



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, 19 Mawrth 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/SPC19m>

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 cofnodion y cyfarfod(ydd) blaenorol fel cofnod cywir.

1 - 8

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.

- | | | |
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| 6 | Adroddiad Blynyddol Safonau'r Gymraeg 2022-2023. | 9 - 36 |
| 7 | Adroddiad Cwynion a Chanmoliaeth Blynyddol 2022-23. | 37 - 72 |
| 8 | Adroddiadau Cynnydd y Panel Craffu Perfformiad: Addysg (Cynghorydd Lyndon Jones, Cynullydd). | 73 - 79 |
| 9 | Aelodaeth paneli a gweithgorau craffu. | 80 - 81 |
| 10 | Dyddiad ac amser cyfarfodydd paneli/gweithgorau sydd ar ddod.
Trafodaeth am:
a) Gynllun Gwaith y Pwyllgor.
b) Cyfleoedd Craffu Cyn Penderfynu.
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Cyfarfod nesaf: Dydd Mawrth, 16 Ebrill 2024 am 4.00 pm



Huw Evans

Pennaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd

Dydd Mawrth, 12 Mawrth 2024

Cyswllt: Y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd Ffôn (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Special **Scrutiny Programme** **Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Thursday, 1 February 2024 at 11.00 am

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
W G Lewis
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P N May
T M White

Councillor(s)

M Jones
F D O'Brien

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Beth Allender

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

S M Jones

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor V A Holland, C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, L R Jones and S E Keeton and Elizabeth Lee

70 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

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

71 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.

72 Public Question Time.

None.

73 Call In of Cabinet Decision - Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework.

The Chair referred to the circulated report on Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework, which had been called in by several councillors following the meeting of Cabinet on 18th January and referred to this committee in line with the Council's call in procedure.

He referred to the absence of the lead senior officer for the report due to a recent family bereavement and proposed that the matter be deferred to the meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee scheduled for Tuesday 13th February at 4pm.

Resolved that the report be deferred to the committee on 13th February 2024.

The meeting ended at 11.03 am

Chair



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 13 February 2024 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)
E W Fitzgerald
W G Lewis
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)
V A Holland
P N May
T M White

Councillor(s)
M Jones
F D O'Brien

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Beth Allender Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley L R Jones

Officer(s)

Rachael Davies	Head of HR & Service Centre
Sarah Lackenby	Head of Digital and Customer Services
Julian Morgans	Head of Revenues & Benefits
Michelle Roberts	Scrutiny Officer
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer

Also present

Councillor Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)
Councillor Sandra Joy – Lead Councillor making the Call In

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): None.
Statutory Co-opted Member(s): None
Councillor Co-opted Members: P R Hood-Williams, S M Jones and S E Keeton

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

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

75 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.

76 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 16 January 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

77 Public Question Time.

None.

78 Call In of Cabinet Decision - Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework.

The Chair referred to the report which stated that the Committee was required to consider the concerns raised in relation to the Cabinet report / decision made on 18 January, on the 'Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework' which had been 'Called In' by Councillors (lead Councillor, Sandra Joy).

Councillor Sandra Joy – Lead Councillor making the Call In, detailed the reasons for the Call in 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”.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation stated that:

Whilst having been present at the Service Transformation Committee she wished to clarify some of the issues raised.

She provided assurance about the Council commitment and care for childrens' welfare and the access to free school meals.

She referred to the rationale behind the timescale of the Service Standard regarding Free School Meals and proposal to address the concerns raised following discussion with Officers. Unfortunately, in some cases, it was not possible to confirm eligibility without consulting the DWP, who can take up to 28 days to respond. The DWP timescales are outside of the control of the Council. However, if the Council were aware of a family's entitlement through different means (e.g. Council tax or Housing Benefit, and they provided evidence previously for qualifying benefits) the Council can confirm this and process the application within one or two days.

The proposed amendment of seven working days reflected action that was within the Council's control, once the Council is aware of a qualifying benefit. However, every effort is made to process applications as quickly as possible.

The Cabinet Member clarified that the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework was due to be implemented on the 1st of April and was always intended to be a 'living document' that will be updated/amended accordingly to improve our customer service, as reflected in the Cabinet decision on 18 January where delegated authority had been given to Directors and the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to make any minor amendments as appropriate.

In conclusion, the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation stated that she wished to give a level of assurance that the concerns raised would be taken on board prior to implementation on the 1 April 2024.

The Head of Revenues and Benefits provided a comprehensive overview of the process for determining eligibility and reiterated the comments made by the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation.

Committee questioning and discussions focussed on the following:

- Changes to Benefits Scheme (roll out of Universal Credit).

- Schools' responses to timescales for Free School Meals.
- Eligibility criteria in England and Wales.

The Chair thanked Councillor S Joy, the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and Officers for their input.

Resolved that the Chair write to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation reflecting the Committee's decision to recommend the amendment to the Free School Meals Service Standard detailed in the response of the Chief Executive (Appendix 4) in which the timescale be amended to 7 working days (of receiving the confirmation).

79 Workforce Strategy Progress Report.

The Head of HR and Service Centre introduced the Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 which had been approved by Cabinet in October 2022 after a period of design and consultation with stakeholders. The strategy was available for viewing at Appendix A.

The strategy contained 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.

Following Cabinet's approval of the Workforce Strategy a Workforce and Organisational Development Transformation Programme Board was established in December 2022. The board was responsible for identifying appropriate transformation projects that would 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.

The Head of HR & Service Centre detailed the progress with the four specific transformation projects and the Workforce Strategy objectives identified for implementation during 2023/24.

Members noted that of the 23 objectives agreed for 2023/24 the summary RAG status list was:

- Complete – 4
- Green – 12
- Amber – 6
- Withdrawn - 1

Good progress had 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 would be carried forward into the 2024/25 year along with newly selected goals remaining in the strategy.

Recruitment to the vacant HR&OD Manager post would 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.

Committee questioning and discussions focussed on the following:

- A Workforce Fit for the Future – Recognising Performance – the Head of HR and Service Centre detailed the new approach/actions taken to deliver a culture of culture of 'high performance', with regular evaluation and feedback via Oracle.
- Workforce and Organisational Development Transformation – The Head of HR & Service Centre detailed the process involved in attaining 'Investors in People' accreditation. Due to costs of accreditation, it was deemed to be something that could be explored at a later date.
- Being an Employer of Choice – Recruitment & Retention – The Head of HR & Service Centre detailed progress and the type of research and information to inform improvement to Policy and the Council's approach to Recruitment & Selection.

The Chair thanked the Head of HR & Service Centre for her input and requested that a further update on the delivery of the Workforce Strategy to the Committee be scheduled in one year, focusing on the impact.

Resolved that the Chair write to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance reflecting discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

80 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Climate Change & Nature (Councillor Sara Keeton, Convener).

Councillor Sara Keeton provided the Committee with a progress report on the work / activities of the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Climate Change & Nature.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Climate Change & Nature be noted.

81 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

Resolved that the membership of the Community Growing Scrutiny Working Group as reported, with Councillor Michael Locke as Convener, be agreed.

82 Scrutiny Work Programme.

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

He highlighted that:

- the new Scrutiny Inquiry on Community Assets is now underway;
- a public request for Scrutiny had been received on the topic of 5G roll out and its impact, but following advice from the Chief Legal Officer the specific issues

raised were considered outside the scope of Scrutiny, so no action would be taken;

Following conclusion of the Scrutiny Training & Development Programme for Swansea Scrutiny Councillors, which was facilitated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), a number of ideas have emerged from this process and self-assessment. These will be considered as part of a wider end of year review to inform Scrutiny Improvement Objectives and actions going forward.

He confirmed that the main items for the next Committee on 19 March comprised:

- Annual Complaints Report 2022/2023.
- Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022/2023.

83 Scrutiny Letters.

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

- Committee – Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities – Letter to Cabinet Member for Wellbeing.
- Committee – Scrutiny of Support for Business – Letter to Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism.

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

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

The meeting ended at 5.06 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Cabinet Members for Education & Learning and Culture, Human Rights and Equalities

Scrutiny Programme Committee - 19 March 2024

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-23

Purpose	To present the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-23.
Content	The report provides a summary of the activities relating to Welsh Standards within the financial year ending 31 st March 2023; including new projects and activities during the year.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided and give views
Lead Councillor	Councillors Robert Smith and Elliott King, Cabinet Members for Education & Learning and Culture, Human Rights and Equalities
Report Author	Ness Young
Legal Officer	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer	Ben Smith

1. Background

- 1.1 Since 30th March 2016 all local authorities in Wales have had a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) and with Welsh Language Standards imposed by the Measure through sub-legislation (Welsh Language Regulation Standards), commonly referred to as the 'Standards'.
- 1.2 Swansea Council is required to comply with 163 standards across 5 categories. Standards 158, 164 and 170 require the Council to produce an annual report which details how it has complied with the standards, including:
 - the number of complaints received during that year which relate to the Standards relevant to the Council
 - the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question
 - the number of employees who have participated in Welsh training courses during the year

- the number of new and vacant posts requiring Welsh Language Skills as essential, desirable, or not required.

1.3 The Standards also require the Council to:

- publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates
- publicise the fact that you have published an annual report
- ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available on the Council website, and in each of our offices that are open to the public.

2. Briefing

2.1 The 2022-23 Annual Report is at Annex A and includes examples of actions we have taken across the five standards categories during the year as well as data demonstrating our compliance.

2.2 During 2022-23 we received six complaints regarding the Council's compliance with the standards (see section 3.4 of Annex A).

2.3 846 employees reported having some level of Welsh language skills, which is a 28% increase on the 662 who reported this in 2021-22. 601 employees were willing to use Welsh in the course of their work, compared to 454 in 2021-22, an increase of a third.

2.4 65 employees participated in formal Welsh language training courses, nearly a third more than in 2021-22.

2.5 58% of new or vacant posts (excluding schools) specified that Welsh language skills were desirable or essential, compared to 34% in the previous year.

3. Conclusions

3.1 During 2022-23 the Council continued to promote the Welsh language and sought to strengthen its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards across the five categories - from publishing the 2022-27 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and embedding Welsh language into the Integrated Impact Assessment, to responding to the outcome of Welsh Language Commissioner investigations and promoting Welsh Language event days such as St David's Day.

3.2 The data in Section 2 above and in Annex A shows that the actions being taken by the Council to promote the Welsh language are having an impact. That said we continue to find the recruitment of Welsh speakers challenging and are looking for ways to address this in 2023-24.

3.3 The 2022-23 Annual Report should have been published by June 2023, but has been delayed due staffing issues. The Welsh Language Commissioner's Office is aware of the delay. The report will be published once translated, following the Scrutiny Programme Committee's consideration of it.

4. Legal implications

4.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

5. Finance Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Glossary of terms: Not applicable

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Annex A - Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-23



Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022 - 2023

**Mae'r ddogfen hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh**

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1. Introduction

This is Swansea Council's seventh Welsh Language Annual Report, providing an overview of our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and related activities for the financial year ending 31st March 2023. It has been prepared in accordance with Welsh Language Standards 158ⁱ, 164ⁱⁱ and 170ⁱⁱⁱ.

2. Background

Since 2016 all local authorities in Wales have had a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) and with specific Welsh Language Standards imposed by the Measure through sub-legislation (Welsh Language Regulation Standards). The intention of the standards is:

- to ensure that organisations treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language; and
- to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use in their day-to-day-life).

The Standards aim to:

- make it clear to organisations what their duties are in relation to the Welsh language;
- make it clearer to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh; and
- make Welsh language services more consistent and improve their quality.

2.1 Swansea Council Welsh Language Standards

Compliance Notice Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011¹ contains a list of 163 standards with which the council must comply. Table 1 shows those standards broken down across five categories.

Table 1: Swansea Council Welsh Language Standards

Swansea Council		
	Categories	Number of Standards
1	Service Delivery standards	86
2	Policy Making standards	16
3	Operational standards	51
4	Promotional standards	2
5	Record Keeping standards	8
	Total	163

¹ <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/cymraeg> <https://www.abertawe.gov.uk/cymraeg>

2.2 Accountability

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning has Cabinet responsibility for the Welsh Language. The Corporate Management Team provides strategic leadership and operational compliance with the standards sits with Heads of Service. In addition, each Service Area has a Welsh Language Champion as the main channel for information (inward and outward) relevant to their work areas and practices.

In 2022-23 the Council's Standards Officer provided corporate administration and support for implementation of the standards, supporting service staff with the early resolution of issues and complaints, addressing queries from the public as well as helping promote the language. The Standard's Officer was also responsible for the day to day management of the Welsh Translation Unit.

The Council's Corporate Complaints Policy sets out the process for dealing with complaints about compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, and training.

All information and support materials relating to the implementation of the Welsh language standards and Welsh language training are available to employees on Council's intranet site, Staffnet. Awareness of the requirements of the standards is promoted via the Corporate Management Team, Leadership, Directorate Management Teams, and team meetings. The Welsh language is also promoted through the Council's internal communications mechanisms, including all staff briefings and the Chief Executive's weekly blog.

Each year an annual report on the Welsh language is submitted for approval to the Corporate Management Team and the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning. Once approved the reports are published in English and Welsh on our website and in all public council buildings.

3. Compliance with the Standards

3.1 Overview of 2022-23

2022-23 saw the UK's transition out of the COVID pandemic. Despite council buildings reopening and some staff returning to the office, many continued to work remotely, at least part of the time, in line with the Council's agile working policy. As such during the year communication with Swansea citizens and staff was mainly delivered through digital channels with all relevant communication to the public and staff being provided bilingually and published simultaneously.

Complying with the Welsh Language Standards continues to be challenging for the council, not least because we have a limited number of Welsh speakers who are willing and able to use their language skills at work. This has impacted our ability consistently to respond to phone calls in a timely way.

During 2022-23 we received six complaints regarding the Council's compliance with the standards (see section 3.4.) We were also pleased to see Swansea citizens engaging with the standards, raising issues and concerns such as Swansea market compliance and historic street signage.

Table 2 highlights examples of actions undertaken under each category of standards, together with some actions planned for 2023-24.

Table 2: Welsh Language Standards Actions Taken in 2022-23

Standard Category	Action taken during 2022-23	Action planned for 2023-24
Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced new automated processes to improve service users access to services bilingually • Published the Council's 2022-27 Welsh Education Strategic Plan • Improved the search and navigation functions of the Council's website and Staffnet • Increased engagement with Welsh Language Champions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the new Oracle Fusion system • Undertake a review of the Council's Staffnet and website pages to ensure content is compliant
Policy Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embedded Welsh Language impact assessments into the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor IIA compliance ▪ Council staff to attend WLC online policy making events
Operational Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responded to Welsh Language Commissioner investigations and compliance directions ▪ Promoted Welsh Language Awareness training and Welsh Language courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Translate into Welsh all relevant staff policies ▪ Review HR correspondence templates to ensure compliance with the standards
Promotional Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of Welsh Language event days such as St David's Day, Diwrnod Shwmae, Diwrnod Hawliau/Welsh Language Rights Day and Dydd Santes Dwynwen. ▪ Participation in Grwp Deddf and the Local Welsh Government Association Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy ▪ Produce new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
Record-keeping Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued to develop a new automated complaints' system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement the new automated complaints' system

3.2 Service Delivery Standards

3.2.1 Email addresses

All individual and departmental email addresses are available in English and Welsh so that Welsh speaking residents and businesses can make contact via the Welsh address. Staff are expected to place their @swansea.gov.uk and their @abertawe.gov.uk address in their email signature. In addition, all external emails have an automated bilingual footnote which includes:

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymdrin â gohebiaeth Gymraeg a Saesneg i'r un safonau ac amserlenni.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and will deal with Welsh and English correspondence to the same standards and timescales.

3.2.2 Telephone

1,805 Welsh language calls were made to the council in 2022-23 compared to 7,575 in 2021-22. This a reduction is directly related to the winding down of the pandemic related Track, Trace and Protect Service and the Welsh Vaccine Certification Service. The 2022-23 figure is more in line with that of pre-pandemic levels.

3.2.3 Staffing Arrangements

In 2022-23 the Welsh Translation Unit translated 3.17 million words which is in line with the number translated in 2021-22. Around 400,000 words were translated by our third party provider, compared to 750,00 in the previous year.

Welsh Language Champions were in place across services supporting and promoting the Welsh Language Standards, and work continued with the Welsh Language Skills Group.

3.2.4 Technical Systems

The Council has successfully delivered a series of digital projects so that residents and businesses can access services online bilingually, at times and in ways which suit their needs and personal circumstances, including:

- Satisfaction Survey. Following a tradesman's visit, this system enables customers to rate their work through a survey, providing valuable feedback to improve service quality and tradesman performance. Emails are bilingual.
- The Welsh Language RPA process significantly enhances our Welsh language services by automating the turnaround of internal translation requests.

- The Recycling Bag Request RPA process, built in bilingual email capabilities, streamlines the management of recycling bag distributions through automation.
- The Ward Map is an interactive digital tool designed to give users a visual representation of the Wards in Swansea. Available in Welsh and English.
- NDR Rate relief
- Cost of living payments
- Carers grant
- Fuel Support Grant
- School Uniform Grant
- Microsoft Teams bilingual functionality: Hybrid attendance using Microsoft Teams can now be conducted using a bilingual service in conjunction with our Welsh Translation Unit for council meetings.
- Installation of fully bilingual third public payment terminal at the Landore Park and Ride site.

3.2.5 Social Services

The Welsh Language Standards Act has strengthened the provision of bilingual services in Health and Social Care, and across the Council as a whole. We continue to use best practice approaches in using the Welsh language to improve the service offer to both citizens and amongst staff involved in delivering health and social care.

Swansea social services have continued to improve quality of services, practice and to enhance the lives of those people, whose preferred language is Welsh.

