is necessary. This avoids the expense of building dedicated bus lanes and provides a more efficient use of road space.

11. The scrutiny report you refer to was presented to Cabinet on November 12th 2013 and put forward 13 recommendations. Having reviewed the report and Action Plan, I do not accept that no action was taken then, and indeed I believe that all of those recommendations which we could influence were positively addressed, and solutions were achieved.

12. I note that a follow up meeting of the Working Group is proposed in 6 months' time and I will be happy to provide an update as and when required.

Yours sincerely



Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Mark Thomas
Aelod Y Cabinet Dros Gwella'r Amgylchedd a Rheoli Isadeiledd/
Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management



To:

**Councillor Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for Environment
Enhancement and Infrastructure
Management**

BY EMAIL

CC Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Scrutiny Office
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Llinell
Uniongyrchol:*

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scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

*Date
Dyddiad:*

08 April 2022

Summary: This is a letter from the Bus Services Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management following the meeting of the Working Group on 14 March 2022. It is about bus services in Swansea.

Dear Cllr Thomas

The Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group first met on 07 July 2021 to look at bus network coverage and levels of service, community transport provision and integration with other forms of transport etc. It was agreed to hold a follow up meeting in around 6 months to see what changes/improvements have been made and this meeting was held on 14 March 2022. This letter provides you with feedback from this follow up meeting.

We would like to thank you, Stuart Davies and Cath Swain for attending to present the report and answer questions. We appreciate your engagement and input. The Working Group found the meeting informative and interesting.

We noted that Welsh Government is keen to introduce cleaner fuel buses and to move ahead with hydrogen buses and Transport for Wales is doing some investigation into bus travel. We felt there were exciting times ahead with the possible introduction of hydrogen buses. We were informed that the use of hydrogen buses would be a trial project in Swansea Bay area and Pembroke area. Welsh Government is leading on this project and there are many issues to consider including the cost of buses, where they would run, how often, who would own them, safety issues and depot facilities etc. We heard that there could potentially be 50 hydrogen buses in Swansea and that

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

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To receive this information in alternative format, or in Welsh please contact the above

hydrogen buses are currently being used in Aberdeen. We noted that in terms of electric vehicles, they are not carbon free.

We felt that there were issues with bus services in Swansea that need to be resolved in order to increase bus usage ie buses are totally unreliable, bus shelters are not weatherproof and more bus stops with real time information are needed. We were informed that with regards to bus shelters, 112 are currently being removed and replaced but there may be a couple of weeks in between where a stop is left without one. We also heard that a funding bid has been submitted through the ERF Board to fund repair and replacement of the remaining bus shelters. Officers confirmed bus services have been very unreliable as there were many problems during covid - the Travel Line travel information system could not keep up with the changes to timetables and information at bus stops was not updated, and this issue is still continuing due to staffing issues. Officers stated that some bus stops have electronic scheduled timetable information but it is not in real time and other ways to provide real time information is being looked at, such as mobile phone apps. We heard that ideally all bus stops would have real time information but there are capital and ongoing costs, however, it is hoped high usage bus stops will have real time information displayed in the future.

We were interested in why people do not use buses and felt it was a problem of attitude towards bus use and the culture of acquiring a car and queried how attitudes towards bus use could be changed. We heard that there are a number of reasons why people do not use buses and there are many perceptions that have to be got over but when the bus fleet becomes green this is a good opportunity to change perception. We were informed that the Authority has learnt from previous experience what attracts people to use buses and increase patronage – frequency of service, quality of service, information provided, ticketing, journey times. There is also a need to promote things people can do when they travel by bus such as use phones and laptops etc.

We stated that there are trials taking place in North Wales around cross-ticketing and it was something Swansea could be looking at. We heard that all trials are being carried out with full involvement of the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales and an integrated ticketing system is something that could be done relatively quickly as the technological systems are in place already, but the Welsh Government would have to legislate to make it happen. We mentioned that cross-ticketing is already used in London with the Oyster card and Bristol is looking to have a similar scheme, so this model is already being used and it works. Officers confirmed this scheme works in London because services are franchised, and Welsh Government is looking at a franchising system under new legislation, control of the whole bus network would then be under public sector control. Welsh Government is also trialling 'tap on, tap off' contactless ticketing which has started to be used in London.

We queried if given the recent court ruling the Local Authority or Welsh Government had given any thought to authority run bus services. You said you believed change is coming, whether through the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales new approach on franchising or the Authority having its own bus services. We heard that municipal bus companies are being looked at as part of a legislation review. At the moment the 1985 Transport Act actively discourages the set up, but Welsh Government is very keen to encourage development of municipal bus companies with local authorities.

We queried what will happen when the Bus Emergency Scheme comes to an end in July 2022 and how transition will be achieved. Officers confirmed that financial support to bus companies will now go beyond July 2022 but no details are available yet.

We were informed that currently network coverage is 80% what it was in 2020; passenger numbers are 60% what they were in 2020; concessionary numbers are 50% what they were in 2020 and a lot less students are travelling by bus than before.

Working Group Members then discussed progress and made the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. We were pleased to hear there are lots of projects and improvements planned for the future. However, despite the Public Transport Scrutiny Inquiry 8 years ago there has not been much improvement in reliability and service that the public want. Reliability is key to encourage more people to use buses.
2. We felt bus usage needs to be made more attractive for current non-users of the service. It is not just the practical problems of bus use, there is the wider issue of public attitude to bus use. With the climate crisis this issue of public perception needs to be addressed.
3. We were concerned that bus companies have a monopoly and will only go after profitable routes, leaving local authorities to tender services on unprofitable routes. Bus operators have got to provide a good service first before anything else can change. Welsh Government needs to change legislation and introduce regulations to be able to hold bus operators to account for provision of services, amongst other things. We encourage the Authority to continue to do all it can to progress changes in legislation to be able to hold bus operators to account, to make the setting up of municipal bus companies easier and to enable cross-ticketing.
4. We felt regular meetings within wards between councillors and bus operators is very important. This was previously recommended and there is a need to ensure this happens.
5. We welcome the replacement and repair of bus shelters. However, we would also like to see regular cleaning of bus shelters, bus stops and signposts.
6. We feel it would be useful to have a system of lockers readily available at bus stations to store shopping etc, so people do not have to carry everything around with them all day and hope that you will give this some consideration.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We are interested in hearing your thoughts about the issues raised and would ask that you respond to the points in our conclusions by 29 April 2022.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES
CONVENER, BUS SERVICES SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP
CLLR.LYNDON.JONES@SWANSEA.GOV.UK

Cllr Jones
Convener of the Bus Services Scrutiny
Working Group

(By email)

Please ask for: Councillor Mark Thomas
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E-Mail: cllr.mark.thomas@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: MT/JG
Your Ref:
Date: 27 April 2022

Dear Councillor Jones,

**Re: - Convener's letter to Cabinet Member – Scrutiny Working Group Bus Services
14th March 2022**

Thank you for your feedback from the Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group on 14th March 2022. I note your recommendations and conclusions, and would provide the following comments in response to the six points that you have raised:

1. The Council will continue to support the reliability of bus services through Bus Priority Measures and Telematics initiatives. The bus companies also have a key role to play by ensuring that they have sufficient resources in place to provide the services that are advertised and by ensuring that their timetables are realistic. There is a nationwide shortage of bus drivers for various reasons and the Swansea area has not been immune to this. Bus companies are also still feeling the effects of drivers not being able to attend work due to Covid isolation requirements, and this continues to lead to short notice cancellations. On a positive note, two of the major bus companies operating in Swansea are now using agency drivers to improve their staffing levels. There are also signs that some of the bus service frequency reductions introduced by the major bus operator last Autumn in the light of driver shortages are starting to be reversed on the busiest services as passenger demand increases again.
2. There are a number of areas for making bus services more attractive to non-bus users that need consideration. These include simplifying the bus network itself, simplifying ticketing arrangements, speeding up journey times through infrastructure and telematics initiatives, ensuring confidence that timetables remain stable, and ensuring that buses turn up, operate reasonably punctually and when people need them. Unfortunately, bus services have been through a difficult period in the past couple of years due to short notice Covid-lockdowns, frequent timetable change, roadside publicity not being kept updated, passengers having to observe social distancing when travelling and perhaps a general unease amongst some that bus travel is now no longer as safe a mode of transport as prior to the pandemic. The Council has a role to play in restoring

public confidence, and the Free Travel Initiatives during the school holidays are hopefully helping towards this. However, in reality, in view of the commercial freedoms that bus companies have in operating their services, the greater responsibility in building up businesses and restoring customer confidence again must lie with the bus operators themselves. A good example initiated by the bus operators is the move towards contactless payment systems, which have seen a steady rise in popularity, particularly over the last couple of years when cash payments were actively discouraged.

3. The situation that you are describing stems from the Transport Act 1985, which led to local bus service deregulation in England (outside London), Wales and Scotland in 1986. However, the Welsh Government is planning for the whole of Wales to switch to a franchising model, and is currently inviting views on its “One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket” White Paper. Please see the link below:

[One network, one timetable, one ticket, Welsh Government sets out plans to change the way we travel | GOV.WALES](#)

In terms of municipal bus companies, the legislation would remove the restrictions on the creation of new municipal bus companies. Councils would be able to run bus services ‘in house’ or via an arms-length company as part of a franchised network, and Councils would also be able to invest in or acquire existing bus companies.

In terms of ticketing, a One Ticket system is proposed, which would see simple area-wide fares, valid across all bus routes and on all modes of public transport.

In terms of accountability, officers are currently able to hold bus companies to account for the services that operate under contract, though I recognise that the Council’s powers do not extend to the commercial service network, and this falls to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner and Bus Users Cymru. However, indications are that with a franchised network in place, there would be far greater accountability on the part of the bus operators for all the services that they would operate.

