



Dinas a Sir Abertawe

Hysbysiad o Gyfarfod

Fe'ch gwahoddir i gyfarfod

Pwyllgor Rhaglen Chraffu

Lleoliad: Cyfarfod Aml-Leoliad - Ystafell Gloucester, Neuadd y Ddinas / MS Teams

Dyddiad: Dydd Mawrth, 13 Chwefror 2024

Amser: 4.00 pm

Cadeirydd: Y Cyngorydd Peter Black CBE

Aelodaeth:

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

Aelodau Cyfetholedig Statudol: Beth Allender a/ac Elizabeth Lee

Cynghorwyr sy'n Aelodau Cyfetholedig: C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, S M Jones, L R Jones a/ac S E Keeton

Gwyllo ar-lein: <http://tiny.cc/spc132>

Gweddarlledu: Gellir ffilmio'r cyfarfod hwn i'w ddarlledu'n fyw neu'n ddiweddarach drwy wefan y cyngor. Drwy gymryd rhan, rydych yn cytuno i gael eich ffilmio ac i'r delweddau a'r recordiadau sain hynny gael eu defnyddio at ddibenion gweddarlledu a/neu hyfforddiant o bosib.

Agenda

Rhif y Dudalen.

1 Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.

2 Datgeliadau o fuddiannau personol a rhagfarnol.

www.abertawe.gov.uk/DatgeluCysylltiadau

3 Gwahardd pleidleisiau chwip a datgan chwipiau'r pleidiau.

4 Cofnodion.

Cymeradwyo a llofnodi, fel cofnod cywir, gofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol.

1 - 5

5 Cwestiynau gan y cyhoedd.

Gellir cyflwyno cwestiynau'n ysgrifenedig i'r Gwasanaethau Democratiaid Democratiaeth@abertawe.gov.uk hyd at ganol dydd y diwrnod cyn y cyfarfod. Bydd cwestiynau ysgrifenedig yn cael eu blaenoriaethu. Gall y cyhoedd ddod a gofyn cwestiynau'n uniongyrchol

os bydd amser. Rhaid i gwestiynau fod yn berthnasol i'r eitemau ar ran agored yr agenda ac ymdrinnir â nhw o fewn cyfnod o 10 munud.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|------------------|
| 6 | Galw penderfyniad y Cabinet i mewn - Fframwaith Siarter Cwsmeriaid a Safonau Gwasanaeth. | 6 - 47 |
| 7 | Adroddiad Cynnydd Strategaeth y Gweithlu. | 48 - 122 |
| 8 | Adroddiadau Cynnydd y Panel Craffu Perfformiad: Newid yn yr Hinsawdd a Natur (Cynghorydd Sara Keeton, Cynullydd). | 123 - 128 |
| 9 | Aelodaeth paneli a gweithgorau craffu. | 129 - 130 |
| 10 | Rhaglen Waith Craffu.
Trafodaeth am:
a) Gynllun Gwaith y Pwyllgor.
b) Cyfleoedd Craffu Cyn Penderfynu.
c) Cynnydd gyda Phaneli a Gweithgorau Craffu | 131 - 162 |
| 11 | Llythyrau craffu. | 163 - 180 |
| 12 | Dyddiad ac amser cyfarfodydd paneli/gweithgorau sydd ar ddod. | 181 - 182 |

Cyfarfod nesaf: Dydd Mawrth, 19 Mawrth 2024 am 4.00 pm

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Pennaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd
Dydd Mercher, 7 Chwefror 2024

Cyswllt: Y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd Ffôn (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, 16 January 2024 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
W G Lewis
T M White

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P N May

Councillor(s)

V A Holland
S Pritchard

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley
P R Hood-Williams

S M Jones
L R Jones

Officer(s)

Matthew Bowyer
Stuart Davies
Alan Ferris
Brij Madahar
Debbie Smith
Mark Wade
Samantha Woon

Group Leader, Highways & Transportation
Head of Highways & Transportation
Road Safety Manager
Scrutiny Team Leader
Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Director of Place
Democratic Services Officer

Also present

Councillor R C Stewart - Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy

Councillor A S Stevens – Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): M Jones and F D O'Brien

Statutory Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

59 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

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

60 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.

61 Minutes.

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

62 Public Question Time.

None.

63 Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Q & A Session with Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy (Councillor Rob Stewart).

The Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy attended for Q & A session on his portfolio responsibilities.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on the following:

- Progress on Major Projects: Copr Bay – Willmot Dixon had taken over from the former contractor and progress was being made in regard to prioritising the outstanding work. Discussion regarding proposed new hotel next to the Arena ongoing.
- Swansea Arena Events / Ticket Sales – Question asked around performance against business plan, and relative numbers visiting for commercial performances vs events such as conferences where tickets may be free. Noted the Arena is a multi-use venue and a breakdown between conferences and commercial shows and other events such as rental of the arena for graduation ceremonies can be provided.
- City Centre Parking – Disabled Bay Provision – Concern expressed around temporary loss of spaces for development works and impact. Highways Officers had made visits to the City Centre to look at opportunities to relocate displaced disabled parking. Park Street, Pell Street and the rear of the Quadrant were being examined to mitigate the loss of disabled parking spaces.
- Innovative Living Building Development at Picton Yard – following a query about the proposed name for this building, noted that a naming policy report was being submitted to Council to consider a formal mechanism for naming and re-naming.
- Major Projects/New Projects for Swansea from 2024 onwards – focus would remain on completing the outstanding projects, however, opportunities existed in relation to the Albert hall, former Burtons, Mamma Mia's and the McDonald's building on the corner of Castle Square. The second phase of Copr Bay and progress in relation to Urban Splash, a National Gallery for Wales, the Aquarium and Skyline was detailed.

- Blue Eden – discussion around progress and concurrent developments in technology. Noted that the project comprised an integrated energy project and a number of elements had fallen into place. The Council were close to commencing work.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points– a written response would be provided to the Councillor further to their question at Council.
- Archive Service relocation to the former BHS building – the building would be state of the art and large enough to accommodate the Archives Service.
- Drainage Service – vast investment had been made in relation to the Service.
- Transformation Programme – Question around response to Audit Wales comments made in October 2023. Noted these were made a 'point in time' and feedback was largely positive. Recommendations have been taken on board and the Transformation Delivery Board was focussed on outcomes and impact.

The Chair thanked the Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy for his input.

Resolved that the Chair write to the Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy reflecting discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

64 Follow Up: Scrutiny Working Group - Road Safety.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure provided a report which updated Members on Road Safety issues of concern, following a Scrutiny Working Group on Road Safety in December 2022, and set out the approach being taken to build on road safety improvements achieved in recent years.

The Road Safety Manager took the Committee through the report highlighting certain aspects, including the Council's success in reducing the level and intensity of collisions.

Committee questioning and discussions focussed on the following:

- School Crossing Patrols – Concern around future provision. The Council remain committed to School Crossing Patrols. Noted that whilst there were no discontinued patrols, challenges existed with regard to recruitment.
- Signage/Banners Outside Schools – There has been no progress in increasing signage and banners outside schools on road safety.
- Kerbcraft & Road Safety Education Programmes - the Kerbcraft Programme required updating and representations had been made to the Welsh Government.

- Kerbcraft & Road Safety Education Programmes – 50 out of the 74 Primary Schools participate. The size of the Welsh Government grant does impact on the provision of the programme. Parents were encouraged to be involved via the website and literature provided to children for their parents.
- Road Safety Grant – it was difficult to quantify the impacts from the loss of Road Safety Grant. Evaluation takes a number of years and the increased workload to highways staff from the 20mph speed reduction scheme has compacted this challenge.
- Shared Use Paths – any issues with safety, e.g., provision of signage, should be directed to the Highways Help Desk.
- Coordination between planning, design and delivery of Active Travel Routes and the Road Safety Team – whilst challenges exist in terms of balancing different considerations, both services are integrated to ensure any safety issues are raised regarding Active Travel routes.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure and Officers for their input and expressed thanks to the Road Safety Team for their work.

Resolved that the Chair write to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure reflecting discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

65 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Child & Family Services (Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener).

Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams provided the Committee with a progress report on the work / activities of the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Child & Family Services.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Child & Family Services be noted.

66 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

No changes reported.

67 Scrutiny Work Programme.

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

The Chair referred to the final session of the Scrutiny Training & Development Programme:

- Self-Assessment of Scrutiny (two parts) – to be held on 17 January (online) /23 January (Lord Mayor's Reception Room, Guildhall)

The main items for the next Committee on 13 February comprised:

- Delivery against Workforce Development Strategy.

68 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair referred to the following letters, reflecting on recent Committee Scrutiny activity:

- Scrutiny Working Group – Public Rights of Way - Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure.

69 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 5.15 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

Call In of Cabinet Decision – Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework

Purpose:	To consider the Cabinet decision on Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework, in line with the Council's Call In procedure.
Content:	Original Cabinet decision and information on the Call In procedure including background, the role of Scrutiny and next steps.
Councillors are being asked to:	Consider the information provided in line with the Call In procedure and merits of the Call In.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer & Report Author:	Brij Madahar Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Call In of Cabinet Report

1.1 In accordance with the Council Constitution (Cabinet Procedure Rules, Part 4.4 Paragraphs 19 & 20 – **see Appendix 1**), the Committee is required to consider the Call In of a Cabinet decision made on 18 January 2024 on the following report:

- Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework (Report of the Chair of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee) - see **Appendix 2**

1.2 The Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet show the following decision being taken on this report:

Resolved that:

- 1) The Customer Charter & Service Standards Framework set out in Appendix A of the report be approved and adopted from 1 April 2024.
- 2) Authority be delegated to Directors and the relevant Cabinet Member, to make any minor changes to the Standards as appropriate and always in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance (Joint Deputy Leader of the Council) and the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation (Joint Deputy Leader of the Council).

2. Reason(s) for Call In

- 2.1 The Call In was requested by Councillor Sandra Joy, supported by Councillors Allan Jeffery, Peter May, and Stuart Rice, and deemed valid by the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Presiding Member. The reason(s) given for Calling In the decision are as follows:

The reason for the Call In is because we believe that the Cabinet made this decision without being fully appraised of the concerns expressed by members of the Corporate Services and Financial Resilience STC in a minuted meeting on 12th December, when this policy draft was discussed. They were under the impression that this policy draft had been accepted in its entirety by this STC, and that is not the case. The Chair of the Corporate Services and Financial Resilience STC omitted to share with the Cabinet members the concerns that were raised.

During this STC meeting, significant concerns were raised about the timescales for processing applications for free school meals. This is noted as 28 working days, almost six weeks. (Other timescales for people experiencing hardship were also raised in the meeting, but we are focussing on the direct impact on vulnerable children.)

Please note that children who are eligible for free school meals are some of the most vulnerable people in our society. They have no access to funds. Concern was expressed that such a child could potentially be in a position where they are unable to access any food during the day for up to six weeks.

The Council officer present informed the Committee that she would 'take that back to the Heads of Service' and 'feed back to you'. This did not happen until after the Cabinet had met and made their decision, so again they were not appraised of the concerns raised.

Obviously, supporting evidence that this was raised can be provided, both via the minutes of the meetings referred to here and the recordings of both meetings: the STC and the Cabinet meeting, as well as subsequent email exchanges with Council officers.

In summary, we believe that, the decision to adopt the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework without amendment is unsafe, in that we believe the Cabinet would have been unlikely to accept that any vulnerable child should be expected to go without food every day for almost six weeks whilst adults process the required paperwork.

- 2.2 Extract from the Minutes of the Service Transformation Committee meeting referred to are attached as **Appendix 3**.

3. Role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee shall consider the reasons for the Call In against the decision made by Cabinet and will hear from lead Councillors and Officers involved in the decision-making process to respond to the Call In and answer questions.

- i) If satisfied with the explanation it will so indicate to enable the Cabinet decision, as made, to be implemented;
- ii) If 'no longer concerned', but not minded to indicate that it is 'satisfied with the explanation', it is in order for the Committee to resolve that 'the explanation be accepted but not endorsed by the Committee';
- iii) If still concerned about the decision, then it may refer it back to Cabinet or the relevant decision maker / body for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns. The Cabinet, decision maker / body shall then reconsider its decision before making a final decision.

- 3.2 Any recommendations from the Committee, having considered the merits of the Call In, will be communicated to relevant decision-makers.

4. Response to Call In

- 4.1 The Councillor(s) who have made the Call In have been in communication with relevant Councillors / Officers about their concerns and a way forward. A note from the Council's Chief Executive (attached as **Appendix 4**) explains what the Council is able to do in terms of processing applications for Free School Meals, for the elements within its control, and indicates intention to make a change to the Service Standards.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is being asked to consider and review the Cabinet decision and as such there are no additional direct legal implications beyond those set out in the Cabinet report seeking that original decision.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is being asked to consider and review the Cabinet decision and as such there are no additional direct financial implications beyond those set out in the Cabinet report seeking that original decision.

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

7.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is being asked to consider and review the Cabinet decision and as such there are no additional direct integrated assessment implications beyond those set out in the Cabinet report seeking that original decision.

Background papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Extract from Council Constitution - Call In Procedure and Flow Chart (<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/documents/s97888/Cabinet%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf?LLL=0>)

Appendix 2: Cabinet Report - 18 January 2024 (<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ielIssueDetails.aspx?IId=51867&PlanId=0&Opt=3&LLL=0#AI49583>)

Appendix 3: Extract from Minutes of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee – 12 December 2023 (<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/documents/g11260/Printed%20minutes%20Tuesday%2012-Dec-2023%2014.00%20Corporate%20Services%20Financial%20Resilience%20Service%20Trans.pdf?T=1&LLL=0>)

Appendix 4: Response of the Chief Executive



EXTRACT FROM Council Constitution, Part 4.4 - Rules of Procedure (Cabinet Procedure Rules)

19 Call In Procedure

1 Executive Decisions

- a) Where a decision is made by Cabinet, the minutes of the decision shall be published electronically and made available at the Guildhall within 2 clear working days of the decision being made by the Head of Democratic Services.
- b) The Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee shall also be sent electronic copies of the minutes of all such decisions.
- c) The minutes shall:
 - i) Bear the date on which they are published; and
 - ii) Specify that the decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 3 clear working days (the Call In period) after the publication of the decision, unless called in pursuant to these Procedure Rules.

2 How to Call In an Executive Decision?

The Chair and / or Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee or any 4 Councillors may Call In a decision by giving notice and stating the reason(s) for a Call In, in writing (preferably via e-mail) to the Head of Democratic Services within the Call In period. The Head of Democratic Services will then notify the decision taker of the Call In via e-mail.

3 Validity of Call In

The Head of Democratic Services upon consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Presiding Member may rule that a Call In is not valid if:

- a) It is not made by 23.59 on the 3rd clear working day of the publication of the decision;
- b) The decision is exempt from Call In on account of urgency provisions as set out below and also where:
 - i) The decision being called in is the same, or broadly the same, as a previous Call In within the last six months;
 - ii) The decision has been subject to pre-decision scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information/evidence;
 - iii) The Call In does not specify precisely which aspects of the decision is to be challenged or provides too little information.

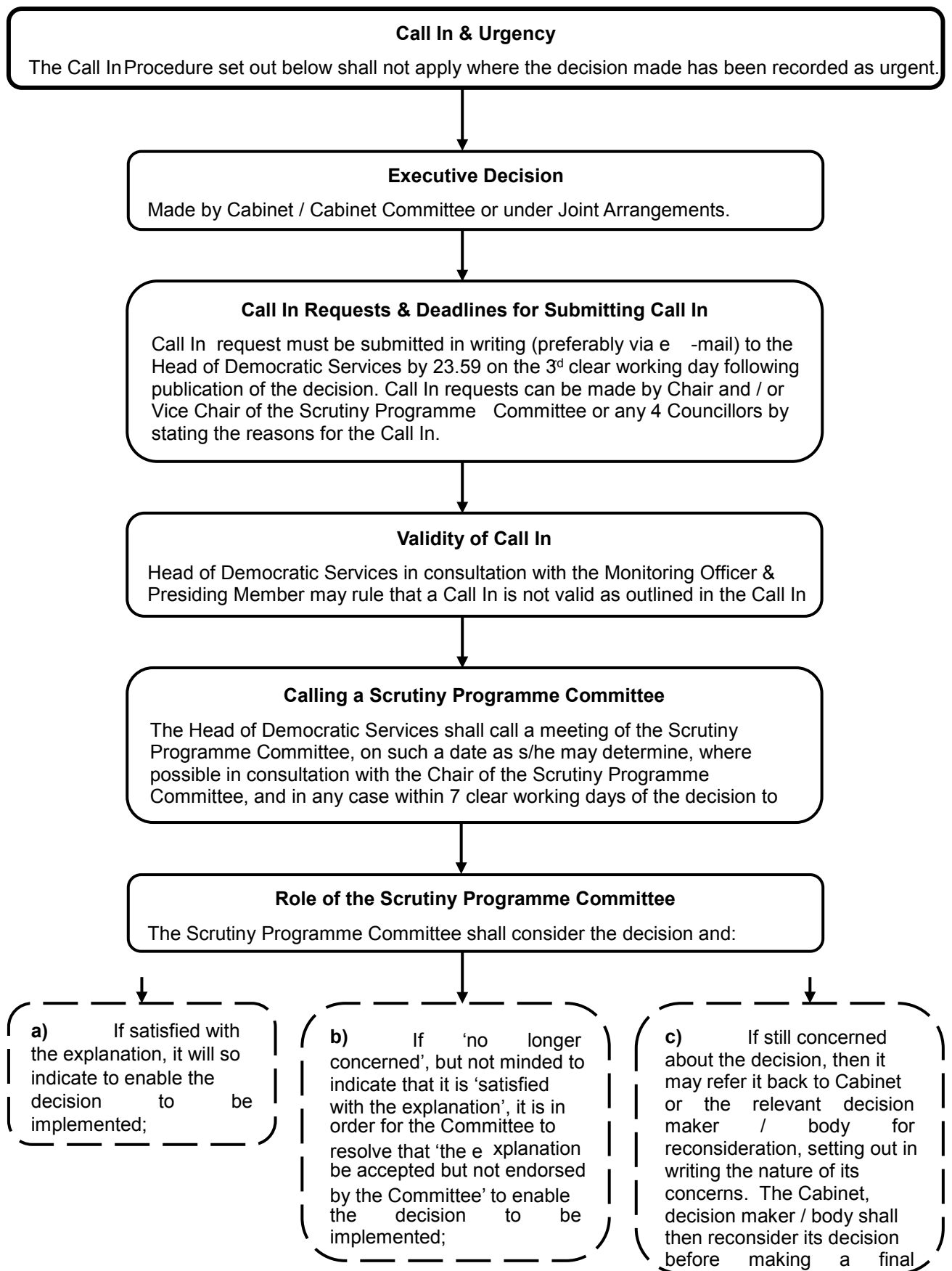
4 **Role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee**

- a) The Head of Democratic Services shall call a meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee on such date as s/he may determine, where possible after consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee, and in any case within 7 clear working days of the decision to Call In.
Note: For the purpose of this paragraph, the last working day before Christmas and the working days between Christmas and the New Year shall not be counted as working days.
- b) At its meeting, the Scrutiny Programme Committee will consider the called in decision.
- c) The Scrutiny Programme Committee shall consider the reasons for the Call In and the decision and:
 - i) If satisfied with the explanation it will so indicate to enable the decision to be implemented; ii) If 'no longer concerned', but not minded to indicate that it is 'satisfied with the explanation', it is in order for the Committee to resolve that 'the explanation be accepted but not endorsed by the Committee'; iii) If still concerned about the decision, then it may refer it back to Cabinet or the relevant decision maker / body for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns. The Cabinet, decision maker / body shall then reconsider its decision before making a final decision.

5 **Call In and Urgency**

- a) The Call In procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken is urgent. A decision will be urgent if either the Chief Executive, the Section 151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer certifies that any delay likely to be caused by the Call In procedure could seriously prejudice the Council or the public interest including failure to comply with statutory requirements;
- b) The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public, shall state whether the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to Call In.
- c) The operation of the provisions relating to Call In and urgency shall be monitored annually and a report submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary.

20 Call In Procedure Flowchart





Report of the Chair of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee

Cabinet – 18 January 2024

Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework

Purpose:	To recommend to Cabinet for approval and adoption the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework (Appendix A).
Policy Framework:	Successful and Sustainable Swansea Digital Strategy 2023-28
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance and Legal
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cabinet approves the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework (Appendix A), for adoption from the 1st April 2024. 2) Cabinet delegates authority to Directors and the relevant Cabinet Member, to make any minor changes to the Standards as appropriate and always in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader) and the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation (Deputy Leader).
Report Author:	Sarah Lackenby
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporate Services Service Transformation Committee discussed a draft Customer Charter and Service Standards on the 25th of July 2023, after which public consultation and engagement was undertaken in the form of:
- A survey published online and in paper copies at libraries and the reception in Civic Centre.

- Engagement with the Ageing Well Steering Group. This group is made up of partners and community groups and includes representation from all communities over 50.
 - The Council also asked people for feedback at a large engagement event in December, which had representation from groups who work with the Council on the LGBTQ+ Forum, Disability Liaison Group and Ageing Well.
- 1.2 Overall, 144 people responded and the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework (Appendix A) has been updated as a result of their feedback, which is highlighted in section 2 of this report.
- 1.3 The Charter and Standards are a dynamic set of guidelines. They will require constant review, and moving forward, will be updated in line with changes to legislation and working practices. Therefore, although it is recommended this version of the Charter and Standards is adopted, it will be subject to change and development moving forward.

2 Survey Consultation and Engagement Feedback

- 2.1 There were 73 responses to the survey of whom 81% were Swansea residents and 16% were Swansea Council staff.
- 2.2 A summary of feedback from residents who completed the survey includes the following:
- 84% of respondents agreed the overall promises laid out in the Charter are needed and 73% felt they will improve customer standards. Responding in a timely manner was raised throughout by several respondents.
 - With regard to accessing services online 76% of respondents felt they were the right promises and 68% felt they would improve customer standards. However, additional comments strongly highlighted the need for telephone and face-to-face channels alongside online services.
 - Regarding contacting Council services by email, 70% of respondents felt they were the right promises and 77% felt they would improve customer standards.
 - Regarding contacting Council services by phone, 77% of respondents felt they were the right promises and 68% felt they would improve customer standards. This is the area where responding in a timely manner was requested by most respondents to the survey.
 - Regarding residents visiting Council offices, 92% of respondents felt they were the right promises and 90% felt they would improve customer standards.
 - Regarding Council staff visiting residents, 96% of respondents felt they were the right promises and 90% felt they would improve customer standards.
- 2.3 With regard to the Service Standards listed for each service area, some comments were received around individual cases and current service requests, these will be passed to the relevant department.

- 2.4 In addition, the Partnership and Involvement Team provided the support for further direct engagement and feedback through both the Ageing Well Steering Group and a large engagement event in December. The event had representation from groups who work with the Council on the LGBTQ+ Forum, Disability Liaison Group and Ageing Well. 71 responses were received with feedback across the following themes:
- The importance of face-to-face access channels
 - Pocket guides were requested for useful information such as the Customer Charter and Service Standards
 - Requests for services to be available in more languages.

3. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 3.1 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.
- 3.1.1 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'.
- 3.1.2 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.
- 3.2 An IIA Screening Form has been completed (Appendix B) with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required. The IIA has been updated following the survey feedback and will continue to be reviewed. Summary of findings from the IIA screening:
- The Customer Charter and Service Standards will have a medium positive impact across all groups as residents and businesses will know what level of service to expect when they contact the Council.

- The Service Standards are already in place, some of which are statutory, therefore changes will not be possible for some areas.
- The Charter and Standards are dynamic and will be subject to change, for example, as a result of legislative or service changes. Moving forward, services may therefore also undertake their own consultation and engagement where changes are being proposed, this may include co-production where appropriate.
- A broad survey consultation has been undertaken and changes have been made to the Charter and Service Standards as a result, including:
 - A framework to reflect the dynamic nature of services.
 - Providing access to services and information in alternative formats, e.g. large print, braille etc.
 - Strengthening the need for telephone and face-to-face to support online channels.
 - Strengthening the timeliness of responses, especially when responding by phone.
- In addition to the survey, further engagement was undertaken with the Ageing Well Steering Group and through a large engagement event in December, which had representation from groups who work with the Council on the LGBTQ+ Forum, Disability Liaison Group and Ageing Well. Further suggestions are being evaluated, particularly the themes around more languages and handy pocket guides.
- This work delivers on the Transformation and Financial Resilience well-being goal and steps in the Corporate Plan. The aim of the Charter and Standards is to provide clear guidance to residents and businesses when they access Council services.
- Risks are considered to be low as Service Standards are already in place, some of which are statutory.
- The cumulative impact is considered to be positive at this stage in development, providing a firm framework for residents and businesses accessing Council services.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Providing access to information and services in alternative formats such as large print or braille may incur additional costs for some services. It is expected to be accommodated within existing budgets.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

- Appendix A Customer Charter and Service Standards
 Appendix B IIA Screening



CUSTOMER CHARTER & SERVICE STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

Customer Charter

The Swansea Council Customer Charter, combined with our published Service Standards, provide our framework for communicating how we will meet the expectations of our residents. The framework provides clear and concise statements, detailing ways by which we can measure and monitor customer service levels.

The Service Standards explain what each front-facing service delivers. They also describe the timescales within which you can expect us to deal with your query. We are committed to ensuring that you are completely satisfied with the service you are getting in line with our Standards.

Swansea Council is committed to putting our customers at the heart of everything we do and we welcome your feedback on how we can improve our services.