Here are some of the areas of development in Adult Services:

- Reflecting Welsh culture within all our services
- Updated Directory identifying Welsh Language Champions within social care
- Welsh Dementia Friends champions now becoming Dementia Friends Ambassadors
- Audit Tool developed to carry out Welsh speaking skills within adult services
- Monitoring how we promote Welsh culture through a quality assurance framework

3.2.6 “Mwy Na Geriau”, “More than Just Words”

In 2022-23 the *More than Just Words* strategy became more embedded in social services with a clear expectation that citizens can access the service in a way that meets their language needs, leading to better outcomes. The Social Services workforce understand how Welsh language and culture are central to a bilingual public service offer, and their role in promoting this.

The Council has developed an action plan to address the next phase of this national strategic framework, and work is underway to incorporate the objectives into existing transformation programmes.

Active Offer:

We continue to extend the active offer into all areas of social services provision. For example, a care home resident whose first language was Welsh recently given the option of having her planning meetings (MDT's) in her first language. The nurse based in the service was a fluent Welsh speaker and supported the resident during these meetings until her discharge from the service.

Welsh Champions:

Welsh Speaking Dementia Friends champions are transitioning to become Welsh speaking Dementia friends ambassadors. this will mean we have 2 Dementia Friends Ambassadors who are able to deliver Welsh Language training sessions to our teams, partner agencies, schools and of course to individuals and family members.

Dechrau Disglair:

A family attending the Welsh medium Flying Start childcare setting (Dechrau Disglair) were in desperate need of support. The child's key worker quickly identified that the family's level of need was high. The parents were experiencing financial difficulties with the family living only on the weekly child benefit. They didn't have food, clothes for the toddler nor themselves as parents. Mum was pregnant again with the baby due. With the support from the Children's Centre Dechrau Disglair we were able to obtain a winter coat for the toddler and some clothes, hat and gloves as it was extremely cold, and she only had a light summer jacket to wear. The setting also provided a bag of food and fruit. The Childcare Manager spoke to the Health Visitor - requesting a visit to address housing issues, fleas in the house, lack of bedding, and damp conditions. The toddler was sleeping in a cold damp room and her toys were mouldy.

The Health Visitor is now supporting the family with tenancy support and the Childcare Manager requested a food parcel / Christmas hamper for the family. Our Early Years Early Help Worker is now based at Dechrau Disglair and is aware of this family, assisting the Childcare Manager with information regarding additional support from the winter warm project. The EYEH Worker made a list of requirements in terms of supporting the family including addressing the basic needs of a newborn baby; additional baby clothes, blankets, baby bedding, bottles, nappies etc She also provided toys for the new baby and toddler. The family are extremely grateful for the support and for everything that they have received from Flying Start. Working together within the team has made a massive difference to the family.

3.3 Policy Making Standards

3.3.1 Equality Impact Assessments

During 2022-23 all policy making decisions were subject to the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process, which considers the potential effect which the initiative may have on Equality issues. While based on the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (under the Equality Act (2010) the IIA requires

an assessment to be made of the Welsh Language Standards and our requirements to meet them. Associated guidance reinforces these requirements.

3.3.2 The Welsh Language Standards across Strategic Plans

The Council continues to embed its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards across its corporate strategic plans including:

- **The Council's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)** both through the use of the IIA process and as a step to implement one of the equality objectives. In the SEP the Council has included a consideration of the Welsh Language alongside the wider protected characteristics in terms of our approach to equality
- **Swansea's Annual Review of Performance** – Welsh Language is highlighted as a priority for Education, describes how the Council is contributing to the national well-being goals, and how the Council is training staff
- **Swansea's Corporate Plan** – Welsh Language as steps in both the Education & Skills and Transformation & Future Council Development well-being objectives

3.4 Operational standards

3.4.1 Resources for Staff

Operational Standards relate to the use of Welsh within the internal functions of the Council including its relationship with its employees (including during recruitment and appointment), through:

- Encouraging and assisting staff to use their Welsh language skills as part of their normal day-to-day work; and
- Providing a supportive framework for staff to improve and develop their Welsh language skills.

During 2022-23, the Human Resources Service reviewed their policies and procedures to identify those which need to be available bilingually and published on Staffnet.

The StaffNet has a 'Welsh Language' section² which contains supporting resources for staff using the Welsh language in their work, such as:

- An overview of the Standards, including information on the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner
- An on-line Welsh language awareness course developed to provide some social and historical context to the Welsh language and its place in modern society
- Handy guides on specific areas of the standards, e.g.:
 - telephone calls
 - emails
 - organising meetings
 - design of signs

² <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/welsh>

- access to software applications to assist staff in the use of Welsh (e.g. MSOffice spell checking, grammar checking, and automatic translation).
- Access to standard translations to assist with production of standard information with small amounts of variable data (e.g. dates, times, venues and automatic (out of office) messages)
- Guide to bilingual social media - rules for publicising events and other information on Twitter, Facebook, and other social media.
- Details of Welsh language tuition and practice sessions, including external courses listed on the <http://www.swansea.ac.uk/learnwelsh/> website
- Regular external social events via the Menter Iaith Abertawe website
- Welsh language training opportunities for staff
- Details of service area Welsh Language Champions

3.4.2 Staffnet – Staff usage and promotion of Welsh

In 2022-23 there were 2,513,689 total page views on Staffnet, including the default browser screen. This is an increase of 17% on 2021-22. 20,428 page views related to Welsh, a 7.5% increase on the previous year. The top page views about Welsh are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Top Welsh Staffnet Pages Viewed in 2022-23

Staffnet Page	No. of views
/welsh translations	10744
/stafflogin?returnurl=https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/welshtranslations	2040
/welsh	1960
/learn welsh	1343
/welsh language unit	425
/bilingual lmessages	414
/welsh phrases	399
/welsh translation terms of service	386
/welsh guides	273
/new year welsh	165
/welsh standards	138
/welsh champions	127

3.4.3 Staff and Welsh Language Skills

In 2022-23, 2,152 employees (excluding schools) provided information on their skills in respect of the Welsh language (see Table 4). 846 staff of these reported having some level of Welsh language skills, which is a 28% increase on the 662 who reported in 2021-22. 601 employees were willing to use Welsh in the course of their work, compared to 454 in 2021-22, an increase of a third.

Table 4: Staff Self-Reporting Welsh Language Skills in 2022-23

	Understand spoken welsh	Speak Welsh	Read Welsh	Write Welsh	Learning Welsh	Willing to use in course of your work
Yes	343	261	279	231	230	601
No	100	96	101	101	106	357
Not Stated	1,709	1,795	1,772	1,820	1,816	1,107
Preferred not to say	-	-	-	-	-	87
Total	2,152	2,152	2,152	2,152	2,152	2,152

12.98% of all the council's staff (excluding schools) reported having some Welsh language skills, compared to 10.24% reported in 2021-22.

Table 5: Percentage of Council staff (excluding schools) reporting to have Welsh language skills

Directorate	Number of Staff reporting Welsh Language Skills	Total Number of Staff	Percentage of Staff known to have Welsh Language Skills
Place	391	2,721	14.37
Corporate Services	68	433	15.70
Finance	19	257	7.39
Education excluding schools	41	978	4.19
Social Services	327	2,130	15.35
Total	846	6,519	12.98

Table 6: Breakdown of Employees Self-Reporting Welsh language skills by grade (excluding schools)

Grade Name	No of staff self-reporting skill level
Chief Officer 1-5	1
Director]	3
Grade 1	6
Grade 2	91
Grade 2a	25
Grade 3	100
Grade 4	140
Grade 4a	20
Grade 5	316
Grade 5a	3
Grade 6	427

Grade 7	336
Grade 8	234
Grade 9	159
Grade 10	101
Grade 10a	32
Grade 10b	14
Grade 11	53
Grade 12	26
HOS Band 1	6
HOS Band 2	4
Minimum Wage	16
Apprentices	10
Soulbury Grades	12
Teacher (Central Education)	17
Total	2,152

3.4.4 New and Vacant Posts

Table 7 shows that of the 381 new posts created in 2022-23, 69% (261) stated that Welsh language skills were desirable or essential. Table 8 shows that more than 65% of these posts required some level of Welsh language skills.

Table 7: Welsh language skills criteria for new posts in 2022-23

Welsh Language skill Criteria	Number of new posts
Not Required	120
Desirable	258
Essential	3
Total	381

Table 8: Welsh language skills level required for new posts in 2022-23

Welsh Language skill level required	Number of new posts
Level 1	243
Level 2	2
Level 3	2
Level 4	1
Level 5	1
Level Not Specified	132
Total	381

Table 9 shows that of the 678 vacant posts as at 31 March 23, 52% (351) identified Welsh language skills as a desirable or essential criteria while Table 10 shows that more than half of the vacant posts required some level of Welsh Language skills.

Table 9: Welsh language skills criteria for posts that were vacant as at 31 March 2023

Welsh Language skill Criteria	Number of vacant posts
Not Required	327
Desirable	349
Essential	2
Total	678

Table 10: Welsh Language Skill Level Required for Vacant Posts as at 31 March 2023

Welsh Language skill level required	Number of vacant posts
Level 1	339
Level 2	4
Level 3	2
Level 4	0
Level 5	1
Level not specified	332
Total	678

Consistent comparisons with 2021-22 require the new and vacant posts to be combined. In 2021-22 the Council reported that 34% of new or vacant posts had specified that Welsh language skills were desirable or essential. In 2022-23 that figure has increased to 58% of all posts.

3.4.5 Schools' Workforce Welsh Language Skills

The percentage of the schools' workforce that has some level of Welsh language skills in 2022-23 the same as in 2021-22, at an all school level as well as in English and Welsh medium schools.

Tables 11a-11c: School Workforce Census 2022: Ability in Welsh

All schools	Headcount			Percentage of Headcount		
Level	Teachers	Support	Total	Teachers	Support	Total
Proficient Level	405	253	658	19%	10%	14%
Advanced Level	70	38	108	3%	1%	2%
Intermediate Level	180	60	240	9%	2%	5%
Foundation Level	437	208	645	21%	8%	14%
Entry Level	595	891	1,486	28%	34%	31%
No language skills	436	1,183	1,619	21%	45%	34%
Information not yet obtained	4	10	14	0%	0%	0%
Total	2,127	2,643	4,770	100%	100%	100%

English medium only	Headcount			Percentage of Headcount		
Level	Teachers	Support	Total	Teachers	Support	Total
Proficient Level	124	44	168	7%	2%	4%
Advanced Level	63	26	89	3%	1%	2%
Intermediate Level	180	55	235	10%	2%	6%
Foundation Level	437	207	644	24%	9%	15%
Entry Level	595	891	1,486	32%	37%	35%
No language skills	436	1,180	1,616	24%	49%	38%
Information not yet obtained	4	10	14	0%	0%	0%
Total	1,839	2,413	4,252	100%	100%	100%

Welsh medium only	Headcount			Percentage of Headcount		
	Teachers	Support	Total	Teachers	Support	Total
Proficient Level	281	209	490	98%	91%	95%
Advanced Level	7	12	19	2%	5%	4%
Intermediate Level		5	5	0%	2%	1%
Foundation Level		1	1	0%	0%	0%
Entry Level				0%	0%	0%
No language skills		3	3	0%	1%	1%
Total	288	230	518	100%	100%	100%

3.4.6 Staff Training

In 2022-23 the Council's Welsh Language Training Support Group met monthly to take forward the Welsh language skills strategic framework and enable more staff to learn or improve Welsh Language skills.

As can be seen in Table 12, there 65 employees participated in formal Welsh language training courses, nearly a third more than in 2021-22.

Table 12: Number of Employees participating in formal Welsh language training

Training Course	2022-23 Participants	2021-22 Participants
Mynediad Level 1	36	12
Mynediad Level 2	10	16
Sylfaen (Foundation) Level 1	15	15
Sylfaen (Foundation) Level 2	4	6
Total	65	49

3.4.7 Staff Communication

Communication issued centrally and sent to groups of staff is in English (as is permissible under the standards).

3.4.8 Meetings

Hybrid meetings are now the main model for meetings, with the aim of encouraging greater participation in the democratic process including from Welsh speakers. Although the corporate tool remains Teams, Zoom licences have also been procured for facilitators to enable simultaneous translation.

3.5 Promotion Standards

The Council's five year Welsh Language strategy formally expired during 2022-23 and a review of its effectiveness commenced. Work also began on developing the next five year promotion strategy, including reviewing other councils' strategies and guidance from the Welsh Language Commissioner. Development of the strategy will continue in 2023-24 and in the meantime, the 2017-2022 strategy will be rolled forward.

3.6 Record Keeping Standards

3.6.1 Complaints

There were six Welsh language complaints in 2022-23 compared with seven the previous year.

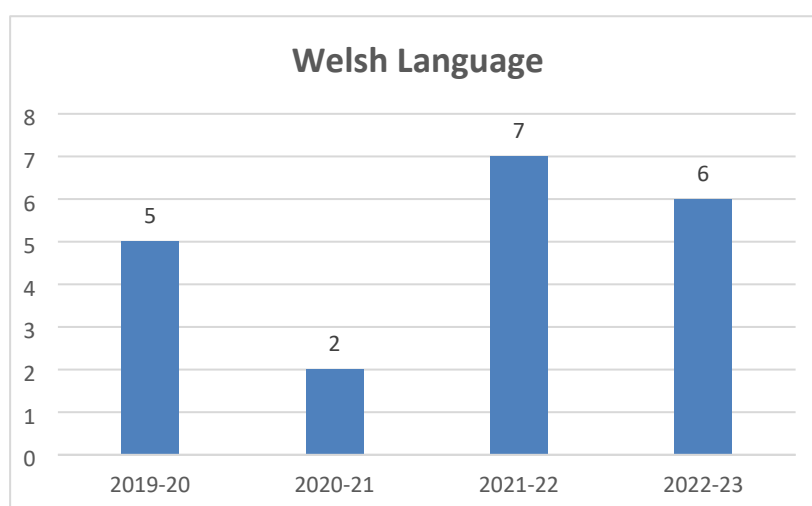


Table 13: Details of Welsh Language Complaints Received in 2022-23

Complaint details	Council Response
Complainant was unable able to speak with a Welsh speaker in Council Tax, despite selecting the Welsh option	No action taken
Iron Man signs were not bilingual	No response sent as no contact details provided on webform by complainant
Letter from Bereavement Service was sent in English only. When they contacted the department, they were advised it was to 'save money'.	An apology was provided, and the complainant was advised that this was not the case – letters are available in Welsh
Non-Welsh speaking complainant felt discriminated against as he could get a response from the Environmental Health Welsh line, but not the English phone line	No action was taken

Welsh not English printed first on council parking machines	Complainant advised that is in line with Welsh Government policy
Street names not in Welsh	Complainant was advised that the Council's Highways, Technical and Property Services Committee discussed the policy for naming streets on 11th December 1996 and resolved, <i>"that streets should be named in either English or Welsh with approximate equal use of each language ensured by monitoring over time. It was proposed that local characteristics should dictate the choice in each particular case"</i>

4. Welsh Medium Education

The future development of the Welsh language across Swansea and beyond is fundamentally linked with Welsh-medium education and this aspect is dealt with specifically in the council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This was consulted upon in autumn 2021 and approved by the council's Cabinet in January 2022. It was subsequently submitted to the Minister for Welsh Language and Education and following feedback from the Minister received final approval and was implemented in September 2022.

There are 10 Welsh-medium primary schools feeding into the two secondary schools: Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr, and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe.

Tables 14 to 18 below show the number of students attending Welsh-medium education in the three age ranges each year since 2019-20. The overall percentage of students in Welsh language streams has remained stable at between 14-15%, with a slight reduction being seen in the percentage of primary students and an small increase in years 12-13 in 2022-23.

Table14: Number of Students Attending Welsh Medium Education 2022-23

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	21358	3081	14.43%
Y7-11	13298	1733	13.03%
Y12-13	1269	284	22.38%
Total	35,925	5,098	14.19%

Table 15: Number of Students Attending Welsh Medium Education 2021-22

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	21394	3133	14.64%
Y7-11	12871	1720	13.36%
Y12-13	1420	294	20.70%
Total	35,685	5,147	14.42%

Table 16: Number of Students Attending Welsh Medium Education 2021-22

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	21159	3157	14.92%
Y7-11	12859	1674	13.02%
Y12-13	1507	315	20.90%
Total	35,525	5,146	14.49%

Table 17: Number of Students Attending Welsh Medium Education 2020-21

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	% of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	22190	3519	15.9%
Y7-11	12331	1503	12.2%
Y12-13	1358	273	20.1%
Total	35,879	5,295	14.8%

Table 18: Number of Students Attending Welsh Medium Education 2019-20

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	22147	3306	14.9%
Y7-11	12246	1503	12.3%
Y12-13	1318	273	20.7%
Total	35,711	5,082	14.2%

In GCSE Welsh First Language, 78.2% in 2023 of students attain grades A*- C, and numbers entering this subject (307 entries) were slightly down on the previous year. In the GCSE Welsh Second Language 67.2% in 2023 attain grades A*- C with 1763 entries, the highest number of entries since 2020.

In 2023 KS3 Welsh First Language for the expected level and above (Level 5) was just under 91%. KS3 Welsh Second Language for the expected level and above was just above 76%. Due to the pandemic data collections for KS2 stopped in 2020 and did not restart.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Council has continued to promote the Welsh Language in 2022-23 and has sought to strengthen its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards across the five categories. From publishing the 2022-27 WESP and embedding Welsh language into the Integrated Impact Assessment to responding to the outcome of Welsh Language Commissioner investigations and promoting Welsh Language event days such as St David's Day.

We continued to experience challenges in recruiting Welsh speaking employees which has had an impact on our ability to respond to phone calls in a timely manner. We were pleased to see an increase in the number of employees reporting some Welsh language skills and an increase of 33% in the number reporting to be willing to use the skills in the workplace. However, we still do not know the skill level of two thirds of our non-schools workforce so we will continue to look for ways to increase these numbers and to recruit more Welsh speakers into our contact centres. For example, in 2022-23 we increased the number of new and vacant posts which required some level of Welsh Language skills. 58% of these posts stated that Welsh language skills were desirable or essential compared to 34% in 2021-22.

Next year we will continue to implement the WESP and also to focus on our compliance with the Operational Standards, particularly in respect of staff policies and correspondence and we will audit our internal and external web pages to maximise our compliance with the service delivery standards.