4. Your recommendation has merit and I would suggest that in view of the availability of the various parties that would be involved, a structured approach is taken. I would also encourage Local Members to continue to channel comments or concerns about bus services through officers so that they can be taken up with the management of the companies concerned. In the meantime, officers will continue to issue periodic Bus Bulletins to Local Members as services change.
5. The new company that owns the bus shelters fitted with advertising panels is responsible for cleaning them. This leaves approximately 350 shelters throughout the County that are in the Council’s ownership. The Bus Shelters Budget is small and predominantly covers structural and vandalism repairs, though it also funds about £3.5k for a contractor to undertake an annual power wash of each shelter. However, £100k has recently been awarded through the Economic Recovery Fund towards a bus shelter replacement programme. This will replace about 20 shelters, and it is hoped that any economies of scale that can be achieved by replacing old for new can then be channelled towards the further upkeep measures of the Council’s shelter stock, including cleaning.

6. Left luggage lockers are already available at Swansea Mobility Hire, which is located just off the southern end of the Bus Station passenger concourse. Opening hours are 0900 to 1700 Mondays to Saturdays. Please refer to the following link for further information on the number and size of lockers available, and the charges:

www.swansea.gov.uk/bagstorage

Yours sincerely



Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Mark Thomas
Aelod Y Cabinet Dros Gwella'r Amgylchedd a Rheoli Isadeiledd/
Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management



Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

Scrutiny Programme Committee - 14 November 2023

Bus Services Update

Purpose	To provide Councillors with an update on issues raised in the previous meetings of the Working Group in July 2021 and March 2022
Content	This report includes updates on the issues raised by Councillors in the previous meetings of the Working Group
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the information provided • Make recommendations to Cabinet Member as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure
Lead Officer(s)	Mark Wade, Director of Place
Report Author	Barrie Gilbert, Team Leader – Passenger Transport
Legal Officer Finance Officer Access to Services Officer	Debbie Smith Paul Roach Rhian Millar

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group met on 7th July 2021 and 14th March 2022.
- 1.2 One of the recommendations to the Scrutiny Programme Committee was that a follow up meeting of the Working Group be held to see what changes / improvements had been made.

2.0 Updates

2.1 Cleaner fuel buses

The Welsh Government, through Transport for Wales, is investigating the possibility of implementing a network of hydrogen fuelled buses to operate services on strategic corridors. The initiative is progressing and Swansea Council is working with both Transport for Wales and other Local Authorities in the region to consider the feasibility of a pilot scheme in the Swansea Bay area. Transport for Wales has already had discussions with local bus operators and vehicle manufacturers. It has also identified a potential depot site within the County, which would be shared by all bus operators using such vehicles.

2.2 Bus service network and Bus Emergency Scheme (BES)

The current legislative framework which underpins the provision of local bus services was outlined in the report presented to the Committee in March 2022. The Welsh Government has since consulted on new legislation which would lead to the current deregulated model of providing services, introduced in 1986, being replaced by a franchised model. It is anticipated that the new legislation and model will be introduced in 2025 at the earliest.

The report also highlighted the financial assistance that the Welsh Government has provided the Bus Industry both during and subsequent to the Covid pandemic.

Whilst there has been a progressive recovery of passenger numbers post-Covid, bus operators locally are reporting that there is still a degree of resistance to using bus services again. Fare paying passenger numbers are still only about 80% of those carried pre-Covid, and for concessionary pass holders, it varies between 60% and 75% on individual services. These suppressed levels are also being reported across Wales. 'On bus' and concessionary pass holder revenue shortfalls were therefore covered between August 2020 and July 2023 (inc) by the Welsh Government's Bus Emergency Scheme (BES), which sought to match pre-Covid levels.

BES was replaced from 25th July 2023 by the Bus Transition Fund (BTF), though the level of funding made available for the 2023/2024 Financial Year has reduced. Bus operators have therefore been required to examine their commercial networks and asked to make economies so that their funding requests match the actual funding available. In Swansea, most of the commercial network is operated by First Cymru. The company reduced the frequencies of most of its services from 29th October 2023 saving a number of vehicles and drivers. However, the

Council has worked with the company over several months to try to ensure that most areas retain a basic bus service.

Under the BTF, the Council, like all others across Wales, is now required to tender contracts for all of services that will continue to require funding from 1st April 2024. This will include the services which are not commercially viable but are deemed to be socially necessary, and for which the Council has traditionally provided funding.

Whilst the Welsh Government has agreed to provide an early indication of the budget for 2024/25 to assist with the tendering process, the available funding is unlikely to increase.

2.3 Bus and Rail links

Work is progressing to establish a transport hub at Gowerton following a successful funding bid to Welsh Government. This has already led to:

1. a new bus stop being established closer to the railway station for services arriving from Gorseinon and heading towards Waunarlwydd, and
2. a new bus stop located closer to Gowerton surgery, which will be served by the bus service from North Gower in due course.

2.4 Bus Shelters

The Council owns approximately 350 bus shelters of various designs and a large number are many years old. The budget to maintain these is only £15,000 per annum, and in the last decade, there has been very little capital investment to replace the oldest shelters and those in the worst condition. However, £100,000 funding from the Economic Recovery Fund (ERF) enabled 19 shelters to be replaced in 2022/2023, and a further tranche of £100,000 allowed a similar number to be replaced during 2023. A third tranche of £100,000 funding is allowing for the replacement of a further tranche and a programme of repairs and minor refurbishments in early 2024.

In 2022, the Council let a new contract for the supply of bus shelters fitted with advertising panels. The shelters are owned and maintained by the successful tenderer, who receives advertising income to offset the costs. The contract has led to 112 shelters owned by the previous supplier being replaced by brand new facilities. Discussions are ongoing with the new supplier to consider supplying shelters at new locations across the County. These would either complement the Council's existing stock or replace Council-owned shelters, which, subject to their condition, could then be re-located to provide benefits at new locations.

3.0 Legal Implications

3.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. However, confirmation is awaited from Welsh Government on its budget for funding local bus services for the 2024/2025 Financial Year. Therefore, the effect that this will have on the new network of services is not yet known.

5.0 Integrated Assessment Implications

5.1 This is an information only report, with no implications, and therefore an IIA is not required.

Agenda Item 10



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There are five Performance Panels which have been established by the Committee. Whilst the work of an Inquiry Panel leads to the production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet based on evidence gathered on a specific issue, the work of a Performance Panel represents regular monitoring of, and challenge to, particular services / service areas and issues.
- 1.2 Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant Cabinet / lead members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about the performance of services and service delivery.
- 1.3 The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of Scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panels Conveners will therefore provide a regular progress report to the Committee to enable:

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

1.4 This report is about the following Performance Panel:

Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance – this is a new Panel, formed in July 2023 by bringing together the former Service Improvement & Finance Panel and the Development & Regeneration Performance Panel.

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

1.5 This Panel involves the following 17 Members:

Labour Councillors: 4

Terry Hennegan	Matthew Jones
Dai Jenkins	Mike White

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 9

Peter Black	Mary Jones
Wendy Fitzgerald	Susan Jones
Chris Holley (CONVENER)	Michael Locke
Lynda James	Mark Tribe
Jeff Jones	

Conservative Councillors: 3

Paxton Hood-Williams	Will Thomas
Brigitte Rowlands	

Green Councillor: 1

Chris Evans	
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2. Legal Implications

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

3. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching remit of the Panel is to ensure that the Council's budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient, acting as a critical friend for the Cabinet and helping to ensure accountability. In addition, this Panel is responsible for ongoing monitoring of Council performance in relation to development and regeneration, including the 'health' of the city centre, wider economic development across Swansea and discussion about progress on the Swansea Bay City Deal. The Panel meets monthly.

2. Key Activities

This is newly merged Panel of the Service Improvement and Finance and Development and Regeneration Panels, as agreed by the Committee in July.

The last update to Committee for the Service Improvement and Finance Panel was January 2023 and for Development and Regeneration was April 2023. The merged Panel first met in September 2023.

The below table updates on all meetings post and prior to the Panel merge since the last updates until November 2023. From these meetings **18** letters were sent to Cabinet.

Service Improvement and Finance	
Meeting	Topic(s)
17 January 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Proposals 2023/24 – 2026/27 2. Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 3. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23 4. Sustainable Swansea Update
14 February 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan: Pre-Decision Scrutiny
14 March 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Annual Performance Report 2021/22 2. Annual Complaints Report 2021/22
18 April 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual Review of Wellbeing Objectives and Corporate Plan 2023/28 2. Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23
9 May 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan 2. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/2022
27 June 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Road Repairs
Development and Regeneration	

15 May 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project Review - Swansea Arena 2. Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report
Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance	
5 September 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revenue Financial Outturn 22-23 and Revenue Outturn 22-23 (Housing Revenue Account) 2. Annual Performance Monitoring Report 2022/2023 3. Annual Review of Performance 2022/2023
26 September 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital Outturn and Financing 2022/23 2. Quarter 1 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report
17 October 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audit Wales Report – Setting of Wellbeing Objectives 2. Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report

3. Achievements / Impact

Financial Monitoring

- During this period the Panel looked at the Budget Proposals 2023/24 – 2026/27, pre decision scrutiny of the Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan, the Q2 and Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23 and the Capital, HRA and Revenue Outturns and Financing 2022/23.
- Regarding the budget, the Panel shared concerns about the tight timetable for the budget setting process, hindered by the timing of Welsh Government budget announcements. The Panel welcomed the increase in central funding, but felt it fell short when considering the level of inflation and other pressures, such as energy costs.
- Concerns were raised in the outturn reports that £3.8m is being carried forward for the Oracle project for the next financial year. It was therefore agreed for the Oracle Update Report to be brought for pre scrutiny with the Scrutiny Programme Committee in October.
- The capital outturn position reported a net underspend of £28.8m. Several large-scale schemes have added to the programme due to material overspending or reprofiling. Officers reported that the first quarter budget report of 2023/24 will reference a capital programme for the current year of more than £150m. This has been complicated by some significant cost overruns and the additional impact of challenges faced with the Copr Bay development.

Performance Monitoring

- During this period the Panel looked at the Performance Monitoring Report for Q2 and Q3 2022/23 and Q1 2023/24, the Annual Review of Performance and the Annual Performance Monitoring Report for 2022/23.
- The Panel noted 6 new indicators introduced because of the National Social Services Performance Framework introduced by Welsh Government.
- Due to several questions arising on road repairs the Panel agreed to invite Cllr Andrew Stevens to a future meeting. This was then held on 27 June 2023.