Our Customer Charter framework sets out our promises as to how we will deliver high quality services to you and the service standards we will provide to enable us to meet your expectations.

Our promises

We will:

- Provide you with quality services
- Ensure that we use plain language and have trained staff to answer your questions
- Be honest, approachable and polite, keeping your needs at the heart of everything we do
- Acknowledge and respond within the timescales laid out in our Service Standards
- Aim to answer your enquiry through the publicised first point of contact wherever possible
- Make sure the information we provide is accurate, up to date, and bilingual where required
- Provide information in alternative formats where requested, e.g. large print, braille
- Deliver services in a way which offers good value for money for the community
- Involve you in the design and delivery of our services wherever possible.

When you need to access services online, we will:

- Provide you with easy-to-use, accessible, bilingual online services with all the information you need in one place

- Publish a range of web addresses and emails so you can quickly access services or contact officers
- Deliver secure and trusted online services to you
- Help those residents unable to use online channels with telephone and face-to-face support.

If you email us, when we respond we will:

- Be clear, use plain language, and reply bilingually where appropriate
- Respond within the timescales laid out in our Service Standards.

If you phone the Council, we will:

- Aim to answer your call in a timely manner
- Give you alternative options and information for accessing services during busy periods
- Provide access to services in Welsh and other languages.

When you visit our public offices, we will:

- Provide an accessible space which is open during published hours
- Provide a welcoming, friendly and helpful atmosphere
- Aim to see you within 30 minutes (if you have to wait longer we will explain why).

If we visit you, we will:

- Arrive at the agreed appointment time (unless we are delayed, in which case we will contact you)
- Be helpful, polite, and treat you with respect and dignity.

When you speak with our staff we expect you to:

- Be helpful, polite, and treat us with respect and dignity
- Understand we will address unreasonable behaviour and may end the conversation / visit, or invoke our Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy if necessary.

Service Standards

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Benefits – Housing Benefit (HB)	Make a new claim for Housing Benefit or tell us about a change in your household circumstances that might affect an existing claim	If you have provided all the information we need, we will work out how much HB you are entitled to and tell you	28 working days	Web: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction - Swansea Email: benefits@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635353
Benefits – Council Tax Reduction (CTR)	Make a new claim for CTR or tell us about a change in your household circumstances that might affect an existing claim	If you have provided all the information we need, we will work out how much CTR you are entitled to and tell you	28 working days	Web: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction - Swansea Email: benefits@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635353
Benefits – Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Reduction (CTR)	Query entitlement/ payments / the potential impact of changes in circumstance on benefits / seek advice, support	We will explain our decisions/calculations and the regulations in a clear and concise way.	28 working days	Web: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction - Swansea Email: benefits@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635353
Breach of planning control	Report works where a property doesn't have planning permission or is breach of condition	Investigate your complaint and advise on course of action to be taken	12 weeks	Web: swansea.gov.uk/planningenforcement Email: enforcement.development@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635701
Building Control application	Submit a completed application form for building regulations	Register your application	Within 3 working days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/bcon Email: bcon@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792635636

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Building inspections	Request an Inspection	Carry out inspections while the work is taking place and we are happy to talk to you about an inspection programme for your scheme that suits you.	Where possible same working day, or within 24hrs of request. Future date inspection by arrangement.	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/bcon Email: bcon@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635636
Cemeteries	Search for a grave	We will conduct a search of municipal cemeteries	Within 5 working days	Web: Burials and cremations - Swansea Email: bereavementservices@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636389
Crematorium	Enquire about a memorialisation scheme for the crematorium	Provide information / costs and process application	Within 5 working days	Web: Burials and cremations - Swansea Email: bereavementservices@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636481
Registrars	Enquire to register a birth	Offer an appointment	Within 5 working days	Web: swansea.gov.uk/registrars Email: registrars@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 637444
Commercial land and property	Search for available land and property in Council ownership	We will advise on available council land and property.	Email contact 5 working days. Tel contact 2 working days If call unable to be answered and message	Web: Land and property for sale or lease - Swansea Email: Corporate.Property@swansea.gov.uk Phone: General enquiries (property / asset management) 01792 636727

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
			being left requesting a call back	
Committee agendas	To find out information on any meetings such as council, cabinet, planning etc.	We will advise and help in your search for information on items reported to the various meetings of council.	5 working days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy Email: democracy@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636923
Councillors	To find out information on any our 75 councillors.	We will assist and advise with queries such as who is my local councillor or relevant cabinet member for a service area.	3 workings days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/councillors Email: democracy@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636923
Complaints	Make a complaint about any service	We will investigate the complaint and respond to you. We take complaints very seriously and use them as an opportunity to improve our services.	Corporate complaints: Stage 1: 10 working days Stage 2: 20 working days Social Services complaints follow a specific Policy, please visit the link	Web: Corporate complaints policy Social Services complaints policy Email: complaints@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 637345
Council-owned land	To make general queries including ownership	We will advise if land is council owned and confirm areas of responsibility	Email contact 5 working days. Tel contact 2 working days If call unable	Email: Corporate.Property@swansea.gov.uk

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
			to be answered and message being left requesting a call back	Phone: General enquiries (property / asset management) 01792 636727
Council Tax	Report a change of address / change of ownership or occupation of a property	Take the details off you and make the necessary updates so a correct bill can be issued	28 working days	Web: Register/report a change of circumstances that may affect your Council Tax - Swansea Email: council.tax@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635382
Council Tax	Ask to pay by direct debit	Take the details off you and set up a direct debit claim for whichever of the 4 available dates you choose	28 working days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/paycounciltax Email: council.tax@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635382
Council Tax	Tell us about difficulties you may have with paying your bill	We will listen and do our best to agree a reasonable, mutually acceptable payment plan with you. We will also offer to refer you for independent financial advice and tell you about Council Tax Reduction	28 working days	Web: Problems paying your Council Tax bill - Swansea Email: council.tax@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635382
Council Tax	Make a payment	We will take the payment from you promptly	3 days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/paycounciltax

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
				Email: council.tax@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 0300 4562765
Dangerous structures	Report a dangerous structure.	To react within 3 hours/ 24 hours depending on severity.	Deal with imminent dangers within 3 hours. Non-imminent danger the next working day.	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/bcon Email: bcon@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792635636
Dog fouling/litter	Report locations where dog fouling and/or litter is creating a hazard and/or nuisance	Remove the nuisance and/or hazard	Danger – by end of next working day Nuisance – within 5 working days	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/reportit Email: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Education: General Queries	Ask any question about the provision of education in Swansea	Provide a clear and concise response and/or signpost to the relevant school/process	15 working days	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schoolsandlearning Email: education@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 637400
Education: School Uniform Grant (School Essentials Grant)	Helpline to support the online grant application process	Provide support to claimants that are struggling with the online application process	15 working days	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooluniformgrant Email: SchoolUniformGrant@swansea.gov.uk
Education: Free School Meals (FSM)	Make a new application for FSM or tell us about a change in your household circumstances that might affect an	If you have provided all the information we need, we will work out if you are entitled to FSM and tell you	28 working days	Web: Free school meals - Swansea Email: freeschoolmeals@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635353

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
	existing award of FSM			
Education: Additional Learning Needs Inclusion Team (ALNIT)	Contacting a member of the ALNIT Team for information, advice or assistance	Make sure we publish all the relevant information on our website	15 school days (during term time) or 28 calendar days (during school holidays)	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/alnprofessionals Email: ALNIT@swansea.gov.uk Caseworker@swansea.gov.uk DESCO@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636162
Education: Additional Learning Needs Inclusion Team (ALNIT)	General enquiries to the team	Ensure all the relevant information is available on our website. Answer emails on specific questions Provide a limited phone services for those without internet or email access	15 school days to respond to e-mail queries Phone line will be open between 10.00 am to 12 noon & 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/aln Email: ALNIT@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636162
Education: School Admissions	Apply to change school in the school year	Write to you with the outcome of your application in line with the timescales	15 school days (during term time) or 28 calendar days (during school holidays)	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooladmissions Email: admissions@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636550
	Apply for a school place because you have moved into the area	Write to you with the outcome of your application in line with the timescales	15 school days (during term time) or 28 calendar days (during school holidays)	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooladmissions Email: admissions@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636550
	Apply for a school place for entry to reception or year 7	Make sure we publish all the relevant information on our website and write to		Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooladmissions Email: admissions@swansea.gov.uk

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
		you directly if you are currently registered with a Swansea school		Phone: 01792 636550
	Admission Appeals	Make sure we publish all relevant information on our website to advise of the process to follow	Notification of right to appeal 15 school days (during term time) or 28 calendar days (during school holidays)	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooladmissions Email: admissions@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636550
	General enquiries about school admissions	Ensure all the relevant information is available on our website. Answer emails on specific questions Provide a limited phone services for those without internet or email access	10 working days to respond to email queries Phone line will be open between 10 and 12 a.m. and 2 and 4 p.m. Monday – Friday (excluding bank holidays)	
Empty properties	Report details of an empty property which is open to access	We will visit the property, try to identify and contact the owner and make sure the property is secured if there is a risk of unauthorised access.	Visit the property within 2 working days	E-mail: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Food hygiene enquiries or complaints	Make a complaint, submit an enquiry or request for a service	Investigate the complaint, respond to the enquiry or request for a service and take appropriate action	Officers will respond to your complaint, enquiry or request for a service within 5	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/food Email: foodandsafety@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
			working days of receipt	
Freedom of Information requests	Make a Freedom of Information Request in writing	On receipt of a written request for recorded information the Council will notify you whether we hold that information. We will provide it in the way you requested	20 working days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/freedomofinformation Email: freedomofinformation@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 637345
Grants and funding	Find out about grant funding options or opportunities	Help to signpost you to the most appropriate funding source(s)	Within 28 working days for initial request	Email: ExternalGrants@swansea.gov.uk GrantiauAllanol@abertawe.gov.uk
Grass verge cutting	Report locations where long grass is limiting driver visibility and creating a hazard	Cut visions splays as necessary	Within 5 working days	Email: parks.section@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 280210
Health and Safety advice and complaints	Make a complaint, submit an enquiry or request for a service	Investigate the complaint, respond to the enquiry or request for a service and take appropriate action	Officers will respond to your complaint, enquiry or request for a service within 5 working days of receipt	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/healthandsafety Email: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Highways: Active Travel	General enquiries	Ensure all the relevant information is available on our website. Answer emails on specific questions.	Officers will respond to your enquiry, complaint or request for a service within 10	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/activetravel Email: activetravel@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 843330 (Highways)

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
			working days of receipt	
Highways: Emergency	Report an immediately dangerous situation on the Highway	To react within 4 hours/ 24 hours depending on severity.		Phone to Highways Front Desk 01792 843330
Highways: Pothole Pledge	Report a pothole	We will repair the pothole where able.	48 hours for action and further 48 hours for response when an email address is provided.	Using the online "Report it" form, Email to highways@swansea.gov.uk or By Phone to 01792 843330
Highways Service Request	Reporting requests for works or routine service, ice, road condition, flooding etc	Log the call, investigate action appropriately.	Non safety defects no agreed response time. Dealt with by routine programmes of work.	Using the online "Report it" form, Email to highways@swansea.gov.uk or By Phone to 01792 843330
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing	Make a licence application or request a variation of an existing licence	Log the application and contact you to confirm details, take payment and explain next stages.	Within 10 working days of you submitting the application.	E-mail: hph@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Housing Standards	Report issues with the condition of your privately rented property	Take the details from you, including details of your landlord/agent, give you advice and arrange an inspection of the property, after contacting your landlord/agent.	Contact you to arrange an inspection within 5 working days of your report	Web: Get advice on private rented housing - Swansea E-mail: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Housing	General enquiries	We will refer your query to the correct section/team	General email enquiries: an initial acknowledgement within 1 working day and full response within 10 working days from the relevant team.	General enquiries: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/housingenquiryform email: housing@swansea.gov.uk housing portal: https://housing.swansea.gov.uk Area Housing Office emails: westarea.housingoffice@swansea.gov.uk eastarea.housingoffice@swansea.gov.uk northarea.housingoffice@swansea.gov.uk centralarea.housingoffice@swansea.gov.uk
Housing	Apply for Housing	Your application will be assessed in accordance with our Housing Allocations Policy.	30 working days	Housing Options Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/applyforcouncilhousing https://www.swansea.gov.uk/contacthousingoptions Email: housing.options@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 533100
Housing	Make a Homelessness application	If you are at risk of becoming homeless, contact Housing Options and we will take initial details from you and arrange for you to be contacted by a homelessness caseworker who will carry out an assessment with you.	On the day if homeless that night. 10 working days if at risk of homelessness	Housing Options Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/helpforhomeless https://www.swansea.gov.uk/atriskoflosingyourhome https://www.swansea.gov.uk/contacthousingoptions Email: housing.options@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 533100
Housing	Discuss your rent account	We will offer advice and support if you are	You will be contacted within 5	Rents Team Queries:

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
		struggling to pay your rent, or have a query about your account.	working days to discuss your query	Email: rentsteam@swansea.gov.uk Tel: 01792 534094 Ways to pay: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/rentsteam Pay your rent online: https://www.civicaepay.co.uk/Swansea/Webpay_public/webpay/default.aspx?Fund=21 Housing portal: https://housing.swansea.gov.uk
Housing	Report a repair	We will respond to your request and deal with your repair.	Repair categories: A - Emergency repairs – Attended to and made safe within 24 hours. Out of hours service available B - Urgent repairs– complete in 5 working days C - Non-urgent – complete in 20 working days (maybe subject to pre-inspection) D - Specialist Repairs – complete in 80 working days (may be subject to pre-inspection)	Repairs Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/requesthousingrepair Email: housingrepairscentre@swansea.gov.uk Housing portal: https://housing.swansea.gov.uk Tel: 01792 635100 Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm and Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm Out of office hours emergencies: 01792 521500 Monday - Thursday 5.00pm - 8.30am Friday 4.30pm - Monday 8.30am

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
			<p>Pre-inspections carried out via an appointment arranged with the tenant</p> <p>Damp and mould – inspected within 5 working days and work needed carried out within 20 working days</p>	
Housing	Report anti-social behaviour (ASB) on council estates	Your initial complaint will be responded to either by the Area Housing Office or by the Neighbourhood Support Unit (NSU)	Your initial report will be responded to within 5 working days if a name and address is left.	<p>Report ASB - NSU Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/reportantisocialbehaviour Tel: 01792 648507 (24 hours)</p>
Housing	Request support from the Tenancy Support Unit (TSU)	The Tenancy Support Unit will provide housing-related support and advice to home owners, housing association tenants, council tenants and those who rent from the private sector.	An initial assessment of support needs will be undertaken within 5 working days.	<p>Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/requesttenancysupport Email: tsu@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 774360</p>

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Housing	Council Housing Major Improvement Programme	Provide advice and guidance to tenants of council properties about major repair and improvement work being undertaken or proposed in the future	Replies to emails will be made in 5 working days	Enquires to HousingILT@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635117
Housing	Renewals – enquire about grants and loans for eg Council House adaptations, Disabled Facilities Grants and repairs eg HomeFix Loan and Welsh Government loans	Provide initial advice and assistance on the forms of assistance available and signpost to most suitable service. Assist client in applying for that form of assistance.	Contacted within 10 working days to complete an initial enquiry for housing grants / loans assistance.	Renewals – Housing Grants Team Email: urbanrenewals@swansea.gov.uk Tel: 01792 635330
Land searches	To request Local Authority Con 29 searches, copies of documents, make payments and queries on all searches	We carry out local land searches which are part of the property conveyancing process. It allows prospective purchasers of properties and mortgage lenders to find out information that we hold about a property.	10 working days	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/locallandcharges Email: locallandcharges@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635728
Licensing		Log the application and process in accordance		Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/licensing Email: evh.licensing@swansea.gov.uk

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
	<p>Submit a completed application for a licence</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Make a complaint, submit an enquiry or request for a service</p>	<p>with statutory requirements</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Investigate the complaint, respond to the enquiry or request for a service and take appropriate action</p>	<p>Applications will be processed in accordance with statutory timescales where applicable</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Officers will respond to your complaint, enquiry or request for a service within 5 working days of receipt</p>	<p>taxilicensing@swansea.gov.uk</p> <p>Phone: 01792 635600</p>
Litter/dog bins	<p>Report locations where overflowing litter/dog bins are creating a hazard and/or nuisance</p>	<p>Remove the nuisance and/or hazard</p>	<p>Danger – by end of next working day Nuisance – within 5 working days</p>	<p>Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/reportit Email: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600</p>
Local Development Plan	<p>Understand, raise queries about, and get involved in the production of, the Swansea Local Development Plan</p>	<p>To provide clear, consistent advice and opportunity for the public and key stakeholders to be active participants in the LDP process in accordance with the agreed Community Involvement Scheme</p>	<p>Respond to queries within 2 working days</p>	<p>Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/RLDP Email: ldp@swansea.gov.uk</p>

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Noise nuisance and Pollution	Report a problem about noise, water, land or air pollution	Take the details from you and investigate and action appropriately	An officer will contact you for further information, where necessary within 5 working days.	Web https://www.swansea.gov.uk/reportpollution E-mail: pollution@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Parking ticket appeal	When you make representations in writing appealing against the issue of a Parking Charge Notice	Consider your reasons for appealing the Parking Ticket and make a decision to either uphold or reject these representations.	Pre Notice to Owner (NTO) appeal – respond in writing within 6 months. Post Notice to Owner (NTO) appeal – respond in writing within 56 Days	Web: Challenge Entry - City and County of Swansea Email: Car.parks@swansea.gov.uk
Passport to Leisure (PTL)	Make a new application for a PTL or to tell us about a change in your household circumstances that might affect a PTL you already hold	If you have provided all the information we need, we will work out if you are entitled to a PTL and tell you	28 Working days	Web: Passport to Leisure - Swansea Email: PTL@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635353
Placemaking and heritage	Obtain advice or information relating to placemaking and heritage in Swansea, including for Conservation Areas and Heritage Protected Assets	To provide clear, consistent advice and information	Respond to queries within 2 working days	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/placemakingandheritage Email: ldp@swansea.gov.uk

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
	such as Listed Buildings			
Planning Pre-application advice	To explain how the Pre application service works, including the different types of pre applications provided and to make Payments	To provide clear and concise advice on the feasibility of proposals submitted	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statutory advice service – 21 days of receipt of valid application 2. Non-Statutory advice service – 28 days of receipt of valid application or as agreed for larger schemes. 	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/preplanningadvice Email: planning@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635701
Planning applications	To explain how the planning application process works, updates on planning applications, request application forms and to pay planning fees	To process as many applications as possible within Statutory targets, to approve developments assessed against current planning policies that bring social and economic benefits to all residents and communities within Swansea	56 days (for most applications)	Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/planningapplications Email: planning@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635701
Playgrounds - dangerous	Report playgrounds where there perceived hazards	Remove the hazard	Danger – by end of next working day	Email: parks.section@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 280210
Pest Control	If you have problems with pests like mice, rats, fleas and wasps you can	Arrange a visit by a pest control officer after payment of the relevant	Due to the volume of calls the pest control service is receiving it can	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/pestcontrolenquiryform

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
	arrange a pest control visit by completing the on-line enquiry form.	fee, as most of our services have a charge.	take up to 10 working days for a visit date to be made, from date of enquiry	Phone Environment Call Centre on 01792 635600
Port Health	Make a complaint, submit an enquiry or request for a service	Investigate the complaint, respond to the enquiry or request for a service and take appropriate action	Officers will respond to your complaint, enquiry or request for a service within 5 working days of receipt	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/swanseabaypha Email: Port.Health@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Register to vote / Elections / Voting	Enquire about vacancies, and standing for election	We will give you advice according to current legislations	We will follow statutory timetables during election time, otherwise we will respond within 5 working days	01792 636123 Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/elections Email: elections@swansea.gov.uk
	Enquire about elections in your area and how and where to vote	We will advise you of the correct procedure and where and when to vote	Within 3 working days	01792 636123 Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/elections Email: elections@swansea.gov.uk
	Report a change of name, address, add or remove an elector from your property	We will write to you confirming of the change	Within 28 days	01792 636123 Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/elections Email: elections@swansea.gov.uk
	Enquire about your registration details	We will confirm your registration status	Within 3 working days	01792 636123 Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/elections Email: elections@swansea.gov.uk
Paying for Adult Social	Make a new application for help	If you have provided all the information we need,	28 Working Days	Web: Paying for residential care - Swansea

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Care – Residential Care	towards the cost of Residential Social Care or to tell us about a change in your circumstances that might affect an existing application.	we will work out how much help you are entitled to and explain how we have arrived at our decision.		Email: - SCIF@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636380
Paying for Adult Social Care – Non-Residential Care	Make a new application for help towards the cost of Non- Residential Social Care costs or to tell us about a change in your circumstances that might affect an existing application.	If you have provided all the information we need, we will work out how much help you are entitled to and explain how we have arrived at our decision.	28 Working Days	Web: Charges for care at home - Swansea Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/chargesforcareathome Email: SCIFhomecare@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636160
Social Care – Direct Payments Finance	Query the Finance side of Direct Payments	The Finance Directorate will make payments as instructed by Social Services, based on the client's support plan.	28 working days from when the instruction is received from Social Services	Web: Social care direct payments - Swansea Email: - DPFinance@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636511
Social Care – Childcare Payments	Query the Finance side of Childcare Payments including Fostering, Special Guardianships and Adoption	The Finance Directorate will make payments as instructed by Social Services, based on the client's support plan.	28 working days from when the instruction is received from Social Services	Web: Fostering and adoption - Swansea Email: - softbox.remittances@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636310

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
Paying for Adult Social Care-	Make a payment	We will take the payment from you promptly	3 days	Web: Pay - Swansea Residential Care Phone: 01792 636380 Non Residential Care Phone: 01792 636160
Adult Social Care	Information, advice or assistance Reporting a safeguarding concern	We will work with you to live well and safely in our community	We will respond within 2 working days via telephone or email.	Web: Social care and wellbeing - Swansea Common Access Point: CAP@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636519 Safeguarding: AdultSafeguardingTeam@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 636854 Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): Emergency Duty Team - Swansea Email: edt.edt@swansea.gov.uk Tel: 01792 775501
Social Services	Make a comment, complaint or compliment about Social Services	When things go wrong and a service user or someone sufficiently concerned with their welfare, may wish to complain, the law says you have a right to get your views heard about Social Services	You will get an acknowledgement within 2 working days. We will contact you to discuss your complaint within 10 working days, We will write to you within 5 working days of the resolution date,	Phone: 01792 637345 Or contact the <u>Council Complaints Team</u>

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
			confirming the outcome.	
Child and Family Services	Seek information, advice or assistance or to report a safeguarding concern	We can help families to get support from the right people at the right time to live happy, health and safe lives	We will respond within 48 hours via telephone or email	Swansea Single Point of Contact (Monday to Thursday, 8.30 am – 5.00 pm; Friday 8.30 am – 4.30 pm) Email: singlepointofcontact@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635700 Emergency Duty Team is available outside of normal working hours on 01792 775501
Child and Family Services	Enquire about becoming a foster carer	We provide dedicated support on your fostering journey, from specialist training to financial allowances, so you're never alone	We will respond to your initial enquiry within 24 hours	Email: fosterwales.swansea@swansea.gov.uk Fostering Enquiry Line: 0300 555 0111
Child and Family Services	Enquire about becoming an adoptive parent	Western Bay Adoption offer support to not only adopters going through the assessment but also so adopted young people affected by adoption	We will respond to your initial enquiry within 5 working days	Email: enquiries@westernbayadoption.org Phone: 01639 685396
Stray Dogs	Report a dog straying in your area or contact us to see if your dog has been picked up by the Animal Warden	We will take the details from you and try and collect a straying animal or check our register to confirm whether your stray dog has been picked up. Take the release fee from you and explain how you	We will respond within 1 working day	E-mail: pest.control@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council's Commitment to you:	Within the Following Timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
		can collect your impounded dog.		
Trading Standards	Make a complaint, submit an enquiry or request for a service	Investigate the complaint, respond to the enquiry or request for a service and take appropriate action	Officers will respond to your complaint, enquiry or request for a service within 5 working days of receipt	Web: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/tradingstandards Email: trading_standards@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Trees - dangerous	Report trees which are considered to be creating a hazard	Remove the hazard	Immediate Danger – by end of next working day Non immediate hazard - within 5 working days	Email: parks.section@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 280210
Waste & Recycling: Assisted waste collections	When all residents of a property are unable to put waste out for collection due to disability or infirmity	Our waste team will be advised and will agree a safe position on the premises to collect the bags/bins	On your normal bin collection day, (Mon-Fri)	Web: Assisted collections - Swansea Email: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600
Waste & Recycling: Collections - missed	Report that your waste, correctly put out on time, has not been collected on the correct collection day, giving us your contact details	If put your waste out correctly and on time, our Waste Team will return to collect it	Within 5 working days	Web: Missed recycling and rubbish collection - Swansea Email: evh@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635600

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Digital and Customer Services

Directorate: Corporate Services

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

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

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

This initiative is a Customer Charter and Service Standards as part of delivering the first goal in the Digital Strategy 2023-28. Customer Charters are considered good practice and provide a framework for communicating how the Council will meet the expectations of our residents. In addition, a Customer Charter provides clear and concise statements detailing ways by which the organisation can measure customer service levels.

The Service Standards demonstrate what each front facing service within the Council will adhere to, with the timescales for dealing with a query.