Turning to the promotion standards we will complete the review our first Welsh Language Strategy which expired in 2022-23 and we will continue to develop a new five year strategy.

Finally, in 2023-24 we will implement the new Oracle Fusion system and a new automated complaints' system. This will help us to improve the ways in which we communicate, engage, and provide services to Swansea citizens through the media of English and Welsh.

ⁱ Standard 158: (1) You must produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the service delivery standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year. (2) The annual report must include the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which

you were under a duty to comply. (3) You must publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates.

ⁱⁱ Standard 164: (1) You must produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the policy making standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year. (2) The annual report must include the number of complaints you received during the year which related to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you were under a duty to comply. (3) You must publish the annual report no later than 30 June following the financial year to which the report relates. (4) You must publicise the fact that you have published an annual report. (5) You must ensure that a current copy of your annual report is available (a) on your website, and (b) in each of your offices that are open to the public.

ⁱⁱⁱ Standard 170: (1) You must produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the operational standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year. (2) The annual report must include the following information (where relevant, to the extent you are under a duty to comply with the standards referred to:

(a) the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question

(b) the number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year

(c) if a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version

(ch) the number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where: (i) Welsh language skills were essential, (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post, (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable, or (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary, (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154);

(d) the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the operational standards with which you were under a duty to comply.



To:
Councillor Elliott King
Cabinet Member for Equalities
and Culture

Councillor Robert Smith
Cabinet Member for Education and
Learning

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

e-Mail
e-Bost:

Date
Dyddiad:

Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

23 May 2023

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Members for Equalities and Culture and Education and Learning. The letter concerns the meeting held on 9 May 2023 and the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/2022. A response is required by 13 June.

Dear Councillors King and Smith,

On the 9 May, the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel met to discuss the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/22. The Panel are grateful to yourselves and relevant officers for attending.

Overall you informed us that progress is being made in implementing the Welsh Language Standards. You informed us that there are over 160 standards which local authorities are required to adhere to and highlighted a few areas including the implementation of the Cwtsh- Ysgrifennu yn Cymraeg ' a virtual space for staff and the full embedding of the Welsh language into Integrated Impact Assessments.

The report informed us of the six Welsh language complaints received during this reported year. We noted that two complaints relate to Welsh language requirements for car parking machines and one relates to a street sign on a non-adopted road which is not within the Councils remit to provide, in affect reducing the number to three. We asked how Swansea's complaints compare with the rest of Wales and were informed this number compares equally with Neath Port Talbot.

The increase in Welsh language calls was raised by the officer and work continues on the new system for public complaints in regards to complying with the Welsh language standards. The Welsh language standards have strengthened the provision of bilingual services in health and social care across the Council as part of the "more than just words" offer. The Council has extended the offer to social care and housing staff to learn Welsh through work. There have been over 2,000,000 total page views

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

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

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

on Staffnet in 2021 to 2022 and over 19,000 of these were related to Welsh and the Welsh language.

We noted that roughly 20% of translated words are being carried out by external providers, which was due to an increase in service demand, we wondered if it would be cheaper to increase internal staff rather than paying for external translators. The officer informed us they will look into this.

In addition we asked for some figures from the previous 3/4 years on how much translation has been carried out and how much of this was given to external translators in comparison to the 2021-22 figures given in paragraph 3.1.3 of the report. We would also be interested in the cost of external translators in comparison to the cost of in house translators so we can compare and consider value for money.

In discussing the complaints we commented on the challenge with signage which can occur when translations are not checked with the Welsh translation department and the keenness of the media to pick up on the small amount of errors. We are interested to know if there were any other breaches of standards other than the ones picked up in the complaints and would appreciate a response to this.

We were also made aware that out of office messages continues to be an issue throughout the Council but work with the communications team is ongoing to highlight this.

We were pleased to see the percentage of Welsh skills of Council staff going up from 6.8% to 10.2% and queried what standard of Welsh is considered under the term "Welsh skills" as labelled in the report. The officer informed that this was unknown and therefore could mean anything from learner to fluent Welsh speaker.

Regarding the school statistics in the report, we asked if there is an increase in Welsh skills in children due to the Welsh content in the syllabus as this will help to increase the number of Welsh speakers. Data on this was not available however the recent census information reports that overall the number of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea has decreased. But this is still a critical mass that needs to build and develop. Also the report does not cover that Welsh is an integral part of all schools in Wales, not just the Welsh medium schools.

Your Response

We welcome your comments on any of the issues raised and request a formal response by 13 June in regards to the following –

- Equivalent historic data to paragraph 3.1.3 regarding total words translated and how many were externally translated going back 3-4 years.
- The cost of external translation against the cost of in house translation.
- Details of any other breaches of the Welsh Language Standards other than those recorded as a formal complaint.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHolley', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Councillor Chris Holley

Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener
Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny
Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor Robert Smith
Direct Line: 01792 63 7429
E-Mail: cllr.robert.smith@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: EK/RS/JG
Your Ref:
Date: 28 June 2023

Dear Councillor Holley,

Re: Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel meeting held on 9th May 2023

Thank you for your letter following the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 9th May, when we met to discuss the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/22.

Please find below a formal response to the points raised in your letter.

1. Equivalent historic data to paragraph 3.1.3 regarding total words translated and how many were externally translated going back 3-4 years:

The Panel requested additional figures from the previous 3/4 years on how much translation has been carried out and how much of this was given to external translators in comparison to the 2021-22 figures given in paragraph 3.1.3 of the report. Having looked back to 2019, the amounts remain consistent, along with the amount of work requests completed by external translation sources.

2. The cost of external translation against the cost of in-house translation:

The Panel expressed an interest in examining the cost of external translators in comparison to the cost of in-house translators in order to compare and consider 'value for money'.

If considering solely the cost implication of external translators as compared to our in-house translators, by using comparators such as number of words translated per month and other cost factors such as pension contributions, the use of external translators- or an external translation service- is significantly more cost effective per annum. Further detail will be provided at a later date.

3. Details of any other breaches of the Welsh Language Standards, other than those recorded as a formal complaint:

The Panel were interested to know if there were any other breaches of Welsh Language Standards, other than the complaints as escalated to the Welsh Language Commissioner. I can confirm that for this report period there were no other Welsh Language Standards complaints.

Yours sincerely,



**Y Cyngorydd Robert Smith / Councillor Robert Smith
Aelod y Cabinet Dros Addysg a Dysgu
Cabinet Member for Education & Learning**



**Y Cyngorydd Elliott J King / Councillor Elliott J King
Aelod y Cabinet dros Diwylliant, Hawliau Dynol a Chydraddoldebau/ Cabinet Member
for Culture, Human Rights & Equalities**

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Cabinet Members for Service Transformation and Care Services

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 March 2024

Annual Complaints & Compliments Reports 2022-23

Purpose:	To present the Complaints and Compliments report for 2022-23. Councillors are invited to discuss the Council's performance and the comments and compliments received from service users.
Policy Framework:	Corporate Complaints Policy Social Services Complaints Policy Transformation & Financial Resilience Well-being Objective of the Corporate Plan Successful and Sustainable Swansea
Consultation:	Finance and Legal.
Report Author:	Sarah Lackenby
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Stephen Holland

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 These two reports at appendices A and B detail performance on the operation of the Corporate Complaints Policy and Social Services Complaints Policy between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023.
- 1.2 This year the Complaints reports have a new format in response to a request from the Governance & Audit Committee. The Annual Reports are also presented to the Governance & Audit Committee as it has a responsibility to consider the Authority's ability to handle complaints effectively, so assurance is provided to it on the complaints handling process.

- 1.3 The Council recognises that complaints are a valuable resource, helping us to understand the needs and concerns of members of the public and to improve services. All complaints are taken very seriously and provide valuable customer insight.
- 1.4 An internal audit of Complaints began at the end of 2022-23 and concluded in 2023-24 with the overall assurance level of substantial.

2. Integrated Assessment Implications

2.1 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.

2.2 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'.

2.3 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.

- This report is for information only. Any activities following this report will be subject to the IIA process as required.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 The additional cost of running the service in 2022-23 includes:

- £11,013 in financial redress for Adult Services, compared with the £12,016 in 2021-22.

- £250 in financial re-dress for Child & Family Services, which was the first payment made in the past four years.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Part 5 of The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014, prescribes the records required to be kept in relation to social service specific complaints, and the publication of information relating to the same.

'PART 5 LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

Monitoring

20. Each local authority must keep a record of—

- (a) each complaint it receives;
- (b) the outcome of each complaint;
- (c) whether the local authority has complied with the time limits specified in regulations 16 to 19;

with the intention of monitoring its compliance with these Regulations.

Annual Report

21.—(1) Each local authority must prepare an annual report, which must include details of the records kept in accordance with regulation 20, on its performance in the handling and investigation of complaints for the purposes of—

- (a) monitoring compliance with these Regulations; and
- (b) improving the handling and consideration of complaints.'

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A	Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report 2022-23
Appendix B	Social Services Complaints & Compliments Annual Report 2022-23



Annual Corporate Complaints & Compliments Report

2022-23

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 This report details performance on the operation of the corporate complaints procedure between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023. The report highlights complaints, comments and compliments received from the public and provides the latest position of the key performance indicators.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that complaints are a valuable resource, helping us to understand the needs and concerns of members of the public and to improve services.

2. Our Complaints Procedure

2.1 Stage 1 Complaints

- 2.1.1 To begin with, complaints will be dealt with by the Service Department concerned and hopefully resolved.
- 2.1.2 The Service Department will aim to provide a response to the complaint within 10 working days.

2.2 Stage 2 Complaints

- 2.2.1 If the Service Department has not responded within 10 working days without good reason, or a complainant remains dissatisfied, then the complaint will be referred to the Corporate Complaints Team.
- 2.2.2 The Complaints Team will investigate the complaint on behalf of the Chief Executive.
- 2.2.3 The complaint will be logged and the complainant will receive a response within 20 working days. Sometimes it may take longer, but the complainant will be kept informed if this is likely to be the case.

2.3 Public Services Ombudsman (Wales)

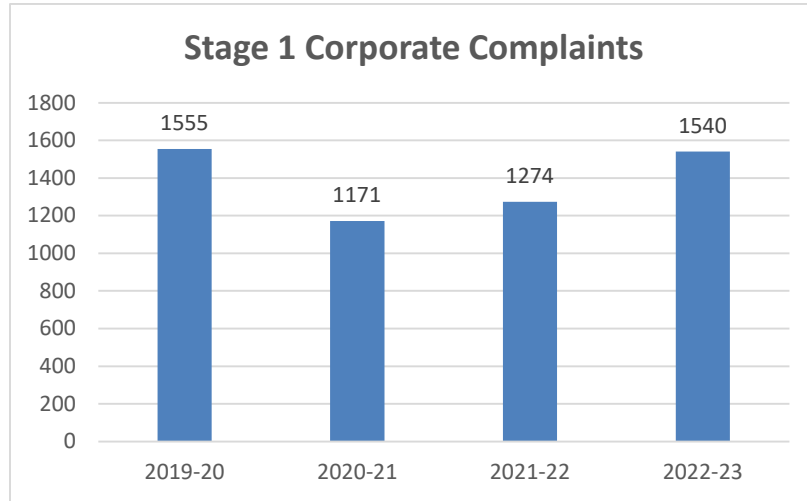
- 2.3.1 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint having pursued it through the various stages with the Council, the complainant may wish to refer the matter to the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales).

2.4 Requests for Service

- 2.4.1 A request for service is not a complaint (e.g., a request for service could be a request to repair an unlit lamp post, or missed bin collection). A complaint would only arise should the request for service not be properly dealt with.

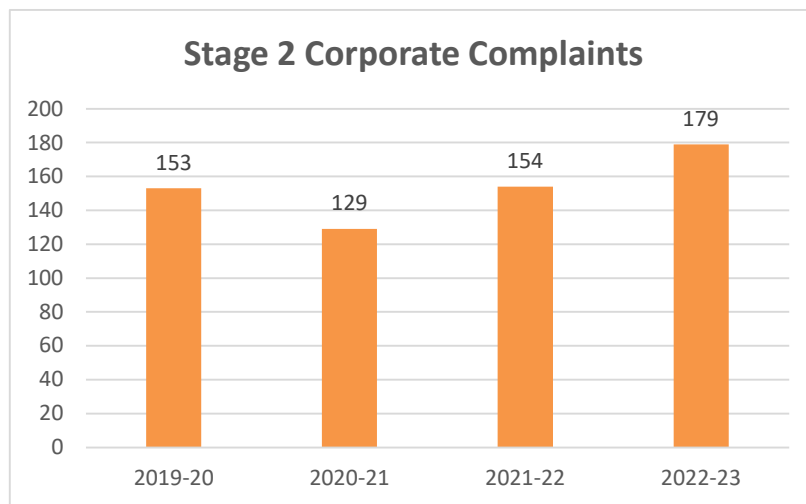
3. Corporate Complaints to Swansea Council 2022-23

3.1 A total of **1,540** Stage 1 corporate complaints were recorded for 2022-23. This is a 20.9% increase on the previous year when 1,274 were recorded.

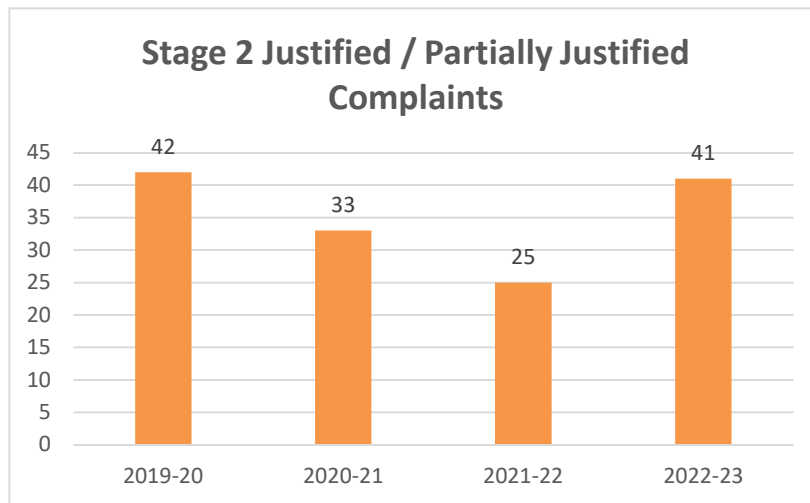


3.2 A total of **467 (30.3%)** Stage 1 complaints were justified, which is a 15.3% increase on the 405 justified the previous year.

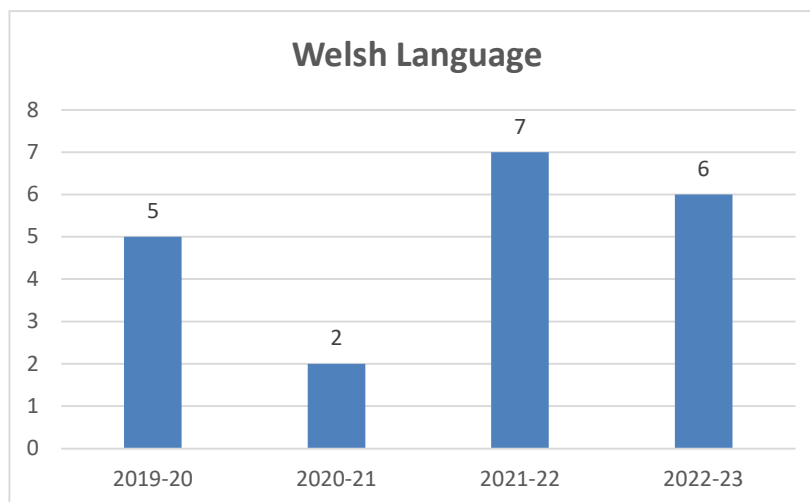
3.3 A total of **179** Stage 2 corporate complaints were recorded for 2022-23. This is a 16% increase on the previous year when 154 were recorded.



3.4 Of all the stage 2 complaints received, **41** were justified or partially justified compared with 25 for the previous year.



3.5 There were 6 Welsh Language complaints received in 2022-23 compared with 7 received in 2021-22.



4. Complaints Breakdown by Service for Swansea Council 2022-23

4.1 The table below shows the stage 1 and stage 2 corporate complaints by service area. Corporate Building & Property Services, Highways & Transportation, Housing & Public Protection, and Waste Management & Parks are the Council's main frontline service areas and further detail around these services is provided at section 8 later in the report.

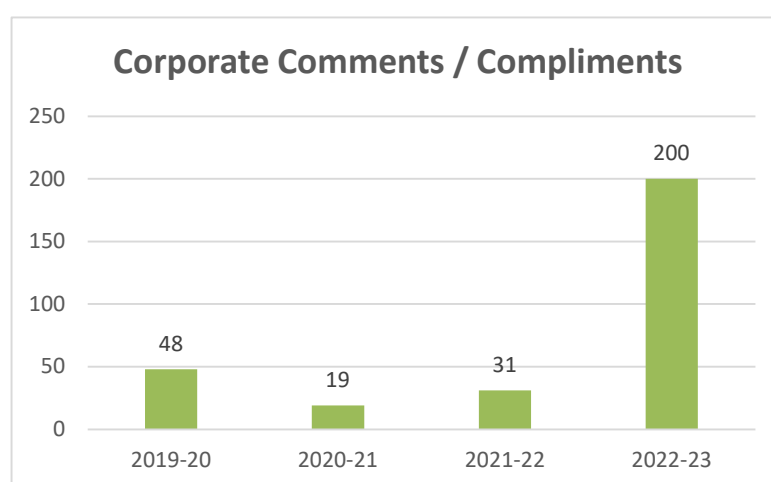
Service Area	Stage 1 Complaints 2022/23	Stage 2 Complaints 2022/23	Request for Service 2022/23
Commercial Services	0	0	0
Communications & Cust. Engagement	29	1	3
Corporate Building & Property Serv.	336	44	64
Cultural Services	78	6	24
Economic Regeneration & Planning	49	21	19
Education	33	3	18
Financial Services	61	8	79
Highways & Transportation	322	38	226
Housing & Public Protection	278	47	162
HR & Organisational Development	3	0	11
Digital & Customer Services	2	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services	15	1	20
Poverty, Wellbeing & Communities	0	0	0
Waste Management & Parks	334	10	222
Totals	1,540	179	848

4.2 This can be compared with stage 1 and stage 2 complaints for the previous year 2021-22:

Service Area	Stage 1 Complaints 2021/22	Stage 2 Complaints 2021/22	Request for Service 2021/22
Commercial Services	0	0	0
Communications & Cust. Engagement	45	2	19
Corporate Building & Property Serv.	170	16	47
Cultural Services	44	6	18
Economic Regeneration & Planning	54	19	25
Education	21	3	21
Financial Services	43	6	54
Highways & Transportation	277	55	279
Housing & Public Protection	260	32	153
HR & Organisational Development	3	0	5
Digital & Customer Services	1	0	1
Legal & Democratic Services	11	2	18
Poverty, Wellbeing & Communities	0	0	0
Waste Management & Parks	345	13	211
Totals	1,274	154	851

5. Compliments Breakdown by Service for Swansea Council 2022-23

- 5.1 When positive comments and compliments are received from the public they are acknowledged and forwarded to the Head of Service for the relevant service area. A selection of those compliments are then highlighted for the staff newsletter. This has a positive impact on staff morale and allows departments to recognise good practices.
- 5.2 In 2022-23 the Council received **200** compliments compared with 31 the previous year. This increase is largely down to reporting changes as not all compliments were logged.