- It was noted that the speed of processing Housing Benefits and Council Tax reduction claims has declined. The Panel asked about measures to improve this and were informed of training of replacement staff which will take time to increase productivity levels.
- The Panel noted demands on Social Care workforce, waiting times, particularly in adult social care and the pressures on funding in the social care market for the 2022/23 Annual Reports.
- A new suite of indicators for Nature Recovery and Climate Change were introduced in Q1 2023/24. The Panel were concerned however that some indicators were too broad. Habitat, biodiversity, and pollution levels are all areas that merit monitoring and are not currently mentioned.
- The Panel have ongoing concerns with sickness levels. The Cabinet Member, Cllr Hopkins, suggested inviting officers to a future meeting to discuss the work that is being carried out in this area and the Panel plan to do this at a later date.

Sustainable Swansea Update

- Sustainable Swansea had been previously discussed a number of years ago and due the impact of the Covid pandemic a final report had been delayed. Some of this project has been superseded now by the subsequent Achieving Better Together program.
- The Panel recognised the difference Sustainable Swansea has made but were unsure how well the progress column clearly aligns with the intended outcomes.
- The Panel requested additional information including further information on the impact of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018, progress made in the Social Services catering review and how these meet the intended outcomes, more information on the Day Services Review and an update on whether feedback was collected from service users to gauge effectiveness and satisfaction.
- The additional information was provided. The Day services review was reported to be in its initial stages. Regarding service user feedback, the department are undertaking a large-scale consultation and will report findings to Scrutiny during September 2023.

Planning Annual Performance Report 2021/22

- Officers reported a significant increase in applications during this period. Additionally, the pandemic created a backlog of enforcement cases due to officers not being able to attend sites as easily, as well as the impact of staff vacancies.
- Concern was raised in regard to enforcement not being seen to be fully carried out and officers reassured the Panel that they are all investigated and dealt with accordingly just not all are within the target number of days.
- The Panel asked whether application fees could be increased in order to recruit more officers potentially temporarily to reduce the backlog of enforcement cases, however officers have written to the Minister to ask, and Welsh Government have said no at this point.
- Concerns were raised about the new Local Development Plan to identify lessons learnt that may avoid predictions not materialising.

Annual Complaints Report 2021/22

- Officers highlighted the suppression in complaints during lockdown followed by a surge post lockdown.
- The Panel requested additional information on complaints related to Communications and Customer Engagement and year on year trends.
- We asked if there is any data held that looks at year on year trends to see comparisons further back than the previous year, the officer said it would be possible to include this in subsequent reports in the future.
- Service delays and pressures during this period contributed to an increase in adult Social Services complaints.
- The Panel valued looking at the received compliments and recognised there is as much to learn from examples of good practise as from complaints.

Annual Review of Wellbeing Objectives and Corporate Plan 2023/28

- The Panel discussed the readability of the new Corporate Plan, with concern regarding the length of the document and how this may have affected the consultation survey response.
- The Panel were made aware of the challenging balance between a plan that is user friendly but also a document that meets legislative responsibilities and fulfils statutory guidance.
- Questions were raised regarding progress measurements with the officer reporting that this work is underway on a new suite of measures, the results of which will be brought to the Panel in the Q1 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24.

Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan

- This action plan resulted from the All-Wales study by the Welsh Audit Office into how councils were making use of data in a report originally published in December 2018. The pandemic had a profound impact on this work and delayed an update.
- The Panel noted the significant progress in all the 11 specific recommendations which are now considered closed and the new digital strategy 2023-28 was approved by Cabinet in April 2023.
- Staff training was discussed and the Panel felt there was a need for more training for Councillors on understanding what data is available and how data is used. This would support the Councillors carrying out performance related scrutiny but also in other areas of the Councillor role. The officer noted this request.

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/2022

- The Panel learned there were 160 Welsh Language standards which local authorities are required to adhere to with 6 complaints made within the year.
- There was concern that 20% of translations are being outsourced externally due to an increase in service demand. They Panel wondered if it would be cheaper to increase internal staff rather than paying for external translators. The officer informed the Panel they would look into this.
- The Panel requested additional data on the cost of external translation compared to internal translation and historic data on how much translation had been carried out externally in the last few years.

Road Repairs

- The Panel were given an overview of routine repairs and planned maintenance.
- Several future challenges were raised including further marginal winters, carbon emissions from road resurfacing materials and road damage from traffic calming as this creates more wear and tear on the roads.
- Questions were raised by the Panel regarding the impact of electric vehicles, water ingress on potholes, water run offs, road closures, the planned maintenance list and statutory undertakers, damage from private developers, budgets and active travel.

Project Review - Swansea Arena

- The Panel were grateful for the attendance of the Arena Director and heard a summary of the Arenas first year of trading. Overall, the year had been positive while dealing with post covid recovery and adapting to the new building.
- Concerns about exiting the Arena car park were raised, traffic signals have now been adapted to deal better with clearing car park backlog.
- The Panel were concerned about the potential for a negative effect on other venues and competition for acts and were informed that there are positive working relationships between the different venues and an understanding of which events suit which venue.
- The venue expects a second positive year within the context of an ongoing post covid recovery.

Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report

- The Panel received several public questions relating to Skyline.
- A summary of the numerous development and regeneration projects was provided to the Panel. This included an update on the Kingsway office development where Panel Members were concerned the next access route could be to the detriment of Picton Arcade business.
- The Panel asked officers to chase up the public information boards that have not yet been installed down Wind Street in regard to Castle Square.

Audit Wales Report – Setting of Wellbeing Objectives

- The Panel heard that overall, Swansea Council has applied the sustainable development principle when setting its new well-being objectives and embedding its approach to engagement and performance monitoring will further strengthen this.
- The Panel appreciated the opportunity to ask Audit Wales questions at this session, particularly around benchmarking and measuring performance in areas like consultation.
- Concerns were raised for the potential cost implications of meeting wellbeing objectives in future. Reassurance was made that the council have provisions in place to budget for this.

- Audit Wales have taken on board the Panels suggestion to offer examples of good practice where benchmarking is not available.

Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report

- The Panel pleased to hear about the hard work and post covid recovery of local library services sharing support and positive experiences.
- There is a trend to remove library book fines across Wales but in Swansea there is a large income pressure from the fines budget of about £50,000 and without an ability to offset that, fines in Swansea were reintroduced in April 2023.
- Welsh Government have raised concern regarding the lack of qualified library staff in Swansea. There are some plans to rectify this so the Panel will be interested to see if this has improved next year.
- Some recommendations were made by the Panel including ways to increase completion of children's questionnaires, increased advertising of the libraries' print programme and shared workspace provision.
- The Panel have requested an update about a Swansea Library of Things and are currently awaiting a response from the Cabinet Member.

4. Future Work Programme

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

Meeting	Topic(s)
14 November 2023	1. Q1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – 2023/24 2. Regeneration Project(s) Update – Skyline/Copr Bay
12 December 2023	1. Mid Term Budget Statement 2023/24 2. Review of Revenue Reserves 3. Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring Report
16 January 2024	1. Budget Proposals 2. Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 3. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24 4. Tourism Destination Management Plan Update
February 2024 (Date TBC)	1. Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Reports: Annual Budget / Medium Term Financial Plan 2. Q3 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24
12 March 2024	1. Regeneration Project(s) Update (To be decided) 2. Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments for Development and Regeneration
9 April 2024	1. Annual Review of Wellbeing Objectives and Corporate Plan 2. Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24
7 May 2024	1. Planning Annual Performance Report 2. City Centre Retail

5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.

Agenda Item 11



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

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

1. Introduction

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

2. Revision to Existing Scrutiny Panel / Working Group Membership

- 2.1 None

3. Guiding Principles

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

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

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 12



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Scrutiny Work Programme

Purpose	This report shows the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24, which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.
Content	The agreed work programme is attached, which shows the topics being examined by Scrutiny through various Panels and Working Groups. A plan for future Committee meetings is also attached.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• plan for the Committee meetings ahead• consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny• review the Scrutiny Work Programme (including progress of current Panels and Working Groups)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's Scrutiny Work Programme and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.

1.2 A report is provided to each meeting to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of agreed Scrutiny activities, monitor progress, and coordinate work as necessary.

1.3 The broad aim of the Scrutiny function is to engage non-executive councillors in activities to:

- provide an effective challenge to the executive
- help improve services, policies, and performance

- engage the public in its work
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of Scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of time and resources.

It also needs to be:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
 - relevant to Council priorities
 - adding value and having maximum impact
 - coordinated and avoids duplication
- 1.5 The work of Scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the Committee itself, by establishing informal Panels (for in-depth activities) or via one-off Working Groups. Panels and Working Groups would be open to all non-executive Councillors - the Committee will determine membership and conveners following expressions of interest.
- 1.6 Scrutiny will regularly send letters to Cabinet Members communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, by producing reports. Inquiry panels will always produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered. Inquiry panels will reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and the impact of their work – usually 6-12 months following cabinet decision.
- 1.7 Although much of the work of Scrutiny is carried out by informal Panels and Working Groups these meetings are accessible to the public. Agendas, reports and letters relating to all such scrutiny activities are published, in the same manner as the committee, on the Council's modern.gov online platform:
<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

2. Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

- 2.1.1 The Committee agreed the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24 on 18 July. This Work Programme is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.1.2. The following paragraphs break down the Work Programme by specific ways of working to provide a brief overview.
- 2.2 Scrutiny Programme Committee:
- 2.2.1 The Committee work plan for the year ahead is attached as **Appendix 2**. This should be kept under constant review to ensure it represents a robust, manageable, and effective plan.

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

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

19 December:

- **Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities – Support for Businesses** - Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism will attend, along with lead officer(s) to report to the Committee on the Council's work in relation to support for businesses, which is amongst his Cabinet portfolio responsibilities, and answer questions.
- **Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty** - this has become an annual item within the Committee work plan, enabling the Committee to review action and achievements in the delivery of the Council priority over the past year. The Leader and the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing will report to the Committee, having lead portfolio responsibility for tackling poverty. Relevant lead officer(s) will also attend to support the Cabinet Member(s) and Committee discussion.