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

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

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

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

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

Consultation and engagement has been undertaken following discussion at the Service Transformation Committee on the 25th July 2023. A survey was undertaken to gather feedback and input from residents and further engagement was undertaken with the Ageing Well Steering Group and through a large engagement event in December, which had representation from groups who work with the Council on the LGBTQ+ Forum, Disability Liaison Group and Ageing Well. The Service Standards are already in place, some of which are statutory, therefore changes will not be possible for some areas. Services may also undertake their own consultation and engagement where changes are being proposed, this may include co-production where appropriate.

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

This work delivers on the Transformation and Financial Resilience well-being goal and steps in the Corporate Plan. The aim of the Charter and Standards is to provide clear guidance to residents and businesses when they access Council services.

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**

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

The Charter and Standards will be adopted across the Council

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

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

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

(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)

The cumulative impact is considered to be positive. Feedback following consultation and engagement has been incorporated into the Customer Charter and further suggestions are being evaluated, particularly the themes around more languages and handy pocket guides.

Outcome of Screening

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

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

Summary of findings:

- The Customer Charter and Service Standards will have a medium positive impact across all groups as residents and businesses will know what level of service to expect when they contact the Council.
- The Service Standards are already in place, some of which are statutory, therefore changes will not be possible for some areas.
- The Charter and Standards are dynamic and will be subject to change, for example, as a result of legislative or service changes. Moving forward, services may therefore also undertake their own consultation and engagement where changes are being proposed, this may include co-production where appropriate.
- A broad survey consultation has been undertaken and changes have been made to the Charter and Service Standards as a result, including:
 - A framework to reflect the dynamic nature of services.
 - Providing access to services and information in alternative formats, e.g. large print, braille etc.
 - Strengthening the need for telephone and face-to-face to support online channels.
 - Strengthening the timeliness of responses, especially when responding by phone.
- In addition to the survey, further engagement was undertaken with the Ageing Well Steering Group and through a large engagement event in December, which had representation from groups who work with the Council on the LGBTQ+ Forum, Disability Liaison Group and Ageing Well. Further suggestions are being evaluated, particularly the themes around more languages and handy pocket guides

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form – Appendix B

- This work delivers on the Transformation and Financial Resilience well-being goal and steps in the Corporate Plan. The aim of the Charter and Standards is to provide clear guidance to residents and businesses when they access Council services
- Risks are considered to be low as Service Standards are already in place, some of which are statutory.
- The cumulative impact is considered to be positive at this stage in development, providing a firm framework for residents and businesses accessing Council services.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the ‘**Integrated Assessment Implications**’ section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

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

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: Sarah Lackenby
Job title: Head of Digital & Customer Services
Date: 13th July 2023 updated 20th November 2023 and 15th December 2023
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Ness Young
Position: Director of Corporate Services
Date: 13th July 2023

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk



City and County of Swansea

EXTRACT FROM Minutes of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee

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

Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor V M Evans (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)
E T Kirchner

Councillor(s)
F D O'Brien

Councillor(s)
L V Walton

Officer(s)

Caritas Adere

Emily-Jayne Davies

Sarah Lackenby

Rhian Millar

Lee Wenham

Samantha Woon

Associate Lawyer

Strategic Policy Officer

Head of Digital and Customer Services

Consultation Co-ordinator

Head of Communications & Customer Engagement

Democratic Services Officer

Also present

Councillor H Gwilliam – Cabinet Member for Community

Councillor A S Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P N Bentu

18 Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework.

The Head of Digital & Customer Services presented the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework.

The Committee had discussed the draft Customer Charter and Service Standards at their meeting on 25 July, 2023 following which public consultation and engagement was undertaken in the form of a survey. The Charter and Standards had been updated as a result of feedback in the survey. Further views were being sought with specific consultation groups before the Charter and Standards are submitted to Cabinet for approval on 18 January, 2024.

The Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework is a dynamic set of guidelines which will require constant review and will be updated in line with changes to legislation and working practices. Therefore, although it is recommended that this version of the Charter and Standards are adopted, it will be subject to change and development.

There were 73 responses to the survey of whom 81% were Swansea residents and 16% were Swansea Council staff. A summary of feedback from residents regarding the Customer Charter was detailed.

With regard to the Service Standards listed for each service area, some comments were received around individual cases and current service requests, these would be passed to the relevant department.

It was noted that providing access to information and services in alternative formats such as large print or braille would incur additional costs for some services which is expected to be accommodated within existing budgets.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on:

- Timescales in regard to dealing with Council Tax and Free School Meals – the Head of Digital & Customer Services will liaise with the relevant Heads of Service on this.
- Corporate complaints had benefitted from the introduction of a new system which had assisted with processing times. Freedom of Information requests could prove complex if responses were required from multiple organisations. In these cases, the individual would be advised of revised response times if the timescales were not feasible.

The Head of Digital and Customer Services stated that she would report the Committee comments to Leadership Team.

The Chair thanked the Head of Digital & Customer Services for the informative report.

Resolved that:

- 1) the Chair present the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework to Cabinet on 18 January, 2024, for approval and adoption from 1 April, 2024.

The meeting ended at 2.17 pm

Call In of Cabinet Decision – Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework

Appendix 4

Response of the Chief Executive

This note outlines the suggested response to the call in submitted and a proposed way forward.

The position with FSM is that eligibility depends on receipt of a range of benefits/credits, none of which are under the Council control but are under the remit of Department of work and pensions or HMRC

Where the council has processed a claim for Housing Benefit or Council tax reduction the Council may have already obtained proof that one of those benefits/credits are in payment so we can confirm eligibility without checking further. Also the Council has an 'opt out' clause included in our HB/CTR application forms for parents to tick if they **do not** want to claim FSM – the aim being to maximise take up and ease the process, which it does.

In terms of process when the Council uses the eligibility checking service to seek confirmation of DWP/HMRC benefits, it can get one of three responses:

- Entitlement to one of the qualifying benefits is confirmed – award FSM
- Entitlement to one of the qualifying benefits is **not** confirmed – refuse FSM
- Please check back as an application is pending – we therefore resubmit, and often resubmit and resubmit and resubmit until there is a definitive answer one way or another and FSM can be awarded or refused.

Once a decision is made on a new award, a confirmation email is sent to the parent and the data team in education who will update SIMS so the schools are aware and this is done usually in a matter of a day or two after confirmation is obtained.

As the process or timeline is not within the control of the Council the proposed service standard was set to cover the "overall" process and to match up with HB/CTR claims and to allow for the potential for 'to and fro' with the DWP checking system.

However the Council understands that this could appear to show a much longer period to assess claims than is actually the case so it is proposed to amend the timescale to include the elements that are only within the council control and with this in mind will be suggesting the following change.

Free School Meals (FSM)	Make a new application for FSM or tell us about a change in your household circumstances that might affect an existing award of FSM	If you have provided all the information we need and we have been able to obtain confirmation of your eligibility/non-eligibility from DWP/HMRC, we will tell you if you are entitled to FSM	7 working days (of receiving the confirmation)	Web: Free school meals - Swansea Email: freeschoolmeals@swansea.gov.uk Phone: 01792 635353
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However if the DWP have a decision in the pipeline, the Council has no control of the time it takes them to make their decision so that could be a considerable period during which the Council will continue to submit multiple eligibility checks. This is why the 28 days was originally set to try and reflect the overall timeline but it is accepted the proposed change to the above definition and response time should make it clearer to residents.

Conclusion

It is intended to make this change to the service standards to better explain what the Council is able to do in terms of processing applications for the elements within its control. i.e. 7 days from receipt of confirmation of eligibility.

The process and timing for making this change would depend on the outcome of the call-in process.

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

Workforce Strategy Progress Report

Purpose	To update the Scrutiny Committee on progress made against the objectives within the Workforce Strategy 2022-2027
Content	The report sets out the progress made against the Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 objectives during the 2023/24 financial year.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided and give views on the progress made to date.
Lead Councillor	Cllr David Hopkins, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance
Lead Officer Report Author	Rachael Davies, Head of HR and Service Centre Rachael Davies Tel: 07917 200065 E-mail: Rachael.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer	Ben Smith

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 was approved by Cabinet in October 2022 after a period of design and consultation with stakeholders. The strategy is available for viewing at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The strategy contains four key themes to drive the improvement of organisational culture over the lifespan of the five-year period, contributing to the Council's Corporate Plan, '*Successful and Sustainable Swansea*,' and the associated Corporate Transformation Plan for 2023-2028.
- 1.3 Following Cabinet's approval of the Workforce Strategy a Workforce and Organisational Development Transformation Programme Board was established in December 2022. The board is responsible for identifying appropriate transformation projects that will enable delivery of the strategy's objectives, agreeing the priority projects for implementation at any given point in the lifetime of the strategy and monitoring progress on a quarterly basis.

1.4 The programme board agreed four specific transformation projects listed below in addition to selecting which of the Workforce Strategy objectives would be identified for implementation during 2023/24.

2. Transformation project progress

2.1 Leadership and Management:

Continuing to build a coaching and mentoring culture was selected as the transformation project under the leadership and management theme. The Council had already invested resource into delivering a cohort of qualified coaches which was successfully delivered and a network of coaches created. To embed this approach further a second cohort of the programme was proposed. The project is ready to implement and is anticipated to complete at the end of the 2023/24 financial year.

2.2 A Workforce Fit for the Future:

This project sought to reshape the service that the HR&OD function provides to the organisation, moving from a generic provision to a function led offer. This saw the service split into two distinct functions – an Employee Relations arm to respond to live people management issues and a Business Partner arm which will provide strategic advice and guidance to directorates on workforce planning and organisational development. This portfolio change was complete in September 2023 and the new ways of working have commenced.

2.3 Employer of Choice:

The Employer of Choice transformation project fits within the Digital Transformation Programme given it is IT-systems led development and as such is referenced in the Workforce and OD Transformation Programme Board due to the associated cultural impact of its implementation on the workforce. The project seeks to introduce a new module within the Oracle Fusion suite of products and create a new online recruitment and onboarding process. This project will be moved into the 2024/25 period.

2.4 Wellbeing and Inclusion:

The final transformation project sees a comprehensive review of sickness absence and occupational health provision to inform new approaches. This project was completed during the Summer of 2023, with final recommendations due to be considered at CMT/Leadership in February 2024.

2.5 Further detail on each of these transformation projects is contained within Appendix B.

3. Workforce Strategy objectives and progress summary

3.1 The four themes contained within the Workforce Strategy are as follows:

Theme 1 Leadership and Management
Strand 1 - Culture and Behaviours
Strand 2 - Future Leadership
Strand 3 – Future Shape of the Organisation

Theme 2 A Workforce Fit for the Future
Strand 4 – Future Workforce
Strand 5 – Recognising Performance

Theme 3 Being an Employer of Choice
Strand 6 – Recruitment and Retention
Strand 7 – Workforce Development

Theme 4 Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion
Strand 8- Supporting Our Workforce
Strand 9– Equality in the Workplace

3.2 There are circa 40 objectives across the four themes and the programme board have approved commencement of 23 objectives during 2023/24 and into 2024/25.

3.3 Appendix C sets out each of the agreed objectives for the 2023/24 year, provides progress to date, future actions and a current RAG status.

3.4 The Leadership and Management theme contains 5 objectives, all of which are green and scheduled to be delivered by the end of the financial year. An OD offer to the organisation is due to be considered by CMT/Leadership in early February and it is anticipated that most of these objectives will then turn blue and be complete.

3.5 The Corporate Services and Financial Resilience Transformation Committee discussed progress made against the Leadership and Management theme in their January meeting to provide strategic oversight of the theme in detail. The report is contained in Appendix D.

3.6 The Workforce Fit for the Future theme also contains 5 objectives with 1 complete, 4 green and 1 amber. The next programme board is due to consider the status of the amber objective and what actions should be taken to resolve. At the time of writing the Workforce Strategy in early 2022, the 'optimal structure' objective related to plans in each directorate and subsequent changes to strategic direction in the directorates require a review of the relevance of the content in this strategy. It is likely that this objective will change focus and be more specific towards the workforce goals that the directorates are actively pursuing.

- 3.7 Employer of Choice has 6 objectives, 3 of which are green with the remainder needing further work before being completed. As we move into the 2024/25 objectives it is likely that the recruitment-based objectives will be identified as the top priority actions for the revised 2024/25 objective list.
- 3.8 There are 7 objectives in the Wellbeing and Inclusion theme, 3 of which are complete, 1 green, 2 amber and 1 will be withdrawn. The amber objectives are in relation to equalities work and will be carried forward into 2024/25. A HR&OD Manager appointment will be made for the 2024/25 year which will help with capacity amongst the HR management team to prioritise the 5 amber objectives across the strategy.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Of the 23 objectives agreed for 2023/24 the summary RAG status list is;

Complete – 4

Green – 12

Amber – 6

Withdrawn - 1

- 4.2 Good progress has been made with addressing the objectives set out in the Workforce Strategy with 70% of them due to be complete by the end of the financial year. With one objective due to be withdrawn due to circumstances beyond the control of the Council and a further amber to be redrafted to meet directorate intentions, the remaining 5 amber objectives will be carried forward into the 2024/25 year along with newly selected goals remaining in the strategy.
- 4.3 Recruitment to the vacant HR&OD Manager post will enable greater capacity for delivery against the Workforce Strategy objectives and as the HR&OD service transformation embeds, focus on project work will increase as a result.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications contained within the report.

6. Finance implications

- 6.1 There are no direct implications contained within the report. Any that arise in due course will be factored into future budgets and planning if and when needed.

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 7.1 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.

7.2 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’.

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

7.4 As this is an information report there is no need for an IIA.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A Workforce Strategy 2022-2027

Appendix B Workforce and OD Transformation Business Cases

Appendix C Workforce Strategy Objectives 2023/24

Appendix D Corporate Services and Financial Resilience Transformation
Committee report – Leadership and Management, 23 January 2024



“Achieving Better together as a Workforce”

Workforce Strategy and Plan

2022 - 2027

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Leader's Introduction

To help us support and serve the communities of Swansea, and to help us deliver on our corporate plan, it is important that we have a clear vision and strategy for our workforce.

This strategy sets out our plans for the next five years and demonstrates our commitment to invest in our workforce at all levels across the Council, providing them with the development opportunities to learn and succeed for the future.

We are in a period of unprecedented change in local government in responding to the many challenges that we face. That means we have to transform the way we work, making best use of technology and being more responsive to our residents and our communities, and be able to flex and change to meet the needs of the future.

Our workforce are our most essential asset and we must ensure that we all feel engaged and motivated to deliver the best possible services to our residents, businesses and visitors to Swansea.

It is important that you have a voice and can contribute to improving the way we work. Most often it is our workforce on the frontline who know their services and customers the best and how things can be done better. It is therefore important that we continue to recognise the value of the services we provide and how they support and improve the lives of our communities.

The vision of the strategy applies equally to our entire workforce, regardless of where in the organisation you work, and sets out our commitment to investing in your wellbeing, your ongoing professional development and making sure that Swansea Council is an excellent and rewarding place to work and progress.

**Councillor Rob Stewart,
Leader of the Council**

Organisational Context

Our Corporate Plan for 2020/22; “Delivering a Successful & Sustainable Swansea”, outlined the challenges Swansea faces as follows:

- Population changes – a growing, ageing and more diverse Swansea.
- Economic changes – attracting investment, high quality jobs and new technology into Swansea while addressing the skills gap.
- Climate change – risks from flooding, air and water quality, dangers to ecosystems and biodiversity and energy security.
- Social and cultural changes – addressing inequalities in health, education, employment and life chances.

We have sought to address these current and future challenges through our Corporate Plan and our well-being objectives, as required by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

In addition, we are working to meet the requirements of Welsh and UK Government and the immediate and longer- term challenges around Covid-19 and leaving the European Union. This adds to the complexity and uncertainty for the Council to deliver operationally while maintaining the confidence of residents that we are here to serve in our local communities.

As a result, the Recovery Plan; *“Managing the Present and Shaping the Future Swansea Council- From Recovery to Transformation”* has provided an overview in responding to these challenges and the framework to replace the Sustainable Swansea Strategy with *“Swansea – Achieving Better Together”*. As part of that framework it has been identified under the third longer-term “Reshape” phase that we develop a “Workforce Strategy”, recognising that work in Phases 1 (Re-Align) and 2 (Re-Focus) will support this.



Why Do We Need a Workforce Strategy?

A talented and aligned workforce is crucial for bringing the strategic priorities to life and ensuring the organisation delivers on its objectives. Direct people costs make up 45% of the council's expenditure.

The Workforce Strategy and Plan can deliver significant improvements in value and cost reduction through ensuring that;

- The workforce is the right size.
- Organisational objectives can be delivered
- There is better productivity – through workforce alignment to the operating model
- There is competitive advantage through a more skilled and innovative workforce
- The workforce is resilient and equipped with the skills to adapt to changing demand
- There is higher quality and timeliness of delivery, greater staff engagement and retention and lower levels of stress.
- Cultural and behaviour change is supported and evolves to reflect the operating environment and, following sustainable development so that the workplace is a “more integrated, involvement based environment where we work together with a longer term and preventative focus”.

It is also recognised that the Council is composed of a number of different Service Areas with different strategic priorities and operational requirements and this will need to be reflected in specific action plans wherever appropriate.

Initial consultations with Heads of Service have highlighted a “weariness” and “wariness” in developing strategies that are subsequently not delivered and we must be cognisant of this in moving this strategy forward.



Internal Context

1. Workforce Numbers

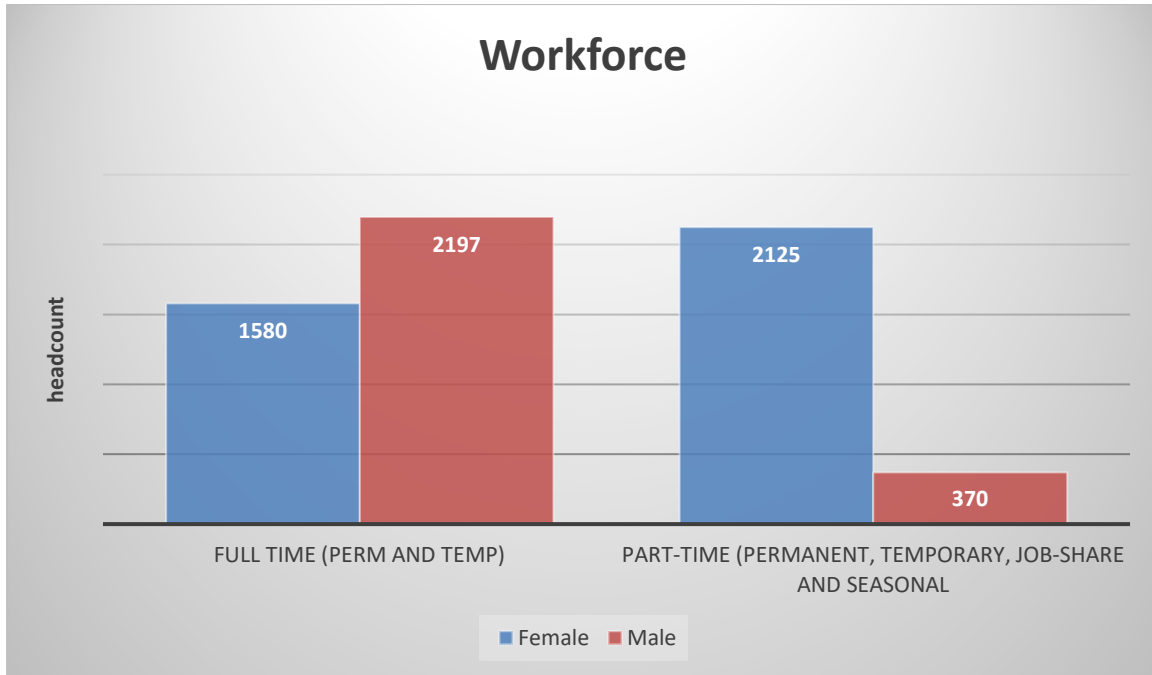
	31/12/2018		31/12/2019		31/12/2020		31/12/2021	
D'rate	H'count	FTE	H'count	FTE	H'count	FTE	H'count	FTE
Place	2595	2299.2	2579	2302.8	2582	2324.6	2633	2373.48
Resources	639	576.93	627	566.02	669	608.3	852	763.46
Education (incl. Schools)	5880	4413.7	5962	4441.1	5843	4403.6	6025	4569.99
Social Services	1956	1634.4	1852	1548.2	1944	1623.9	1965	1658.59
TOTAL	11,070	8,924.2	11,020	8,858.2	11,038	8,960.4	11,475	9,365.52

2. Composition of the Workforce,

The composition of the Workforce, excluding schools, as at 31st December is as follows;

Employment Category	Female	Female Percentage	Male	Male Percentage
Full-Time (permanent and Temporary)	1580	25.19%	2197	35.03%
Part-Time (permanent, temporary, job-share and seasonal)	2125	33.88%	370	5.90%
Total	3705	59.07%	2567	40.93%

There are over 1,800 employees in a total 6,460 duplicate roles across the Council including schools.

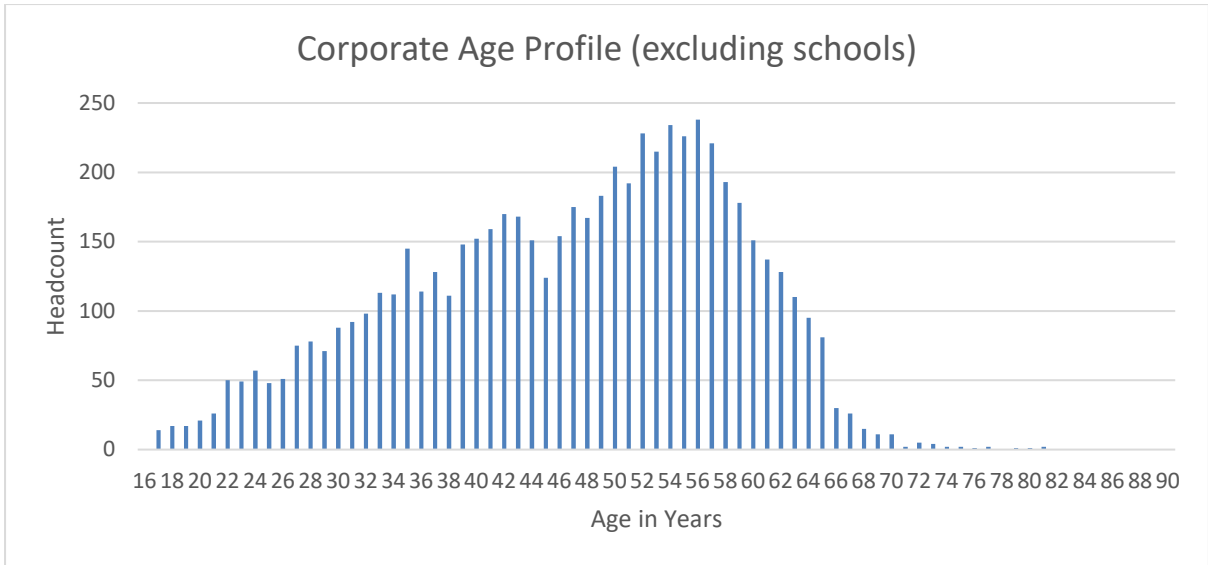


3. Age Profile of the Workforce

The Corporate Age Profile (Headcount excluding Schools) is as follows:

Age Range	Number	Percentage
Age 16 to 24	251	4.00%
Age 25 to 29	323	5.15%
Age 30 to 39	1149	18.32%
Age 40 to 49	1603	25.56%
Age 50 to 59	2129	33.94%
Age 60 to 69	784	12.50%
Age 70+	33	0.53%

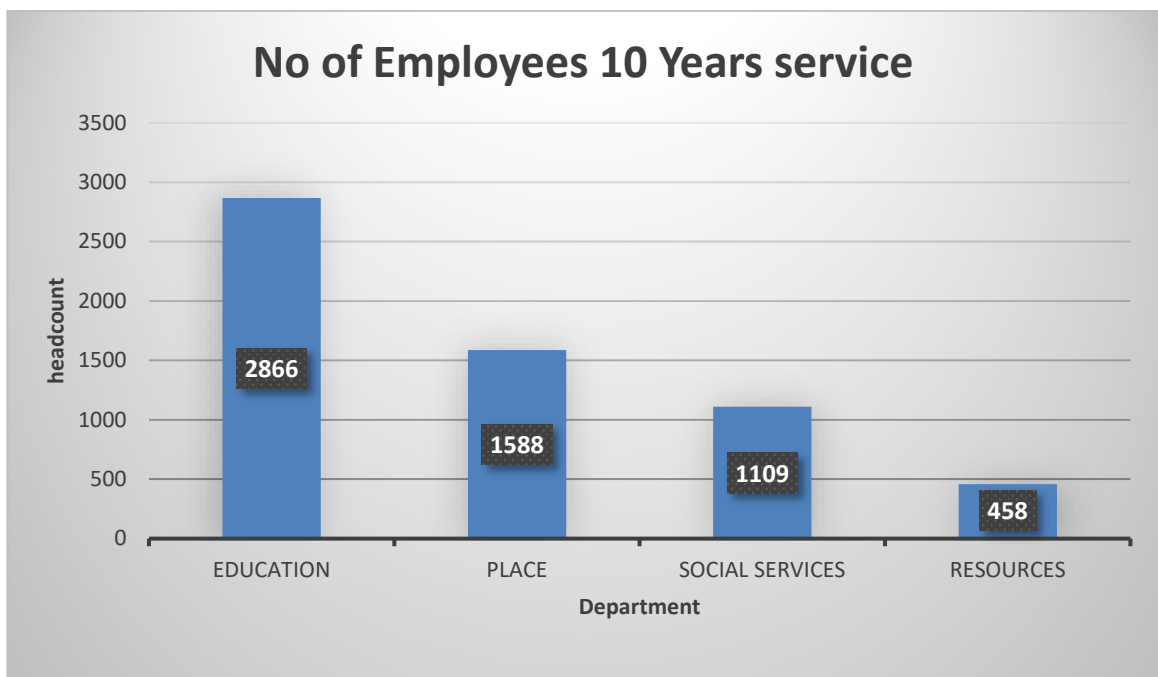
The youngest employees are 16 years of age and the eldest is 81.