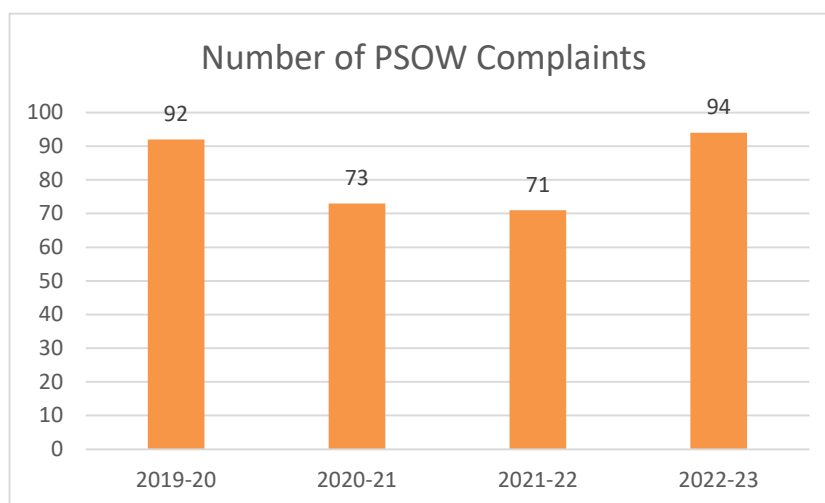
- 5.3 The breakdown of compliments by service area is shown in the table below with Cultural Services, Highways & Transportation, Housing and Public Protection and Waste Management & Parks receiving the most positive comments and compliments.

Service Area	Comments / Compliments 2021/22	Comments / Compliments 2022/23
Commercial Services	0	0
Communications & Customer Engagement	3	3
Corporate Building & Property Services	2	35
Cultural Services	5	26
Economic Regeneration & Planning	0	1
Education	0	2
Financial Services	1	4
Highways & Transportation	4	20
Housing & Public Protection	4	19
HR & Organisational Development	0	1
Digital & Customer Services	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services	1	1
Poverty, Wellbeing & Communities	0	0
Waste Management & Parks	11	88
Totals	31	200

6. Complaints Closed by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 2022-23

6.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) publishes the annual letters to all Councils on its website. The letter highlights activities undertaken by the Ombudsman's office during the year and the Council's performance.

6.2 In 2022-23 the Ombudsman received **94** complaints and closed **99** cases relating to Swansea Council (71 in 2021-22), which represents 6% of Swansea Council's overall complaints and 9% of all complaints received across Wales. The table below shows complaints over the past four years.



6.3 The table below highlights the reasons for closing the 99 complaints:

Considered by the Ombudsman to be 'out of jurisdiction'	29
Considered to be premature because the Council's Complaints procedures had not been exhausted	28
Cases closed where the Ombudsman was satisfied by the actions the Council had taken	32
Cases closed by Voluntary Settlement. These are redress proposals which enable a case to be closed without a full investigation, e.g. providing an apology, changing ways of working, and/or financial redress	10
TOTAL	99

6.4 Of the 99 complaints received and closed, 24% (23) complaints related to Housing. These were across a range of issues with no particular trend. Housing has seen an increase in complaints due to clearing the Covid backlog of internal repairs, and the transition period to the new Oracle Field Services system.

6.5 Of the 99 complaints received and closed, only ten complaints required intervention. All of these reached an early resolution / voluntary settlement and these related to:

- Eight Corporate Complaints including: the Contact Centre (1), Housing Repairs (4), Rats (1), Council tax (1), and Housing (1)
- Two Social Services including: Child and Family (1), Adult Services (1).

7. Learning from Complaints

7.1 Swansea Council uses complaints, comments, and compliments from the public to continuously improve processes and services.

7.2 Complaints via the Ombudsman are discussed with Heads of Service and the relevant Principal Officer. The Complaints Officer responds to the PSOW on the actions undertaken by Swansea Council and any lessons learned. Once actions were completed, the complaint is closed on the system, recording the outcome and any lessons learned.

7.3 The Complaints Service receives an Internal Audit every three years to ensure it is undertaking its functions correctly. The internal audit of Complaints began at the end of 2022-23 and concluded in 2023-24 with the overall assurance level of substantial.

8. Complaints by Service Area

8.1 The charts included for each area compares performance across the last four years.

8.2 Corporate Building & Property Services

8.2.1 The chart below shows that Corporate Building & Property Services complaints across the board compared with the previous year. Requests for service relate to first time requests that were not complaints.

8.2.2 The general reason for the rise in Corporate Building & Property Services complaints during 2022-23 is mostly due to increased demand, clearing the Covid backlog of internal housing repairs, and the transition period from the old Orchard repairs system to the new Oracle Field Services.

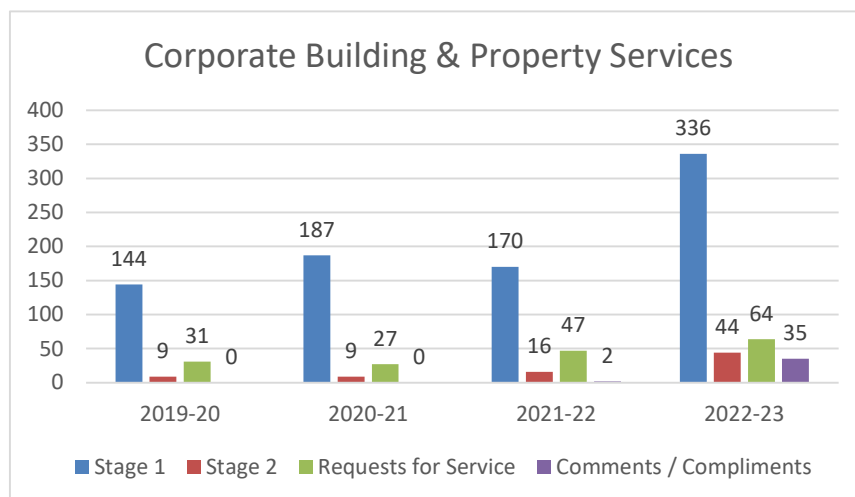
8.2.3 Timescales on complaints handling has significantly improved since the new complaints system was introduced.

8.2.4 Building Services complete in excess of 70,000 repairs annually, so the number of complaints received 380 (stage 1 and 2) equates to 0.54%.

8.2.5 Examples of the compliments received:

“I just wanted to compliment the boys who were sent to my property at X to do some painting work. The boys did a brilliant job I'm really impressed. Think their names were A and B and also their boss D who was such a nice guy, great to talk to and very helpful with questions I had. I would highly recommend them.”

“I have just had a young lad out to fix my outside door. He worked non-stop and was so polite and well mannered. It gives you faith in the Council workers, but to be honest I can't remember getting a bad worker. He asked me if I needed more help or if there was anything he could do for me. It is nice to have our young this nice and hard working”.



	Stage 1 Complaints Closed Within Timescales				Complaints Outcome	
	10 Working Days	After 10 Working Days but within 3 Months	After 3 Months but within 6 Months	After 6 Months	Upheld	Not Upheld
2021-22	89	24	3	0	51	56
2022-23	136	69	20	5	137	85

8.3 Waste Management, Parks & Cleansing

8.3.1 The chart below shows that Waste Management, Parks & Cleansing stage 1 and stage 2 complaints reduced compared with the previous year. Stage 2 complaints have reduced each year for the past four years. Requests for service relate to first time requests that were not complaints.

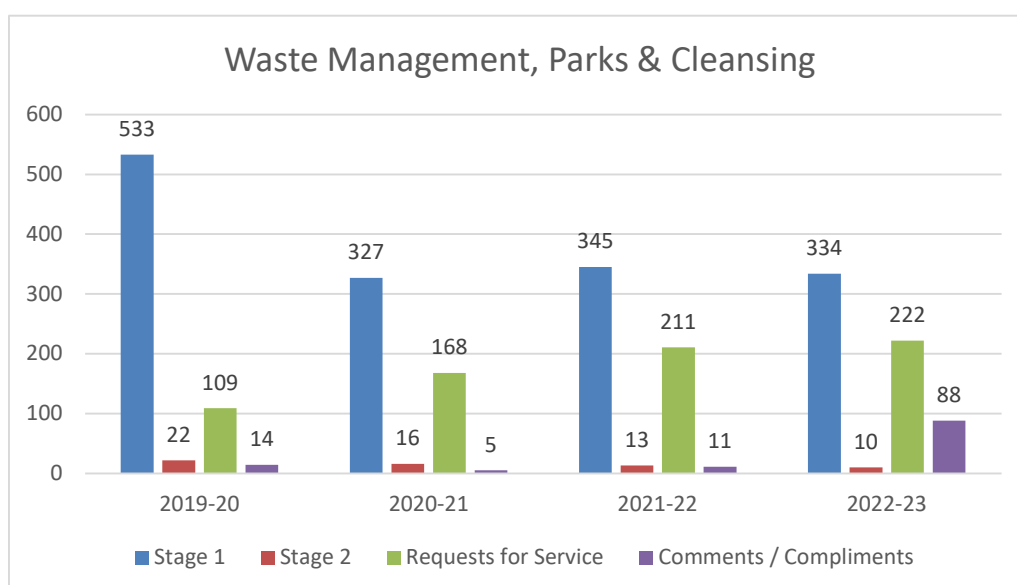
8.3.2 Generally, the complaints mostly relate to missed collections.

8.3.3 Timescales on complaints handling has significantly improved since the new complaints system was introduced.

8.3.4 Examples of the compliments received:

“We are all too fond of complaining when things go wrong but I want to give praise to the person responsible for the maintenance of Tir Canol playing fields. I have used them for 40 years and they are looking the best they ever have. He obviously takes pride in his work and is a credit to you.”

“Thank you for my beautiful hanging basket delivered today, it is fabulous”.



	Stage 1 Complaints Closed Within Timescales				Complaints Outcome	
	10 Working Days	After 10 Working Days but within 3 Months	After 3 Months but within 6 Months	After 6 Months	Upheld	Not Upheld
2021-22	263	23	1	0	179	99
2022-23	248	30	0	0	167	100

8.4 Highways & Transportation

8.4.1 The chart below shows Highways & Transportation stage 1 complaints increased compared with the previous year. However, stage 2 complaints were the lowest for the past four years. Requests for service relate to first time requests that were not complaints.

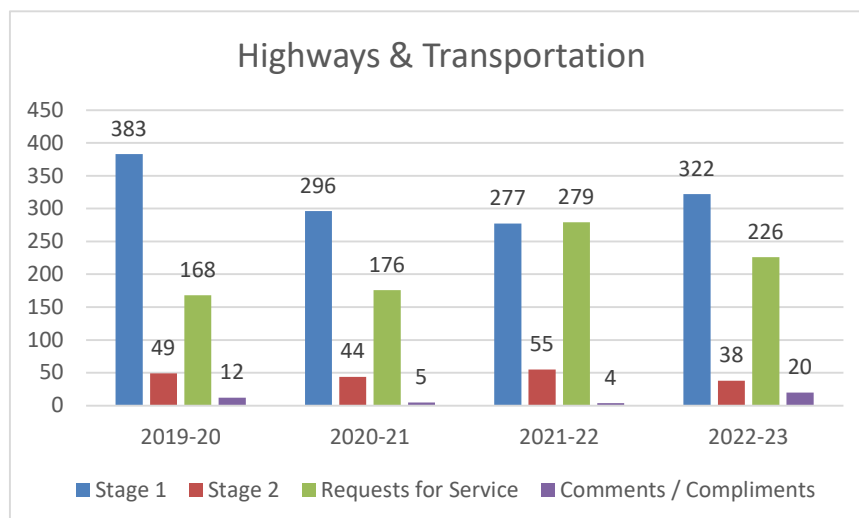
8.4.2 There are no overall trends, several complaints were received relating to parking tickets.

8.4.3 Timescales on complaints handling has significantly improved since the new complaints system was introduced.

8.4.4 Examples of the compliments received:

“Hi there, I'd like to thank your pothole team for your prompt service, well done to all involved many thanks X.”

“I reported a streetlight not working in Killay and within a couple of days it has been repaired. I am very impressed with this speed and efficiency.”



	Stage 1 Complaints Closed Within Timescales				Complaints Outcome	
	10 Working Days	After 10 Working Days but within 3 Months	After 3 Months but within 6 Months	After 6 Months	Upheld	Not Upheld
2021-22	206	51	4	0	69	174
2022-23	242	25	0	0	61	176

8.5 Housing & Public Protection

8.5.1 The chart below shows Housing & Public Protection stage 1 and stage 2 complaints increased during 2022-23 compared with the previous year.

8.5.2 Requests for service and positive comments and compliments also increased.

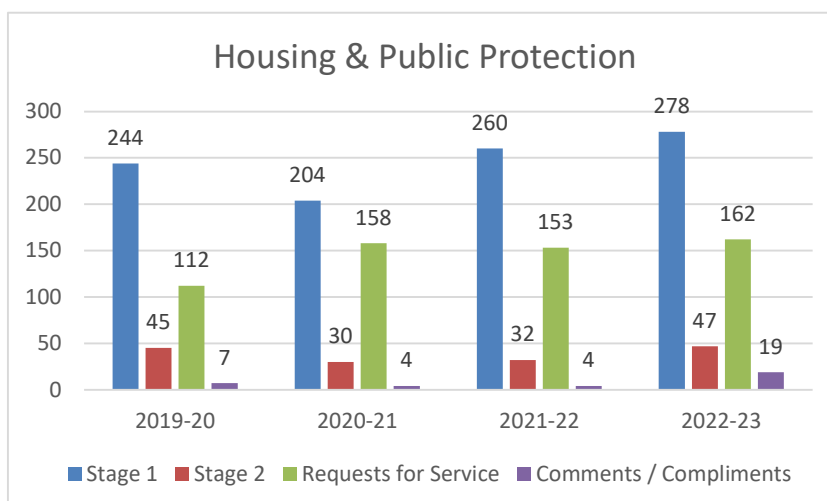
8.5.3 There are no overall trends across the complaints.

8.5.4 Timescales on complaints handling has significantly improved since the new complaints system was introduced

8.5.5 Examples of the compliments received:

“The Environmental Health Team, Specifically Empty Property Officer and Pest Control, exceptionally high level of service and care which impacted on my property and my wellbeing.”

“Town Centre AHO – Mr X underwent lifesaving surgery over the weekend. His sister called to thank us for the care we displayed towards her brother”.



	Stage 1 Complaints Closed Within Timescales				Complaints Outcome	
	10 Working Days	After 10 Working Days but within 3 Months	After 3 Months but within 6 Months	After 6 Months	Upheld	Not Upheld
2021-22	180	29	2	0	48	113
2022-23	203	22	0	0	55	151

9. Key Performance Indicators

- 9.1 The table below shows overall performance on responding to complaints within the timescales stipulated in the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.
- 9.2 The response times, particularly on Stage 1 corporate complaints, has significantly improved since the new complaints system went live in July 2023.

Key Performance Indicator	Comment / Management Actions
65.4% (1,008 of 1,540) of stage one corporate complaints responded to within 10 clear working days	Building Services responded to 37.2% (125) complaints within 10 working days. These delays are due to many repairs involving complex elements and take more than 10 days to resolve i.e. Disrepair claims where tenants will not allow repairs to be completed as instructed by their claims lawyer. Access issues where appointments being made to complete the work are either not being kept or are arranged beyond the 10 days as requested by the tenant. 22/23 Stage 1 justified 467 (30.3%) 21/22 Stage 1 justified 405 (31.8%)
77.6% (139 of 179) of stage two corporate complaints responded to within 20 clear working days, or within any	One case relates to a request to move a pelican crossing in a Ward and was delayed due to a by-election. One case was not responded to as the tenant was waiting to decant so that work could be carried out on property.