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

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

2.3 Inquiry Panels:

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

In Progress / Planned	Completed (follow up stage)
<p>1. Anti-Social Behaviour (Panel has agreed its final report. This is being presented to Committee 14 Nov, for agreement to submit to Cabinet for decision)</p> <p>2. Community Assets (membership has been agreed; Inquiry will commence following completion of Anti-Social Behaviour Inquiry)</p>	<p>1. Procurement (Follow up carried out 24 Oct 2023 – Panel has agreed to conclude monitoring based on satisfaction with action against Scrutiny Inquiry recommendations – Panel’s letter to Cabinet Member is included under Item 13)</p>

2.4 Performance Panels:

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

Performance Panel	Convener
1. Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly)	Cllr. Chris Holley
2. Education (monthly)	Cllr. Lyndon Jones
3. Adult Services (every six weeks)	Cllr. Susan Jones
4. Child & Family Services (every six weeks)	Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams
5. Climate Change & Nature (every two months)	Cllr. Sara Keeton

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

2.5 Working Groups:

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

<p>1. Public Rights of Way (22 Nov)</p> <p>2. Customer Contact (26 Jan)</p>	<p>3. Community Growing</p>
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Reserve List:

- Public Consultation
- Healthy City

2.6 Joint / Regional Scrutiny:

- 2.6.1 **Partneriaeth** – A Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group, comprising of Education Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs, or equivalent, across Swansea Council, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Councils scrutinises the work of the new regional education partnership which will support the delivery of school improvement, and ensure greater public accountability over decisions made. Scrutiny will seek reassurance and consider if the Partnership is operating according to the Joint Committee Agreement, and its Business Plan, and is being managed effectively. The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Convener of the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel are participating in the Scrutiny of Partneriaeth. The Partneriaeth Joint Committee, comprises the Leaders of the three Councils, as the strategic decision-making body. The Swansea Scrutiny Team manages support for the Scrutiny of Partneriaeth.
- 2.6.2 **Swansea Bay City Region City Deal** – Swansea Scrutiny is also involved in the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee, approved by Council in July 2018. This arrangement involves three councillor representatives from each of the four Councils involved in the City Region, meeting to scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal programme. As per the Joint Committee Agreement, the Scrutiny Committee is serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Scrutiny Councillor representatives are currently: Jan Curtice, Victoria Holland & Chris Holley.
- 2.6.3 **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee** – The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) involves Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Councils, as well as Brecon Beacons and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities, and will exercise functions relating to strategic land use planning, regional transport planning and the exercise of economic well-being powers. The Committee has set up a CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee which consists of three elected members from each Council and will meet at least quarterly. The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee will scrutinise the decisions / actions of the CJC as it discharges its functions and performance in relation to policy objectives and targets. The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee is being serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Scrutiny Councillor representatives are currently: Peter Black, Wendy Lewis & Mike White.
- 2.6.4 The Scrutiny Programme Committee will need to ensure that there is no duplication between local and regional scrutiny. A regular update on regional Scrutiny activity will be provided to Committee members to ensure awareness. Regional Scrutiny arrangements will not, however, preclude Councillors within constituent Councils discussing the impact of the regional body on their Council and locality, and holding Cabinet Members to account for their involvement / Council's involvement and engagement in regional bodies, and relevant local decision-making.

3. Monitoring the Work Programme

- 3.1 The Committee is responsible for monitoring progress against the agreed Work Programme and this includes work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings, to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility.
- 3.2 A timetable of all Scrutiny activities (projected or actual where dates are known) is attached as **Appendix 4a**. Lead Councillors and officers are also noted within. Also provided as **Appendix 4b** is a snapshot of progress with all Panels and Working Groups established by the Committee, as well as Regional Scrutiny, and their current position. These will be updated and provided to every Committee meeting.
- 3.3 The Committee will also be kept abreast of work plans of the individual Performance Panels to improve Committee oversight of topics being examined, check coverage across Cabinet portfolios, and help avoid duplication of effort between the Committee and Panels and between Panels etc.
- 3.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme will be kept under constant review by the Committee, with changes made as necessary. The Committee will always retain the flexibility to adapt and re-prioritise the work of scrutiny in response to changing circumstances and/or urgent issues which may arise in-year, to ensure the continued relevance of the programme.
- 3.5 The Committee should be mindful of the work plans of other Council bodies, such as the Governance & Audit Committee and the Council's Service Transformation Committees. Any issues regarding possible overlap / duplication will be discussed between the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and relevant Chairs.

4. Public Requests for Scrutiny / Councillor Calls for Action

- 4.1 Members of the public are able to make requests for scrutiny by contacting the Chair or Scrutiny Team in writing detailing the issue of concern, its impact, and suggested action. This can be via the Council's website: www.swansea.gov.uk/raiseanissuetoscrutiny or email to scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk. In accordance with agreed protocol the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee will consider any requests received and bring about proposals to deal with these to the Committee for consideration. Taking into account relevant advice, any such issues may merit inclusion in the work programme, referral elsewhere, or no action.
- 4.2 None received.

5. Scrutiny Training & Development Programme

5.1 A Scrutiny Training & Development Programme for Swansea Scrutiny Councillors is underway, which is being facilitated by the Improvement Team at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The following Sessions have now been held:

- Introduction to Scrutiny – held on 5 October
- Scrutiny Chairing Skills – held on 9 October / 10 October
- Questioning Skills for Scrutiny – held on 31 October / 1 November

5.2.1 Upcoming Sessions:

- Scrutiny of Performance – to be held on 4 December / 6 December
- Self-Assessment of Scrutiny (two parts) – to be held on 17 January / 23 January

All Sessions are being held online via MS Teams, with the exception of the final 'Self-Assessment' part 2 session which will be in-person only. As well as benefitting individual Councillors, the Programme will help to inform Scrutiny Improvement Objectives and actions going forward.

6. Financial Implications

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

7. Legal Implications

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

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Programme Committee Work Plan 2023/24

Appendix 3: Cabinet Forward Plan

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

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

Appendix 1 - AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

Inquiry Panel (time-limited in-depth scrutiny – six months)	Working Groups (light-touch scrutiny / one-off meetings)	Performance Panels (ongoing in-depth performance / financial monitoring & challenge)	Issues for Scrutiny Programme Committee (overall work programme management; discussion of broad range of policy and service issues)
<p>1. Anti-Social Behaviour (to complete from 2022/23)</p> <p>2. Community Assets (Terms of Reference / Key Question to be agreed by Panel, but could focus on how effective the process of Community Asset Transfer has been and benefits, looking at relevant examples such as Parks & Community Centres, and lessons)</p> <p>Follow Up of Previous Inquiries:</p> <p>1. Procurement</p>	<p>1. Customer Contact (carry over from 2022/23 - enabling focussed discussion & questioning on user experience when contacting the Council / accessing services whether by telephone or on-line / though digital means; response rates; provision for offline and on-line contact; effectiveness of Council Contact Centre; on-going actions to improve digital inclusion / access; quality of website, etc.)</p> <p>2. Public Rights of Way (enabling focussed questioning & discussion on overview of Public Rights of Way across Swansea (mapping / numbers) and issues; impact on PRoW from developments; effect on communities, etc.)</p> <p>3. Community Growing (enabling focussed questioning & discussion around Council activity / support to Community Growing, with examples (e.g., allotments) and experience; benefits / success; including focus on schools / children & young people; and its contribution to health & well-being, etc.)</p>	<p>1. Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly)</p> <p>2. Education (monthly)</p> <p>3. Adult Services (every six weeks)</p> <p>4. Child & Family Services (every six weeks)</p> <p>5. Climate Change & Nature (every two months)</p> <p>Specific issues to incorporate within wider Panel work plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Panel to refocus work plan, taking into account previous work – to create capacity some items to be picked up by Scrutiny Programme Committee - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan - Performance Management - Pre-decision Scrutiny of Budget Proposals - Economic Regeneration Actions / Delivery - City Deal 'Swansea Specific' Projects - Planning Policy & Service (incl. Call-in Process & dealing with 5G Masts) - Recycling, particularly Commercial Waste - Highways / Infrastructure Maintenance - Listed Buildings • Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Education) - Delivery against Education Estyn Inspection actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific annual reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children & Young People's Rights Scheme - Corporate Safeguarding - Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty - Complaints - Welsh Language Standards - Welsh Housing Quality Standard • Leader Q & A Session(s): incl. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Transformation / Recovery Plan - Councillor / Officer Relations (communications) • Other Cabinet Member Q & As (issues to pick up): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active Travel - Oracle Fusion Project Implementation - Delivery against Workforce Development Strategy (incl. use of agency staff / Council structures) - Support for Businesses - Homelessness • Public Services Board • Crime & Disorder (Community Safety): incl. Domestic Abuse; Community Cohesion; Tackling Extremism; Substance Misuse; Electric Scooters

Appendix 1 - AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

	<p>Reserve List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Consultation (enabling focussed questioning and discussion on the Council's approaches to public consultation and effectiveness; relevant learning and development, etc.) • Healthy City (carry over from 2022/23 - enabling focussed questioning & discussion of the Healthy City Partnership, key activities and achievements, work in relation to health promotion, particularly physical activities, including provision of outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Additional Learning Needs (ALN) - Post-covid Cost implications for Schools - Reading / Literacy - School Attendance - School Meals service: impact of changes • Adult Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Adult Services) - Safeguarding - Local Area Coordination - Partnership between Health and Social Care Services • Child & Family Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Child & Family Services) - Safeguarding • Climate Change & Nature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Climate Change & Nature) – e.g., Progress against Net Zero 2030 Action Plan - Flood Prevention / Drainage Services - Natural Environment / Biodiversity - Impact of Housing Developments on Environment - Public Electric Vehicle Charging Provision - Grounds Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow Up on Previous Working Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bus Services - Road Safety - Co-production
<p>Joint / Regional Scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partneriaeth (Education / School Improvement – Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group) • City Deal (Development / Regeneration - Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee) • South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (Land Use Planning; Regional Transport; Economic Well-being – Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee) 			