4. Turnover rate of the workforce in 2021 was 7.73%.

5. Employees with over 10 years of service by Directorate

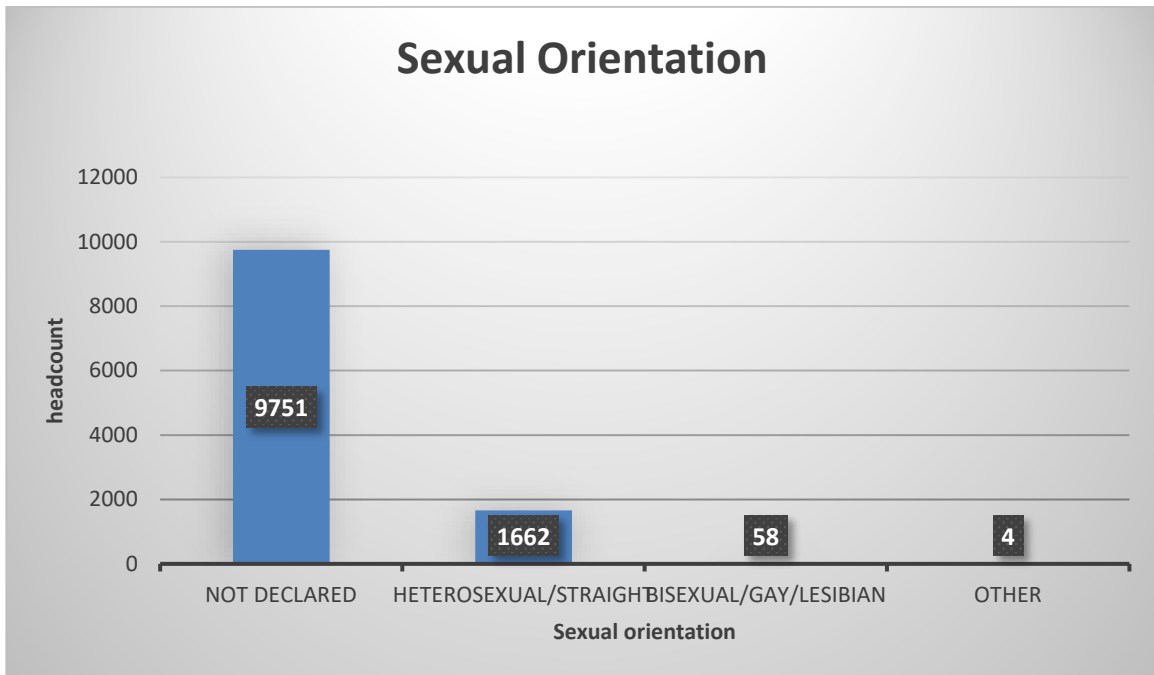
Directorate	Employee Numbers
Education and Schools	2866 (48%)
Place	1588 (60%)
Resources	458 (54%)
Social Services	1109 (56%)
TOTAL	6031(53%)



6. The number of employees that have identified themselves as having protected characteristics are as follows;

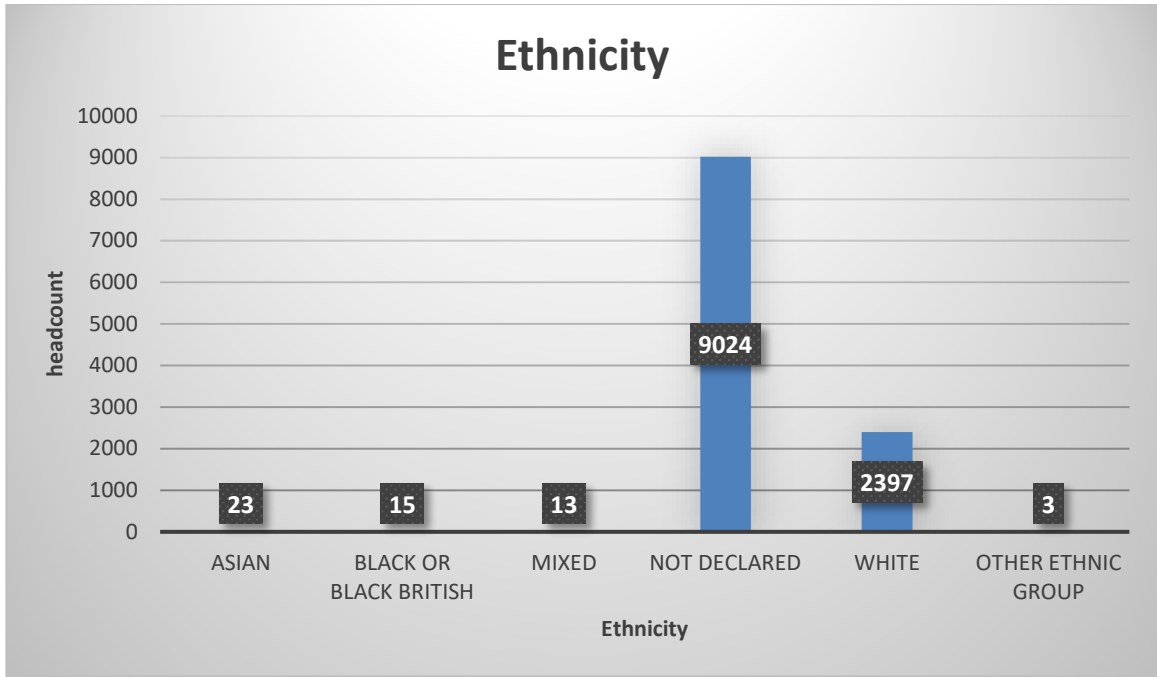
Sexual Orientation

Not Declared	9,751
Heterosexual/ Straight.	1,662
Bisexual/ Gay/ Lesbian	58
Other	4



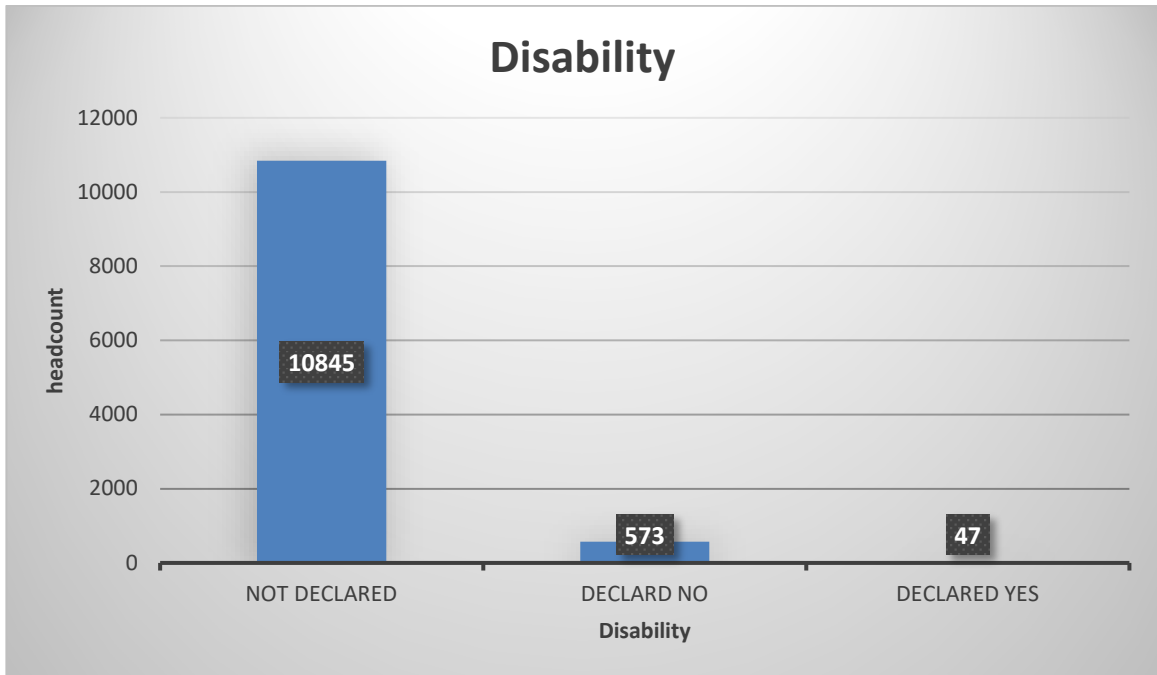
Ethnicity

Not Declared	9,024
Asian	23
Black or Black British	15
Mixed	13
Other ethnic group	3
White	2,397



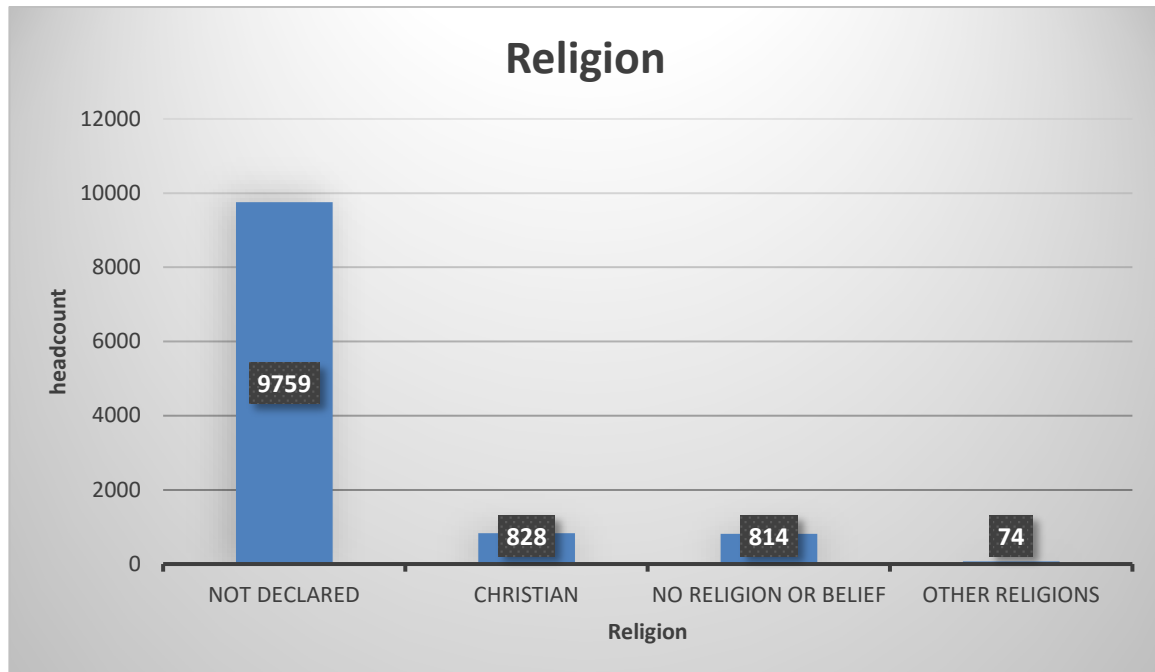
Disability

Not Declared	10,845
Declared No	573
Declared Yes	47



Religion

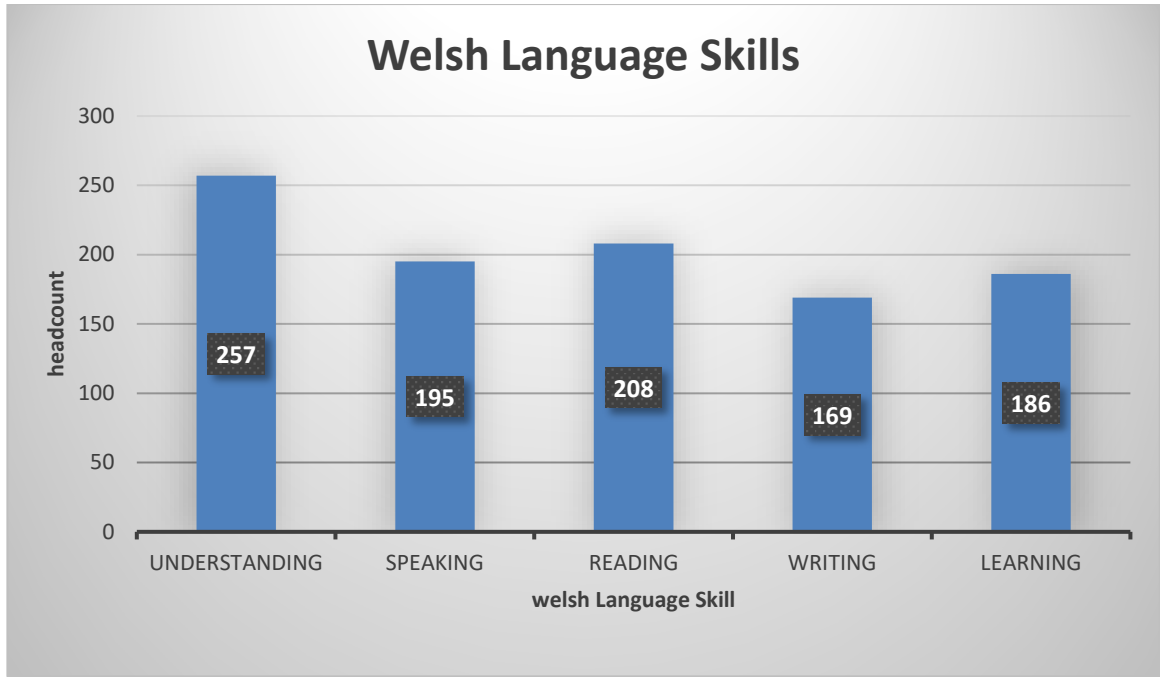
Not Declared	9759
Christian	828
No Religion or Belief	814
Other Religions	74



7. Welsh language skills ability;

The percentage of our workforce that have identified themselves as having Welsh language skills ability are approximately 1.5 to 2.2. This is broken down as follows;

Ability	Numbers
Understanding	257
Speaking	195
Reading	208
Writing	169
Learning	186



External Context

In responding to the organisational context above, the workforce strategy will need to respond as follows;

- *“Population changes – a growing, ageing and more diverse Swansea”, so that our workforce reflects the communities that it serves.*
- *“Economic changes – attracting investment, high quality jobs and new technology into Swansea while addressing the skills gap”, so that we lead by example in identifying and addressing skills gaps in our own workforce and developing the expertise in the investment in people and jobs in Swansea.*
- *“Climate change – risks from flooding, air and water quality, dangers to ecosystems and biodiversity and energy security” so that the total workforce can engage and be developed to contribute to the response to ecological and climate change.*
- *“Social and cultural changes – addressing inequalities in health, education, employment and life chances” so that the total workforce can adapt to new ways of working, place well-being and kindness and the centre of policy and respond to inequalities promoting human rights.*
- The Council’s Recovery Plan identifies the need to “ensure that the “Culture of the organisation is aligned to the delivery of the corporate plan” and will;
 - Develop a “collaborative culture and embed corporate behaviours
 - Develop a “Decide and Do Culture”.

Within the Recovery Plan, there is a specific Strand identifying the following Projects that are ingrained in the proposed workforce strategy;

- Workforce planning – skills for the future
- Employment Policy Review
- Agile and flexible working linked to the Accommodation Strategy and post covid new ways of working
- Management of Attendance to focus on reducing long-term sickness
- Staff Well-Being in light of covid
- Workforce Training & Development



What does the Workforce need to look like in the Future?

Due to financial constraints, we will not be able to deliver the same services as it does now and will need to prioritise budgetary spend to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Swansea. We will need to be;

- **Customer Focussed** – ensuring we work with and listen to residents, contractors, members and colleagues to develop and deliver best customer service at all times, treating everybody with respect.
- More **agile**– delivering services in different ways, using technology to maximise efficiencies and reduce our reliance on traditional ways of working.
- **Business Focussed** –operating and acting efficiently in the delivery of Council business.
- **Collaborative** – services are increasingly likely to be delivered working in partnership with other services, as well as private, public and third sector partners.
- **Flexible, adaptable and innovative** –to embrace a changing environment, anticipate future trends as well as finding innovative ways to deliver services.
- **Outcome focussed and high performing** – whatever we do will need to have identifiable outcomes that align with both our long term goals and take account of the objectives of local, regional and national partners.
- Understand, and buy in to, our priorities (well-being objectives) – being clear about our direction and understand how we contribute to achieving our priorities and how these integrate with the **wider partnership** context.
- **Engaged, motivated and resilient** – being well informed, clear on the direction of the organisation and resilient to meet the challenges ahead.
- Demonstrating **Great Leadership** –so that managers demonstrate visible, fair and pro-active leadership, supporting the workforce and ensuring that poor performance is managed effectively.
- Ensuring we are safe at all times and work in a **healthy and supportive environment** that takes a preventative approach by identifying root cause to stop problems starting or getting worse and underpinned by values of “kindness and compassion” and the “five ways of working” as defined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.



Our Vision

Our vision for the workforce for the period 2022 -2027 is...

To have a motivated and committed workforce that is innovative, supported, skilled and customer focused.

We want to build strong morale in the workforce and ensure our employees feel professionally satisfied, valued and motivated by the positive and lasting impact they have on the people and communities they serve.



Our Strategic Priorities

The Strategic Priorities and strands have been identified through extensive consultation with all stakeholders, including cabinet, CMT, Leadership Team, staff working groups, directorates, unions and through HR partners and together we have translated these into 4 Priorities and 9 Strands .

The overview of the Themes and strands are set out below:

- Theme 1 Leadership and Management**
 - Strand 1 - Culture and Behaviours**
 - Strand 2 - Future Leadership**
 - Strand 3 – Future Shape of the Organisation**

- Theme 2 A Workforce Fit for the Future**
 - Strand 4 – Future Workforce**
 - Strand 5 – Recognising Performance**

- Theme 3 Being an Employer of Choice**
 - Strand 6 – Recruitment and Retention**
 - Strand 7 – Workforce Development**

- Theme 4 Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion**
 - Strand 8- Supporting Our Workforce**
 - Strand 9– Equality in the Workplace**



Strand 1: Culture and Behaviours

Now more than ever we are reliant on innovative, confident and diverse leadership and management. Leadership is demonstrated at all levels and we are committed to nurturing this throughout your career.

Leadership awareness will bring to life desired behaviours and changes in culture that are aligned with the organisation's values, creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels empowered to be themselves and difference is positively valued.

Objective:

We will:

- Modify our culture by being the leader of our values and associated behaviours.
- Bring to life our organisational values

So that they are understood and embedded and support the delivery of corporate strategy and culture

Actions:

- Review and refresh its existing Principles, Values and Behaviours to ensure that it is robust enough and fit for purpose in meeting the future needs of the Council and the communities it serves by reflecting the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and subsequently embedded into day to day practice.
- Further develop a Social Partnership Working framework with our Trade Unions on strategic and operational issues, establishing a robust and best practice framework for negotiation, consultation and facilities provision.
- Deliver a Strategy for communications and engagement across all areas and levels across the Council.

Strand 2: Future Leadership

Design and implement leadership training, to teach and boost the skills needed to demonstrate positive leadership and role model the desired future culture, ensuring Development opportunities and career pathways exist which create supportive and resilient leaders at all levels.

Objectives:

To achieve high-quality, skilled leadership in responding to future change and challenges.

So that they exemplify our Principles, Values and Behaviours.

Actions:

- Develop a framework of leadership behaviours that will underpin our core values and set out the expectations that employees at all levels can have of those in leadership and management roles.
- Deliver appropriate development interventions for managers and leaders at all levels of the organisation, including Members.
- Development of a coaching and mentoring strategy across the Council.
- Be an active contributor and participant member of “New Local”, networking and collaborating with this organisation and member authorities on key topics to source research and innovative insights to genuinely solve problems and find practical solutions.

Strand 3: Future Shape of the Organisation

We will transform our workforce so that it can continue to be responsive to the needs of our residents and service users now and in the future.

Objectives:

To achieve an organisational design and structure that is fit for the future needs of the Council.

So that they support the priorities of our Recovery Plan to “RE-MOBILISE”, “RE-FOCUS” and, in particular, “RE-SHAPE” in considering the required workforce structure and design for our eight identified priorities:

- Digital,
- Regionalisation,
- Workforce skills for the future,
- Commercialism and General Power of Competence,
- Transforming Council Services,
- Capital Delivery,
- Modern Council
- Budget Strategy.

Actions:

- To establish optimal structures that meet the future needs of the above priorities, particularly:
 - Our regionalisation agenda
 - Learning and development
 - “Implementing the optimum model for adult services, and a child and family services improvement programme including a safe 'Looked After Children' reduction strategy. This also includes the implementation of integrated early help, early years and family support arrangements as well as a cross cutting commissioning review in Social Services.
 - Review of future additional learning needs provisions
 - Support of the long term sustainable waste management strategy.
 - Support of the community development strategy.
 - Support of future sustainable transport provision through our Integrated Transport Unit, as well as local and regional solutions.
- To pro-actively identify opportunities for synchronicities and efficiencies in organisational design, both budgetary and operationally, across Directorates and Service areas.
- Pro-active consideration of the structural and workforce requirements in the “commissioning of people oriented services”, as identified in the Recovery Plan

Strand 4: Future Workforce

We will plan and adapt the skills, knowledge and approach of our workforce to meet the needs of the constant changes taking place within and to the organisation, that affect the way we need to work both now and in the future and plan ahead for the future workforce needs.

Objectives:

To ensure that our workforce is fit for purpose for the future and have the right ways of working to achieve our purpose, vision, goals and projected outcomes.

So that we understand and adapt to future trends in the context of a strong long-term vision.

Actions:

- Deliver strategic resource planning to inform workforce strategy.
- Develop a Flexible Workforce (in conjunction with Property Services) through HR&OD Policy development, guidance and training.
- Develop and adopt agile (“lean”) working practices and processes.
- Optimal management of Agency Workers
- Review of Flexitime Provisions

Strand 5: Recognising Performance

We will achieve and recognise high levels of performance from direct and effective communication, regular evaluation and feedback, clear planning and understanding and supporting our workforce and incentivise appropriately.

Objectives:

To create a culture of “high performance”.

So that we have capable staff who are appropriately incentivised, recognised and motivated to achieve a high performance culture across all teams and demonstrating our core values.

Actions:

- Review of pay and grading across the Council and for senior roles as identified through the senior management review
- Delivery of a revised, “fit for purpose” Performance Management approach, via Oracle, to reflect the future needs of the Council,
- Corporate and Directorate Objectives Reviewed and Agreed
- Delivery of Action Plan to address Gender, Disability and Race Pay Gap Issues.
- Consider re-introduction of “career grades” as part of Pay policy/ strategy.

Strand 6: Recruitment and Retention

We want Swansea Council to be a rich, fulfilling and rewarding place to work. The workforce has adapted to and absorbed a very different way of working during the pandemic and continued the journey of agile working. We want to identify the best aspects of these new ways of working into our everyday working practices and, in doing so, create more compelling reasons to attract and retain talented staff.

Objectives:

To recruit and retain the right quantity and quality of employee that we need to support the Council in the future through development of our Recruitment Attraction Programme.

So that we deliver a positive recruitment experience for applicants and hiring managers

Actions:

- Review and Update of Recruitment and Selection Policy; so that it meets with employment legislation, best practice and Council need (particularly with regard to Equalities). Where necessary, taking positive action through R&S activity to make sure our staff profiles reflect our inclusive and diverse communities.
- Development of our Recruitment Attraction Approach; so that our websites are enhanced to best promote our employer brand, stressing the benefits of working with us. Ensuring that recruitment advertising is effective, focussed, good value for money, uses language and imagery that maximises potential interest from a diverse range of candidates, and is legally compliant
- Review of Application Process; so that it is compliant with legislation and is seen to be supportive to applicants.
- Upskilling of recruiting Managers so that, for example they are appropriately trained, in unconscious bias training, and that all employees who are involved in recruitment panels follow correct processes in conducting recruitment interviews.

Strand 7: Workforce Development

Your skills and expertise are unique and are the core to developing a learning organisation and to ensure we can deliver high quality services our residents and visitors to Swansea expect and require.

We are transforming our model for learning and development to provide a comprehensive and modernised learning offer that delivers engaging content at the point of need. This will support you throughout your career, embracing new digital and flexible means of learning and development and qualification while providing valuable face-to-face and reflection time for the highest value learning opportunities.

Objectives:

To have best practice L&D mechanisms in place.

So that we develop our workforce in a “learning organisation” committed to the development of transferable skills, knowledge and experience.

Actions:

- Development of Corporate Development Needs Analyses (DNA)
- Delivery of effective elearning solutions in Oracle Fusion, including the ability to provide regular reports on training provision.
- Delivery of Career Development Programmes, particularly for apprenticeships and graduate level entrants
- Delivery of Equalities Training
- Delivery of training related to the requirements of the Future Generations Act, for example, Integrated Impact Assessments, Sustainable Development.
- Provision of Welsh language training to meet our Legal and Corporate objectives
- Develop Induction/ Onboarding
- Continued partnership with Gower College to identify and deliver external training support, particularly in Digital Skills.
- Climate Change and Nature Recovery - Net Zero Swansea
- Deliver the Digital Strategy mission to achieve Digital skills and confidence.