<p>extension agreed with the customer.</p>	<p>One case picked up by Social Services complaints officer was not responded to.</p> <p>Between July and December, several delayed due to workload and sickness within the Complaints team.</p> <p>22/23 Stage 2 justified 41 (22.9%) 21/22 Stage 2 justified 25 (16.23%)</p>
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Annual Social Services Complaints & Compliments Report

2022-23

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 Social Services aims to provide quality services to the public of the City and County of Swansea. There may be, however, times when things go wrong and a service user or someone sufficiently concerned with their welfare, may wish to complain.
- 1.2 Swansea Council's Social Service Complaints Policy has been established in accordance with The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and The Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- 1.3 The above regulations are made under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. They bring the complaints handling process for Social Services in line with the Welsh Government Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and Guidance, and the NHS Complaints Procedure Putting Things Right.
- 1.4 This policy also encompasses the requirements of the Children Act 1989, the Adoption of Children Act 2002, the Community Care Act 2014 and is in accordance with guidance issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970.
- 1.5 Each Local Authority is required to produce and publish an annual report regarding the operation of their Social Services Complaints Procedures. This report contains statistical information and analysis relating to complaints, comments and compliments dealt with during the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

2. Our Complaints Procedure

- 2.1 The law says that you have a right to get your views heard about Social Services.
- 2.2 The following people can use the procedure:
 - People using social care services provided by the Council.
 - People using social care services purchased or contracted by the council.
 - A representative, relative or friend, properly nominated by a service user or acknowledged as appropriate to act in a service user's best interest when they lack capacity or have died.
- 2.3 Firstly, you should tell the staff member who provides support about what you feel is wrong so they can try to put things right for you.
- 2.4 Stage 1 – Local Resolution
 - 2.4.1 When we receive your complaint, you will get an acknowledgement within 2 working days. We will contact you to discuss your complaint within

10 working days. This could be via phone or if you prefer we can have a face-to-face meeting. Once we have discussed your complaint and the matter has been resolved, we will write to you within 5 working days of the resolution date, confirming the outcome.

2.4.2 Most complaints are resolved at this stage, and it is usually the quickest and most straightforward way to deal with issues.

2.5 Stage 2 – Formal Consideration

2.5.1 If the complaint cannot be resolved at the informal stage, your complaint will progress to stage 2. This stage will be carried out by someone not directly involved with the service you are complaining about. During the investigation the Complaints Officer will keep you advised and informed of developments.

2.5.2 You are not obliged to take up the offer of a discussion at local resolution stage; you have the right to request a formal investigation from the very beginning if you wish. However, as this is a longer process than local resolution, we recommend trying to resolve matters through local resolution first.

2.5.3 When your complaint is investigated at stage 2, we will write to you within 5 working days of receiving your request for a formal investigation, to make sure we understand all the details of your complaint and the outcome you would like to achieve. We will ask you to confirm that this is accurate and will also give you details of the Independent Investigator.

2.5.4 The date on which you confirm the detail of your complaint is called the 'start date' and we have 25 working days from this date to complete the investigation and send you a written response.

2.5.5 If we are unable to achieve this deadline, we will write to you and tell you why there is a delay and when you will receive the response. This will be as soon as possible after the 25 working day deadline and no later than 6 months from the date we received your complaint.

2.6 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

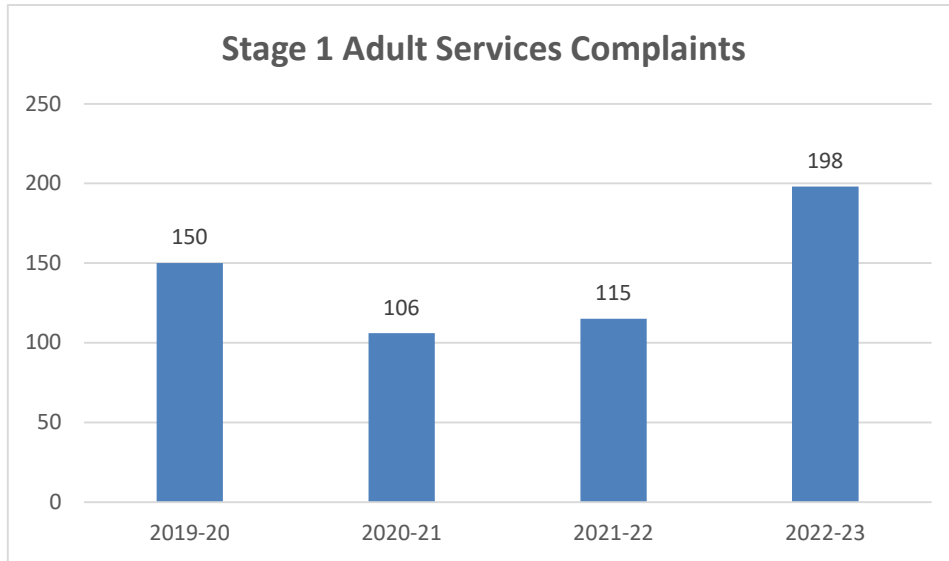
2.6.1 If you are still unhappy after the conclusion of the Council process you can complain to the Ombudsman.

2.7 Advocates

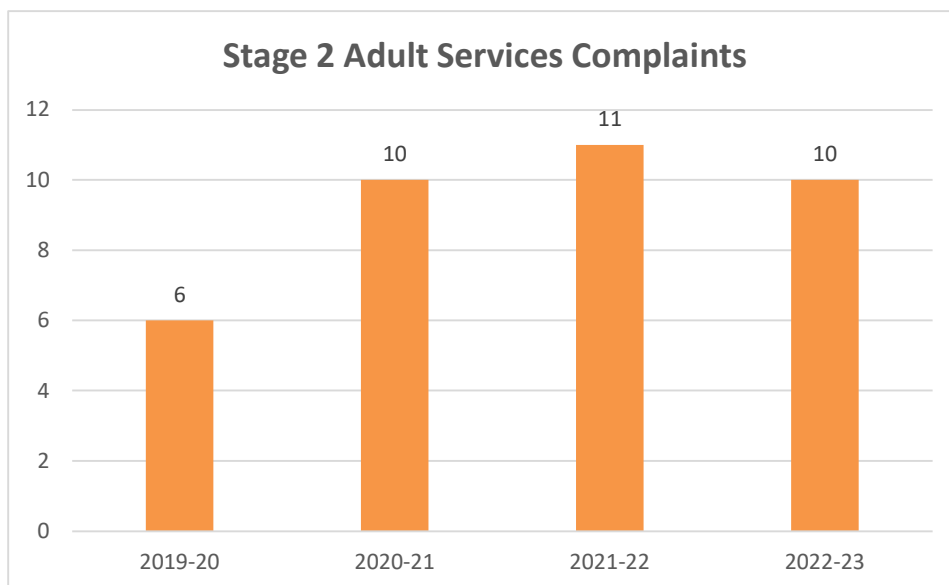
2.7.1 Our staff will aim to help you to make your concerns known to us. If extra assistance is needed, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help.

3. Adult Services Complaints to Swansea Council 2022-23

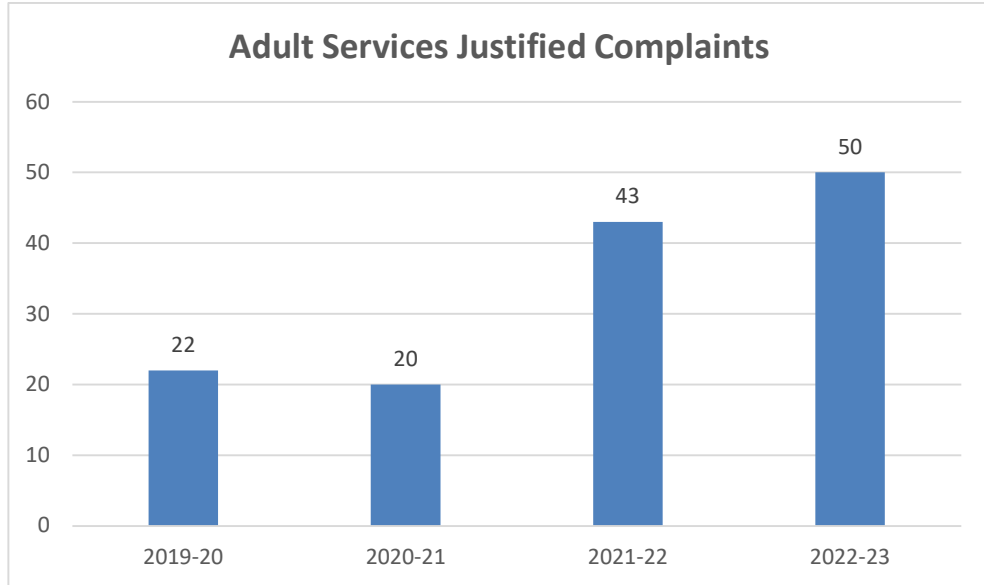
3.1 A total of **198** Stage 1 Adult Services complaints were recorded for 2022-23. This is a 72% increase on the previous year when 115 were recorded and a 32% increase on pre-pandemic levels. 27% (54) complaints were all from the same complainant. The level of stage 1 complaints is mainly due to the increasing demand and the pressure on services, leading to delays in the provision of care. This increase is also being seen across other Councils in Wales.



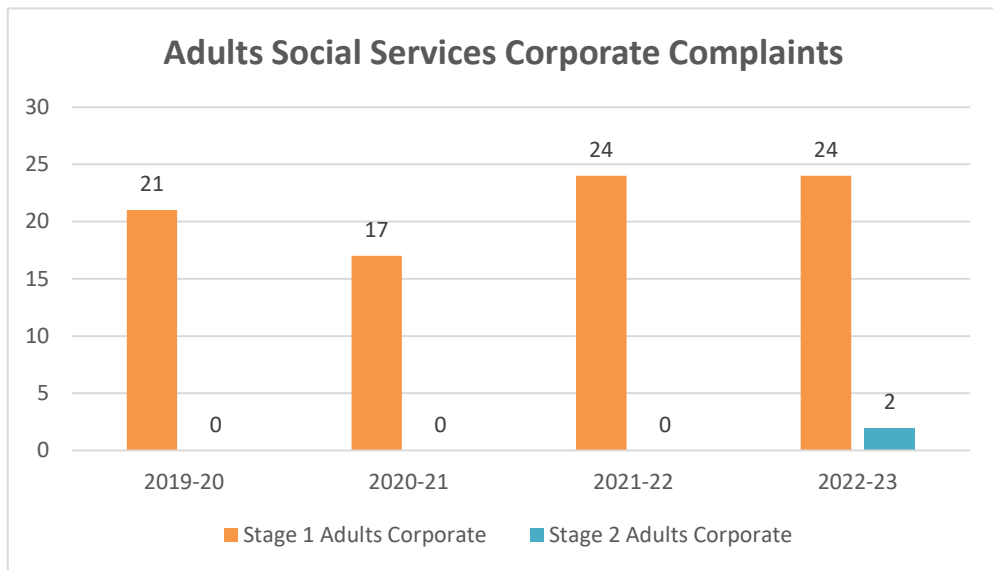
3.2 A total of **10** Stage 2 complaints were recorded for 2022-23. This is one fewer than last year and the same number received in 2020-21.



3.3 Of all complaints received, **50** were justified compared with 43 for the previous year.



3.4 Corporate complaints relate to the business administration within Adult Services as opposed to Social Care Services. **24** stage 1 Corporate Complaints relating to Adult Services were received, which is the same number as last year. Two further stage 2 complaints were Corporate Complaints.



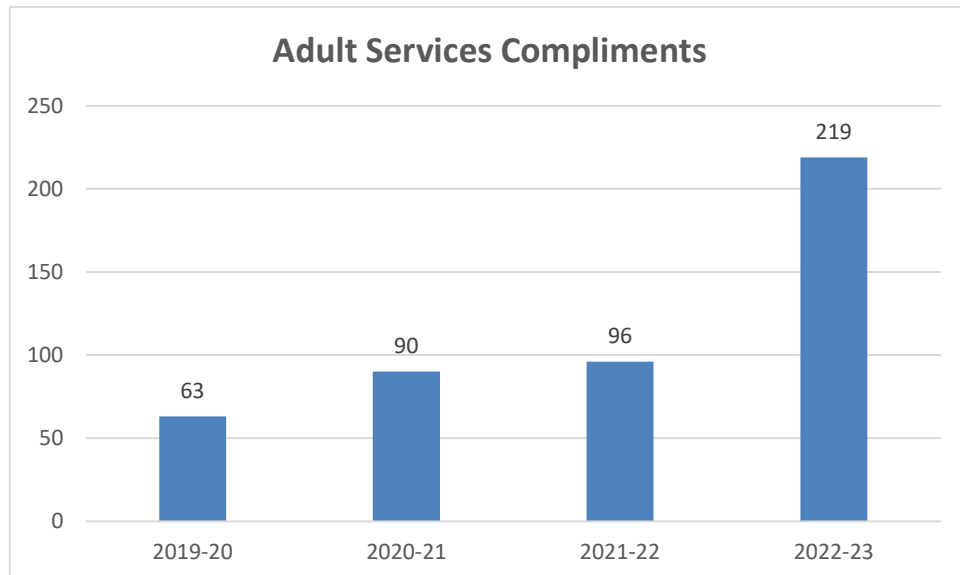
4. Outcomes of Stage 2 Complaints for Adults Services 2022-23

4.1 The table below provides the outcomes for the ten stage 2 complaints and two stage 2 Corporate Complaints:

Complaint	Outcome
Adult Services	
Contracting: Unhappy with care costs levied due to care of Dad in home	Justified
Community Initial Assessment Team (CIAT): Social worker not advising of care costs in relation to third party fees	Not Justified
Contracting: Poor practice and failings in the duty of care by care home	Not Justified
Direct Payments Team: Complainant not informed that contribution to care had increased and allowed a huge debt to accrue	Not Justified
Contracting: Joint complaint with Carmarthenshire – neglectful care of wife at care home.	Not Justified
Maes Glas Residential Services: Various complaints regarding son’s care management at placement	Partially Justified
Maes Glas Residential Services: Various complaints regarding son’s care management at placement	Partially Justified
Transition Team: requested respite facility not able to provide medical care for son	Partially Justified
Financial Assessments/Safeguarding: Financial matters regarding capital, income and house sale. Discontinued as the investigating Officer was unable to confirm the specific detail of this complaint	Discontinued / out of remit
Learning Disability Team / Contracting / Safeguarding: Numerous complaints regarding safeguarding, supported living management and the social work team care management	Ongoing
Adult Services Corporate Complaints	
Community Long Term Social Work Team: Breach of confidentiality	Not Upheld
Common Access Point: Poor communication from CAP with concerns of a neighbour	Partially Upheld

5. Compliments Adult Services 2022-23

5.1 Adult Services saw a significant **128%** increase in compliments in 2022-23.



5.2 These are some examples of compliments received by the Adult Services teams:

Common Access Point Social Workers: received special thanks from the partner of a service user eager to show their gratitude. The partner said: "Over the last six months, I have had a lot of contact with Social Services over the care of my partner. I want to thank all those involved, especially the workers I cannot praise highly enough - They could see I was at the end of my mental and physical strength and did all they could to help me. So, thank you once again."

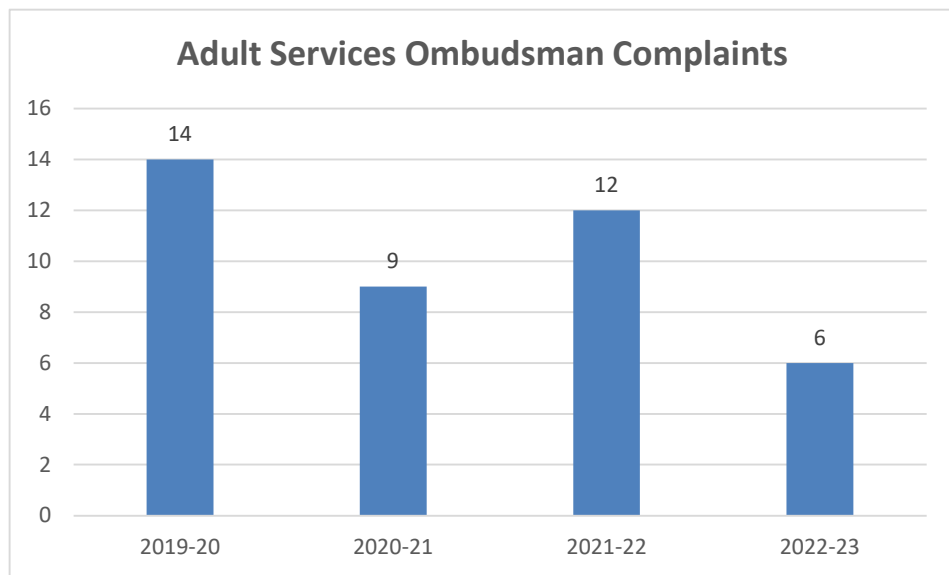
Social worker from the Community Initial Assessment team: The daughter said: "We have read your Assessment and have nothing to add other than what an extremely insightful synopsis of our family. I humbly thank you again for all your help and kindness in this difficult time for my mother and me."

A Social Worker received terrific feedback from the daughter of a service user going through a difficult transition to a care home. The daughter said: "I want to let you know how well my family and I have been supported by my mum's Social Worker, X. Mum is now settled happily in Hengoed Park. The stress of mum's situation was extremely difficult to cope with, but X calmly and efficiently supported us through it. Also, care home staff said they had great confidence in X to bring the situation to a positive conclusion. We can't thank her enough."

6. Complaints Closed by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for Adult Services 2022-23

6.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) publishes the annual letters to all Councils on its website. The letter highlights activities undertaken by the Ombudsman’s office during the year and the Council’s performance.

6.2 In 2022-23 the Ombudsman annual letter showed the PSOW received and closed six Adult Services complaints, which is a 50% reduction on last year and the lowest figure for the past four years.



6.3 Not all the Ombudsman figures in the annual letter relate to the year in which they were received, as investigations can take time to complete. In 2022-23 the Council received 14 enquiries about Adult Services complaints from the Ombudsman’s office. Eleven were not investigated, one was referred to Health, one was able to be resolved quickly and one was withdrawn.