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2023/24

ACTIVITY	18 Jul 2023	19 Sep 2023	17 Oct 2023	14 Nov 2023	19 Dec 2023	16 Jan 2024
Scrutiny Work Programme	Agreement of Scrutiny Work Programme	Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23				
Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q & A Sessions		Active Travel (CM for Environment & Infrastructure)			Support for Businesses (CM for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism)	Leader / Economy, Finance & Strategy
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports Page 192			Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis)	- Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report (CM for Care Services / Director of Social Services) - Children & Young People's Rights Scheme (annual report) (CM for Community – Support)	Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty (annual item) (Leader / CM for Wellbeing)	
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports			Education	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance	Adult Services	Child & Family Services
Pre-decision Scrutiny	FPR7 Redevelopment of 277-278 Oxford Street - Community Hub Project		Oracle Fusion Project Implementation / Project Closure Report (Leader / CM for Service Transformation)			
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.				- Follow Up on Bus Services Working Group (CM for Environment & Infrastructure) - Anti-Social Behaviour Inquiry Final Report		Follow Up on Road Safety Working Group (CM for Environ. & Infrastructure)

ACTIVITY	13 Feb 2024	19 Mar 2024	16 Apr 2024	14 May 2024		
Scrutiny Work Programme		Audit / Scrutiny Relationship – Discussion w/ Chair of Governance & Audit Committee		End of Year Review		
Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q & A Sessions	Delivery against Workforce Development Strategy (CM for Corporate Services & Performance)					
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports Page 193	Annual Complaints Report 2022-23 (CM for Service Transformation)	- Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis) - Welsh Language Standards (annual report) (CMs for Education & Learning / Culture, Human Rights & Equalities)	Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership (Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership)			
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports	Climate Change & Nature	Education	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance			
Pre-decision Scrutiny						
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.				Follow Up on Co-production Working Group (CM for Community - Support)		

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023-24

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Capital Programme Authorisation for the Commitment of Capital Grant Funding Awarded to Support Learners with Additional Learning Needs.	Welsh Government have awarded funding to the Council of £1,458,714.00 for capital expenditure on the support of learners with additional learning needs. The aim of the grant is to support learners with additional learning needs. This report is seeking authorisation to commit the full balance of grant funding	Louise Herbert-Evans	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	16 Nov 2023	Open
Increasing Supported Accommodation to Help Tackle Homelessness.	In direct response to the current homelessness crisis it is proposed that Housing Services develop and operate as a Temporary Supported Accommodation Scheme.	Helen Andrew, Carol Morgan	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 Nov 2023	Fully exempt
Quarter 2 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report.	To report the performance indicator results and summarise the Council's performance meetings its priorities for the first quarter period July 2023 – September 2023.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open

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Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023-24

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2023/24.	To note any significant variations from the agreed budget 2023/24 and savings plan and the actions planned to achieve a balanced budget.	Ben Smith	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open
Annual Equality Review 2022/23.	To publish the Council's Annual Equality Review for 2022/23 in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty and reporting regulations for Wales.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open
Co-production Policy.	To approve the Coproduction policy for Swansea Council	Rhian Millar	Cabinet Members - Community	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open
Regional Education Consortium Amendment to Legal Agreement on Voting Within Joint Committee.	Amendment to Legal Agreement for Partneriaeth requiring Cabinet Member for Education and Learning to be Swansea's voting Member at Partneriaeth joint committees.	Helen Morgan-Rees	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open
Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour.	Conclusions and recommendations resulting from a scrutiny inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour.	Michelle Roberts	Terry Hennegan, Cabinet Member - Well-being	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open

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Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023-24

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
New Dining Facilities to Support the Universal Free School Meals Programme Together with an All-Weather Pitch and Community Facilities for Townhill Community Primary School.	To seek authorisation to commit to the capital programme £3,257,070 for new dining facilities to support the Universal Free School Meals (uFSM) programme together with an all-weather pitch and community facilities for Townhill Community Primary School, funded by uFSM and Community Focussed Schools funding plus other smaller funding streams.	Louise Herbert-Evans	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open
Update on Swansea Council's Progress Towards Achieving Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2030.	The third annual report to Cabinet, providing an update on the most recent emissions data, the delivery plan activity and the challenges facing the council if it is to achieve its ambition of being net zero by 2030.	Rachel Lewis	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open
Financial Procedure Rule 7 – Local Transport Fund SBWW and Regional Bus Core Allocation 2023/24 and 2024/25.	To approve the additional funding for Local Transport Fund (LTF) and seek approval to add the capital expenditure to the delivery programme for Local Transport Fund projects in 2023/24 and 2024/25.	Matthew Bowyer	Cabinet Member - Environment & Infrastructure	Cabinet	21 Dec 2023	Open

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023-24

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Budget Proposals 2024/25 – 2027/28.	To consider budget proposals for 2024/25 to 2027/28 as part of the Council's Budget Strategy within the Achieving Better Together Framework. To enable consultation to take place with residents, employees, partners and other interested parties	Ben Smith	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader), Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	12 Jan 2024	Open
Maximising EOTAS Provision for Vulnerable Learners in Swansea Follow Up Report.	Following a period of stakeholder engagement the reports seeks to share findings of this activity and propose a solutions to better meet the needs of learners in Swansea who require access to EOTAS provision.	Kate Phillips	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	18 Jan 2024	Open
Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2023/24.	To note any significant variations from the agreed budget 2023/24 and savings plan and the actions planned to achieve a balanced budget.	Ben Smith	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	15 Feb 2024	Open

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023-24

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Green Infrastructure Strategy's Swansea Central Area: Regenerating our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife Action Plan.	This Action Plan is designed to deliver the strategic objectives of the Swansea Central Area: Regenerating our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife Green Infrastructure Strategy in the short, medium and long term. It helps deliver the Council's well-being objective on Nature Recovery and Climate Change.	Penny Gruffydd	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	15 Feb 2024	Open
Quarter 3 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report.	To report the performance indicator results and summarise the Council's performance meetings its priorities for the third quarter period October 2023 – December 2023.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open

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Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24 – Projected Timetable of Meetings (actual dates shown)

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2023	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Brij Madahar Lead Cabinet Member: cross-cutting Lead CMT: cross-cutting Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	13 June Work Planning Conf.	18		19	17	14	19	16	13	19	16	14
INQUIRY PANELS:												
	Findings				Final report							
Anti-Social Behaviour Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Terry Hennegan Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: cross-cutting Lead CMT: cross-cutting Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	29 June			12	18							
							Planning					
Community Assets Lead Scrutiny Councillor: tbc Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Hayley Gwilliam / Elliot King Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Geoff Bacon												
Procurement Follow Up (Cabinet decision: 20 Oct 2022) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: David Hopkins Lead CMT: Ben Smith Lead Head of Service: Chris Williams					24							

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2023	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
PERFORMANCE PANELS:												
Service Improvement & Finance (monthly) *ENDED* Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / David Hopkins Lead CMT: Ness Young / Ben Smith Lead Head of Service: Lee Wenham	27 June											
Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / David Hopkins / Robert Francis Davies Lead CMT: Ness Young / Ben Smith / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phillip Holmes / Lee Wenham				5 and 26	17	14	12	16	TBC Budget	12	9	7
Education (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	15 June	13		14	19	23	14	18	12 22	14	18	9

Appendix 4a

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2023	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Adult Services (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Sue Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Amy Hawkins / Helen St John	28 June		7	5	31		12	30	TBC Budget	20		7
Child & Family Services (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Paxton Hood-Williams Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Julie Davies	22 May 20 June		2	13	24		5	23	TBC Budget	12		1
Development & Regeneration (every 2 months) *ENDED* Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / Robert Francis-Davies Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phillip Holmes		11										
Climate Change & Nature (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Hannah Lawson Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Andrea Lewis Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting		4			3	28		30		19		14

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2023	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
WORKING GROUPS:												
Topic 1 – Public Rights of Way Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Mike White Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Andrew Stevens Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phillip Holmes						22						
Topic 1 – Customer Contact Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Joe Hale Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Andrea Lewis Lead CMT: Ness Young Lead Head of Service: Sarah Lackenby								26				
Topic 3 – Community Growing Lead Scrutiny Councillor: tbc Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Hayley Gwilliam Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service:												

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2023	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
REGIONAL SCRUTINY:												
Partneriaeth Regional Scrutiny Councillor Group (Education / School Improvement) (quarterly) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Lyndon Jones (chair) / Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Partneriaeth: Ian Altman / Gareth Morgans Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Regional Lead: Martin Nicholls (Lead Director for Partneriaeth)	19 June				23				26			
Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Rob James (Carmarthenshire Council) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Jan Curtice, Victoria Holland, Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Charlotte John, Neath Port Talbot Council Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes		4			24							
South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee (quarterly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Russell Sparks (Carmarthenshire Council) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Peter Black, Wendy Lewis, Mike White Lead Scrutiny Officer: Charlotte John, Neath Port Talbot						2						

Council Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes												
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* denotes extra meeting

** not public

Information correct as of 07/11/23 16:06

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

1. Inquiry Panels:

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

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

Key Question: *How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?*

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Panel met and discussed their final report in October which included looking at the comments made by contributors. They with a few amendment agreed its submission to the Scrutiny Programme Committee in November prior to Cabinet in December.

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

2. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

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

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Procurement	20 Oct 2022	14	0	0	24 Oct 2023 (MONITORING COMPLETE)

3. **Performance Panels:**

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

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

This Panel meets every month. A progress report appears in the agenda under Item 10.

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

This Panel meets every month. The Panel at their meeting in October they visited and met with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors at Gorseinon Primary School to discuss the schools progress with their school development plan.

At their next meeting on 23 November, they will discuss reducing disadvantage in school including the use of the pupil development grant in Swansea. They will also receive a briefing on Cookery in Schools and the School Improvement Service.

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its meeting on 31 October the Panel discussed the Director of Social Services Annual Report and was briefed on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

The next meeting on 12 December will discuss the latest Performance Monitoring report, receive an update on the Adult Services Transformation and Improvement Programme and receive a briefing on Llais.

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. On 24 October the Panel received an update from the Regional Safeguarding Board and discussed the Service Quality Unit Annual Report. The Panel also received a progress update on Commissioning.