Strand 8: Supporting Our Workforce

The pressures and demands of your job, (which has been amplified by the impact of the pandemic) has a significant impact on you and your wellbeing. We are committed to ensuring our workforce has the right structures, support and encouragement to maintain your mental and physical health in adaptive and flexible ways.

Objective:

To provide a clear roadmap for health and wellbeing that is accessible and fit for purpose.

So that we help maintain a happy and healthy workforce and a supportive and productive working environment, aligned to the Future Generations Act objectives around kindness and compassion.

Actions:

- Incorporate mental health awareness into leadership and management development so that they feel confident to address issues around mental health.
- Maintain and develop the Council's "Helping Hands" programme that champions mental health champions issues that;
 - Develops knowledge and confidence to signpost people with the most common mental health issues to the right support
 - Develops an understanding of how to help build a mentally healthy workplace, challenge stigma and support positive wellbeing
 - Takes a preventative approach to ensuring good mental health
- Review and re-launch of Dying to Work Charter
- Delivery of dedicated advice and support to focus on reducing sickness absence, particularly longer-term.
- Seek re-accreditation for SEQOHS ('Safe, Effective, Quality Occupational Health Service).
- To regain Gold Award status under the Healthy Working Wales; Corporate Health Standard and Small Workplace Health Awards).

Strand 9: Equality in the Workplace

We are building an environment that creates diversity and promotes equality, ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce across the entire council that is more representative of societal diversity and the diversity of our service users. We will tackle racism and other forms of discrimination where it exists in the services and we will ensure the workforce is equipped and supported to do the same.

Objective

To maintain a culture where equality of opportunity exists for all to fulfil their potential and the need for equality, diversity and inclusion is incorporated into everyday activity.

So that we are an exemplar as a fair and equitable employer, including support for employer forums where appropriate and the workforce represents the population it serves

Actions

- Establishment of a Workforce Equalities Group to address workforce equalities issues such as;
 - Collection of Data on “Protected Characteristics
 - Delivery of Action Plan to address Gender and Race Pay gap Issues
 - Delivery of Equalities and Integrated Assessments Training
 - Adherence to the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan and LGBT+ Action Plan as they relate to the Workforce.
- Achievement of Disability Confident Accreditation Leader Status
- Delivery of Equalities Training

Delivering the plan

The Workforce Plan will be delivered over 5 years with an annual delivery plan setting out key deliverables and milestones for the coming year.

The Year One Delivery Plan for 2022/23 is attached (**appendix 1**) which has clear deliverables and a foundation to build upon over the 5 years.

Year One has a particular focus on establishing key strategies in relation to skills, performance, resourcing and engagement which support our new ways of working.

A Corporate Workforce Group will monitor and manage the delivery of our workforce plan across all areas of the council.

Underpinning our Delivery Plan is a commitment to:

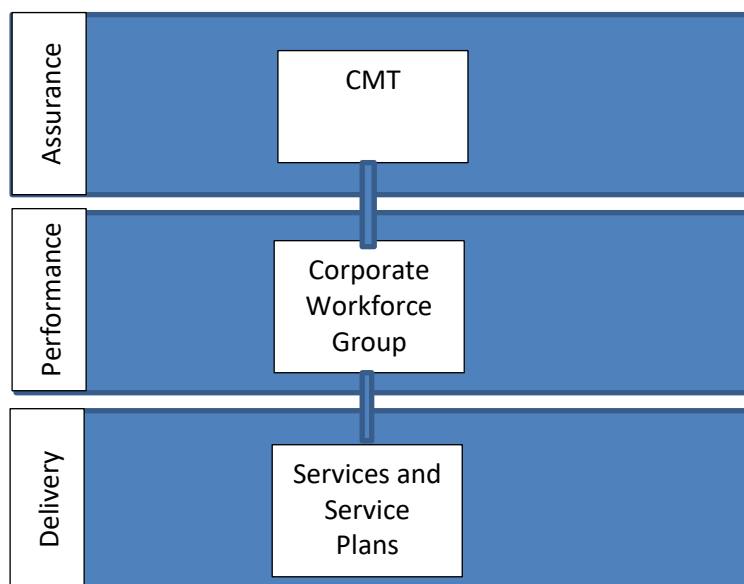
- 1 Focus on the outcomes in the Council Corporate Plan
- 2 Engage constructively with our employees and trade unions
- 3 Make informed and value for money decisions
- 4 Promote equality, diversity and inclusion

Corporate Workforce Group

Membership: Deputy Chief Executive
Head of HR and Service centre
HR / Service Centre Partner
Administrator/PA
Representative from each Directorate

Frequency of meetings: Quarterly

Reporting: 6 monthly report to CMT



Workforce Plan Responsibility

As the Workforce Plan belongs to the whole Council, to succeed it needs to be embedded throughout the organisation, so responsibility in practice is distributed.

By its very nature, much of the Workforce Plan will form part of the Human Resources and Service Centre Service Plan, however, the aims that have been highlighted that focus on internal communication and ICT will be delivered through the respective service area and will form part of their Service Plans. In addition, the work streams identified in the workforce plan should also feature and be embedded in all services plans across all the directorates to ensure the aims and objectives are tailored to any specific requirements within each service.

Updating the workforce plan

The workforce planning process is fundamental to the success of the Council in achieving its vision and priorities. It is important in anticipating future workforce needs and in shaping clear strategies to help meet those needs

Although this is a five-year plan it is important that it is refreshed on an annual basis and informed by revisions to the Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan, outcomes from the wider service planning process and information gained from individual performance development reviews.

In addition it is important that the plan is informed by good quality employment data, intelligence about trends in the local and national labour market and contextual social, legal, technological and demographic information

The table below sets out the annual process for workforce planning. The process will ensure a clear flow of intelligence, which informs workforce planning at the corporate and directorate level and which is connected with the wider resource and service planning process:

1	The consideration of workforce issues as part of the service planning process	October-December each year
2	The framing of local service based workforce plans	October-December each year
3	The review of strategic themes to inform the corporate workforce planning process	December each year
4	The updating of the workforce planning actions to capture the strategic themes and develop responding strategies	January - February each year
5	Updating HR and training strategies to deliver workforce planning objectives	March each year

How will we know if we have been Successful?

We will know if we are successful if our employees, trade unions, elected members and customers feedback positively.

We will regularly monitor key management information which we will develop and refine over the 4 year period of the Plan.

The outcomes we are looking to achieve are:

- Council Plan outcomes are successfully delivered.
- Customer feedback and satisfaction is improved.
- Employee morale is increased.
- Attendance levels are improved.
- Employees are more informed via effective two way communication.
- Higher number of career paths and apprenticeships are in place and planned through closer collaboration with schools, colleges and higher education providers.
- Employee performance is measured in a structured way.
- A clear understanding of workforce skills and training requirements is in place.
- Workforce training and e-learning completions are increased.
- The Gender Pay Gap is reduced.
- Workforce diversity is more representative of the communities being served and our understanding of cultural values is enhanced.
- The number of employees in our “hard to fill” roles is reduced through improved recruitment and retention programmes.
- The workforce age profile is more balanced.
- There is less use of an Externally Provided Workforce (EPWs), or spend on consultants, agency staff and interims.
- Links with peers and partners are strengthened with an increased number of collaborative services and joint workforce initiatives.

We recognise that our employees have different requirements and we need to improve our knowledge and understanding of the workforce to allow us to make more informed decisions around our themes.

As such, developing our ability to record and measure some of the key data above and utilise this information will be a successful measure in itself.



Strategic Workforce Metrics and Measures

To measure the impact of the workforce strategy and guide workforce planning the following Key Performance Indicators/Metrics will be used to monitor the progress:

Key Performance indicator / measure	What it will show	Why use it
Time taken to recruit	Time taken from submission of advert to offer of appointment	To maintain effectiveness of recruitment system; Impact on organisational capacity if recruitment delayed; help identify workflow blockages
Absence	Days lost per FTE	Manage overall levels, and identify potential costs.
Turnover (Voluntary)	Number of employees leaving (not including end of fixed term contract etc.)	To indicate satisfaction with Council as an employer and identify high turnover areas and manage retention rates
Apprentice securing role with Council	% of apprenticeships/Traineeships successfully completed	To indicate success of apprenticeship schemes in achieving workforce needs.
Staff Survey (Council as an employer)	% employees stating positively that Council is a good employer	Overall measure of employee satisfaction, engagement and manage retention
Gender Pay Gap	% gap in Mean and median earnings of male and female employees	To track success in addressing/reducing gender pay gap
Diversity and inclusion	Percentage of employees (and senior managers) by protected characteristics	To track and monitor effectiveness of diversity and equal opportunity Policies and success in reaching wider talent pools for jobs
External competitor pay check	Key roles where Council pay/benefits package varies from competitors	To manage recruitment and retention hotspots and challenges

Appendices

1st Year (2022/23) Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan

Corporate Action Plan 2022/23							
Action point No.	Action	Success criteria & Outcomes	Milestones	Finish date	Officer responsible	Resource required from within council	Status and update
Leadership and Management							
Strand 1 Culture and Behaviours							
1.1	Review and refresh its existing Principles, Values and Behaviours	To ensure that it is robust enough and fit for purpose in meeting the future needs of the Council and the communities it serves by reflecting the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.	TBD on appointment of OD & Behaviours lead	March 2023 and ongoing	Head of HR	Engagement with Members, CMT, Leadership Team, Staff and Trade unions	Funding identified for recruitment of OD & Behaviours Lead
1.2	Further develop a Social Partnership Working framework with our Trade Unions on strategic and operational issues. ,	Establishment of a robust and best practice framework for negotiation, consultation and facilities provision.	Delivery of Social Partnership Working locally. Introduction of Social Partnership Agreement.	September 2022	Heads of Service Head of HR	Engagement with Members, CMT, Leadership Team, Staff and Trade unions	
1.3	Deliver a Strategy for communications and engagement across all areas and levels across the Council.	Delivery of revised Communications strategy	Strategy in process of being developed.	March 2022	Head of Communication s and Marketing	TBA	
Strand 2; Future Leadership							
2.1	Develop a framework of leadership behaviours that will underpin our core values and set out the expectations that employees at all levels can have of those in	Deliver appropriate development interventions for managers and leaders at all levels of the organisation, including; New Leader Programme"; focussed on current and identified potential Heads of Service	TBD pending availability of L&D resource	March 2023	Head of HR	Engagement with Gower College.	Discussions ongoing with L&D team.

	leadership and management roles.	New Manager Programme”; building on the current Management Development Programme and focussed on existing Managers linked to achievement of ILM Level 5.					
2.2	A Coaching and Mentoring strategy across the Council.	<p>Research coaching qualifications & providers for the qualification. Identify coaching solutions for Grades 12, Directors and Councillors.</p> <p>Create an over-arching strategy along with supporting policies & processes</p>	<p>A functional Coaching Network is created with coaching available across all Directorates within Swansea Council.</p> <p>Delegates completing the funded qualifications within a timely manner & supporting Swansea employees with between 2-3 coaching clients per annum</p> <p>A coaching culture being embedded and valued within the Swansea Council culture.</p>	Phase one training complete by October 2022, all qualifications complete by Jan 2023A pool of qualified, competent and motivated Coaches available for coaching throughout Swansea Council will be in place for the last financial quarter of 2022/23	Head of HR	Intranet updates (Liz Shellard’s Team) Chris Peters-Bond/Internal Comms for promotion Existing qualified coaches to be sourced for mentoring and observations	Secure funding of circa £10k for the program, CMT accept strategy 2021All strategy & policy documents have been approved and the initial application process is underway
2.3	Continuation of Leadership Hub (now “Let’s Talk”)	Success to be measured through attendee feedback.	Speakers to be identified for monthly events during 2022/23	Ongoing	Head of HR		Re-branded “Let’s talk” to reflect Focus Group feedback

2.4	Be an active contributor and participant member of “New Local”, networking and collaborating with this organisation and member authorities on key topics to source research and innovative insights to genuinely solve problems and find practical solutions.	<p>A recognised space for officers to step away from day-to-day activities and engage with peers from across the country.</p> <p>Opportunities, support and investment in our staff.</p> <p>Ambitious leaders from across the Council on the Next Generation Academy</p> <p>Officers share experience, expertise & learning on some of the most pressing issues the sector is facing with other Councils across the UK.</p>	join the list of forward-thinking, ready-to-learn councils and organisations across the UK = April 2022	TBC March 2024	(Interim) Marlyn Dickson	Internal Engagement/ Participation Role	Implementation plan in Development, with MD&AC.
Strand 3; Future Shape of the Organisation							
3.1	To establish optimal structures that meet the future needs of the above priorities.	Opportunities are identified and delivered to optimise structures and reporting lines. So that tangible efficiencies are achieved and silo working reduced in the areas identified from 3.2 to 3.10.	TBC. To commence following appointment of an OD & Behaviours Lead. Milestones to be determined in respect of 3.2 to 3.10	TBC; ongoing for length of strategy.	Head of HR	Led by OD & Behaviours Lead to be appointed following Head of HR appointment. Engagement with CMT and Heads of Service	Funding received for recruitment of OD & Behaviours Lead following appointment of Head of HR
3.2	Our regionalisation agenda	Advocate and explore opportunities which have been or will be identified and delivered. Optimising structures and reporting lines and ensuring our employees are trained in best practice to maximise partnership working opportunities.	Implementation of CJC’s, City Deal, Western gateway, Swansea bay tidal Lagoon, Partneriaeth Regional Education consortium	The skills and knowledge will need to be developed as each project and scheme is being developed and	Director of Resources	Training, good practice examples	

				throughout the project and should link into the development plans of each project and scheme			
3.3	Learning and development	Opportunities are maximised to improve and achieve efficiencies in the delivery of learning and development provision across the Council.	TBD on appointment of Head of HR	March 2023	Head of HR	L&D Leads across Council	
3.4	“Implementing the optimum model for adult services, and a child and family services improvement programme including a safe 'Looked After Children' reduction strategy.	<p>More adults and carers supported through preventative, community and place based approaches.</p> <p>More adults supported to stay safe and well at home without recourse to more institutionalised forms of care.</p> <p>Greater proportion of adults with care and support needs and their carers supported directly through local authority or third sector provision</p> <p>More children and families supported via early support services and approaches</p> <p>Fewer children requiring recourse to statutory children services support</p> <p>More children supported to remain living safely within their own families and communities</p>	See adults and children services recovery/transformation plans. This also includes the implementation of integrated early help, early years and family support arrangements as well as a cross cutting commissioning review in Social Services.	Strategies will be refreshed on an annual basis	Director of Social Services	<p>Service redesign to implement the optimal model for adult services will have to be reviewed in light of the impact of covid and Welsh Government's policy intent to rebalance the social care market.</p> <p>Children services Safe LAC reduction strategy is well embedded but service redesign/transformation/renewal will continue to reflect new and emerging challenges including the impact of covid</p>	

		For those children who do need to be looked after a greater proportion will be supported by Foster Wales Swansea or through our in house residential care services					
3.5	Review of future additional learning needs provisions	a) Delivery of specialist teaching facilities (STFs) review. b) Central provision of ALN reviewed following 2020 re-structure. c) Consideration of additional further specialist places in schools d) Head of vulnerable learner service re-introduced.	a) Implementation of changes to STFs in Swansea b) Fit for future ALN central staff c) Possible single special school in Swansea d) Post holder in place and managers configured for service area	TBC. Consultation would commence September 2022 (STFs) Review of ALN central structure completed December 2021. Special school considerations by 2027 Head of service and management in place by September 2022	Director of Education	Fit for purpose central workforce to meet increased demand and expectations in light of ALN reform.	Review of future additional learning needs provisions
3.6	Support of the long term sustainable waste management strategy.	Delivery of new strategy being developed for 22/25 which might impact on future resourcing	Cabinet due to approve new waste strategy by March 2022	March 2022	Director of Place	None at this stage	Report principles approved. Awaiting cabinet decision
3.7	Support of the community development strategy.	New resources approved via Budget/ERF during 21/22	ERF bid approved for 21/22 and 22/23	March 2023	Head of Cultural Services	New resources approved via	ERF bid approved for 21/22 and 22/23

						Budget/ERF during 21/22	
3.8	Support of future sustainable transport provision through our Integrated Transport Unit, as well as local and regional solutions.	Deliver ITU structure and respond to emerging local regional and national strategies	ITU established. New National transport strategy due late 2022. New regional transport Plan required mid-2023.	Mid 2023	Director of Place	None at this stage	Set up of ITU complete.
3.9	To pro-actively identify opportunities for synchronicities and efficiencies in organisational design, both budgetary and operationally, across Directorates and Service areas.	Opportunities are maximised to improve and achieve efficiencies in the delivery services across the Council.	TBD on appointment of Head of HR	March 2023	Head of HR	Directors Heads of Service	Funding received for recruitment of OD & Behaviours Lead following appointment of Head of HR
3.10	Pro-active consideration of the structural and workforce requirements in the “commissioning of people oriented services”, as identified in the Recovery Plan	People commissioning hub established utilising hub and spoke model of small central infrastructure drawing upon specialists embedded within children services, adults services, education, housing and procurement	Hub established April 2020 Education structure implemented September 2021 Review of effectiveness of central infrastructure June 2022	October 2022	Director of Social Services	Children services, Adult services, Education, Housing and Procurement	Hub has been operating throughout the period of the covid pandemic. Review of staffing infrastructure has been postponed during this period of emergency but will now be undertaken

**A Workforce Fit for the Future
Strand 4 – Future Workforce**

4.1	Deliver strategic resource planning to inform workforce strategy.	TBD by HoS to include; Delivery of skills audit. Workforce plans in place for each service area. Identification of critical posts. Succession plans in place to spot talent and develop staff for future leadership roles. Plans in place to address age profile issues.	TBD with HoS Refreshment of training on Workforce planning techniques	Ongoing	Directors Heads of Service	HR&OD	Work ongoing
4.2	Develop a flexible Workforce (in conjunction with Property Services) through HR&OD Policy development, guidance and training.	Flexitime policy to be delivered. New Ways of Working integral to the development of property portfolio.	Flexitime policy in place by March 23. Analysis of workforce behaviours post-pandemic. Longer-term implementation of City Centre hub.	Flexitime policy in place by March 2023	Head of HR	Property Services	Agile policy in place
4.3	Develop and adopt agile (“lean”) working practices and processes.	Identify opportunities for “Red-tape busting”, improved systems and process in identified areas.	TBD on and prior to appointment of QS Lead.	March 2023	Directors HoS	Quality Systems Lead HR&OD	Funding received for recruitment of Quality Systems Lead
4.4	Optimal management of Agency Workers	Adherence to Agency Worker policy.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Directors HoS	Procurement HR&OD Agency providers	Audit in last quarter 2022
Strand 5 – Recognising Performance							
5.1	Review of pay and grading across the Council and for senior roles as identified through	To optimise pay and grading arrangements. Review and deliver “future proof” Chief Officer scheme.	TBD on appointment of Pay & Grading Officer	March 2023	Head of HR	Pay and Grading Officer Directors	Funding received for recruitment of

	the senior management review	Review potential for new Officer JE scheme.					Pay & Grading Officer.
5.3	Delivery of a revised, “fit for purpose” Performance Management approach, to reflect the future needs of the Council,	Delivery of “Performance and Goals performance management system through Oracle Fusion Delivery of revised Performance Management Policy Corporate and Directorate Objectives Reviewed and Agreed	Oracle Fusion implemented October 2022 Rollout to Council by March 2023	March 2023	Head of HR	Oracle fusion team HR&OD CMT Leadership Team Trade Unions	Engagement with Oracle Fusion team ongoing
5.4	Delivery of Action Plan to address Gender, Disability and Race Pay Gap Issues.	Delivery on Actions identified through Plan Develop readiness for Disability and Race Pay Gap issues	Establishment of Workforce Equalities Group Appointment of Pay and Grading Officer	March 2023	Head of HR	Workforce Equalities Group Pay and Grading Officer	Funding received for recruitment of Pay & Grading Officer
5.5	Consider re-introduction of “career grades” as part of Pay policy/ strategy	Identified through Staff Focus Group Process to address recruitment and retention issues	Appointment of Pay and Grading Officer	March 2023	Head of HR	Pay and Grading Officer	Funding received for recruitment of Pay & Grading Officer
Being an Employer of Choice							
Strand 6 – Recruitment and Retention							
6.1	Review and Update of Recruitment and Selection Policy; so that it meets with employment legislation, best practice and Council need (particularly with regard to Equalities).	Where necessary, taking positive action through R&S activity to make sure our staff profiles reflect our inclusive and diverse communities. Addressing future skills and resource gaps; through delivery of effective programmes to attract and retain talent in key resource and skill shortage areas, identified through workforce planning activities	Appointment of Recruitment Specialist	March 2023	Head of HR	Recruitment Specialist Service Centre Hiring Managers Workforce Equalities Group	Funding received for recruitment of Recruitment Specialist
6.2	Review of Application Process; so that it is compliant with legislation and is seen to be supportive to applicants.	That we meet established KPIs in relation to recruitment practices.	Appointment of Quality Systems Lead	March 2023	Head of HR	Quality Systems Lead Service Centre IT Recruitment Specialist	Funding received for recruitment of Pay & Grading Officer

6.3	Development of our Recruitment Attraction Approach;	So that our websites are enhanced to best promote our employer brand, stressing the benefits of working with us. Ensuring that recruitment advertising is effective, focussed, good value for money, uses language and imagery that maximises potential interest from a diverse range of candidates, and is legally compliant	Appointment of Recruitment Specialist	March 2023	Head of HR	Recruitment Specialist Service Centre Hiring Managers	Funding received for recruitment of Recruitment Specialist
6.4	Upskilling of recruiting Managers	So that, for example they are appropriately trained, in unconscious bias training, and that all employees who are involved in recruitment panels follow correct processes in conducting recruitment interviews.	Appointment of Recruitment Specialist	March 2023	Head of HR	Recruitment Specialist Service Centre Hiring Managers Workforce Equalities Group Corporate L&D Team	Funding received for recruitment of Recruitment Specialist and Corporate L&D Officers
6.5	National Education staff recruitment campaign	Participation in the Educators Wales recruitment Portal.	Appointment of Recruitment Specialist	September 2022	Head of HR	Recruitment Specialist Service Centre Hiring Managers	Funding received for recruitment of Recruitment Specialist and Corporate L&D Officers
Strand 7 – Workforce Development							
7.1	Development of Corporate Development Needs Analyses (DNA)	So that we have a clear understanding of our corporate needs, informed by our workforce planning activities.	Draft DNA's in place for each Directorate by 30 September 2023	March 2023	Head of HR	Directors Heads of Service Council L&D teams	Funding received for recruitment of Corporate L&D Officers
7.2	Delivery of effective elearning solutions in Oracle Fusion,	The ability to provide regular and timely reports on training provision. Easily accessible access to training	Oracle Fusion implementation	March 2023	Oracle Fusion	Council L&D teams	Funding received for recruitment of Corporate L&D Officers
7.3	Delivery of Career Development	So that there is a clear direction of travel on the provision of	TBD	March 2023	Head of HR/ to be determined	Heads of Service	Resurrection and review of

	Programmes, particularly for apprenticeships and graduate level entrants offering work experience, trainee programmes,	Programmes to meet the needs of Directorates and Service areas. There is a proactive offer of opportunities for care experienced young people to reflect the Council's role as a corporate parent				Corporate L&D Team	previous proposals for development programmes. Develop an offer for care experienced young people drawing in best practice from other LAs
7.4	Delivery of training related to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) Act, for example, Integrated Impact Assessments, Sustainable Development	The workforce has a clear understanding of the WFG Act, and their roles and responsibilities. The workforce has opportunities to support in its implementation and improve well-being via better decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Sustainable Development (WFG) Policy • IIA Training • WFG Training 	March 2023	Future Generations Act lead	Corporate L&D Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft online WFG training developed with sustainable development focus • Draft IIA Training in progress • Redrafting based on policy update required once confirmed
7.5	Provision of Welsh language training to meet our Legal and Corporate objectives	Delivery of Welsh Language Skills Framework; delivery of key strands; including training for front line staff and e-learning	Delivery of each of the key strands detailed in the Framework.	March 2023	Head of HR	Corporate L&D Team Welsh Language Skills Training Group	Framework paper to be presented to CMT in February. Funding provided for Welsh Language Skills training
7.6	Develop Induction/ On boarding	So that we have a consistent on boarding and induction process in place that supports new employees	TBD on appointment of Corporate L&D officer	September 2023	Head of HR	Corporate L&D	Funding for Corporate L&D Officers received.

		in understanding their role and place in the organisation					
7.7	Continued partnership with Gower College to identify and deliver external training support, particularly in Digital Skills.	So that we make best use of Gower College provision to deliver learning and development opportunities. Optimal use of Apprenticeship levy funding	Monthly Review of delivery and support packages across Directorates and Services.	Ongoing	Head of HR	Corporate L&D Team Heads of Service	
7.8	Climate Change and Nature Recovery - Net Zero Swansea	Work with training officers to update mandatory training to include relevant links to Net Zero 2030/50 and Climate Change Work with training officers to develop non mandatory training for staff and members on Net Zero Raise Awareness through the intranet and Council website using the Net Zero and Climate Change pages and a toolkit format for staff, residents and businesses Work with recruitment to ensure Net Zero Swansea and climate change is included in recruitment packs	Training for Cllrs and staff on Net Zero Swansea Formatted website pages with links to relevant policies	March 2023	Project Manager – Strategic Climate Change	Corporate L&D Website development staff to work with Project Manager to develop the pages and develop training	
7.9	Deliver the Digital Strategy mission to achieve Digital skills and confidence	To be determined during course of 2022/23	To be determined	March 2025	Head of Digital and Customer Services	Support required from Corporate L&D Team, Gower College to develop a corporate wide approach	
7.10	Schools Leadership Development	Growing leaders in Swansea schools so that we; Support development of leaders and practitioners in schools Have a new and acting headteacher induction programme in Swansea Participate in the Regional partnership leadership development programme	To be determined	To be determined	Director of Education	To be determined	

Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion
Strand 8- Supporting Our Workforce

8.1	Incorporate mental health awareness into leadership and management development	So that Leaders and Managers feel confident to address issues around mental health.	Yearly Training Delivery Plans 2022-25 with course frequency incrementally increased to 12 courses per year	31st March 2025	Corporate Health and Wellbeing Manager	Ongoing budget provision to maintain delivery	Training package in-place with additional e-learning packages
8.2	Maintain and develop the Council's "Helping Hands" programme that champions mental health.	So that there is; knowledge and confidence to signpost people with the most common mental health issues to the right support.	Return HH face to face group activity Raise awareness through promotion through newsletters and Staffnet Advertise and recruit volunteers across Authority HH promotion at all Health Fairs	March 2025	Corporate Health and Wellbeing Manager	Support from Comms Team in raising visibility through Staffnet and Staff Newsletters	Helping Hands training package complete, with promotional/recruitment resources
8.3	Review and re-launch of Dying to Work Charter	So that this Charter is brought up to date with best practice.	Consultation and Agreement with TU's. Engagement with JCC and CMT	June 2022	Head of HR	Trade Unions	Work ongoing on this activity
8.4	Delivery of dedicated advice and support to focus on reducing sickness absence, particularly longer-term.	Delivery of dedicated advice and support to focus on reducing sickness absence, particularly longer-term. Review of Management of Attendance Policy	Milestones and success criteria to be determined in respect of each Service area	Ongoing	Heads of Service Head of HR	Trade Unions	Sickness Absence Officers appointed
8.5	Seek re-accreditation for SEQOHS ('Safe, Effective, Quality	Demonstration of recognised set of standards for occupational health	Action plan 2022-23 developed	March 2025	Corporate Health and	Budget & Resource Commitment by Authority	Processes in-place, action plan will

	Occupational Health Service).	services to achieve SEQOHS accreditation. Raises confidence in the organisation, showing visible commitment to employees in their health being a priority and the quality of medical services provided	Action Plan delivered Online audit approved by CX submitted Onsite inspection and interview with CX complete SEQOHS accreditation achieved		Wellbeing Manager	Support of the Chief Executive, to read and approve submission and interview with SEQOHS assessment Team NB: If staffing resources and £3k project budget not in place this objective is unattainable	commence development April 2022 for submission before audit and inspection by SEQOHS assessors
	To regain Gold Award status under the Healthy Working Wales; Corporate Health Standard and Small Workplace Health Awards).	To improve confidence and staff wellbeing, and improve the offer of employment to increase recruitment as a flexible staff focused organisation committed to staff wellbeing	SEQOHS attained Action plan developed and implemented Evidence folders developed Delivery of health fairs and health promotion Themed staff wellbeing survey implemented Mock assessment with HWW assessors undertaken with report and action plan received with assessment of	March 2025	Corporate Health and Wellbeing Manager	Support from Directorate representatives and TU's as part of the Wellbeing Working Group Support from Comms team to promote activity through Staffnet & newsletters NB: If staffing resources not in place this objective is unattainable	

			level (Bronze, Silver or Gold)				
			3 Day onsite assessment with staff interviews at multiple sites, interviews with Wellbeing Working Group and CX.				
			Receipt of HWW assessors report with organisational accredited status				
Strand 9– Equality in the Workplace							
9.1	Establishment of a Workforce Equalities Group to address workforce equalities issues such as;	Collection of Data on “Protected Characteristics	TBD	March 2023	Head of HR	Service Centre Trade Unions	
9.2		Adherence to the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan and LGBT+ Action Plan as they relate to the Workforce	TBD	March 2023	Head of HR	Access to Services	
9.3		Pro-active contribution to the development of recruitment and selection processes to reflect the communities we serve	TBD	March 2023	Head of HR	Service Centre Recruitment Specialist	Funding for recruitment of Recruitment Specialist obtained.
9.4	Achievement of Disability Confident Accreditation Leader Status	So that we are accredited as a Disability Confident Leader; acting as a champion within our local and business communities.	External Validation of self-assessment referring to the “Voluntary Reporting Framework”	March 2023	Head of HR	Recruitment Specialist Service Centre Workforce Equalities Group	Disability Confident Employer Status already achieved. External support being provided by Remploy.

9.5	Delivery of Equalities Training	So that we have e-learning and face face training provisions the meets best practice and legislative requirements.	Training in place by June 2023	June 2023	Head of HR	Corporate L&D team Workforce Equalities Group	E-learning for staff in place. E-learning for Managers and face to face training being developed.
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Workforce and OD Transformation Programme Business Case

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 contains 43 key strategic objectives across four workforce themes, all of which are anticipated to be achieved within the lifetime of the strategy. Whilst a number of these objectives are specific areas of focus for business-as-usual activity, there are some critical transformational elements that will complement the day-to-day delivery.
- This business case seeks additional investment to deliver the transformation required in Years 1 and 2 of the Programme.

2. Strategic Case

- 2.1 The Council has ambitious plans for the city and county of Swansea which are heavily dependent on the capacity, capability and commitment of our workforce. We will need to tackle numerous internal and external challenges as we seek to achieve our objectives over the coming years and will need a workforce that can adapt and respond accordingly.
- Our 2023-28 Corporate Plan, *Successful and Sustainable Swansea*, sets out the Council's priorities for the next five years, one of which is **Transformation and Financial Resilience** to ensure the council and the services we provide are sustainable and fit for the future. There are two workforce related steps under this priority:

- **Workforce Development:** We will implement the council's workforce strategy and thereby develop a motivated and committed workforce that is innovative, supported, skilled and customer focused.
- **Organisational Development:** We will ensure the organisation's working model reflects the needs of the population and the council's agile working approach. We will review senior management structure,

pay and grading to ensure they are appropriate and in line with the wider workforce pay and grading scheme. We will develop tools to help services implement change, including training, guidance, and support.

2.2 Workforce Strategy

To achieve our Corporate Plan objective set out above, we need a strong vision for the workforce and a clear strategy on how we will navigate internal and external challenges and opportunities to create a workforce that is fit for the future and that can help the council to achieve its ambitious plans.

This will be achieved through five goals:

1. A workforce with the capacity to deliver statutory requirements and council wellbeing objectives
2. Highly and appropriately skilled employees across the wide range of roles
3. A motivated and valued workforce with high levels of engagement and wellbeing
4. A workforce that lives and breathes the organisation's values and the sustainable development five ways of working
5. An employment offer that will make Swansea Council an employer of choice

2.3 The rationale for transformation

The Workforce and OD Transformation Programme will aim to ensure that our workforce is supported to develop the following attributes in order to be adaptable, flexible, multi-skilled and committed to excellent public service.

- **Customer focussed** – ensuring we work with and listen to residents, contractors, members and colleagues to develop and deliver best customer service at all times, treating everybody with respect.
- **More agile and digitally skilled** – delivering services in different ways, using technology to maximise efficiencies and reduce our reliance on traditional ways of working.
- **Business focussed** –operating and acting efficiently in the delivery of Council business.
- **Collaborative** – services are increasingly likely to be delivered working in partnership with other services, as well as private, public and third sector partners.
- **Flexible, adaptable and innovative** –to embrace a changing environment, anticipate future trends as well as finding innovative ways to deliver services.
- **Outcome focussed and high performing** – whatever we do will need to have identifiable outcomes that align with both our long term goals and take account of the objectives of local, regional and national partners.

- Understand, and buy in to our priorities (well-being objectives) – being clear about our direction and understand how we contribute to achieving our priorities and how these integrate with the **wider partnership** context.
- **Engaged, motivated and resilient** – being well informed, clear on the direction of the organisation and resilient to meet the challenges ahead.
- Demonstrate **great Leadership** –so that managers role model visible, fair and pro-active leadership, supporting the workforce and ensuring that poor performance is managed effectively.
- Ensuring we are safe at all times and work in a **healthy and supportive environment** that takes a preventative approach by identifying root cause to stop problems starting or getting worse and underpinned by values of “kindness and compassion” and the “five ways of working” as defined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

2.4 Current and future delivery models

When considering delivery of the Workforce Strategy and associated Workforce and OD Transformation Programme, our current delivery model relies heavily on current people management policies and practices without focus on transformative change that strives to build a workplace with a progressive and modern culture. This contrast between current approach and future need places the Workforce Strategy success at risk if the delivery model is not reviewed.

Our future delivery model will be designed around three areas of transformation – cultural, systems and structural:

1) **Cultural transformation** throughout leadership, management, policy approach and ways of working.

2) **Systems transformation** by maximising automation and workflow, reducing demand for manual processes and improving overall efficiency.

3) **Structural transformation** of the HR&OD service offer from one of transactional process completion to proactive organisational business partnering.

The workforce and OD transformation programme will consist of a range of project business cases which identify one or more of the relevant transformation areas above across each of the Workforce Strategy themes of **Leadership and Management, A Workforce Fit for the Future, Employer of Choice** and **Employee Wellbeing and Inclusion**.

2.5 Benefits

The range of potential employee/manager, external applicant and Council wide benefits are described below:

Employee/manager related benefits:

- Opportunity across all hierarchy layers to engage in leadership development
- Real time access to recruitment functionality
- Review of wellbeing and Occupational Health provision to ensure a fit for purpose offer
- HR&OD offer to managers focused on supporting with proactive organisational design and workforce planning

External applicant related benefits:

- Mobile technology driven access to recruitment platform
- Immediate response times due to automated workflow processes
- Reduction in the length of time taken to hire

Council related benefits:

- Enhanced HR&OD strategic capacity and capability to support the forward planning of the organisation
- Increased levels of attendance
- Reduction in the length of time taken to hire
- Cultural change to support trust and empowerment

2.6 Risks

Ref	Description	RAG	Mitigation	RAG
01	If there is insufficient internal capacity for the programme, then there is a risk it will be delayed or fail to be implemented		Structural change included in business case and request for funding	
02	If the same resource across HR&OD is working on the Transformation programme and business as usual projects, then there is a risk of delay to projects.		Mapping of resources across all projects and planning of priorities across years including new and emerging projects.	
03	If there is insufficient funding for the programme, then there is a risk the		Explore alternative models for transformation	

Ref	Description	RAG	Mitigation	RAG
	goals and benefits will not be realised.		Cease current activity without lead time	

3. Economic Case

A range of projects will be taken forward to deliver the Workforce Strategy but not all require investment. The economic case below focuses on only those projects requiring additional investment to move forward in Years 1 and 2 of the lifespan.

3.1 Critical Success Factors

The key critical success factors that are needed to realise the programme benefits are set out in the table below:

Success Factor	Description
Long term: The importance of balancing immediate needs whilst safeguarding the ability to also meet long-term needs	The programme includes activities and projects to ensure the Council's workforce is sustainable in the longer term
Integration: With the Council's well-being objectives and the goals of other strategies	The programme is integrated with the corporate plan and wellbeing objectives, workforce, and digital strategies
Involvement: We will engage and involve others in a meaningful way, working in social partnership wherever possible	The programme will achieve this by engaging with the internal customer/trade unions and external potential future workforce applicant, working digitally by default where possible and co-producing in social partnership where appropriate
Collaboration: We will ensure more internal and external collaboration	Working with others to share learning and good practice
Prevention: Preventing problems from occurring or getting worse	The programme will achieve this through projects that aspire to improve performance

3.2 Business case detail

3.2.1 Leadership and Management – Coaching and Mentoring Programme

This project focuses on two key areas of work – developing our workforce culture and enabling growth of leadership and management skills. We will strive to foster a culture of inclusion and empowerment where leadership behaviours are welcomed throughout all levels of the organisation and not just through traditional hierarchy layers. This will help us achieve council-wide high quality, skilled leadership in responding to future change and challenges and exemplifying our Principles, Values, and Behaviours. This leadership skills' growth activity will help us teach and boost the learning needed to demonstrate positive leadership and role model the desired future culture, ensuring development opportunities and career pathways exist which create supportive and resilient leaders at all levels.

This project has various strands associated with leadership development over the lifespan of the Programme. Year 1 will focus on embedding a culture of coaching and mentoring, providing a new cohort of coaches and mentors from a wide range of departments across the Council.

The project requires investment to provide the high quality training and formal qualification provision as this cannot be accredited in-house.

Future phases of the project will explore talent management strategies alongside a development needs analysis of our current leadership and management capability, implementing a range of programmes across different layers of the organisation as a result.

3.2.2 *A Workforce Fit for the Future – Transforming HR&OD Services*

Directorates need to be able to deliver organisational and transformational change to their services and the ways they work and to do this they access to high quality HR tools, advice and guidance. In addition the HR&OD Service needs to transform if it is to deliver the 43 objectives in the council's Workforce Strategy as the current structure is not set up to achieve those objectives.

This project therefore involves transforming both the service that the HR&OD team provides, and the structure needed to deliver that service over a two year period.

Specifically the project will establish a business partnering model for the HR&OD Service. It will create effective change agents for service areas, enabling and facilitating organisational change to take place throughout the workforce. Business Partners will be expected to work closely with their service area to identify opportunities for improvement, drive cultural change and be the primary link for reorganisation of service delivery including transformation and MTFP achievement. They will be expected to diagnose and prescribe appropriate interventions that support organisational

performance in addition to taking lead roles in owning projects linked to the Workforce Strategy objectives.

This will transform ways of working in HR&OD, moving from the current position whereby the business partner role enacts people management policies to one where the primary objectives are to support managers to deliver their organisational objectives through workforce design and to deliver the objectives of the Workforce Strategy.

The structure will need to reform because of this changing expectation of business partner roles. People management activity will be delivered by a separate specialist team who will manage all employee relations casework and policy design, releasing business partners to solely focus on organisational transformation with their allocated service areas and to deliver the range of objectives from the Workforce Strategy.

It is only by transforming ourselves as a function that we can then seek to promote and develop transformation in those service areas we support. Not all activity carried out currently will be appropriate in future years and work needs to start now to prepare for this shift in delivery model.

The project requires pump priming investment in additional business partner roles to ensure that the right level of strategic support can be provided to directorates. This will bring opportunity to improve workforce planning activity, deliver in depth analysis of structural designs and greater capacity to deliver project work linked to the Workforce Strategy objectives. Transforming the service into one that provides high quality business partnering requires the employee relations casework to funnel through a different channel – the investment will also support the creation of a lead role for employee relations and policy development. This will ensure a smooth transition from one delivery model to another and will bring about improved consistency in interpretation of casework, provide accountability to the policy development programme and seek to improve current lead times experienced by directorates in the employee relations casework area.

3.2.3 *Employer of Choice – Oracle Fusion Recruitment*

We aspire to recruit and retain the right quantity and quality of employees that we need to support the council in the future through development of our Recruitment Attraction Programme, delivering a positive recruitment experience for applicants and hiring managers.

Moving to Oracle Fusion for recruitment will enable us to deliver the above objective, allowing us to improve and enhance the attraction strategy, application process, manager experience when recruiting and the new starter

onboarding experience. Implementing Oracle Fusion's recruitment platform would fully integrate the employee lifecycle process from application through to termination and reduce reliance (and associated human error) on manual processing activity, thereby delivering a timelier recruitment journey which provides a modern end user experience.

This project features as part of the Digital Transformation Programme due to it being systems-led however it will also be culturally transformative – how we choose to select new hires is an intrinsic part of the recruitment process and this project will seek to align a review of how we attract and recruit new hires into a career with the Council along with the systems capability upgrade.

3.2.4 *Employee Wellbeing and Inclusion – Reviewing our approach to sickness absence and occupational health provision*

This project will seek to understand the cultural transformation that might be required with regards to our management of absence approach. With rising sickness absence levels being reported and ERF funding to support OH due to draw to a close in 23/24, a fundamental review of how this area is managed will enable fresh thinking about the best ways to support the workforce whilst ensuring optimum staffing levels in services.

Defining our perception of wellbeing and any motivating factors that encourage good attendance in the workplace will assist in shaping any new policy approach which in turn sets the cultural norms and expectations around supporting employees during periods of ill health.

We need to have sustainable occupational health provision that is targeted towards the right workforce groups in an effective and efficient way.

This project does not seek additional funding as Year 1 will focus on the review element of the way in which we approach sickness absence and occupational health.

4. Financial Case

4.1 The financial case provides an overview of the anticipated investment required and the financial savings or operational efficiencies that will be achieved by the projects across the programme.

4.2 The transformational projects proposed to be taken forward in the first year are shown in the table below. The total investment required is £558,000, albeit £167,000 of this is being sought through the Digital Transformation Programme as it is to implement an iRecruitment solution.

Workforce Strategy Year 1 Project Themes	Benefits / Deliverables	Total Estimated Costs 2023-24 and 2024-25 (£)
Leadership and Management – Coaching and Mentoring Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a coaching culture throughout all levels of the organisation • Empowering employees to problem solve, make decisions, and initiate performance improvement through individual ownership 	15,000
Workforce Fit for the Future - Transforming HR&OD Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming HR&OD offer to the organisation builds capacity to then support in wider transformation of other services • Focus of service will be on proactive interventions and not reactive processes 	376,000
Employer of Choice – Oracle Fusion Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of new technology to attract future applicants • Improved end user experience of recruitment platform for both applicants and managers • Reduced manual processes in the Service Centre • Aligned systems thinking for whole employee lifecycle in Oracle • Enabling a modern onboarding experience for new hires • Increased security and resilience • Achieves savings in the MTFP 	167,000 ¹
Employee Wellbeing and Inclusion – reviewing sickness absence and occupational health approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic review of sickness absence and occupational health provision • Learn from best practice elsewhere • Transformative approach to managing attendance linked to wellbeing • Sustainable, fit for purpose OH provision 	0
Total Investment		558,000

4.2 The following projects will be a secondary developmental phase with a view to potentially taking them forward in future years depending on changing priorities and budget resource availability as the strategy evolves:

- Further development of Oracle Fusion module functionality
- Organisational wide development needs analysis
- Career pathways and succession planning strategies

¹ This project is included in the Digital Transformation Programme

- Career Development Programmes

4.3 Savings and Efficiencies

All the projects listed in the table at 4.1 meet the definitions of either cultural, systems or structural transformation, will address corporate risks, lead to operational efficiencies, deliver financial savings, or contribute to improved performance/end user experience.

Based on the current MTFP, the HR&OD Service is expected to be needed to deliver savings of around £450,000 by 2026-27. The projects identified above will help to deliver those recurrent savings while improving service quality and delivering key elements of the workforce strategy. Investment in these transformational projects is crucial if we are to make the necessary cultural, systems and structural transformational changes need to ensure a long term sustainable and fit for purpose workforce.

The investment will also help to mitigate the 'workforce recruitment and retention' corporate risk by improving the recruitment and onboarding experience and developing the leadership culture to one of trust and empowerment of the workforce. Retention rates should increase, morale and employee satisfaction should increase and attendance rates should improve as employees are able to make proactive decisions and hold a greater element of control in their daily work. Similarly, investing in Oracle Fusion's recruitment module will enable the council to promote a modern approach to the attraction, application, selection and onboarding of new recruits to the council, reducing the time it takes to hire and closing the gap in service delivery where turnover impacts on performance.

HR&OD structural transformation needs to take place incrementally as managers adopt new people management approaches. The initial investment will enable the offer to transform over a two-year period, building on increasing preventative HR&OD interventions whilst winding down process driven activity and developing the skills and capabilities of the service to deliver new functionality. It is anticipated that efficiencies from across the HR & Service centre service area will be delivered within the 2-year period to enable budget to be redirected to meet any ongoing revenue costs.

5 Monitoring and Reporting

5.1 Programme and Project Management Plans

The Workforce and OD Transformation Programme governance has been established. The Board oversees the programme and reports up to the

Council's overall Transformation Delivery Board. All key roles are in place and agreed as per the table below:

Role	Member
Chair	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance (Deputy Leader)
Deputy Chair	Director of Corporate Services
Sponsor	Director of Corporate Services
Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Head of HR & Service Centre
Programme Manager	Strategic HR&OD Manager
Directorate Representatives	<p>Place: 1. Head of Waste, Cleansing and Parks</p> <p>Social Services: 2. Principal Officer – Resources</p> <p>Education: 3. TBC</p> <p>Corporate Services: 5. TBC</p> <p>Finance: 6. TBC</p>

5.2 Scrutiny and Assurance

The Workforce and OD Transformation Programme Board will report progress, risks, and issues through a highlight report quarterly to the Transformation Delivery Board.

The Workforce and OD Transformation programme will report progress at least once a year to Cabinet/CMT on the delivery of the Workforce Strategy. The Board will also present a public report annually to Cabinet on progress.

Scrutiny and assurance of the strategy will be provided by the Scrutiny Programme Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee in line with existing council procedures.

5.3 Programme Plan

A high-level plan is included in Appendix A, highlighting the projects to be delivered over the next five years. Some of these activities are already in progress and require no additional investment, e.g. relaunching the ‘Dying to Work’ charter.

5.4 Key Milestones

The table below highlights the overarching key milestones of the programme:

Key Milestones	Date	Responsibility
Cabinet approval	October 2022	SRO
Projects commence	April 2023	Project R/O
Quarterly reporting to the Transformation Board	Qtrly	Programme Manager
Annual review of the programme	January each year	SRO / Programme Manager
Annual update on progress to CMT/Cabinet followed by a formal report to Cabinet	March each year	SRO / Programme Manager
Annual review by Scrutiny	April each year	SRO / Programme Manager
Audit of the Workforce Strategy and Programme	2025	SRO / Programme Manager
End of Programme closure report	2027	Programme Manager

5.5 Risk Management

The Programme sets out to operate best practice in the management of:

- Risks
- Actions
- Issues
- Decisions, and
- Dependencies.

The management of risks and issues forms part of the governance of this Programme ensuring they are managed in the most effective way to a clearly stated quality.

Members of the Programme team and key service leads are supported to manage their risks and issues regularly and effectively. Risks will be reviewed at Board level monthly, focusing on red and amber risks. Each project will

manage and maintain their own trackers and there will be a separate Programme risk tracker.

6 Conclusion

6.1 This business case sits alongside the Workforce Strategy 2022-27. The business case identifies an initial number of Workforce and OD transformation projects requiring investment, with a pipeline of further projects for the next four years. Other projects being delivered as part of daily business also contribute to the Workforce Strategy goals therefore all activities will be brought together into one report for the next update to Cabinet. This business case presents the following:

- The clear links that deliver the Corporate Plan well-being objectives
- The chosen projects have been selected. These are projects that are transformational, address a service gap, mitigate, or eliminate significant risks or deliver MTFP savings
- Benefits for residents and other customers, staff, and the wider Council
- The programme forms part of the new corporate transformation programme “Successful and Sustainable Swansea” and contributes to other areas of that programme, e.g. Waste Strategy, Transforming Additional Learning Needs, Digital Transformation
- Critical success factors align with the five ways of working
- Robust governance and programme management arrangements are in place, with the programme reporting up to the Transformation Delivery Board, CMT and Cabinet, with assurance and oversight by Scrutiny
- The programme involves significant change management within services
- The programme will conclude with an evaluation and final report to identify how the activities have delivered the workforce strategy vision and goals.