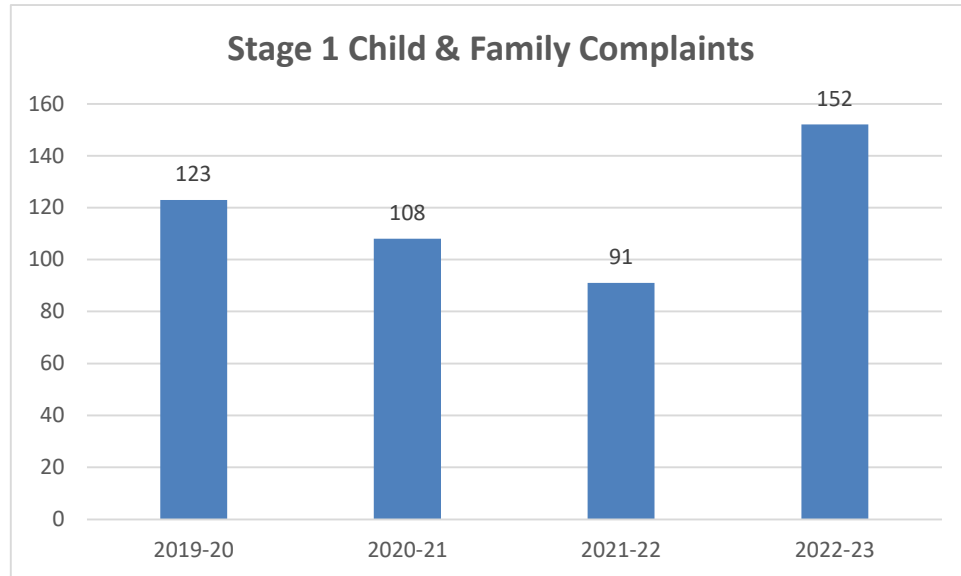
7. Adult Services Complaints Key Performance Indicators 2022-23

- 7.1 The table below shows overall performance by Adult Services on responding to complaints within the timescales stipulated in the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.
- 7.2 Despite the pressure of increasing demand on both Adult Services and the Complaints Team, delays are kept to a minimum wherever possible and within the Council's control.

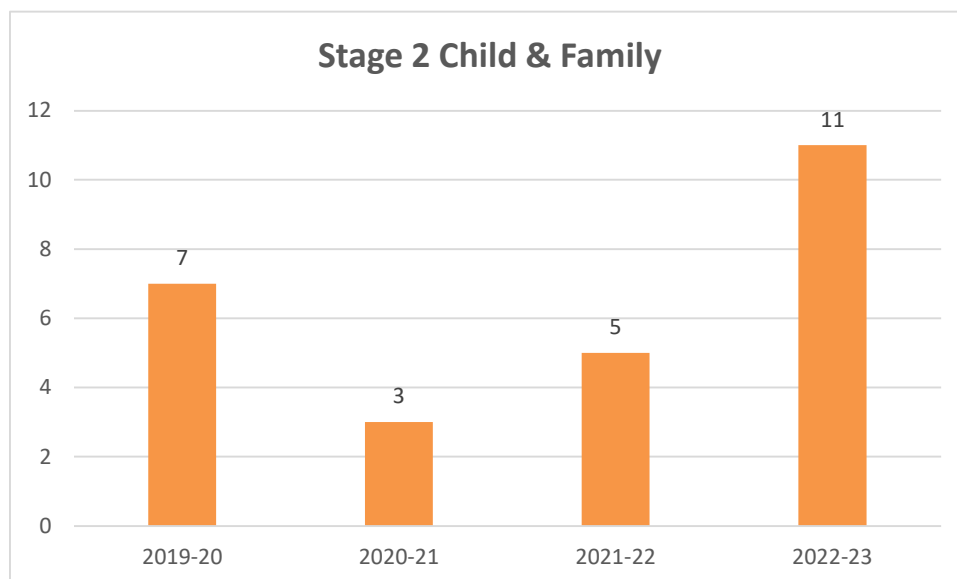
Key Performance Indicator	Comment / Management Actions
96% (189) of stage one social services complaints acknowledged within 2 working days	9 complaints not acknowledged within 2 working days
77.27% (153) of stage one social services complaints discussed with complainants, i.e. appointments with a Social Services Officer or Complaints Officer within 10 working days of acknowledgement	Delays due to capacity within the teams
88% (158) of stage one responded to within 5 working days of discussion	Delays due to capacity within the team. Some delays also due to being unable to reach complainants
100% (10) of stage two complainants receiving a written summary of the complaint within 5 working days	No delays – or within agreed timeframe with complainant
80% (8) of stage two complaints responded to within 25 working days, or within any extension approved by the Director of Social Services.	All extensions agreed with Director of Social Services One is still ongoing and has exceeded the timeframe the Director can agree to.
95.8% (23) stage 1 corporate complaints responded to within 10 clear working days (no requirement for a discussion)	Delay due to capacity within service department
50% (1) stage two corporate complaints responded to within 20 clear working days, or within any extension agreed with the customer.	Delay due to staff capacity in Complaints Team

8. Child & Family Services Complaints to Swansea Council 2022-23

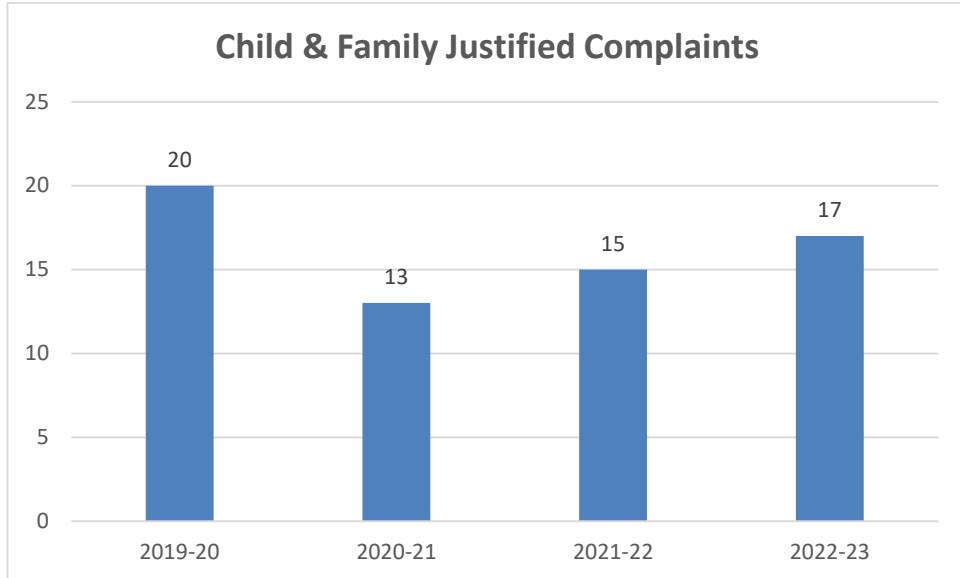
8.1 A total of **152** Stage 1 Child & Family Services complaints were recorded for 2022-23. This is a 67% increase on the previous year when 91 were recorded and a 23% increase on pre-pandemic levels. This is the highest number of stage 1 complaints in the past four years mainly due to the increasing demand and the pressure on services. This increase is also being seen across other Councils in Wales. There were ten complaints from the same complainant.



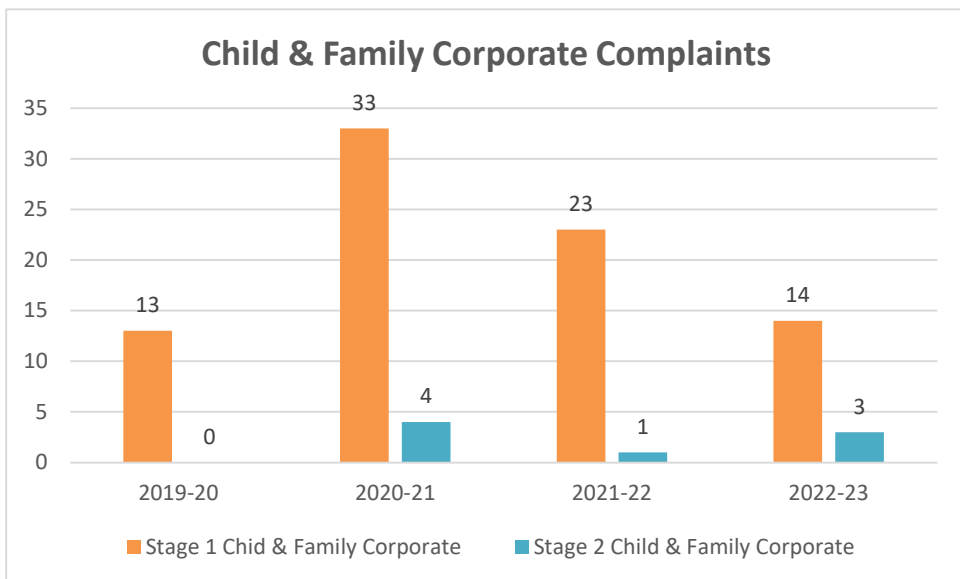
8.2 A total of **11** Stage 2 complaints were recorded for 2022-23. This is six more than last year and the highest number over the past four years.



8.3 Of all complaints received, **17** were justified compared with 15 for the previous year.



8.4 Corporate complaints relate to the business administration within Child & Family Services as opposed to Social Care Services. **14** stage 1 Corporate Complaints relating to Child & Family Services were received, which is a 39% reduction compared with last year and the lowest number in the last three years. Three further stage 2 complaints were Corporate Complaints.



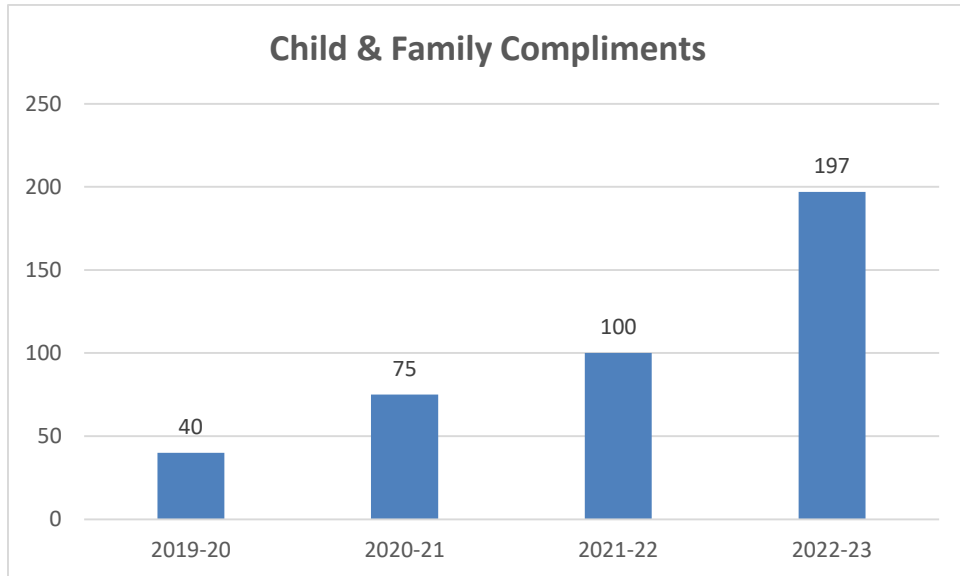
9. Outcomes of Stage 2 Complaints for Child & Family Services 2022-23

9.1 The table below provides the outcomes for the eleven stage 2 complaints and three stage 2 Corporate Complaints:

Complaint	Outcome
Child & Family Services	
Looked After Children Team: IRO notes being incorrect and stage 1 response did not address concerns.	Justified
BAYS: Request to move not granted, unhappy with social work assessment.	Not Justified
Child and Family general: Historical complaint - Social Services did not act to safeguard her when in LA care	Not Justified
Independent Review Officer Team: Poor communication from the team and not invited to reviews.	Not Justified
Friends and Family: Disagreed with the lack of financial support	Not Justified
BAYS: Via an advocate - young person unhappy with the actions taken by Social Services	Not Justified
IAA: Disagreement with Social Services decision not to allow family contact.	Not Justified
Child Disability Team: Via an advocate - Delay in receiving passport.	Not Justified
Looked After Children Team: Unhappy with accusations and contact not promoted.	Partially Justified
Friends and Family: Unhappy with contact/ placement breakdown and factually incorrect minutes.	Partially Justified
Child and family general: Historical complaint regarding parent returning to family home. Discontinued as legal action taken.	Discontinued
Child & Family Services Corporate Complaints	
Penderry Team: Concerns not being listened to and poor communication.	Partially Justified
Penderry Team: Checks carried out without consent	Justified
Penderry Team: Inappropriate comments made by social worker.	Not Justified

10. Compliments Child & Family Services 2022-23

10.1 Child & Family Services saw a significant **97%** increase in compliments in 2022-23.



10.2 These are some examples of compliments received by the Child & Family Services teams:

The Supervised Contact team received a lovely poem in a Christmas card and a box of chocolates from a grateful family. The card read: "I don't know how to thank you enough. For me, this time has been so tough. But you listen to me, and you understand, and are always there with a helping hand. So, thanking you is a must. The depth of gratitude you must trust. Thank you all so very much." Another family member added: "Thank you all for being the best."

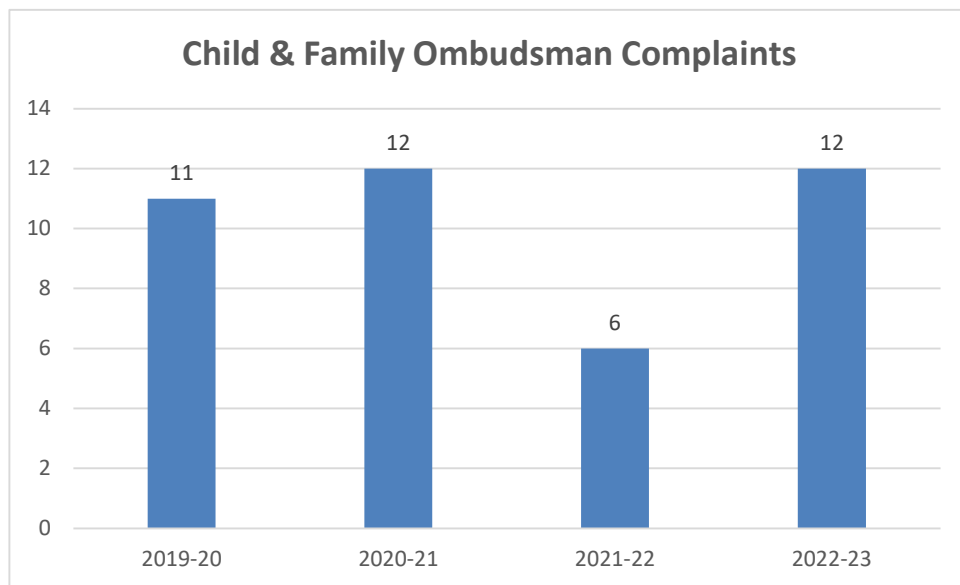
An Independent Domestic Violence Advocate received positive feedback from South Wales Police regarding their great working relationship in response to domestic abuse incidents. The South Wales Police representative said: "Thank you for your massive support and all the knowledge from listening to you speak to the victim about the situations she has been put into. I can now better understand the sheer number of domestic abuse cases I attend."

Newly Qualified Social Worker X has received praise from the solicitor of a mother she is working with to support her son. The solicitor complimented X on her patience and hard work, resulting in a positive outcome.

11. Complaints Closed by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for Child & Family Services 2022-23

11.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) publishes the annual letters to all Councils on its website. The letter highlights activities undertaken by the Ombudsman's office during the year and the Council's performance.

11.2 In 2022-23 the Ombudsman received and closed twelve Child & Family Services complaints, which is double last year's figure of 6 and the same number closed in 2020-21.



11.3 Not all the Ombudsman figures in the annual letter relate to the year in which they were received, as investigations can take time to complete. In 2022-23 the Council received 15 enquiries about Child & Family Services complaints from the Ombudsman's office, none of which were investigated.

12. Child & Family Services Complaints Key Performance Indicators 2022-23

- 12.1 The table below shows overall performance by Child & Family Services on responding to complaints within the timescales stipulated in the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.
- 12.2 Despite the pressure of increasing demand on both Child & Family Services and the Complaints Team, delays are kept to a minimum wherever possible and within the Council's control.

Key Performance Indicator	Comment / Management Actions
93% (141) stage 1 social services complaints acknowledged within 2 working days .	A small number of delays due to the volume of workload and capacity within the team
76% (118) of stage one social services complaints discussed with complainants, i.e. appointments with a Social Services Officer or Complaints Officer within 10 working days of acknowledgement.	Delays due to capacity within the team. Some delay also due to being unable to reach complainants
75% (115) of stage 1 Social Services complaints responded to within 5 working days of discussion.	A small number of delays due to the volume of workload and capacity within the teams
100% (10) of stage two complainants receiving a written summary of the complaint within 5 working days	No delays – or within agreed timeframe with complainant
100% (10) of stage two complaints responded to within 25 working days, or within any extension approved by the Director of Social Services.	All extensions agreed with the Director
79% (11) stage 1 corporate complaints responded to within 10 clear working days (no requirement for a discussion)	Delay due to responding officer
100% (4) of stage two corporate complaints responded to within 20 clear working days, or within any extension agreed with the customer.	

13. Learning from Complaints across Social Services

- 13.1 Adult Services and Child & Family Services both use complaints, comments, and compliments from the public to continuously improve processes and services.
- 13.2 Complaints via the Ombudsman are discussed with Heads of Service and the relevant Principal Officer. The Complaints Officer responds to the PSOW on the actions undertaken by Swansea Council and any lessons learned. Once actions were completed, the complaint is closed on the system, recording the outcome and any lessons learned.
- 13.3 Adult Services undertake quality reviews through a Quality Improvement Group and Continuous Improvement Group to understand where learning and changes can be made as a result of complaints.
- 13.4 The Child & Family Services Learning and Innovation Team routinely takes the learning from complaints to inform the content of briefings, peer learning sessions, and content of training; as well as regularly sharing themes in the Child & family newsletters.
- 13.5 The Complaints Service receives an Internal Audit every three years to ensure it is undertaking its functions correctly. The internal audit of Complaints began at the end of 2022-23 and concluded in 2023-24 with the overall assurance level of substantial.



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

**Councillor Louise Gibbard
Cabinet Member for Care
Services**

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch
am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrchol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

4 April 2023

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and Cabinet Member for Care Services. The letter concerns the meeting held on 14 March 2023 and the Annual Complaints Report 2021/22. This letter does not require a response.

Dear Councillors Lewis and Gibbard,

On the 14 March, the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel met to discuss the Annual Complaints Report 2021/22. The Panel are grateful to you both and relevant officers for attending to discuss and answer questions. Our observations focused on the following areas.