At its meeting on 5 December the Panel will discuss the latest Performance Monitoring report including a session on qualitative auditing, receive an update on the Child and Family Improvement Programme and an update on Contextual Missing Exploited and Trafficked.

e) **Climate Change & Nature** (convener: Cllr Sara Keeton)

This Panel meets every two months. At its meeting on 3 October the Panel looked at Water Quality, Management and Pollution Control and discussed Planning Enforcement in relation to Nature and Biodiversity.

The next meeting on 28 November will look at Environmental Tourism.

4. **Regional Scrutiny:**

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

a) **Partneriaeth - Regional Education Partnership**

Partneriaeth Scrutiny is expected to take place every school term, mirroring meetings of the Partneriaeth Joint Committee.

The Councillor Group met on the 23 October, where they looked at progress with the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales, the Risk Assessment Profile and received an update on the performance of Partneriaeth Priority 2 – Embed principles and processes which underpin educational equity in all schools and educational settings. This included an example of practice happening on the ground from the Headteacher from Birchgrove Comprehensive School.

They will next meet on the 26 February 2024 where they have scheduled to discuss the Partneriaeth financial affairs, risk management and governance arrangements. They will all look at progress with Partneriaeth Priority 3 – Support schools and educational settings to develop of research and enquiry schools as a key part of their own professional learning. This will include looking at an example of a National and Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP).

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

The Joint Scrutiny Committee usually meets every two months. As well as overall programme / project monitoring including the latest financial position, the meeting on 24 October focussed on specific regional Project(s), with updates on 'Skills & Talent' and 'Digital Infrastructure'. The Committee was also informed of the findings and actions of the 2022-23 Internal Audit review into the Swansea Bay City Deal Portfolio.

The next meeting takes place on 13 February 2024

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

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

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

The CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee will meet at least quarterly. The last meeting held on 2 November focussed on the Audit Wales' findings follow their review of Corporate Joint Committees. The purpose of the review was to gain early assurance about the CJsCs' progress as newly established bodies, and provide some early feedback to help CJsCs as they continue to develop. The Committee was also updated on the Regional Transport Plan Implementation Plan which is to be submitted to Welsh Government.

The next meeting is due to take place on 16 January 2024, expected to include budget monitoring – agenda item(s) to be confirmed.

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

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

5. **Working Groups:**

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

a) **Public Rights of Way** (convener: Councillor Mike White)

This Working Group has been arranged for 22 November 2023. This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion on overview of Public Rights of Way across Swansea (mapping / numbers) and issues; impact on Public Rights of Way from developments; effect on communities, etc.

b) **Customer Contact** (convener: Councillor Joe Hale)

This Working Group has been arranged for 26 January 2024. This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion on the user experience when contacting the Council / accessing services whether by telephone or on-line / through digital means; provision for offline and on-line contact; effectiveness of Council Contact Centre; on-going actions to improve digital inclusion / access; quality of website, etc.

This Working Group was carried forward from 2022/23.

c) **Community Growing** (convener: TBC)

This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion around Council activity / support to Community Growing, with examples (e.g., allotments) and experience; benefits / success; including focus on schools / children & young people; and its contribution to health & well-being, etc.

Agenda Item 13



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Scrutiny Letters

Purpose:	To ensure the Committee is aware of the Scrutiny Letters produced following various Scrutiny activities, and to track responses to date.
Content:	The report includes a log of Scrutiny Letters produced this municipal year and provides a copy of correspondence between Scrutiny and Cabinet Members for discussion as required.
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the Scrutiny Letters and responses• Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer:	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The production of Scrutiny Letters has become an established part of the way scrutiny operates in Swansea. Letters from the Chair (or Conveners) allow Scrutiny to communicate directly and quickly with relevant Cabinet Members.
- 1.2 These letters are used to convey views and conclusions about particular issues discussed, and provide the opportunity to raise concerns, ask for further information, and make recommendations. This enables Scrutiny to engage with Cabinet Members on a regular and structured basis.

2. Reporting of Letters

- 2.1 All Scrutiny Letters, whether they are written by the Scrutiny Programme Committee or conveners of Panels / Working Groups, are published to ensure visibility, of the outcomes from meetings, across the Council and public.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee agenda also includes a copy of letters to/from Cabinet Members for its attention and discussion as required, e.g., letters relating to the work of the Committee, Working Groups, and Inquiry Panel follow ups. Letters are included when Cabinet Member responses that were awaited are received or where a Scrutiny Letter did not require a response.
- 2.3 Where requested Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to Scrutiny Letters within 21 calendar days. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take, or have taken, as a result of the views and recommendations made.
- 2.4 Letters relating to the work of Performance Panels are part of an ongoing dialogue with Cabinet Members and are therefore reported back and monitored by each Panel. However, all Performance Panel Conveners will provide a progress report to the Committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes.

3. Letters Log

- 3.1 This report contains a log of Scrutiny Letters produced to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of letters activity over the current municipal year – see **Appendix 1**. The Letters Log will show the average time taken by Cabinet Members to respond to Scrutiny letters, and the percentage of letters responded to within timescale. For comparison, during the previous year (2022/23) 58 letters were sent to Cabinet Members, of which 20 required a written response. The average time taken to respond was 21 days, with 65% responded to within the 21 days target.
- 3.2 The following letter(s), not already reported back to the Committee, are **attached** for discussion:

	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a	Committee – Scrutiny of Active Travel	19 Sep	Letter to Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure
b	Committee Pre-decision Scrutiny – Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operation Model	18 Oct	Letter to Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

C	Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry – Follow Up	24 Oct	Letter to Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance
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3.3 Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Follow Up

3.3.1 The Committee should note the outcome of the Procurement Inquiry follow up meeting on 24 October, which looked at progress with implementation of Scrutiny recommendations and impact of the inquiry. Cabinet decision on the Inquiry recommendations was made in October 2022. All 14 recommendations were agreed, with an action plan being agreed by Cabinet. Having received a report to support the follow up and following discussion with the lead Cabinet Member / officers, the Inquiry Panel has decided it can conclude formal monitoring of the inquiry recommendations.

3.3.2 The Panel were happy with the progress made to date and were pleased to hear about the positive impact that the Inquiry has made. They heard that:

- As a result of the Inquiry the profile of the matters raised by the Panel has increased significantly, across the entire Council, from those working on climate change matters through to Audit, for example, as well as at senior management level, so the Panel's focus and interest has highlighted the importance of the matters reviewed, particularly the work area's ability to be a driver of and an agent of important change.
- Wider trends have been magnified by the Panel's focus and there has been a high degree of alignment between the Panel's focus and Cabinet's response and thus a general commitment to the direction of travel articulated, showing the strategic alignment of the work and its importance to the future of the Council's operation and impact on its wider environment.

3.3.3 The Panel heard about the progress being made across all the recommendations, including for example:

- In relation to Recommendation 1, 2, 3 and 4 a process to ensure the outcomes in relation to social justice, localism, biodiversity and the natural environment are recorded and reported upon, is in the process of being developed. The Panel heard that both the Welsh and UK governments are also looking at this and that the process put in place in Swansea with dovetail with this work.
- A Schools Guide to Procurement has been developed in conjunction with schools and has now been published and is being used in schools across Swansea.

3.3.4 The Panel agreed to conclude formal follow up of the Inquiry after satisfying themselves that good progress has been made with all the recommendations. They heard that 9 of the recommendations are now complete and that good progress has been made with those recommendations that are outstanding. They were reassured to hear

that all the necessary pieces are in place to ensure ongoing improvement in those areas where the recommendations are incomplete.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Letters Log – 2023-24

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Letters / Responses

Scrutiny Letters Log (2023-2024)

Ave. Response Time (days):

17 (target within 21 days)

% responses within target:

50

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Meeting Date	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received
1	Adult Services Performance Panel	02-May	Adult Services Complaints; Policy Commitments; Review of the Year	Care Services	23-May	n/a
2	Committee	16-May	Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Partnership	Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership	08-Jun	n/a
3	Education Performance Panel	15-Jun	ALN, Estyn inspection outcomes, new curriculum and work plan agreement	Education & Learning	26-Jun	n/a
4	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	27-Jun	Road Repairs	Environment & Infrastructure	10-Jul	n/a
5	Partnersiaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group	19-Jun	Regional Education Scrutiny	Education & Learning	10-Jul	n/a
6	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	20-Jun	Performance Monitoring; Regional Adoption Service	Care Services	12-Jul	n/a
7	Adult Services Performance Panel	28-Jun	Performance Monitoring; CIW Care Home Inspections	Care Services	19-Jul	n/a
8	Committee	18-Jul	Pre-decision Scrutiny - FPR7 Redevelopment of 277-278 Oxford Street - Community Hub Project	Joint Corporate Services & Performance and Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	19-Jul	n/a
9	Education Performance Panel	13-Jul	School Attendance and School Exclusions	Education & Learning	24-Jul	04-Aug

10	Development & Regeneration Performance Panel	11-Jul	Swansea Arena and Regeneration Monitoring Report	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	26-Jul	n/a
11	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	02-Aug	Annual wellbeing report; Residential Care Services	Care Services	29-Aug	n/a
12	Adult Services Performance Panel	07-Aug	WAO Report 'Together We Can'; Tackling Poverty Grants Impact Report; Direct Payments Case Studies		29-Aug	n/a
13	Education Performance Panel	14-Sep	Looked after children education support and 10 education recommendations as referred by previous CDC	Education & Learning	26-Sep	n/a
14	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	05-Sep	Revenue and HRA Outturns 22-23	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	28-Sep	n/a
15	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	05-Sep	Annual Performance Monitoring Report and Annual Review of Performance 22/23	Corporate Services & Performance	28-Sep	n/a
16	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	05-Sep	Copr Bay	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	28-Sep	n/a
17	Adult Services Performance Panel	05-Sep	Performance Monitoring; WAO Report 'A Missed Opportunity'	Care Services	02-Oct	n/a
18	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	13-Sep	Presentation by Young Carers; Adolescent Strategy	Care Services	02-Oct	24-Oct

19	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	26-Sep	Q1 Performance Monitoring Report	Corporate Services & Performance	19-Oct	n/a
20	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	26-Sep	Capital Outturn and Financing 22/23	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	19-Oct	n/a
21	Committee	18-Oct	Pre-decision Scrutiny - Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operating System	Service Transformation	19-Oct	n/a
22	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	03-Oct	Water Quality; Planning Enforcement: Nature and Biodiversity	Corporate Services & Performance	26-Oct	
23	Committee	19-Sep	Active Travel	Environment & Infrastructure	26-Oct	n/a
23	Education Performance Panel	19-Oct	Gorseinon Primary School looking at School Development Plan	Education & Learning	31-Oct	n/a
24	Inquiry Panel	24-Oct	Procurement Impact / Follow up on progress	Corporate Services & Performance	31-Oct	n/a
25	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	17-Oct	Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report	Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	31-Oct	
26	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	17-Oct	Audit Wales Report - Setting Well-being Objectives	Corporate Services & Performance	31-Oct	n/a
27						
28						
29						
29						
30						
31						



**To/
Councillor Andrew Stevens
Cabinet Member for Environment &
Infrastructure**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

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SPC/2023-24/3

26 October 2023

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 19 September 2023. It is about Active Travel. A formal written response is not required but please see further information required by 16 November.