6.2 The programme requests investment for the first tranche of projects of £391,000.



Workforce Strategy

Agreed objectives for 2023/24

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
Leadership and Management	1. Review the Council's current principles, values and behaviours	Engagement sessions complete with Leadership, TU's and staff engagement group Design print engagement on infographics and document layout	Final document ready for CMT/Leadership approval 7 th February Comms roll out plan to be determined Performance Management policy under review for values and behaviours link	Head of HR and Service Centre/HRBP (AG)
	2. Develop a framework of leadership behaviours	As above, leadership behaviours are included in the values and behaviours document which is ready for publishing	Final document ready for CMT/Leadership approval 7 th February Comms roll out plan to be determined	Head of HR and Service Centre/HRBP (AG)

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
			Performance Management policy under review for leadership behaviours link	
	3. Develop a social partnership framework with trade unions	Current framework review undertaken by Principal HRBP JCC agreed review of Committee terms of reference and meeting with trade unions to propose amendments completed on 24 th January	Engagement with trade unions on revised framework at policy development meeting on 7 th February Final version of proposed JCC terms of reference to be scheduled for next JCC meeting on 20 th February	Principal HRBP (CT) Head of HR and Service Centre/Principal HRBP (CT)
	4. Develop a workforce communication and engagement strategy	Stakeholder engagement on proposed strategy complete	CMT approval and comms roll out plan to be determined	Comms and Marketing Officer (CP-B)
	5. Develop a coaching and mentoring approach	Cohort 1 completed Cohort 2 funding approved via Workforce and OD Transformation Programme business case	Approval to proceed with cohort 2 scheduled for CMT/Leadership 7 th February Review and refresh of coaching network	Head of HR and Service Centre/ L&D Advisor (RH)

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
Workforce Fit for the Future	6. Develop optimal structures for the following directorates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Services • Child and Family Services • Social Services commissioning review • Review of future additional learning needs provision • Long term sustainable waste provision • Community Development • Sustainable transport provision 		Currently under review with HoS / Directorates	
	7. Established workforce plans in each area	HRBP team completed LGA workforce planning training June 2023 New workforce planning template available for service areas to	Date to be confirmed for strategic leadership training session in April 2024 HRBP's to provide support to each service area for completion	Head of HR and Service Centre/HRBP's

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
		complete alongside 24/25 service plans		
	8. Develop a new hybrid operating model	<p>Principles of post pandemic working model approved by Cabinet in October 2022</p> <p>Service area completion of post pandemic working models completed</p> <p>12 month review of operating models completed and reported to Cabinet November 2023</p>		<p>Head of HR and Service Centre</p> <p>Heads of Service</p> <p>Head of HR and Service Centre</p>
	9. Confirm new agency contract arrangements	<p>Procurement work around tender exercise and evaluation completed</p> <p>Contract award completed</p>	Comms roll out of agency contract and procedures ahead of 1 st April launch	Head of HR and Service Centre/Procurement
	10. Delivery of effective e-learning solutions in Fusion, particularly reporting functionality	Learn is live and available in Fusion for employees to use	Results of February reporting to be shared with Directorate teams ahead of end of year	Head of HR and Service Centre/L&D advisors (AL)

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
		Scheduled reporting has taken place on a monthly basis since launch		
An Employer of Choice	11. Review and update Recruitment and Selection Policy	Included in HR Policy Development plan for 2023/24 but lower priority than other competing demands in policy framework currently	Stakeholder engagement on recruitment process from new starter and manager perspective scheduled for February 2024	Head of HR and Service Centre/Principal HRBP (CE)
	12. Develop a recruitment attraction approach	Not started	As above	As Above
	13. Review the application and selection process	Not started	As above	As above
	14. Creation of a modern onboarding and induction process	L&D team have reviewed corporate induction offering	Proposal for new induction process to be discussed at CMT/Leadership 7 th February Roll out of new induction to commence	Principal HRBP (WM)/HRBP's (AG/RH)
	15. Review of job evaluation and pay and grading for senior roles	JEQ's completed by all Chief Officers and submitted to LGA for evaluation	Report to Council on outcome of exercise and pay models due 21 st March	Principal HRBP (WM)

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
	as identified by a senior management review	Rank order exercise completed Pay structure review complete	Rank order and right of appeal to be communicated to affected employees	
	16. Review the employee benefits platform and consider new offers	New shared cost AVC scheme approved by Cabinet in October 2023	Implementation scheduled for 1 st April	Head of HR and Service Centre/Payroll Manager
Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion	17. Maintain and develop the 'Helping Hands' network	Recruitment & Training of New HH Volunteers complete Recruitment for new volunteers complete	Ongoing training and support	Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	18. Relaunch the 'Dying to Work' charter	Complete		HR&OD Manager
	19. Delivery of advice and support to reduce sickness absence	MOA advisors in place in three Directorates Self management advice provided to managers	Proposals for revisions to management of absence and OH provision due at CMT/Leadership 7 th February	Head of HR and Service Centre/Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager MOA Advisors

Workforce Strategy Goal	Objectives	Progress	Planned actions	Owner
		<p>Manager Training delivered and OHA advice available</p> <p>Review of approach to sickness absence and OH provision completed October 2023</p>		
	20. Seek re-accreditation for SEQOHS	Complete		Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	21. To regain Gold Award status under the Healthy Working Wales; Corporate Health Standard and Small Workplace Health Awards		Proposal to withdraw this objective at next Workforce and OD Transformation Programme Board as the Healthy Working Wales Corporate Health Standard has been withdrawn by NHS/WG and is no longer an award to apply for	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	22. Establishment of a Workforce Equalities Group to address workforce equalities issues	The group has been established and met during 2022/23	Refocus of purpose of group as a result of new Strategic Equality Plan objectives for workforce	Head of HR and Service Centre
	23. Achievement of Disability Confident Accreditation Leader Status	"Employer" status achieved	Carry forward to 2024/25	Head of HR and Service Centre



Report of the Head of HR and Service Centre

Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee
- 23 January 2024

Workforce and OD Transformation Programme Progress - Leadership and Management Development

Purpose:	To inform the Committee of the Workforce and OD Transformation Programme work in relation to the Leadership and Management development theme
Report Author:	Rachael Davies
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Workforce Strategy was approved by Cabinet in October 2022 after a period of design and consultation with stakeholders during 2022.
- 1.2 The Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 contains four key themes to drive organisational culture and improvement over the lifespan of the strategy, contributing to the 2023-2028 Corporate Plan, '*Successful and Sustainable Swansea.*'
- 1.3 The Workforce and OD Transformation Programme business case sits alongside the Council's Workforce Strategy 2022-27. The programme includes projects that will deliver the strategic goals of the Workforce Strategy and the overall transformation aspirations of the Corporate Plan.

2. Workforce and OD Transformation Programme

- 2.1 The transformation projects taken forward in the first year are:
 - Leadership and Management – Coaching and Mentoring Programme
 - A Workforce Fit for the Future – Transforming HR&OD Services
 - Employer of Choice – Oracle Fusion Recruitment

- Employee Wellbeing and Inclusion – Reviewing sickness absence and occupational health provision

This report focuses on the first theme – Leadership and Management – and provides an update on progress made since adoption of the strategy.

2.2 The following projects are a secondary developmental phase and were identified with a view to potentially taking them forward in future years depending on changing priorities and budget resource availability as the strategy evolves:

- Further development of Oracle Fusion module functionality
- Organisational wide development needs analysis
- Career pathways and succession planning strategies
- Career Development Programmes

3. Leadership and Management

3.1 This theme focuses on two key areas of work – developing our workforce culture and enabling growth of leadership and management skills. We strive to foster a culture of inclusion and empowerment where leadership behaviours are welcomed throughout all levels of the organisation and not just through traditional hierarchy layers. This will help us achieve council-wide high quality, skilled leadership in responding to future change and challenges and exemplifying our Principles, Values, and Behaviours. This leadership skills' growth activity will help us teach and boost the learning needed to demonstrate positive leadership and role model the desired future culture, ensuring development opportunities and career pathways exist which create supportive and resilient leaders at all levels.

Year 1 intended to focus on embedding a culture of coaching and mentoring, providing a new cohort of coaches and mentors from a wide range of departments across the Council. Funding of £15k was approved from the Transformation Delivery Board for the new cohort.

Future phases of the project theme were to explore talent management strategies, a development needs analysis of our current leadership and management capability and implementing a range of programmes across different layers of the organisation.

The next cohort programme has been confirmed with our partner Gower College and work is now underway to recruit the new cohort of coaches. Staffnet contains resources to explain the purpose of the coaching network, the policy around how to access coaching and the application process to be matched with a suitable coach.

3.2 One of the other Workforce Strategy themes - Workforce Fit for the Future – also saw an area identified for transformation, that of the HR&OD offer to the organisation. With temporary additional resource in the HR&OD team

they have been able to progress other strands under the Leadership and Management theme at a quicker than expected pace.

Working in partnership with Gower College we now have over 100 managers enrolled on the ILM level 4/5 Management Development Programme with the most recent cohort starting in October 2023. There is a waitlist of engaged managers for the next opportunity scheduled to commence in February 2024. Applications continue to be received which is an indication of the positive feedback being shared amongst the management group. Gower College surveyed cohort members on the value of the programme and feedback from the group included the benefits of being able to network with other managers across the business, the collaboration opportunities and hearing about different experiences/perspectives.

25 Graduates attended Swansea Arena on 15th November 2023 to receive their completion certificates at the Gower College Swansea Graduation Ceremony. It is expected that this will be a much larger number at next year's event, given that it is an 18-24 month programme.

To grow this development opportunity still further, we are in the process of finalising activity to expand roll out of an ILM Level 3 to those appointed to management roles for the first time and an ILM Level 2 for employees who aspire to a managerial role in the future. These opportunities are due to commence in Q4 of the 2023/24 year.

- 3.3 Another of our future identified priorities was the introduction of a Development Needs Analysis. As with the expansion of the ILM Level 2 and Level 3 opportunities, this project has taken shape earlier than anticipated. The design pre-work on the analysis has been completed and a service area has been identified and agreed to test the concept before any wider roll out. This will enable us to assess the potential value of the DNA and make any necessary adjustments. It is expected that this piece of work will now be delivered by the end of Year 1 which is ahead of planned schedule.
- 3.4 Whilst our initial target was to widen the access of the Coaching and Mentoring network under the Leadership and Management theme, we are on track to achieve this goal by the end of Year 1 and have made good progress towards other theme priorities around wider leadership and management development and the development needs analysis.

A report to Leadership scheduled for February will provide a full analysis of all Organisational Development activity that is being undertaken in addition to new possibilities that could be considered for 2024/25.

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

4.2 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'.

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

4.4 There are no integrated assessment implications associated with this report as it is a for information report and does not require a decision, however any impacts identified would be positive in that the Leadership and Management theme of the Workforce Strategy will provide additional opportunities for upskilling and qualifications to be gained by a range of different groups across the workforce.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Transformation Delivery Board funding was approved for the £15k cost of the coaching and mentoring programme for 23/24. Partnership with Gower College enables the Council to access fully funded ILM development opportunities.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 8



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

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) Climate Change & Nature
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 Sara Keeton (Panel Convener)
Lead Officers & Report Author	Liz Jordan 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:

- Climate Change & Nature

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 9 Members:

Labour Councillors: 3

Joe Hale	Sara Keeton (CONVENER)
Oliver James	

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 3

Wendy Fitzgerald	Michael Locke
Mary Jones	

Conservative Councillors: 2

Brigitte Rowlands	Will Thomas
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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

Climate Change and Nature Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The Panel is responsible for ongoing monitoring of performance in relation to climate change and the natural environment. The Panel will monitor delivery of the Council's work, commitments and implementation of agreed plans, and assess progress.

2. Key Activities

The Panel is currently meeting every two months and since the beginning of this municipal year the Panel has looked at the following:

Meeting	Topic(s)
4 July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Convener • Draft Work Plan 2023-24
3 October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Quality, Management and Pollution Control • Planning Enforcement: Nature and Biodiversity (Discussion on how to encourage people to look at biodiversity within planning applications)
28 November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Tourism Briefing
30 January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Electric Vehicle Charging Provision

3. Achievements / Impact

We have sent 2 letters (up to end December 2023) to relevant Cabinet Member(s) since our first meeting of the municipal year in July 2023, in order to give our views, raise concerns and make recommendations, for example:

Positives:

- Water Quality, Management and Pollution Control – Panel queried what interaction there is between Welsh Water, the Council and NRW regarding sewerage discharges and how Swansea is performing compared to other parts of the UK. Panel was informed that there is a lot of interaction, NRW liaises with Welsh Water over the number and duration of spills from sewer overflows, with the aim of reducing them, and where there are problems NRW will take action. Panel heard Swansea Bay itself has improved but NRW is still dealing with issues, for example in the Tawe, and is asking Welsh Water if they should prioritise some of their assets for more work under the asset management programme. Panel also heard that on the Gower coast, where the majority of bathing waters are, there are not many potential spillers and NRW is working with Welsh Water on some of these. Panel noted it is not as

good as NRW want it to be, but this area does not have the same level of problems as some areas in the UK.

- Environmental Tourism - Panel stated that Swansea is not registered on the Dark Skies website and heard the Council does not have Dark Skies status yet but is working towards it and by improving the offer, supporting businesses and promoting it, the Council is showing its commitment to trying to achieve it.
- Environmental Tourism - Panel noted from the report, there are areas cycle paths cannot go through due to legal issues as there is opposition from certain groups. Panel queried if there are rights of way going through these areas for people to walk etc, and if so, can these rights of way be promoted more to encourage more walkers/cyclists to use them. Panel also asked if cycle racks can be located in these places. Panel was informed there are public rights of way recorded across the whole of the county and these are promoted by means of the website: www.visitswanseabay – all the promoted walks in the county are advertised on there, and the majority are also available as downloadable PDF's. Also, at the entrance to the Civic Centre there is a display of walking leaflets produced by the Countryside Access team and partners. Panel heard the definitive map is on Swansea council's website and this has all the legally recorded public rights of way within the county available for people to utilise. Panel noted that legally, cyclists do not have the right to use public footpaths, whereas they are entitled to use public bridleways. However, when considering surfacing for public bridleways, the type of surface suitable for equestrians, is not always compatible for cyclists undergoing active travel journeys.

Issues / Concerns:

- Water Quality, Management and Pollution Control - Panel discussed how new suburban housing developments damage wildlife habitats and can also create pollution and asked what measures should be taken by the Council to ensure surface water drainage solutions do not pollute existing local environmental amenities such as ponds and water courses. Panel heard that from NRW perspective there are two sides to this. Firstly, it is important to have a sustainable strategy for dealing with surface water on any site and that is why there is Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) legislation and NRW would urge developers, and as far as possible the Council to encourage developers, to include this in their plans. Secondly, the construction phase, which the Panel heard NRW is particularly concerned about. Panel was informed many of the large construction projects in Swansea put a lot of pressure on local water courses during the construction phase. Silty water leaving site in an uncontrolled manner causes repeated small pollutions. Panel heard NRW feels the Council could, in the planning process, make sure pollution prevention provisions in the construction environmental management plan are as good as can be and it is something NRW would like improvement from the industry on.
- Environmental Tourism - Panel feels there are not enough public facilities available, for example, toilets, drinking water taps, cycle racks etc along the more tourist areas of Swansea and the Gower, including the sea front, and queried if there are plans to increase these types of facilities. Panel was informed there are public toilets close to all major beaches between Mumbles and Rhossili and that over the past 3 years, significant investment has been

made in physical refurbishments and improvements to the cleaning regimes. Panel heard there has been no funding available to provide new public toilets but was pleased to hear that grant funding from the WG has been secured to install two new Changing Places specialist toilets facilities, in Knab Rock and Rhossili. Panel also heard the Council is investigating options for increasing cycle parking facilities at strategic locations across the active travel network, funded by Welsh Government's Active Travel Fund. Panel noted that although not primarily targeted at tourist areas, the placement of these facilities may capture visitors who engage in recreational cycling.

- Environmental Tourism – Panel asked if the Council anticipates recent changes to bus services will have a big effect on green tourism, and if there are any plans to try and overcome this. Panel heard bus services on Gower are covered by Adventure Travel (not First Cymru) so are not affected by these changes. Most tourist routes in Swansea are still operating Monday to Sunday but the frequency of service has reduced, which is a challenge. Panel noted that one of the issues with bus services in Swansea has two providers – Adventure Travel and First Cymru and they do not operate a through ticket system. Panel was informed that research in 2022 showed the majority of people are still arriving by car. The Council is trying to encourage people to use public transport and rail is an option into the destination, but the ongoing rail dispute is discouraging people using this option and is more likely to have had an impact on visitors. On a positive note, Panel heard people are wanting to walk and cycle when they get here, and businesses are looking to invest in facilities which will hopefully attract more visitors in a more sustainable way.

Action Recommended / Agreed:

- Planning Enforcement: Nature and Biodiversity - Panel discussed how it is a reactive service as there is no legislative requirement for developers to notify Planning when starting a development, and the Council does not have enough resources to proactively monitor every development. Panel heard however that there are powers available if the Council is aware of a breach. Cabinet Member emphasized that the public have a very important role to play in reporting issues, therefore public awareness raising is essential going forward. Panel felt it would be useful to get something out on the Council's social media pages giving contact details for reporting issues, and Cabinet Member gave a commitment to liaise with the Communications Team to see what they can do proactively to communicate this message.
- Environmental Tourism - Panel discussed the cycle map of the area, and how previously in Scrutiny, members talked about a 'ski-style' map with red, blue, black and green lines showing the difficulty. Panel queried if this has been implemented in the map and how this is going to link up with rural Gower. Officers confirmed they will consider this suggestion and investigate its feasibility and how it aligns with the principles of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

4. Future Work Programme

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

Meeting	Item to be discussed
19 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Flood Risk Management – Annual Update (including discussion on Drainage Systems/Services) • Air Quality Management
14 May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Update (update on battery disposal to be included) • Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments • Nature and Biodiversity Update (including Monitoring Delivery of Corporate Priority/Objective – Maintain & Enhance Nature & Biodiversity in Swansea) • Panel Review of the Year 2023/24

5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.

Agenda Item 9



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

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. New Community Growing Scrutiny Working Group

3.1 The Committee agreed to include a Scrutiny Working Group to look at Community Growing in this year's Scrutiny Work Programme. This will be held towards the end of this municipal year; sooner if possible. The

following Councillors have expressed interest in being a member of this Working Group:

Labour Councillors: 3

Fiona Gordon	Dai Jenkins
Victoria Holland	

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 2

Lynda James	Michael Locke
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Conservative Councillors: 3

Lyndon Jones	Will Thomas
Francesca O'Brien	

- 3.2 The Committee is required to agree the membership of the Working Group and appoint a Convener to chair the meeting, based on expressions of interest.

4. Guiding Principles

- 4.1 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.

5. Legal Implications

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

6. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 10



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

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:

16 March:

- **Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board** (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis – this follows on from last Committee PSB Scrutiny Session on 17 October)
- **Annual Complaints Report 2022-23** - Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation, will attend along with relevant officer(s) to report to the Committee and answer questions.

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

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

2.3 Inquiry Panels:

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

In Progress / Planned	Completed (follow up stage)
1. Anti-Social Behaviour (Panel has agreed its final report. The Committee endorsed its submission to Cabinet for decision. The report was presented to Cabinet on 21 December. A response to the recommendations is expected)	1. Procurement (Follow up carried out 24 Oct 2023 – monitoring now complete)

<p>within 2 months)</p> <p>2. Community Assets (membership has been agreed; An initial pre-inquiry briefing session with lead Cabinet Member(s) and officer(s) on the topic area took place on 1 February, to help inform the focus of any in-depth inquiry.</p>	
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2.3.2 Following agreement by the Panel on 1 February, the Community Assets Inquiry Terms of Reference are **appended** for the Committee’s awareness and any comments. The Inquiry will be focussed on the following key question: *How can the Council ensure that its community assets are working to provide the best outcomes for the people of Swansea?*

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):

1. Public Rights of Way (22 Nov)	3. Community Growing
2. Customer Contact (23 Feb)	

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 A public request for Scrutiny was received on the topic of 5G roll out and impact on climate change, with concern raised about Planning Policy, its implementation, and compliance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Having received advice from the Chief Legal Officer, this request is not appropriate for Scrutiny

involvement. The implementation of Planning policy is a non-executive function of the Council the responsibility for which rests with planning officers and the Planning Committee. There is no role for Cabinet (the executive) and no role for Scrutiny in scrutinising the way in which planning policy is implemented in the Council. The member of the public has been advised that there are other avenues available to challenge planning decisions and/or make representations to relevant policy makers. No action is required by the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

5. Scrutiny Training & Development Programme

- 5.1 A Scrutiny Training & Development Programme for Swansea Scrutiny Councillors, which was facilitated by the Improvement Team at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), has now concluded, with Sessions on Self-Evaluation taking place in January. As well as benefitting individual Councillors, the Programme was envisaged to inform Scrutiny Improvement Objectives and actions going forward. Councillors participating in the Programme have shared a number of ideas that will be looked at. The Committee will be invited to consider this as part of a wider end of year review.

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 (including Community Assets Inquiry Terms of Reference)

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 Business (CM for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism)	Leader / Economy, Finance & Strategy
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports Page 140			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 / Call In	Pre-decision Scrutiny: FPR7 Redevelopment of 277-278 Oxford Street - Community Hub Project		Pre-decision Scrutiny: 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	1 Feb 2024 (Special)	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			- Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis) - Annual Complaints Report 2022-23 (CM for Service Transformation / CM for Care Services)	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 / Call In	Call In - Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework	Call In - Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework				
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.					Follow Up on Co-production Working Group (CM for Community - Support)	

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To be scheduled:

- Welsh Language Standards (annual report) (CMs for Education & Learning / Culture, Human Rights & Equalities)

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 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
Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2023/24.	This report sets out the annual review of Swansea Council's charges (social services), providing a transparent framework for the setting of charges and the application of allowances to citizens who receive managed care and support, provided or arranged by the council.	Simon Jones	Cabinet Member - Care Services	Cabinet	15 Feb 2024	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
<p>Quality In Education (Qed) – Emerging Proposals And Investment Priorities For The Sustainable Communities For Learning Strategic Outline Programme.</p>	<p>The purpose of this paper is to consider and endorse the continuing and future proposals and investment priorities for the council's rolling Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, for submission to the Welsh Government. Band B of the Programme, formerly known as the 21st Century Schools Programme, is due to end on 31 March 2024, by which time authorities must submit a nine-year capital programme, including an indicative funding forecast for the 9 years, for consideration towards providing a commitment and support for the first 3 years along with in-principle support for years 4, 5 and 6. Years 7 to 9 are intended to reflect the longer-term project pipeline. The remaining Band B projects will be included in the first three years of the nine-year capital programme.</p>	<p>Louise Herbert-Evans</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Education & Learning</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>15 Feb 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>

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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
Contract Award Report – Contracts for Local Bus Services.	The report details the outcome of tenders for Local Bus Services and seeks approval to award contracts.	Barrie Gilbert	Cabinet Member - Environment & Infrastructure	Cabinet	15 Feb 2024	Open
Approval to Receive Grant – HAPS City Deal Financial Incentive Fund and Green Transition Ecosystems (GTE) – Transforming Housing and Homes for Future Generations Project.	This report seeks retrospective approval for 3 grant applications relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HAPS City Deal HAPS Financial Incentive fund (x2) and • Green Transition Ecosystems (GTE) - Transforming Housing and Homes for Future Generations Project 	Rosie Jackson	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	15 Feb 2024	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
Possible Sale of all or Part of Strategic Development Area SD H. - Land at Waunarlyydd and Fforestfach.	<p>Swansea Council owns LDP Housing land at this location. There is purchaser interest from National house builders. The purchase price will be, “Market Value”, at an unspecified future date, (once planning is approved, site investigations are completed, along with final flood mapping, SUDS approval etc.). It is possible that the sale price will exceed delegated limits.</p>	Richard John	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader), Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
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.	<p>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.</p>	Louise Herbert-Evans	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	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
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
Building Capital Maintenance Programme 2024/25.	This report sets out the way in which the Capital Maintenance resources for 2024/25 will be deployed.	Martin Ridgeway	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Disabled Facilities & Improvement Grant Programme 2024/25.	To provide details of Disabled Facilities & Improvement Grant Programme and to seek approval to include schemes in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.	Darren Williams	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Cabinet Response - Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour.	Conclusions and recommendations resulting from a scrutiny inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour.	David Howes	Cabinet Member - Well-being	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Capital Allocation to Highway Infrastructure Assets 2024-25.	To confirm the Capital work programmes for highway infrastructure assets	Bob Fenwick	Cabinet Member - Environment & Infrastructure	Cabinet	21 Mar 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
Accessibility Strategy for Schools.	The requirement for Accessibility Strategies for schools was established under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Our previous strategy has lapsed, and we are now seeking to consult on a new Strategy for Swansea schools.	Rhodri Jones	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Business Rates – Temporary Rate Relief Scheme (Wales) 2024/25.	This report provides details of a temporary business rate relief scheme and a recommendation on whether to accept grant funding from Welsh Government to support the expenditure incurred in providing relief under the scheme, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.	Julian Morgans	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Leisure Partnership Annual Report 2022/2023.	To advise Cabinet of the partnership operations of key facilities within the Cultural Services portfolio.	Jamie Rewbridge	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	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
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	18 Apr 2024	Open

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	1* 13	19	16	14
INQUIRY PANELS:												
	Findings				Final report		Cabinet					
Anti-Social Behaviour (Cabinet decision: awaited) 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		21					
									Planning	Evidence gathering		
Community Assets Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Stuart Rice Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Hayley Gwilliam / Elliot King Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Geoff Bacon									1	11 25	22	20
Procurement Follow Up *COMPLETE* (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 26	17	14	12	16	13 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 (Budget) 19* 22*	13	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	12 Budget (Joint Social Services Panel)	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	12 Budget (Joint Social Services Panel)	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									23			
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				13		16	

<p>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 Council Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes</p>						2		16		12		
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* denotes extra meeting

** not public

Information correct as of 07/02/24 08:58

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 that will be presented to Cabinet (and / or 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 final report was presented to Cabinet on the 21 December 2023. Cabinet will now consider the recommendations and provide a response, which is due to be discussed at Cabinet in March.

b) **Community Assets** (convener: Cllr Stuart Rice)

Key Question: *How can the Council ensure that its community assets are working to provide the best outcomes for the people of Swansea?*

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Inquiry key question and Terms of Reference were agreed by the Panel on 1 February, following an initial overview / briefing session, hearing from lead Cabinet Member(s) and Officer(s). Inquiry Terms of Reference are appended. The Panel is now ready to commence evidence gathering.

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. At their meeting on 16 January the Panel looked at the Budget Proposals 2024/25 – 2027/28, Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24, Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24 and received an update on the Tourism Destination Management Plan.

On 13 February the Panel will carry out Pre-decision Scrutiny of the annual budget and medium-term financial plan. They will also consider the third quarter Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24.

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

This Panel meets every month. On the 18 January the Panel met with the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors from the Gowerton Comprehensive school cluster, known as the North Gower Partnership, to discuss progress with the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales across their school cluster.

The Panel have three meetings in February, the first will be to look at the annual budget as it relates to education on the 12th, then on the 19th they will look at the School Organisation – Special Schools in Swansea and on 22nd they will meet with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors from Clydach Primary School to discuss progress with their school improvement plan.

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its last meeting on 30 January the Panel received an update on the Adult Services Transformation and Improvement Programme and a presentation updating on Local Area Coordination.

On 12 February a Joint Social Services Panel meeting will be held to discuss the Annual Budget in relation to Social Services and Tackling Poverty.

The next Panel meeting will be held on 20 March and will discuss the West Glamorgan Transformation Programme, the latest Performance Monitoring Report and receive a briefing on the Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2022-23.

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its last meeting on 23 January the Panel received an update on progress with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) from a representative of the Health Board. The Panel also received an update on the Corporate Parenting Board.