You reflected the challenges faced by the pandemic that affected 2021/22 and in particular Social Services where complaints were suppressed during 2020/21 but then dramatically increased post lockdown. This was mirrored with the Ombudsman's reports who saw a 47% increase across the whole of Wales. You also shared reasons for the delay in launching the new IT system was due to prioritising payments to support residents and support businesses and updated us that it will go live as soon as possible.

Corporate Complaints

We were informed that Stage one (informal) corporate complaints increased by 8% on the previous year and stage two complaints were up by 16%. It was reported that corporate requests for service were up significantly by 24% and a significant increase in corporate comments which were up by 38%. Welsh language complaints remain relatively low.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

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

www.swansea.gov.uk / www.abertawe.gov.uk

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

We asked if there was any data that records complaints response times and were informed this data is available and is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee which we have since received a copy of.

We also asked for more information regarding the complaints relating to Communications and Customer Engagement which has increased, this information was not available at the meeting but your officers will send this in due course.

We asked if there is any data held that looks at year on year trends to see comparisons further back than the previous year, your officer said it would be possible to include this in subsequent reports in the future.

Adult Social Services

In regards to Adult Social Services stage one complaints were up by 11% and stage two only have an increase of 1 complaint on last year's figures. Justified complaints were up by 53% which you explained related to service delays and pressures, particularly relating to arranging assessments or care packages and staff pressures including external providers. You reported that this has been a challenge across Wales and the UK.

Child and Family

The officer reported that Child and Family Services showed a decrease in stage one complaints which went down by 19% and stage two complaints were down by 1 complaint on last year.

Ombudsman Complaints

Your officer shared with us the Ombudsman's annual letter which reports 71 received complaints, down from 73 in the previous year. In regards to these complaints 76 were closed during 2021/22. Of this 76, 10 received intervention. Of the 10 that received intervention, 6 had early resolution of voluntary settlement and 4 were upheld. Comparing to the previous year, 67 complaints were closed and 9 received intervention, of these 9, 5 had early resolution and 4 were upheld. So overall this is similar to the previous year.

We were pleased to hear that in response to complaints when appropriate, the complaints team hold discussions with Heads to Service and Principal Officers looking at the nature of complaints and any trends or frequency to look for potential improvements.

In addition, regarding complaints to the Ombudsman, 25 of the 71 complaints received were for Planning and Building Control and Roads and Transport, again we have requested more information on these which will be provided by your officer.

Compliments

We were also pleased to hear about the 360 corporate compliments received in this year of which includes 96 for Adult Services and 100 for Child and Family.

We value the importance of compliments and recognise there is as much to learn from examples of good practise as from complaints.

Your Response

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter but in this instance, we require no formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHolley', with a stylized flourish at the end.**Councillor Chris Holley**

Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 8



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 March 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) Education
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 Lyndon Jones (Panel Convener)
Lead Officers & Report Author	Michelle Roberts 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:

- Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (meets monthly)
- Education (meets monthly)
- Adult Services (meets every six weeks)
- Child & Family Services (meets every six weeks)
- Climate Change & Nature (meets every two months)

1.2 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.

- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.

1.5 This report is about the following Performance Panel:

- Education

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, since the last update provided to the Committee in October 2023.

1.6 This Panel involves the following 13 Members:

Labour Councillors: 4

Adam Davis	Beverley Hopkins
Fiona Gordon	Yvonne Jardine

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 3

Mike Day	James McGettrick
Susan Jones	

Conservative Councillors: 3

Lyndon Jones (CONVENER)	Angela O'Connor
Francesca O'Brien	

Uplands Councillor: 1

Sandra Joy	
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Statutory Cooptees: 2

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

2. Legal Implications

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

3. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – SPC Update

1. Remit of the Panel

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

2. Key Activities

The Panel is currently meeting on a monthly basis and the work completed since June 2023 includes:

Meeting	Topic(s)
15 June 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional Learning Needs Reform Update 2. New Curriculum for Wales Update 3. Estyn Inspection – progress with recommendations 4. Key issues affecting education and discussion of work plan for education scrutiny for 2023-2024.
13 July 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing and improving school attendance 2. Managing and Improving school exclusions
14 Sept 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Looked after children, support and progress in school 2. Following up on 10 Cabinet Development Committee recommendations 3. Feedback on Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group meeting on 19 June 2023.
19 Oct 2023	School Session and Visit 1 – Gorseinon Primary School (look at progress with the Schools Development Plan and their Estyn Inspection recommendations)
23 Nov 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reducing disadvantage in school, including PDG spend, roll out for free school meals, cost of school day and uniform. 2. School Improvement Service Update 3. Cookery in Schools
14 Dec 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual Education Performance and Cabinet Member Q&A 2. Feedback on Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group meeting on 23 October 2023.
18 Jan 2024	Introducing the New Curriculum for Wales (meeting with a Gowerton secondary school Headteacher and it cluster of primary heads teachers)
12 Feb 2024	Annual Budget as it relates to education matters
19 Feb 2024 (Extra)	School organisation – amalgamation of special schools in Swansea.
22 Feb 2024	School Session 2 - Clydach Primary School – looking at progress with their school improvement plan
13 Mar 2024	Schools Session and Visit 3 – Bishopston Comprehensive School (To look at progress with the Schools Development Plan) Postponed until July 2024

3. Achievements / Impacts

Nine letters to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning have been sent since our first meeting this Municipal year in June. Find below some of the views and issues raised following on from the previous update in October 2023.

Gorseinon Primary School meeting and visit in October

From our discussions with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the School Improvement Adviser, we are reassured that progress is being made across the School Improvement Plan and with the Estyn recommendations and that there is now a good base for the school to continue to build upon those improvements.

We were encouraged to hear from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, that the support received by the local authority has been excellent as well as from Partneriaeth, particularly in the areas of Science and Maths.

We were very pleased to see the fantastic facilities provided in this new school building and that it was clearly designed for pupils to get the best out of their day at school including good outside space, well designed classrooms and useful shared areas.

Reducing Disadvantage in Schools

We were interested to hear how awareness is being raised across schools about the barriers faced by pupils caused by deprivation. We agreed that the poverty proofing of the schools day is a good way to identify and make practical changes in schools based on what pupils really need to enable them to partake fully in their education.

We also asked how the level of pupil development grant to schools will be determined in the future, given the free school meal (FSM) proxy may no longer be as accurate due to parents having less incentive to register because of the roll out of FSM. We were told that schools are constantly reminding parents to register, because it also enabled them to access the possibility of a grant for school uniform. The Cabinet Member told the Panel FSM indicator is probably not the ideal proxy for measuring deprivation in schools, but it is the best we have for now. A two-pronged approach will need to be used in future, firstly, continuing to get parents to register but also, secondly, to look at other indicators of deprivation.

Cookery in Schools

We were encouraged to hear that cookery does form part of the new curriculum for Wales. We did wish to emphasise the importance of cookery and nutrition, feeling that it is a serious issue and an important life skill. We agreed that schools should ensure that it is clearly part of their curriculum planning.

Cluster working – New Curriculum for Wales

We met with the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors from the Gowerton Comprehensive School cluster (called North Gower Partnership) to discuss how they are progressing the implementation of the New Curriculum for Wales across their cluster. We were keen to hear from the schools about how they are developing a shared understanding of what they mean by progression and we recognise that this must be challenging, because each school will have their own approaches in many aspects.

We were pleased to hear about the support provided to teachers and school staff, the use of a number of researched key principles and the development of shared policies in relation to key areas like safeguarding and attendance. We agreed that the development of a North Gower Partnership website was a particularly useful reference point and resource for pupils, parents and teaching staff and should help in continuing the consistency of approach across the cluster. We asked how the development and maintenance of the website and shared other resources are funded. We heard that currently they are funded via the comprehensive school budget and that the NGP apply for any relevant grant funding that may be available to help progress this. We found a number of learning points from this session which will be passed to the Cabinet Member in the Convener's letter.

Annual Budget as it relates to Education matters

We met on the 12 February to discuss the annual budget as it relates to education matters, we raised a number of points that were submitted to Cabinet in a letter from the Service Improvement, Finance and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel. Some of these included as an example:

- We were concerned about the continual reduction in the level of reserves held by schools. Whilst we recognise the need for the money to be spent wisely, it is important for schools to have a good level of reserves to act as a buffer if and when needed.
- We welcomed the news about the ALN mini bus pilot and look forward to hearing more about this as it develops.
- We noted the overspend in Home to School Transport again this year. We will keep a scrutiny eye on how this progresses over the coming year.
- We welcome the enhancing of 'in county' provision, thereby reducing the potential for so many out of county placements. However, we did notice that there are large savings projected for ALN and felt it was important that this does not affect the overall ALN outcomes in Swansea moving forward.

Partneriaeth

The Convener of the Panel who is also the Chair of the Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group updated the Panel on progress with regard to the regional partnership.

The Councillor Group met in both October 2023 and February 2024 where they spoke to the Lead Director, the Lead Officer and relevant strategic directors progress with two of the partnerships key priorities. They also met with a headteacher at each of the meetings to discuss a National and Professional Enquiry Project linked to those priorities to find out what has been learnt. They group received updates on the both the New Curriculum for Wales progress and the Partneriaeth Risk Profile.

4. Education Scrutiny Performance Panel - Future Work Programme 2023/24

Meeting	Topic(s)
18 Apr 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion, Values and Ethics Education • Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People • Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Update

9 May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning Update• Swansea Skills Partnership Annual Update• End of year review in Education Scrutiny
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Agenda Item 9



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 March 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. Guiding Principles

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

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

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 10



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 March 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 April:

- **Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Session - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership**
(Annual Item - Partnership Joint-Chairs / Representatives will attend to report on the performance of the Safer Swansea Partnership)

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 (The final report was presented to Cabinet on 21 December. A response to the recommendations is expected 18 April) 2. Community Assets (evidence gathering underway)	1. Procurement (Follow up carried out 24 Oct 2023 – monitoring now complete)

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 None received.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 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.

6. Legal Implications

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

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Programme Committee Work Plan 2023/24

Appendix 3: Cabinet Forward Plan

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

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

Appendix 1 - AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

Inquiry Panel (time-limited in-depth scrutiny – six months)	Working Groups (light-touch scrutiny / one-off meetings)	Performance Panels (ongoing in-depth performance / financial monitoring & challenge)	Issues for Scrutiny Programme Committee (overall work programme management; discussion of broad range of policy and service issues)
<p>1. Anti-Social Behaviour (to complete from 2022/23)</p> <p>2. Community Assets (Terms of Reference / Key Question to be agreed by Panel, but could focus on how effective the process of Community Asset Transfer has been and benefits, looking at relevant examples such as Parks & Community Centres, and lessons)</p> <p>Follow Up of Previous Inquiries:</p> <p>1. Procurement</p>	<p>1. Customer Contact (carry over from 2022/23 - enabling focussed discussion & questioning on user experience when contacting the Council / accessing services whether by telephone or on-line / though digital means; response rates; provision for offline and on-line contact; effectiveness of Council Contact Centre; on-going actions to improve digital inclusion / access; quality of website, etc.)</p> <p>2. Public Rights of Way (enabling focussed questioning & discussion on overview of Public Rights of Way across Swansea (mapping / numbers) and issues; impact on PRoW from developments; effect on communities, etc.)</p> <p>3. Community Growing (enabling focussed questioning & discussion around Council activity / support to Community Growing, with examples (e.g., allotments) and experience; benefits / success; including focus on schools / children & young people; and its contribution to health & well-being, etc.)</p>	<p>1. Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly)</p> <p>2. Education (monthly)</p> <p>3. Adult Services (every six weeks)</p> <p>4. Child & Family Services (every six weeks)</p> <p>5. Climate Change & Nature (every two months)</p> <p>Specific issues to incorporate within wider Panel work plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Panel to refocus work plan, taking into account previous work – to create capacity some items to be picked up by Scrutiny Programme Committee - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan - Performance Management - Pre-decision Scrutiny of Budget Proposals - Economic Regeneration Actions / Delivery - City Deal 'Swansea Specific' Projects - Planning Policy & Service (incl. Call-in Process & dealing with 5G Masts) - Recycling, particularly Commercial Waste - Highways / Infrastructure Maintenance - Listed Buildings • Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Education) - Delivery against Education Estyn Inspection actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific annual reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children & Young People's Rights Scheme - Corporate Safeguarding - Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty - Complaints - Welsh Language Standards - Welsh Housing Quality Standard • Leader Q & A Session(s): incl. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Transformation / Recovery Plan - Councillor / Officer Relations (communications) • Other Cabinet Member Q & As (issues to pick up): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active Travel - Oracle Fusion Project Implementation - Delivery against Workforce Development Strategy (incl. use of agency staff / Council structures) - Support for Businesses - Homelessness • Public Services Board • Crime & Disorder (Community Safety): incl. Domestic Abuse; Community Cohesion; Tackling Extremism; Substance Misuse; Electric Scooters

Appendix 1 - AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

	<p>Reserve List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Consultation (enabling focussed questioning and discussion on the Council's approaches to public consultation and effectiveness; relevant learning and development, etc.) • Healthy City (carry over from 2022/23 - enabling focussed questioning & discussion of the Healthy City Partnership, key activities and achievements, work in relation to health promotion, particularly physical activities, including provision of outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Additional Learning Needs (ALN) - Post-covid Cost implications for Schools - Reading / Literacy - School Attendance - School Meals service: impact of changes • Adult Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Adult Services) - Safeguarding - Local Area Coordination - Partnership between Health and Social Care Services • Child & Family Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Child & Family Services) - Safeguarding • Climate Change & Nature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery against Corporate Plan / Transformation Plan (as relevant to Climate Change & Nature) – e.g., Progress against Net Zero 2030 Action Plan - Flood Prevention / Drainage Services - Natural Environment / Biodiversity - Impact of Housing Developments on Environment - Public Electric Vehicle Charging Provision - Grounds Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow Up on Previous Working Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bus Services - Road Safety - Co-production
<p>Joint / Regional Scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partneriaeth (Education / School Improvement – Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group) • City Deal (Development / Regeneration - Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee) • South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (Land Use Planning; Regional Transport; Economic Well-being – Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee) 			

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2023/24

ACTIVITY	18 Jul 2023	19 Sep 2023	17 Oct 2023	14 Nov 2023	19 Dec 2023	16 Jan 2024
Scrutiny Work Programme	Agreement of Scrutiny Work Programme	Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23				
Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q & A Sessions		Active Travel (CM for Environment & Infrastructure)			Support for Business (CM for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism)	Leader / Economy, Finance & Strategy
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports			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			- Annual Complaints Report 2022-23 (CM for Service Transformation) - Welsh Language Standards (annual report 2022/23) (CMs for Education & Learning / Culture, Human Rights & Equalities)	Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership (Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership)	- Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis) - Welsh Language Standards (annual report 2023/24) (CMs for Education & Learning / Culture, Human Rights & Equalities)	
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)	

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<p>Possible Sale of LDP Housing Land at Strategic Development Area (SD) H, Waunarwydd and Fforestfach.</p>	<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>	<p>Richard John</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader), Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>21 Mar 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
New Dining Facilities to Support the Universal Free School Meals Programme Together with an All-Weather Pitch and Community Facilities for Townhill Community Primary School.	To seek authorisation to commit to the capital programme £3,257,070 for new dining facilities to support the Universal Free School Meals (uFSM) programme together with an all-weather pitch and community facilities for Townhill Community Primary School, funded by uFSM and Community Focussed Schools funding plus other smaller funding streams.	Louise Herbert-Evans	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Quarter 3 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report.	To report the performance indicator results and summarise the Council's performance meetings its priorities for the third quarter period October 2023 – December 2023.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
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

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
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
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

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
External Grants Approval for Glynn Vivian Art Gallery.	To secure Cabinet agreement to the funding applications made by Cultural Services in pursuit of external investment in the Gallery's staffing, programming and environmental controls as part of the service's overall post covid recovery strategy.	Nerys Evans	Cabinet Member - Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	Cabinet	21 Mar 2024	Open
Page 95 Guildhall Illumination Policy.	Policy on Swansea Council's illumination of the Guildhall in support of socially important topics, causes and campaigns.			Cabinet	19 Apr 2024	Open

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<p>Notice of Disposal of Part of an Open Space for Land Known as Kilvey Hill, St Thomas, Swansea, SA1 8ED.</p>	<p>The Council is seeking to dispose of public open space at Kilvey Hill by way of a long-lease. In accordance with s123 (2A) Local Government Act 1972 a Public Open Space Notice must be publicised so members of the public can object to the disposal. All objections are to be considered by Cabinet before a decision is reached to approve or not approve the disposal. This purpose of this report is to outline the objections and to seek authority to dispose of the land.</p>	Howard French	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Open
<p>Building Capital Maintenance Programme 2024/25.</p>	<p>This report sets out the way in which the Capital Maintenance resources for 2024/25 will be deployed.</p>	Martin Ridgeway	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Open
<p>Cabinet Response - Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour.</p>	<p>Conclusions and recommendations resulting from a scrutiny inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour.</p>	David Howes	Cabinet Member - Well-being	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Open

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Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
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
Future Plans for Special Schools in Swansea.	Cabinet needs to consider objections raised during the statutory notice period and determine the outcome of the proposal to amalgamate Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn and Ysgol Crug Glas into one Special School on 1 September 2025 on existing sites and relocate the new school on 1 April 2028 to a purpose-built accommodation whilst increasing the number of planned places.	Michelle Thomas	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Open
Risk Management Framework and Policy.	To agree and adopt the Councils revised Risk Management Framework and Policy.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Open

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
FPR7 – Biophilic Living Scheme, Swansea (242 – 246 Oxford Street, Swansea)	Update on the Welsh Government Transforming Towns (TT) grant and loan award in respect of the Biophilic Living Scheme, the proposals of the scheme, acceptance of the financial implications and the inclusion of the scheme on the Councils capital programme.	Elliott Williams	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Fully exempt
71-72 The Kingsway	This report considers budgetary pressures on the scheme and offers several solutions to assist delivery.	Catrin Kim	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cabinet	18 Apr 2024	Fully exempt
Annual Report on Successful and Sustainable Swansea Corporate Transformation Plan.	To report on the progress that has been made on the Corporate Transformation Plan in its first year and to seek agreement to make changes to some of the programmes.	Ness Young	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 May 2024	Open

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Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2023 – 2024

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Land at Mynydd Newydd Road, Penlan, Swansea.	Consideration of options for the proposed disposal of Council land declared surplus to requirements.	Stuart Ramsey	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 May 2024	Fully exempt

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							

Appendix 4a

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*		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 12/03/24 12:20

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 April.