Dear Councillor Stevens,

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 September Scrutiny of Active Travel

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session, which focussed on a specific aspect of your Cabinet portfolio responsibilities, namely Active Travel. This was subject of previous Committee discussion in February 2021, with then Cabinet Member, Mark Thomas, on the Active Travel Consultation Process following some public concerns raised at the time.

We thank you for attending the meeting and providing a written report covering Active Travel. We thank Jack Palmer, Active Travel Officer, for his contributions, taking us through the detail, as well as the input of other officers in attendance. Your report provided an overview of the statutory requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 and an overview of the various strands of work that make up Swansea Council's Active Travel delivery programme. It explains what is meant by 'Active Travel', how Active Travel schemes are identified, funded, and developed, and how the Council monitors the uptake and impact of Active Travel in Swansea.

You highlighted to the Committee that:

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- 'Active Travel' is about planning, improvement and promoting routes for walking and cycling (and other active modes of travel) to displace private car journeys for purposeful journeys to a destination such as work, school, or the shops. This is a legislative requirement under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.
- Councils are required to produce Active Travel Network Maps (ATNM) - most recently these Maps were developed in Swansea throughout 2021 with various consultation and engagement carried out in the process, and Swansea's ATNM was approved in August 2022. ATNMs are to be revisited every 3 years.
- The Council bids for Welsh Government funding to improve / expand its Active Travel network. The Council has an ambitious Active Travel programme which has a record of securing high levels of Welsh Government capital grant funding. There is just over 141km of walking and cycling routes, with over 7km being added or improved in the last financial year (2022/23).
- Issues raised during Scrutiny of the Active Travel Consultation Process in February 2021 have been taken on board, to strengthen stakeholder / public engagement.
- In accordance with the Act, the Council submits annual reports to the Welsh Government on spending on Active Travel, how it is being promoted, and levels of use. These reports are available to view publicly on the Council's [webpages](#).

The Scrutiny session enabled the Committee to consider the Council's responsibilities / priorities, work / plans, achievements, impact, and improvement on 'Active Travel' and provide challenge on actions and performance, as well as helping to inform future thinking. We were particularly interested in how things have developed over the years, including improvements to community consultation / engagement, Active Travel take up / usage (impact on numbers cycling / walking); costs / benefits, and relevant issues. Ultimately, we wanted to know how successful this has all been.

It was a very helpful and useful session, and this letter reflects on what we learnt from the information presented, questions, and discussion. It shares the views of the Committee and highlights any outstanding issues / actions for your response - key issues are summarised below.

Consultation & Engagement

We discussed the experience over the years. There was a recognition that consultation and engagement processes are subject of continuous improvement with learning from experience. We noted that the Council has always adhered to Welsh Government Guidance, but in line with growing community awareness and interest in Active Travel the Council has stepped up its activity and efforts to engage as many people as possible to inform plans and schemes, which the Committee has welcomed.

We noted that Swansea's ATNM was informed by extensive early engagement with Councillors and stakeholders, and by a 12-week public consultation. An initial engagement exercise, funded and implemented across Wales by Welsh Government, used an interactive online mapping tool for people to map out issues and opportunities in the network which received 3,782 visitors and 3,210 contributions made by 785 respondents. This feedback informed the creation of a draft ATNM alongside wider stakeholder engagement. As a result of the formal 12-week public consultation, a further 346 responses were submitted and several detailed letters and emails from stakeholder groups received. Consultation was widely promoted through newsletters, social media posts, briefing notes to all ward members, a series of press releases, lessons and surveys in schools, publicity materials such as posters and five face-to-face drop-in events. It was clarified that consultation on what may actually be delivered on specific routes can only take place if the route is approved for funding. Where routes are taken forward for development, there will be scheme-specific engagement with local Councillors, interest groups, and local communities.

The creation of a new role of Active Travel Officer (in 2022) to recognise the increased workload and increasing importance of the Active Travel programme in recent years, has helped to improve public information / awareness of Active Travel, and consultation and engagement activities.

Challenges associated with dealing with conflicting opinions / views during consultation were discussed. We acknowledged it was a difficult balancing act and it may leave some people unhappy despite a viable scheme, but it was important that anyone concerned is able to have a say and that the Council / department / decision-makers are mindful of all views.

Safety

Active Travel guidance stresses the need for routes to be safe and comfortable. We reflected experiences with certain routes where busy carriageways have been narrowed to create room for Active Travel routes, e.g., Mayals, increasing the risk of collision between road users, cyclists, and pedestrians. We sought assurance that the Council was monitoring the issue of safety across Active Travel routes, and acting where necessary.

You explained there was clear design guidance around the allocation / re-allocation of road space, which may necessitate slower traffic and conditions that road users must adapt to. It was stressed that the Council has statutory obligations regarding road safety and regularly monitors the situation across Swansea (in conjunction with the Police) and would respond where there is an incidence of accidents. It was noted that there is no specific speed limit for cyclists in law, however there would be an expectation that cyclists have regard for the safety of those around them. Any incidents regarding road users / pedestrian safety would need to be reported to the Police.

Community Benefits

We asked about the 'Community Benefits' programme, delivered through Active Travel schemes using local contractors from the South West Wales Regional Civil Engineering Construction Framework, providing a number of local benefits as part of the construction of Active Travel routes, including free Active Travel equipment to local schools. We noted that in the past this has included free bikes, shelters, scooters, and toolkits for teachers, and has benefitted a significant number of schools across the Swansea area. Active Travel schemes have also delivered new seating, heritage information, placemaking features and greenery which make walking and cycling through communities more attractive and enjoyable. You provided examples where new benches have been installed (Townhill), greenery has been planted (Gorseinon), and interpretation boards have been put providing information on local history / heritage (Pontarddulais / Grovesend, Hafod, Gowerton, Clydach).

Active Travel and Tourism / Leisure

We discussed the links between Active Travel and Tourism / Leisure, given that Active Travel routes have the potential to attract visitors keen on cycling and walking. As such we asked about the possible use of Core Allocation Funding for Minor Work, referred to in your report, for enhancements to routes such as information boards and/or signage on local places of interest along routes across Swansea.

You recognised the link between Active Travel and Tourism / Leisure and would consider anything that would make routes more enjoyable and add value, however highlighted that there were stringent parameters to be adhered to when applying for Active Travel funding – as recreation / leisure is secondary to the main objective of routes being used for purposeful journeys to a destination such as work, school or the shops, shifting away from car use.

Nevertheless, Active Travel routes will be used for leisure (if not created for that purpose) and the Committee felt that with growing interest in eco-tourism the Tourism Department could help to promote our Active Travel network, and maximise usage and the wider benefits to our area. We noted that the Council's Countryside Access Team supports residents wishing to maintain, improve or expand walking and cycling routes which are primarily used for leisure or tourism, including the expansive Public Rights of Way network. Working together with Tourism and Countryside Access may also help identify any gaps in the network, where there is potential for both 'purposeful' journeys and tourism / leisure. We would encourage you to discuss further with your Cabinet colleague(s).

Maintenance

Your report stated that the Active Travel Fund provides 100% grant funding to secure the development and delivery of schemes. But any revenue costs (e.g., cost of maintaining new Active Travel routes or infrastructure) arising from capital schemes, must be met by existing internal revenue budgets, with no additional funding available to meet these costs, i.e., Active Travel routes are to be treated as part of the overall highway network. Clearly this places additional pressures on both already stretched Highways Maintenance and Cleansing budgets, and, with a growing Active Travel network, was a concern to the Committee.

We were told that there is a small sum with maintenance budgets (£24k per annum) set aside for Active Travel assets. This is in stark contrast to the £23m funding allocation spent in Swansea between 2018/19 and 2022/23. Whilst many routes are new and may have limited maintenance requirement now, at some point in the future we will need the resources to avoid our network going into disrepair, and at worst becoming unsafe. This needs to be addressed in future budgets. It was also important that the Active Travel network is incorporated into cleansing regimes. You recognised maintenance is an issue, and told us that every opportunity to raise with Welsh Government officials is taken.

Monitoring & Evaluation

We noted that the main objective of Active Travel is described as achieving modal shift by displacing private car journeys with walking and cycling. As such, this must be considered the main factor when assessing the success, or otherwise, of Active Travel. We asked about evidence locally to indicate whether this modal shift is indeed taking place. It was unclear from the discussion whether we can definitively point to this outcome, though acknowledged that it is part of a generational / longer-term strategy to improve the health and well-being of our citizens, and a more sustainable future. Nevertheless, it is important to monitor and analyse usage, and have data that can show the effect that Active Travel is having, and trends, that will build more confidence in this work. Otherwise, there is a danger that the public will see Active Travel as a 'white elephant'. We noted challenges associated with changing behavioural habits in terms of travel preferences, and that Active Travel routes were being used in a variety of ways, some by people not necessarily forsaking car travel.

The Committee heard that the Council actively monitors existing and newly delivered routes on the walking and cycling network, enabling it to assess and respond to any issues raised, gather information for future development of the network and to meet reporting requirements set out by the Welsh Government. We noted that user satisfaction / travel habit surveys are also carried out.