On 12 February a Joint Social Services Panel meeting will be held to discuss the Annual Budget in relation to Social Services and Tackling Poverty.

At its next Panel meeting on 12 March the Panel will look at the latest Performance Monitoring Report, receive a briefing on the Youth Offending Service and discuss the Complaints Annual Report 2022-23 for both Child and Family Services and Adult Services. Adult Services Panel Members will also be invited for this item.

e) **Climate Change & Nature** (convener: Cllr Sara Keeton)

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

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 and includes an update on progress on the Innovation Matrix Project and the outcomes of a recent external Gateway Review, and a report on Carbon Reduction Assessment of the Swansea Bay City Deal Portfolio.

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?Committeed=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 last meeting took place on 16 January 2024 for Quarterly Budget Monitoring and the CJC Draft Budget for 2024/25.

The Sub-Committee has added an extra meeting on 15 February for discussion on the Regional Transport Plan. The next ordinary meeting is scheduled for 12 March and is expected to include a focus on an Energy Action Plan.

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

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=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 was held on 22 November receiving an overview on Public Rights of Way across Swansea (mapping / numbers) and issues; impact on Public Rights of Way from developments; effect on communities, etc. The letter from the Working Group, reflecting on the meeting with its view and recommendations, to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure and the Cabinet Member's response were reported to the Committee on 16 January. The Committee will follow up on this work in the next 12 months.

b) **Customer Contact** (convener: Councillor Joe Hale)

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 has been arranged and will be held on 23 February 2024.

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.

Community Assets Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

Terms of Reference

Inquiry Key Question

The primary focus for the inquiry is to look at how the Council manages the transfer of Council owned community assets in Swansea. The key question, therefore, is:

How can the Council ensure that its community assets are working to provide the best outcomes for the people of Swansea.

What is not part of this inquiry...

Specific venues, only as examples of practice. The inquiry will have a strategic focus, with overview of roles and responsibilities, priorities, powers, current experience and trends, partnership activity and achievement, and how things can be improved.

Reasons for carrying out this piece of work

Councillors chose to carry out this piece of work because they want to

- Ensure that the Council is meeting its duties under any legal requirements.
- That the management and delivery of community assets and any transfers are transparent and sustainable.
- Ensure Swansea Council along with its partners are delivering the most effective service.
- To ensure public, communities and relevant partners/organisations are involved and/or consulted in decision making.

The inquiry will ask and will focus on (the lines of inquiry)

The inquiry will look at community asset transfer in relation to the provision of council functions and how it works with its partners and others to ensure effective management and transfer of community assets in Swansea. It will also consider what the Council does well and what can be improved in this area. This will include:

1. **About Community Assets.** What are community assets? How does a community asset get designated as such? How does a potential asset transfer get identified? Who can apply to have an asset transferred?
2. **The regulatory framework.** What is the regulatory framework that relates to community assets in particular in relation to transferring an asset to a body other than Council? What are the legislative rules and guidance that regulates the management of community assets.
3. **Local policy and the strategic context.** What are the existing local policies in relation to Asset Transfer? What are the different policies relating to Asset Transfer used across Wales and do they differ with Swansea. How does the Council ensure that any Asset Transfer supports the Swansea Councils strategic aims and priorities.
4. **Financial implications.** What are the financial benefits for the Council to transferring an asset and also any disadvantages associated with it.

5. **Risks and barriers.** Risks associated with community asset transfer and how are they addressed and/or mitigated? What are considered as the main barriers and how do we work to overcome them?
6. **Due diligence, the business case and sustainability.** What due diligence is completed around for example financial resilience, governance, Welsh language, equalities, positive effects on community (and ensuring no adverse effects), sustainability, maintenance requirements. How do we ensure the process of decision making is transparent?
7. **Guidance and support.** What guidance, advice and support are given to those taking on an asset, including in relation to funding and applying for grants.
8. **Community benefits/disadvantages.** What are the community benefits and also disadvantages to Asset Transfer. How is this assessed?
9. **Consultation with stakeholders.** What is the process for and who is consulted when transferring a community asset? Do we consult about the wider council policy/aims/objectives in relation to community asset transfer in Swansea?
10. **The asset transfer experience in Swansea.** What has worked well and not so well. Highlight some practical examples where transfers have successfully delivered local benefits, what are the key factors for success (include examples of successful and not so successful transfers). What happens when an asset transfer is not successful or one breaks down or ceases?
11. **Wellbeing and Future Generations as a lever:** What is our strategy, vision, aims and objectives in this area? How are we performing against those? For example, how are we considering future generations when we transfer community assets?

The Inquiry Panel will gather evidence from:

Cabinet Members
 Council Officers
 Partner Organisations
 Other stakeholders
 Other interested groups including the public
 Welsh Government, national government
 Other Local Authorities and/or partnerships
 Any other relevant information identified

This inquiry will be carried out via Panel meetings, roundtable meetings, desk-based research and a public call for evidence. The work of the inquiry will be displayed and publicised via the Councils website. Recordings of meetings will be available and a section for public questions will form a part of the agendas for all public panel meetings.

Intended Impact and Contribution

This inquiry intends to support the work of the Council by:

- Providing a councillor perspective on the issue
- Providing evidenced proposals to Cabinet that will lead to more effective services
- Gaining the views of the public and stakeholders
- Considering and concluding on recommendations from national reports, legislation /directives and their implications for Swansea

- Identification of good practice/research elsewhere and whether there is any learning for Swansea's approach
- Increased councillor understanding about community asset transfer
- Greater public awareness of work in relation to community assets

Membership of the Scrutiny Panel

Labour Councillors: 3

Joe Hale	Yvonne Jardine
Victoria Holland	

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 5

Wendy Fitzgerald	Michael Locke
Chris Holley	Cheryl Philpott
Sue Jones	

Conservative Councillor: 1

Will Thomas	
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Uplands Councillor: 2

Allan Jeffery	Stuart Rice (CONVENER)
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Lead Cabinet Member for Community Assets

Cllr David Hopkins (Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Performance)

Key Officers Contact for the Inquiry

Mark Wade (Director Place)
Geoff Bacon (Head of Property Services)

Scrutiny Officer supporting the Inquiry

Michelle Roberts
01792 637256
michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 11



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

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, as necessary:

	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a	Committee – Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities	19 Dec	Letter to Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
b	Committee – Scrutiny of Support for Business	19 Dec	Letter to Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism

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):

21 (target within 21 days)

% responses within target:

56

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	15-Nov
23	Education Performance Panel	19-Oct	Gorseinon Primary School looking at School Development Plan	Education & Learning	31-Oct	n/a
23	Committee	19-Sep	Active Travel	Environment & Infrastructure	26-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	20-Nov
26	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	17-Oct	Audit Wales Report - Setting Well-being Objectives	Corporate Services & Performance	31-Oct	n/a
27	Committee	17-Oct	Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board	Chair of Public Services Board	09-Nov	n/a
28	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	24-Oct	Regional Safeguarding Board, Service Quality Unit, Commissioning	Care Services	14-Nov	n/a

29	Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group	23-Oct	Priority 2, risk profile and Curriculum for Wales	Education & Learning	15-Nov	n/a
29	Adult Services Performance Panel	31-Oct	Director's Annual Report; Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	Care Services	27-Nov	19-Dec
30	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	14-Nov	Q1 Budget Monitoring Report	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	04-Dec	n/a
31	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	14-Nov	Skyline and Copr Bay	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	04-Dec	n/a
32	Committee	14-Nov	Children & Young People's Rights Scheme Progress Report 2021-23	Community (Support)	06-Dec	n/a
33	Committee	14-Nov	Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23	Care Services	06-Dec	n/a
34	Committee	14-Nov	Follow Up - Bus Services Working Group	Environment & Infrastructure	07-Dec	n/a
34	Working Group	22-Nov	Public Rights of Way	Environment & Infrastructure	07-Dec	03-Jan
35	Education Performance Panel	23-Nov	School Improvement, reducing disadvantage and cookery in school	Education & Learning	12-Dec	n/a
36	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	28-Nov	Environmental Tourism	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	14-Dec	03-Jan
37	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	05-Dec	Performance Monitoring; Improvement Programme; CMET	Care Services	21-Dec	04-Jan
38	Adult Services Performance Panel	12-Dec	Performance Monitoring; Dementia Care	Care Services	02-Jan	02-Feb

39	Education Performance Panel	14-Dec	Education Performance and Q&A with Cabinet Member	Education & Learning	04-Jan	n/a
40	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	12-Dec	Audit Wales Report - digital transformation	Service Transformation	18-Jan	n/a
41	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	12-Dec	Review of Revenue Reserves and the Mid Term Budget Statement 2023/24.	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	18-Jan	n/a
42	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	12-Dec	Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring Report	Community (Services)	18-Jan	
43	Education Performance Panel	18-Jan	North Gower Partnership cluster of school - curriculum for Wales	Education & Learning	31-Jan	n/a
44	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	16-Jan	Budget Proposals and the Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	01-Feb	n/a
45	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	16-Jan	Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24	Corporate Services & Performance	01-Feb	n/a
46	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	16-Jan	Tourism Destination Management Plan.	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	01-Feb	n/a
47	Committee	19-Dec	Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities	Wellbeing	02-Feb	n/a
48	Committee	19-Dec	Support for Business	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	05-Feb	n/a
49						
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51						



**To/
Councillor Alyson Anthony, Cabinet
Member for Wellbeing**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

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Scrutiny

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SPC/2023-24/8

02 February 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Members following the meeting of the Committee on 19 December 2023. It is about the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Anthony,

Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session to monitor and challenge Council action in relation to Tackling Poverty, which is a standing annual item within the Committee work plan. We note that the Corporate Priority was updated this year in the Corporate Plan to add 'Enabling Communities', recognising that the strengths of individuals, communities and networks can be capitalised upon to help tackle poverty

We thank you, and officers, for attending the Committee meeting to present a detailed report on the delivery of the corporate priority, so we can comment on progress, achievements, and implementation of strategy, monitor improvement, and help inform future work / thinking.

A detailed report was submitted to the Committee which set out progress over the last 12 months in delivering the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty and Enabling Communities, and steps taken to meet objectives. The report presented evidence, insights and intelligence to demonstrate the contributions that have been made in support of this priority in the last twelve months,

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together with relevant indicators / measures of progress, and targets. It covered current challenges, including the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, and the Council's response, as well as future plans.

The nine 'key steps' provided information on collective efforts across the Council, and activity and achievements in relation to: Strategic direction; Cost of Living; Tackling and preventing homelessness; Making more homes available; Improving people's prosperity; Focus on early intervention; Empowering communities; Keeping communities safe; and Building community assets. The Committee acknowledged there has been a lot of activity and good work.

This letter reflects on what we gained from the information presented, questions, and discussion.

Committee views, including any outstanding issues / actions:

Tackling Poverty Strategy

We followed up on progress with refreshing the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy, which the Committee was told was being done during 2023.

We heard that some preparatory work has been carried out this year, and you stated that the refreshed Strategy was on course to be published by March 2024 subject to public consultation. **The Committee was keen for opportunity to comment on the draft Strategy, which we can agenda for a future meeting. Please let us know when this can be scheduled for.**

Performance Framework / Measuring Success

We asked about progress in developing a strategic Tackling Poverty Performance Framework to define how we align the objectives, indicators, measures, and outputs relating to tackling poverty, to outcomes - showing to what extent we are achieving, considering the input of resources.

We noted the Corporate Performance Indicators shown in the report that have relevance to Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities were telling us what you are measuring but it was less clear what this means in terms of impact. **The Committee was keen for greater clarity around what indicators mean in terms of impact on people and how this actually translates into reduced poverty. The Committee challenged you on identifying more outcome-focused measures as part of the Framework, so that we know we are better able to assess the Council's success in meeting stated targets for tackling poverty, and can see change.**

Some of the complexities of Tackling Poverty were noted, with challenges with regard to refreshing data, performance framework outcomes, providing lived experiences and developing different ways of presenting poverty. It was noted that some data exists however further work was required collating the more complex 'lived experience' data. We, however, noted a commitment to improving the Performance Framework and developing a robust suite of indicators alongside a refreshed Tackling Poverty Strategy. We look forward to seeing this.

Looking at 2023/24 Targets in the report provided, there was concern around Red RAG Status regarding Homelessness. You reported that this year has been a very challenging in terms of preventing homelessness, with the Council seeing an increase in both homeless presentations and the numbers of households applying on the Council's Waiting List. **We can see that work to agree a strategy to support homeless individuals is ongoing but delayed as a result of increased demand on homelessness services, and that this action has been rescheduled for 2024/25. We felt this needed to be given greater priority, more so than reviewing the Council's Housing Allocations Policy which is also work that has been pushed into the next year.**

Definition of Poverty

We found it interesting that the Minimum Income Standard according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for 2023 is considered to be £29,500 for a single person, to provide a minimum acceptable standard of living. As a recognised measure of poverty, it was remarked that this may place a significant percentage of people living in Swansea below that Minimum Income Standard. **You stated that whilst this was one measure, there was no single source of evidence that defined poverty. The definition of poverty was not merely related to income and broadening the definition was part of ongoing work. We welcomed a clearer definition of poverty.**

We discussed issues around poverty data and the various sources of data, including how the Welsh Index of Deprivation is used and whether there has been much change over time; and around what can be learned from the Audit Wales Data Dashboard national online tool which is designed to support decision making in Councils and improve how they target their work. **It was suggested that future reports to the Committee provide a clearer analysis and explanation of what all of this national data is telling us.**

Cost of Living

We followed up on the difference made by the various 'Cost of Living' grants for individuals and organisations, asking how we have monitored its effectiveness and the benefits to ensure it has helped those who needed it.

You reported that, in total, the Council has so far administered over £400,000 in tackling poverty grants to local people and organisations. Recently, a new Enabling Communities Grant was launched which saw the Council add up to £500,000 in available grants this financial year. Some of the key tackling poverty grants referred to included: Swansea Spaces (Warm Hubs Grant); Direct Food Support Grant; Period Dignity Grants; Holiday Food Fund; Fuel Support Scheme; and Energy Bills Support Schemes.

You assured the Committee that the Council had been monitoring the effectiveness and benefits of 'Cost of Living' grants for individuals and organisations, to ensure it has helped those who needed it. We were told that there has been a lot of positive feedback on the support provided and impact made.

We noted that since it launched in September 2022, the Council's Cost of Living help web page has had 112,545 views and continues to be updated with the most recent information and advice.

'Time for Change – Poverty in Wales' - Audit Wales Recommendations

We followed up on Council actions in response to the Audit Wales national report called 'Time for Change – Poverty in Wales', published in November 2022, which made eight key recommendations, and whether there was anything outstanding from this.

We acknowledged that the Audit report cited the work being carried out in Swansea as a good example, but nevertheless the Council has been addressing the recommendations, some of which it was noted were for the Welsh Government. We were told that an action plan had been developed, with the majority of recommendations delivered, helping to inform the new Tackling Poverty Strategy including the performance framework. We noted that discussion was ongoing with the Welsh Government with regard to improvements in the way that funding for tackling poverty programmes is administered and monitored.

One of the Audit recommendations asks 'Local Authorities to improve their understanding of lived experience of poverty through meaningful involvement and experience mapping, such as the use of Poverty Truth Commissions'. We know that this is something Swansea has already made significant progress on, having been one of the Scrutiny recommendations following a review of the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy. The Swansea Poverty Truth Commission (SPTC) was officially launched in 2022 and we understand is the first and only commission of its kind in Wales, which brings together community, civic and business commissioners from across Swansea to put people with lived experience of poverty at the heart of policy and decision making.

Step 9 – Building Community Assets

We welcomed the development of a Volunteering Strategy referred to in the report, that will be co-ordinated by the Tackling Poverty Service. We note that it will be based on existing Council-led volunteering opportunities in departments like Social Services and Cultural Services, but would aim to enhance to enhance the potential of volunteering to support people and communities to reduce poverty and improve prosperity.

One example you provided, from Cultural Services, is that Swansea Museum offers placements and volunteering opportunities including school work experience. We inquired about how the Museum shared this information with Schools & Colleges, etc, for opportunities with Work Experience and Volunteering. We noted that currently schools make referrals, on a case-by-case basis, to Swansea Museum for opportunities with Work Experience and Volunteering. However, work is in progress to streamline the process across the Council, with the development of a Corporate Volunteering Strategy, that will allow the Council to be more proactive, and further developing the Council's relationship with the 3rd Sector.

Skills Development

We discussed the focus on improving the way we help people to develop their skills, qualifications and employment prospects so that they can find well-paid, meaningful jobs, ideally locally, and improve prospects for their future.

Equipping school children with the correct skills for the work place was high priority and you spoke about the Council's employability programme, with multiple projects underway across Swansea with dedicated officers, which is getting people into work. This also included support for ex-offenders, which has been successful.

Child Poverty

We remarked on the Welsh First Minister's comments, following his recent announcement that he will be stepping down from this role, expressing disappointment that more has not been done to tackle child poverty since devolution. We were interested in your views about what could have been done differently or is needed to make a bigger difference in the years ahead.

You stated that tackling Child Poverty and giving it priority, at all levels, was a political choice and, in your opinion some issues were less important. You felt that more can be done and a dedicated Minister with responsibility for Child Poverty would a positive change for the future, and that the challenge required more innovative and creative solutions. You called for improvements nationally in relation to processes around grant funding to make it easier for Councils to administer, including timescales.

Committee Members felt that a great focus within Schools on finance and budgeting at an early age would help develop practical skills of children who will be the parents of the future. One good example was shared, having been a feature of a recent meeting of the Partneriaeth Regional Scrutiny Councillor Group, of the sort of 'poverty proofing' work going on in Birchgrove Comprehensive School, which the Head Teacher addressed the Scrutiny Group on.

Your Response

We thank all those involved, both within and outside of the Council, for their work and efforts to help people experiencing poverty and acknowledge this is a complex issue, impacting more and more people, that requires multi-agency response.

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 your assistance in facilitating the Committee's request to see and comment on the draft Tackling Poverty Strategy, which we can agenda for a future meeting. Please email scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk to advise when this can be scheduled for.**

In addition, we will make arrangements to re-visit work on Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities for December 2024. This will enable us to keep close watch regularly on progress, follow up on the issues we have raised, and enable Scrutiny views to influence action and improvement.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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**To/
Councillor Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Investment,
Regeneration, Events & Tourism**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

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SPC/2023-24/9

05 February 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 19 December 2023. It is about Support for Business. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Francis-Davies,

Scrutiny of Support for Business

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session, which focused on a specific aspect of your Cabinet portfolio responsibilities, namely Support for Business. We thank you for attending the meeting and providing a written report covering this. We thank officers, in particular Matt Callaghan, Economic Regeneration Manager, for his contributions, taking us through the detail, as well as the input of other officers in attendance.

Your report provided an overview on the Council's work in relation to support for business and highlighted the work of 'Business Swansea,' launched in April 2021, which is a dedicated support service delivered by the Council's Economic Regeneration Team, with the objective of improving the quality and uptake of business support in Swansea.

The Scrutiny session enabled the Committee to consider the Council's responsibilities, priorities, activities, achievements, impact, and improvement, and provide challenge on actions and performance, as well as helping to inform future thinking.

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You highlighted to the Committee:

- the importance given to supporting business in Swansea, and its relationship with the delivery of Council priorities for the economy and tackling poverty.
- the difficulties experienced by businesses during the pandemic, and the Council's proactive recovery efforts, as well as current challenges including the cost-of-living crisis.
- the focus on both sustaining existing business and attracting new business
- the impact on city centres with a number of major retailer chains folding, though footfall in Swansea City Centre is on the rise.
- the Council's regeneration plans for the City Centre, benefitting from private sector investment, to establish Swansea as a strong mixed-use city and regional hub for business.
- praise for the team of officers providing support for business, particularly in making effective use of grant funding opportunities and getting money out quickly, often working under pressure to meet timescales set out by Welsh Government.

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.

Business Swansea

We asked about the biggest difference that the new 'Business Swansea' support service has made almost three years on, and some of the successes in terms of the number of people helped and the value of the service to the local economy.

We noted the overarching objectives of a business support service:

- To improve the number of, but more importantly the survival rates of new businesses, previously amongst the lowest in South Wales
- Growth of the indigenous business base
- Improved resilience of local business
- Attracting Inward Investment into the local economy
- Upskilling local businesses and their workforce

You reported that 'Business Swansea' delivers a combination of 'in-house' support as well as promoting the offer of partner organisations. We heard that the main focus has been on addressing the issues of:

- Businesses being confused/overwhelmed by the changing programmes of business support available from a variety of sources
- An assumption that business support was not available to them and/or was not appropriate to their needs

- Businesses and business owners having insufficient resource available to research support available meaning often freely available support was bypassed.

The Committee noted that a broad range of activities that support local business have been introduced to address these issues. Key areas of activity included work on communication, events, grant support, and partner engagement and we heard about the impact this has made, as well as future plans.

We were told that the new support service has been successful in creating a simplified single point of contact for businesses and communication and engagement had improved. There are dedicated Council web pages on [business advice](#), and an annually published [Business Guide](#). Fortnightly business eNewsletters have been successful in raising awareness of support available locally, with distribution now close to 4000 local business contacts, with significant numbers viewing the Business Swansea YouTube channel, which contain recordings of some of the Business Events that have been organised. There are also regular networking events. It is anticipated that throughout 2024 and beyond, there will be an increased proportion of in-person events enabling improved interaction and networking opportunities.

We noted that the majority of activity currently being undertaken is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through the Business Swansea Anchor project. Whilst work is ongoing, it was pleasing to hear that the following outcomes were projected to be delivered by December 2024:

- 65 new enterprises created (Pre-start Grant Support)
- 65 enterprises adopting new technologies (Website Development Fund)
- 95 jobs created; 95 jobs safeguarded (Business Growth Grant)
- 92 tonnes of CO2 reduction (Carbon Reduction Grant)
- 30 individuals receiving assistance to be enterprise ready (Introduction to Self-employment Workshop Events)
- 258 enterprises receiving non-financial assistance. Including access to training, business to business networking etc.

You reported that across the Community Renewal Fund and Shared Prosperity Grant Funds alone, 82 business grants have been issued to date across all funding programmes, with the number anticipated to increase substantially throughout 2024.

Business Grants

The Committee was interested in the impact and success of business grants, particularly in terms of new business startup in Swansea, which we discussed.

As an example, we asked whether there has been any specific impact on Swansea Market in terms of raised occupancy levels. We noted there is currently a high level of occupancy (94%) within Swansea Market, with a number of businesses that have accessed advice and support from 'Business Swansea'. We noted that footfall is increasing, alongside efforts to promote the Market to the younger population. Details of current initiatives were highlighted (e.g. the market garden project featuring new seating, which has helped to increase well time in the Market), and Swansea Market's success in winning Britain's Best Indoor Market. Congratulations to everyone behind this success.

Parc Felindre

Whilst not directly related to the work of 'Business Swansea' the Committee took the opportunity to ask about the current situation with the Parc Felindre site and what the Council have been doing to attract interest. Officers informed the Committee that work was ongoing in proactively marketing the site. Regular meetings take place to monitor enquiries. Officers confirmed that there were no impediments to any prospective developer (e.g., around utility services on site) and the site was being marketed intensively. The Committee hopes for positive news.

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.

The Committee appreciated the information provided and welcomed the plan to deliver a Councillor Briefing regarding the Shared Prosperity Fund Business Grants currently available in Swansea – which took place on 24 January.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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Agenda Item 12



Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

Date and Time of Upcoming Scrutiny Panel / Working Group / Regional Meetings

- a) **15 February at 12.30pm – South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee** (managed by Neath Port Talbot Council)
 - Regional Transport Plan
- b) **19 February at 4.30pm – Education Performance Panel**
 - School Organisation - Proposal to amalgamate Ysgol Crug Glas and Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn Special Schools
- c) **22 February at 4.00pm – Education Performance Panel**
 - Clydach Primary - School Development Plan
- d) **23 February at 10.00am – Scrutiny Working Group**
 - Customer Contact
- e) **26 February at 10.00am – Partneriaeth Regional Scrutiny Councillor Group**
 - Partneriaeth financial affairs, risk management and governance arrangements
 - Progress Report - Partneriaeth Priority 3 – Support schools and educational settings to develop of research and enquiry schools as a key part of their own professional learning
- f) **11 March at 5.00pm – Community Assets Inquiry Panel**
 - Evidence Gathering Session – Information / discussion around aspects of asset transfer including finance and legal aspects, due diligence, risks, main barriers, and guidance and support.

g) 12 March at 10.00am – Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Panel

- Audit Wales Report – “Cracks in the Foundations” Building Safety in Wales
- Regeneration Project(s) Update 71-72 The Kingsway
- Achievement against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments for Development and Regeneration

h) 12 March at 2.00pm – South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee (managed by Neath Port Talbot Council)

- Energy Action Plan

i) 12 March at 4.00pm – Child & Family Services Panel

- Performance Monitoring
- Briefing on Youth Offending Service
- Child and Family Services / Adult Services Complaints Annual Report 2022-23 (Adult Services Panel members invited in for this item)

j) 13 March at 4.00pm – Education Performance Panel

- Bishopston Comprehensive School - School Development Plan

k) 19 March at 10.00am – Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel

- Local Flood Risk Management – Annual Update (including discussion on Drainage Systems/Services)
- Air Quality Management

l) 19 March at 4.00pm – Scrutiny Programme Committee

- Scrutiny of Public Services Board
- Annual Complaints Report 2022-23

Scrutiny Meetings are multi-location meetings, held in the Gloucester Room, Guildhall as well as accessed remotely via MS Teams, unless otherwise stated.