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). The Panel is now ready to commence evidence gathering, starting with a session on 11 March with information / discussion around aspects of asset transfer including finance and legal aspects, due diligence, risks, main barriers, and guidance and support.

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 13 February the Panel carried out pre-decision scrutiny of the Annual Budget, Medium-Term Financial Plan and other associated budgets.

On 12 March the Panel will hear about the Councils response to the Audit Wales Report – “Cracks in the Foundations” Building Safety in Wales. They will also receive an update on the 71-72 The Kingsway project and receive a briefing on the achievements against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments for Development and Regeneration.

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

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

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. On 12 February a Joint Social Services Panel meeting was 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) 2023-24.

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its meeting on 12 March the Panel looked at the latest Performance Monitoring Report, received a briefing on the Youth Offending Service and discussed the Complaints

and Compliments Annual Report 2022-23 for both Child and Family Services and Adult Services. Adult Services Panel Members were also invited for this item.

On 1 May the Panel will discuss Delivery of the Corporate Priorities/Policy Commitments in relation to Child and Family Services and receive a briefing on the CIW Inspection Report on Ty Nant. The Panel will also undertake a review of the year.

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

This Panel meets every two months. At its meeting on 30 January the Panel discussed Public Electric Vehicle Charging Provision.

The meeting on 19 March will receive an Annual Update on Local Flood Risk Management and discuss Air Quality Management.

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 Partneriaeth Regional Scrutiny Councillor Group met on the 26 February 2024 where they discussed the Partneriaeth financial affairs, risk management and governance arrangements. They also looked 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 included looking at an example of a National and Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP) with the NPEP Lead teacher at Heol Goffa Special School in Llanelli.

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 13 February 2024 included 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 next meeting takes place on 16 April 2024, and is expected to include updates on specific projects including: 'Homes as Power stations' and 'Pembroke Dock'.

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

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

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

The CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee will meet at least quarterly. The meeting held on 16 January 2024 was focussed on Quarterly Budget Monitoring and the CJC Draft Budget for 2024/25. An extra meeting took place on 15 February for discussion on the Regional Transport Plan.

The meeting scheduled for 12 March was cancelled.

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

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

5. **Working Groups:**

A number of 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 Peter Black)

This Working Group took place on 23 February, enabling 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. Views and recommendations arising from the session will be communicated via letter to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation, and reported, along with response, to the Committee in due course. The meeting was

convened by Cllr Peter Black in place of Cllr Joe Hale who was unable to attend due to illness.

c) **Community Growing** (convener: Councillor Michael Locke)

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. A date for this Working Group has not yet been set.

Agenda Item 11



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 March 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 – Call In of Cabinet Decision – Customer Charter & Service Standards Framework	13 Feb	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)
b	Committee – Scrutiny of Workforce Strategy	13 Feb	Letter to Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)

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):

22 (target within 21 days)

% responses within target:

55

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	27-Feb
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	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	23-Jan	CAMHS; Corporate Parenting Board	Care Services	08-Feb	n/a

50	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	13-Feb	Pre decision scrutiny - annual budget	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	14-Feb	
51	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	30-Jan	Public EV Charging Provision	Service Transformation	19-Feb	n/a
52	Committee	13-Feb	Call In - Customer Charter & Service Standards Framework	Service Transformation	20-Feb	07-Mar
53	Committee	16-Jan	Leader Q & A Session	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	26-Feb	
54	Education Performance Panel	19-Feb	School Amalgamation Special Schools	Education & Learning	26-Feb	n/a
55	Committee	16-Jan	Follow Up - Road Safety Working Group	Environment & Infrastructure	28-Feb	
56	Adult Services Performance Panel	30-Jan	Local Area Coordination	Community (Support)	01-Mar	
57	Adult Services Performance Panel	30-Jan	Adult Services Transformation Programme	Care Services	01-Mar	n/a
58	Committee	13-Feb	Workforce Strategy	Corporate Services & Performance	01-Mar	n/a
59	Education Performance Panel	22-Feb	Clydach Primary School - School Improvement Plan	Education & Learning	07-Mar	n/a
60	Working Group	23-Feb	Customer Contact	Service Transformation	07-Mar	
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**To/
Councillor Andrea Lewis
Cabinet Member for Service
Transformation (Deputy Leader)**

BY EMAIL

cc Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

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*Your Ref
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Scrutiny

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SPC/2023-24/10

20 February 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 13 February 2024. It is about the Call-in of Cabinet decision on 18 January 2024 which approved a Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

Call in – Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework

Thank you for attending the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 February 2024 to assist the Committee's consideration of the Call In received on the Customer Charter and Service Standards Framework.

In accordance with Council procedure, the Committee was required to consider the concerns raised in relation to the Cabinet report / decision made on 18 January, which had been 'Called In' by Councillors (lead Councillor, Sandra Joy). The Committee noted that this was a report from the Chair of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee, having overseen the development of the Charter and Framework, presented to Cabinet for decision.

We heard from Councillor Joy on her concerns, which centred on the timescale of 28 working days that had been agreed for the processing of applications for Free School Meals, i.e. almost six calendar weeks, and adverse impact of the lengthy process on the children and their welfare, which she felt was not consistent with this Council's commitment to the UNCRC and

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Tackling Poverty; and Cabinet not being aware of these concerns despite being raised in advance of decision.

The Committee benefited from a written note provided by the Chief Executive, which explained what the Council is able to do in terms of processing applications for Free School Meals, for the elements within its control, and indicated the intention to make a change to the Service Standards in response to the concern raised. We appreciated your response to the Call In and Committee questions, and the input and advice provided by lead officers, Sarah Lackenby, Head of Digital & Customer Services, and Julian Morgans, Head of Revenues & Benefits, which helped the Committee to better understand the process, and the issues that can arise that may delay confirmation of eligibility, and therefore processing times. We were pleased to hear within this that efforts have already been made to improve processes to maximise the take up of Free School Meals.

We heard why the 28 days timescale was originally set, as many applications for Free School Meals are made jointly with applications for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction. Decisions on these can often depend on obtaining various pieces of supporting evidence from the applicant, the Department for Work & Pensions and HM Revenue & Customs, and so there is a 28 day timescale for those decisions to reflect that. It was noted that current actual processing times are around 19 days.

We were pleased to hear that applications for free school meals are looked at within 2 or 3 days of receipt and at that point the necessary checks are made with the Department of Education's eligibility checking service to check entitlement. We noted that where the necessary information is obtained from that service to confirm eligibility, or there is evidence already provided to the Council of the qualifying benefit(s), the Council will send an email to the parent / carer confirming entitlement to Free School Meals and also the data team in the Education Department who will update IT systems, so schools are aware. This usually being done the same day that confirmation is obtained, which is good to hear.

We were assured that in most cases, where there is already proof of qualifying benefit provided or where confirmation of eligibility is obtained from the eligibility checking service applications are processed within days, not weeks. However, we noted that where the eligibility checking service cannot provide immediate confirmation of entitlement, there may be delays which are outside the authority's control. For example, when a new claim for Universal Credit is made there will be at least 5 weeks before a decision on that qualifying benefit is made. Also, with the migration of Housing Benefit to Universal Credit more and more checks will need to be conducted with the eligibility checking service in the future and more applications will be subject to a longer wait for a decision.

In conclusion, we agreed with the Chief Executive’s advice regarding amending the Service Standard to include the elements that are only within the Council’s control, as an improvement on the existing Standard.

Committee Decision

Following our discussion, **the Committee recommended that the Cabinet decision regarding approval of the Customer Charter & Service Standards Framework be reconsidered, in light of the concern raised, and in line with the Chief Executive’s proposed way forward.**

The Committee therefore recommends that the Service Standard for Free School Meals be amended to the following:

Request	When you contact the Council to:	The Council’s Commitment to you:	Within the following timescales	Contact Details of this Service:
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 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

(Note - text marked in red indicates changes from the original)

The change to the above definition and response time will help to make the Council’s role and responsibility clearer to residents.

We noted that the Customer Charter and Services Standards Framework was intended to be implemented from 1 April 2024, and having been approved by Cabinet would nevertheless remain a ‘living’ document that would be subject to updates as deemed necessary at any time. We can see the Cabinet decision on 18 January delegated the 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 (Joint Deputy Leader of the Council) and yourself. As such, we

were advised that amendments could be made without reference back to a future Cabinet meeting.

Reference was also made in the meeting to approaches in other Council's in the UK suggesting that it is possible to further reduce processing timescales, so Cabinet Member(s) should commit to look at that to explore the potential for further improvement in the Service Standard and perhaps engage the Service Transformation Committee in this work.

Your Response

Although you indicated at the meeting support for and willingness to make the amendment shown above, having been involved in finding a way forward, **the Committee will be grateful if you could formally confirm that the Committee's recommendations will be accepted and actioned. We would be grateful for your response by 12 March 2024.**

A copy of this letter and your response letter will then be published in the agenda of the next available Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk

Councillor P. Black
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

(By Email)

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Please ask for: Councillor Andrea Lewis

Direct Line: 01792 63 7442

E-Mail: cllr.andrea.lewis@swansea.gov.uk

Our Ref: AL/JG

Your Ref:

Date: 7 March 2024

Dear Councillor Black,

Re: Scrutiny Letter to Cllr. Andrea Lewis (SPC 13 Feb - Call In)

Thank you to the Scrutiny Performance Panel for giving us the opportunity to discuss the wording clarification and change to the Service Standards.

In my presentation to Cabinet, I explained that the Charter and Service Standards will continue to change and develop over time. We deliberately put a start date of the beginning of April so that we could make them as current as possible before they go live for the first time.

As I made clear in the meeting, the standards have been updated to take account of the helpful amendments to the Free School Meals standard, suggested by the Chief Executive and quoted in your letter.

In respect of the last paragraph of your letter, as was mentioned in the meeting, in practice, we regularly deal with applications within days of them being received and it is usual for eligibility information to be sent to the Education Service on the same day entitlement is confirmed by the Eligibility Checking Service.

Having made some enquiries about the other local authorities mentioned we can see that they have purchased the online application form referred to in the meeting. We would need to undertake a cost/benefit analysis to determine whether purchasing this service would be value for money given it would only provide a minor improvement in the service currently provided.

In addition, as was explained in the meeting, an instant yes or no assessment is often not available from the online service due to DWP processing times so there would be no real benefit in those cases as customers could only be told, automatically, that their entitlement could not be confirmed. Where that currently happens, a member of staff contacts the applicant to help resolve any issues and this personal engagement is something we would want to continue with.

That said, the service is always looking for even a small improvement in customer experience. To that end our inhouse Digital Service had started to work on an improved online application form, but resources were redirected to work on COVID and cost of living related grant processes. When we are in a position to restart this work, we will seek to include the best elements an externally purchased application form has to offer where we can.

Yours sincerely



Y Cynghorydd Andrea Lewis / Councillor Andrea Lewis
Dirprwy Arweinydd / Aelod y Cabinet dros Drawsnewid Gwasanaethau
Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Service Transformation



**To/
Councillor David Hopkins
Cabinet Member for Corporate
Services & Performance (Deputy
Leader)**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

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SPC/2023-24/13

01 March 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 13 February 2024. It is about delivery against the Council's Workforce Strategy. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Hopkins,

Scrutiny of Workforce Strategy

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session, which focussed on one aspect of your Cabinet portfolio responsibilities, namely Human Resources, but specifically on the Council's Workforce Strategy in order for the Committee to provide challenge to progress, performance, and improvement.

Unfortunately, you were unable to attend the meeting due to illness, but we hope this letter finds you now well. We thank the lead officer, Rachael Davies, Head of Human Resources & Service Centre, for assisting the Committee, taking us through the comprehensive written report you had submitted and details, helping us to understand how the Workforce Strategy is being delivered. We know that the Strategy was approved by Cabinet in October 2022 and covers 2022-2027. Your report set out the Strategy, key themes and objectives, and associated transformation projects to implement change and improvement. It provided progress to date, with a current RAG status, and information on future actions.

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

It was highlighted to the Committee that:

- The Strategy sets out our aspirations under 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.
- Shortly after approval of the Workforce Strategy, work commenced on the Transformation Programme. A Workforce and Organisational Development Transformation Programme Board was established in December 2022. The Board has been responsible for identifying appropriate transformation projects that would 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. Four specific transformation Business Cases were described, linked to the Strategy.
- The Council's Workforce Strategy contains 43 key strategic objectives across four workforce themes, all of which are anticipated to be achieved within the lifetime of the strategy. Of the 23 objectives agreed for 2023/24, 4 were Complete, 12 were Green, 6 were Amber, and 1 was Withdrawn, overall indicating that good progress has been made with addressing the objectives set out in the Workforce Strategy (with 70% due to be complete by the end of the financial year).
- One objective was withdrawn (relating to the Healthy Working Wales Corporate Health Standard) as due to circumstances beyond the control of the Council it is not achievable, and a further amber around 'developing optimal structures for specific services' is to be reframed to make it more specific and meaningful so it can be achieved across directorates. This and the remaining 5 amber objectives would be carried forward into the 2024/25 year along with newly selected goals remaining in the Strategy, including a thorough and meaningful review and update of our Recruitment & Selection Policy and review of the application and selection process. The Transformation Board will agree the priorities for 2024/25.

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.

A Workforce Fit for The Future - Recognising Performance

This Objective was noted as creating a culture of 'high performance' with regular evaluation and feedback. One of the actions being: 'Delivery of a revised, "fit for purpose" Performance Management approach, via Oracle, to reflect the future needs of the Council'. We know that the new Oracle Fusion system went live in April 2023. We asked for some detail on what the new approach looks like and how far across the organisation this extended.

We were told there is a specific module called 'Goals and Performance', which can be used across all officer grades, where individual Performance Objectives can be entered and the system can facilitate the Annual Appraisal process, with automated prompts sent out to managers regarding performance monitoring. We heard that the system has reporting functionality so the organisation can measure compliance and engagement with performance management requirements across all directorates. We noted that Corporate Services have been key test users of the new system since it was launched, before wider roll out, and this is being closely monitored. Once all departments are on board the Council as a whole will be able to generate performance information regarding the completion of appraisals, and other relevant data around compliance. You clarified that all officers will be offered an Annual Appraisal, however in some cases where appropriate there may be a team appraisal approach taken.

As well as establishing appropriate targets around Appraisals (engagement and compliance, achievement of objectives, etc), the Committee felt that an evaluation of this new approach to Performance Management will need to be undertaken at some point to assess its effectiveness, i.e. focusing on the value and quality of what we are doing through the new system, to support continuous improvement.

Workforce and Organisational Development Transformation

We agree that our workforce is our most essential asset, and we have many excellent teams, delivering front line services for the citizens of Swansea, who do not always get the recognition they deserve. We asked whether the Council seeks 'Investors in People' (IIP) accreditation, as it aims to be an employer of choice, or other ways that will help achieve this.

The Head of Service detailed the process involved in attaining IIP accreditation, but highlighted that it can be a very costly exercise. It was felt that engagement with such a process might be more appropriate as we come towards the end of the current Workforce Strategy as we reflect on things and can look for external assessments. At this point in time it was argued that the Council has a good handle on workforce strengths and areas for improvement and is currently working through these. It was felt the Council was not at any disadvantage from not having any current IIP accreditation.

We were told that the Council Employee Engagement Strategy, about to be launched, will be the best route forward to understanding how our staff feel about working for the organisation, and would be more effective than an external verification. It was added that the Council, through various means, takes the opportunity to praise Teams and/or individuals on their work and performance and share positive news stories across the Council, e.g. the Chief Executive's Blog, and Staff Newsletters, etc.

Being An Employer Of Choice – Recruitment & Retention

One of the actions is noted as '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)', and another action states there will be a 'Review of the Application Process so that it is compliant with legislation and is seen to be supportive to applicants'. We asked for some more detail on what that will look like, for example in other organisations there is a greater consideration given to skill levels not academic qualifications, ensuring opportunity for all.

We heard that all options would be on the table for these reviews, and supported the view taken by the Head of Service not to rush this work, which was planned for this year, but to roll it on to the next so that proper time can be given to it and improve upon current rigid practice and be more progressive in our applications process. This will include research looking at good practice and experience elsewhere. However, **we were keen that the Review of the Applications Process is prioritised for 2024/5 and would urge the Transformation Board to ensure this is progressed asap.**

Outcomes

The Committee requested that a further update on progress with the delivery of the Workforce Strategy be provided in a year's time, focusing on the impact and difference being made having taken the actions within, to better enable an assessment of the Strategy's success.

We noted within the Strategy reference to a number of outcomes, along with specific strategic metrics and measures, which we could structure the discussion around next time, as far as they relate to the first year of the Strategy:

- 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

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.

We will correspond with you in due course about a meeting date and arrangements for the further update, but would anticipate it taking place around February 2025, at which time we can also follow up on matters raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 March 2024

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

a) 20 March at 4.00pm – Adult Services Performance Panel

- Update on West Glamorgan Transformation Programme
- Performance Monitoring
- Briefing on Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2022-23

b) 25 March at 4.30pm – Community Assets Inquiry Panel

- Evidence Gathering Session – Cultural Services: activity and examples relating to asset transfer, e.g. community centres, parks, sports facilities/grounds, growing areas etc, and outcomes.

c) 9 April at 10.00am – Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel

- Annual Review of Wellbeing Objectives
- Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24
- Audit Wales Report – Use of Performance Information: service user perspectives and outcomes

d) 16 April at 2.00pm – Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee (managed by Neath Port Talbot Council)

- Programme / Project monitoring
- Specific updates:
 - Homes as Power Stations
 - Pembroke Dock

e) 16 April at 4.00pm – Scrutiny Programme Committee

- Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Session – Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership

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