We discussed measures in place to record walking and cycling usage (before and after a scheme has been delivered), and asked how this has informed plans. We were told that there are 23 fixed cycle / pedestrian counter units positioned at strategic locations across the Active Travel network which collect data on usage levels which inform both the Council's reporting duties and provide baseline data which contributes toward the business case of future schemes. Nine of these counters were installed over the last year, and work has been undertaken to upgrade the older counters to count pedestrian as well as cycle numbers. Furthermore, within the Highways and Transportation service area, a Survey Team is also tasked with undertaking ad-hoc temporary cycle counts using pneumatic tube technology, camera surveys and conducting face-to-face surveys with those travelling on routes. It was reported that as part of the 2023/24 Active Travel programme, the Council is due to commence a programme of work with walking and cycling charity Sustrans to engage with schools in Swansea which are either near recently completed Active Travel routes or where new schemes are being developed. The aim of this is to ensure that young people have a say in how new proposals are informed and are engaged in evaluating how effective they have found recently completed schemes in changing their travel habits.

The Committee was told that the Council can see trends and, over the period pre-Covid pandemic to present, usage is on the up. The Committee would like more information on the data / statistics / feedback that the Council has available regarding Active Travel usage, which you indicated could be provided. We would be grateful if you can send this information to scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk by 16 November.

Future Plans

We asked about plans for the next wave of Active Travel Projects, and decision-making. We noted that there is an annual cycle of funding bids to Welsh Government based on the agreed Active Travel Network Map. Schemes ready to be taken forward will be in this year's bid. You stated that the outcome of the bid would be reported to Cabinet usually around June / July each year, for approval to proceed with expenditure on associated projects and adding to the Capital Programme. Scheme specific local Councillor, stakeholder, and community engagement would then follow on the detail.

Some Committee members took the opportunity to ask you about schemes in the pipeline affecting their area(s) e.g., the Newton – Mumbles Scheme which is still in its early stage. Individual Councillors can of course contact you / officer directly to discuss local Schemes further.

Your Response

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

Yours sincerely,

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

COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk



**To/
Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet
Member for Service Transformation
(Deputy Leader)**

BY EMAIL
cc: Cabinet Members

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Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

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*Date
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Scrutiny

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SPC/2023-24/2

18 October 2023

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the Committee meeting on 17 October 2023. It is about the Cabinet report / proposed decision on the Oracle Project. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

**Pre-decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Report:
Oracle Project Closure Process & Transition to New Operating Model**

The Scrutiny Programme Committee met on 17 October 2023 to consider the report that you intend to present and recommend to Cabinet on 19 October. We thank you, the Leader, and officers for attending the meeting to present the report and answer questions.

Your Cabinet report provides an update on the end of the Oracle Fusion system implementation, advising that the system is now live therefore the project will soon be closing and transitioning into the new permanent Oracle operating model, with Cabinet being asked to approve the £500,000 contingency budget for the project remaining in the earmarked Oracle Reserve to be used for the pending change requests from services and any additional in-year licence costs following review.

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As you know, the Committee considered a previous report on the Oracle Project 12 months ago, which advised of additional investment that was required to meet unavoidable costs associated with the pandemic and recovery from it. £6.1m was attributed to unavoidable delays as a direct result of the pandemic. That report (October 2022) indicated that the projected cost would be just under £10.8m plus the £500,000 contingency, compared with the original estimated cost of £4.8m in a September 2019 Cabinet report. Following the Committee meeting last year, we planned to have a follow up meeting in order to seek clarity on total project cost, as well as explore if the new system is functioning well and as planned, how successful the implementation has been, notable achievements / benefits, and whether there have been any issue(s) arising concerning any aspect of the project and modules, including how this project has addressed any relevant areas of corporate risk and/or governance issues. We note from the current Cabinet report that a case made to Welsh Government to meet the pandemic related extra costs was, as the Committee had anticipated, unsuccessful.

We are writing to confirm our views on the report and proposed decision, for Cabinet to consider before it makes a decision.

You highlighted to the Committee that:

- The new Oracle System went live, as planned, on 1 April this year, with major Council systems, such as Payroll, stable and operating smoothly. We noted your praise for all involved in delivering this project, through a difficult period, recognising the size and scale of the task.
- The new system is resilient and secure which helps to mitigate cyber and ICT Disaster recovery risks on the corporate risk register. We noted the examples provided on delivery of Project objectives and benefits / improvements that have been realised. We were told that feedback from staff using the new system has been positive.
- Some teething issues have emerged but have been worked through, mostly around integration with other systems, but to date there is only one outstanding issue relating to integration with a pensions system, but this has not affected the payment of pensions, and is close to resolution. The Project will then close and move into the new permanent operating model, as 'business as usual'.
- The previous project board will be replaced by a Fusion Change Board going forward, which will comprise service leads from across the Council. This new Board will oversee and approve any changes or new developments to the system as well as the quarterly patch releases from Oracle.
- Oracle will constantly develop and evolve the system, some based on recommendations directly from the public sector user group. In addition, the Council will work to maximise the new functionality within Fusion to improve business processes and operational efficiency.

- The new Oracle Fusion Cloud system represents a major upgrade and will have regular updates with the potential to serve the Council for the next 20+ years.

Committee Feedback

In the time available to review your report and ask questions, the Committee wish to bring the following to the attention of Cabinet:

- **Project Cost** - there has been a significant increase in project cost, with the final figure being reported as just under £13.2m. Taking into account the additional costs attributed to the pandemic would indicate an increase of £2.3m. We acknowledge how things have developed since 2019 and reasons for the increased spend, and recognise the complexities of the project and delivery / implementation of major ICT systems.
- **Contingency Budget** – given cost pressures it is good that the contingency budget of £500k remains intact however there are concerns around how far this contingency budget will stretch in view of reported ‘unknown cost of changes’ and ‘additional costs’ in relation to changes to Oracle licencing. You acknowledged that Cabinet would need to consider the possibility of additional costs exceeding the contingency budget, with future costs and funding options needing to form part of budget setting for 2024-25 onwards.
- **Ongoing Costs** - it was confirmed by the Director of Finance that further use of the Capital Equalisation Reserve would not be appropriate for on-going costs associated with the new operating model and suitable arrangements will need to be in place for these costs to be built into base revenue budgets. We noted that further changes will be anticipated as the Council continues with transformation and improving business processes and operational efficiency. The Fusion Change Board will play a vital role in considering change requests, seeing business cases and prioritising / co-ordinating work, and identifying the financial implications. It was noted that managing capacity across the Council to deal with this as well as ‘business as usual’ is an on-going risk that is being monitored.

I will attend the meeting on Thursday to address Cabinet with the feedback from Scrutiny, as contained in this letter.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful. No response is required unless there are any material changes to the report and/or variation to the recommendation/proposed Cabinet decision, which the Committee should be alerted to.

Yours sincerely,

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

COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee
✉ cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk



To:
Councillor David Hopkins
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
and Performance

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Michelle Roberts
Gofynnwch am:
Scrutiny Office 01792 637256
Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrchol:
e-Mail scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
e-Bost:
Date 30 October 2023
Dyddiad:

Summary: This is a letter from the Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance following the meeting of the Panel on 24 October 2023. The Panel met to discuss the impact and progress with the recommendations contained in the inquiry report that was agreed at Cabinet on the 20 October 2023.

Dear Cllr Hopkins,

Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – 24 October 2023

We would like to thank you, the Head of Commercial Services and the Principal Officer Commercial Services for attending our meeting and providing a detailed report giving progress with the scrutiny recommendations that had been agreed by Cabinet on the 20 October 2022. We are writing to you as the Cabinet Member to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the views of the Panel.

We heard that 9 of the 14 recommendations are completed and we agreed that good progress had been made with the remaining 5.

We were pleased to hear from you that the inquiry had been an inclusive and a beneficial piece of work that had helped to further improve procurement within the City and County of Swansea.

We were encouraged to hear about the positives impacts of the inquiry, including:

- As a result of the Inquiry the profile of the matters raised by the Panel has increased significantly, across the entire Council – from those working on climate change matters through to Audit, for example, as well as at senior management level, so the Panel's focus and interest has highlighted the importance of the

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matters reviewed, particularly the work area's ability to be a driver of and an agent of important change.

- Wider trends have been magnified by the Panel's focus and there has been a high degree of alignment between the Panel's focus and Cabinet's response and thus a general commitment to the direction of travel articulated, showing the strategic alignment of the work and its importance to the future of the Council's operation and impact on its wider environment

From our discussions with you and the officers from Procurement we are satisfied that good progress had been made with all 14 recommendations and are happy to sign of the Scrutiny Inquiry and its recommendations as complete.

Your Response

We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter but on this occasion do not require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR CHRIS HOLLEY

Convener, Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel
Cllr.Chris.Holley@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 14



Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 November 2023

Date and Time of Upcoming Scrutiny Panel / Working Group / Regional Meetings

a) 22 November at 2.00pm – Scrutiny Working Group

- Public Rights of Way

b) 23 November at 4.00pm – Education Performance Panel

- Reducing Disadvantage in Schools, including Pupil Development Grant, roll out of Free School Meals, cost of the School day and School Uniform
- School Improvement Service Annual Update
- Cookery in Schools
- Feedback from recent Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group

c) 28 November at 10.00am – Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel

- Environmental Tourism

d) 5 December at 4.30pm – Child & Family Services Performance Panel

- Performance Monitoring (including session on qualitative auditing)
- Update on Child and Family Improvement Programme
- Update on Contextual Missing Exploited & Trafficked (CMET)

e) 12 December at 10.00am – Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel

- Mid Term Budget Statement 2023/24
- Review of Revenue Reserves
- Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring Report

f) 12 December at 4.30pm – Adult Services Performance Panel

- Performance Monitoring
- Briefing on Llais (which has replaced Community Health Councils)

g) 14 December at 4.00pm – Education Services Performance Panel

- Annual Education Performance against identified priorities (RAG) including Estyn Inspection recommendations progress update
- Cabinet Member Q & A Session

h) 19 December at 4.00pm – Scrutiny Programme Committee

- Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities – Support for Businesses (Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism)
- Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty (annual item)

Scrutiny Meetings are multi-location meetings, held in the Gloucester Room, Guildhall as well as accessed remotely via MS Teams, unless otherwise stated.