

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

At: Committee Room 3A, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Monday, 11 January 2016

Time: 4.30 pm

Summary: This is the agenda pack for a meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee taking place on the 11 January 2016. The main items are a question and answer session with the Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty, School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry Final Report, and Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel.

AGENDA

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3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.	
4 Minutes: To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 14 December 2015.	3 - 8
5 Public Question Time.	
6 Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty. <i>(Councillor Will Evans).</i>	9 - 24
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	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a	Committee – Cabinet Member Q & A	14 Sep	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Healthy City
b	Committee – Cabinet Member Q & A	9 Nov	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance
c	Civic Events Working Group	12 Nov	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance

13 Feedback from Recent Scrutiny Events.**14 Upcoming Scrutiny Events.****15 For Information: Audit Committee Work Plan.**

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16 Date and Time of Future Committee Meetings for 2015/16 Municipal Year (all at 4.30 p.m. except where noted):

8 February 2016	11 April 2016	9 May 2016
14 March 2016		

17 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel/Working Group Meetings:

Topic	Approach	Date	Time	Venue Civic Centre (CC) Guildhall (GH)
Transformation of Adult Social Services	Panel	11 Jan	1.30 pm	Committee Room 3B (GH)
Building Sustainable Communities	Inquiry Panel	14 Jan	10.30 am	Room 235 (GH)
Child & Family Services	Performance Panel	18 Jan	2.00 pm	Committee Room 6 (GH)
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	Inquiry Panel	19 Jan	9.30 am	Council Chamber (GH)
Service Improvement & Finance	Performance Panel	20 Jan	11.00 am	Committee Room 3A (GH)

Streetscene	Inquiry Panel (follow up)	20 Jan	2.00 pm	Council Chamber (GH)
Schools	Performance Panel	21 Jan	5.00 pm	Committee Room 3B (GH)
Building Sustainable Communities	Inquiry Panel	3 Feb	10.30 am	Room 235 (GH)
Building Sustainable Communities	Inquiry Panel	3 Feb	10.30 am	Committee Room 6 (GH)

Members of the public are welcome to attend the above Panel / Working Group meetings. Contact the Scrutiny Team if you would like to attend.

Connect with Scrutiny:

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Patrick Arran

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Monday, 4 January, 2016

Contact: Democratic Services - 01792 636923

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE (16)

Labour Councillors: 11

Uta Clay	T J Hennegan
A M Cook	D J Lewis
D W Cole	G Owens
S E Crouch	R V Smith (Vice Chair)
J P Curtice	G J Tanner
N J Davies	

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 3

M H Jones (Chair)	P M Meara
J W Jones	

Independent Councillor: 1

E W Fitzgerald	
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Conservative Councillor: 1

A C S Colburn	
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Co-opted Members:

Name	Term of Office
David Anderson-Thomas	14.03.2014 – 13.03.2017
Vacancy	
C A Holley	Convener (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
P Hood-Williams	Convener (Child & Family Services Performance Panel)
F M Gordon	Convener (Schools Performance Panel)

Officers:

Dean Taylor	Director of Corporate Services
Lee Wenham	Head of Marketing, Communications & Scrutiny
Dave Mckenna	Overview & Scrutiny Manager
Brij Madahar	Overview & Scrutiny Coordinator
Democratic Services	
Wendy Parkin	Legal
Archives	

Email:

Executive Board
Cabinet Members
Leaders of Opposition Groups
Carl Billingsley
Chair of Standards Committee
Chair of Audit Committee
Chair of Democratic Services Committee

Total Copies: 33

Disclosures of Interest

To receive Disclosures of Interest from Councillors and Officers

Councillors

Councillors Interests are made in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea. You must disclose orally to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest.

NOTE: You are requested to identify the Agenda Item / Minute No. / Planning Application No. and Subject Matter to which that interest relates and to enter all declared interests on the sheet provided for that purpose at the meeting.

1. If you have a **Personal Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 10** of the Code, you **MAY STAY, SPEAK AND VOTE** unless it is also a Prejudicial Interest.
2. If you have a Personal Interest which is also a **Prejudicial Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 12** of the Code, then subject to point 3 below, you **MUST WITHDRAW** from the meeting (unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Standards Committee)
3. Where you have a Prejudicial Interest you may attend the meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, **provided** that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise. In such a case, you **must withdraw from the meeting immediately after the period for making representations, answering questions, or giving evidence relating to the business has ended**, and in any event before further consideration of the business begins, whether or not the public are allowed to remain in attendance for such consideration (**Paragraph 14** of the Code).
4. Where you have agreement from the Monitoring Officer that the information relating to your Personal Interest is **sensitive information**, as set out in **Paragraph 16** of the Code of Conduct, your obligation to disclose such information is replaced with an obligation to disclose the existence of a personal interest and to confirm that the Monitoring Officer has agreed that the nature of such personal interest is sensitive information.
5. If you are relying on a **grant of a dispensation** by the Standards Committee, you must, before the matter is under consideration:
 - i) Disclose orally both the interest concerned and the existence of the dispensation; and
 - ii) Before or immediately after the close of the meeting give written notification to the Authority containing:

- a) Details of the prejudicial interest;
- b) Details of the business to which the prejudicial interest relates;
- c) Details of, and the date on which, the dispensation was granted; and
- d) Your signature

Officers

Financial Interests

1. If an Officer has a financial interest in any matter which arises for decision at any meeting to which the Officer is reporting or at which the Officer is in attendance involving any member of the Council and /or any third party the Officer shall declare an interest in that matter and take no part in the consideration or determination of the matter and shall withdraw from the meeting while that matter is considered. Any such declaration made in a meeting of a constitutional body shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting. No Officer shall make a report to a meeting for a decision to be made on any matter in which s/he has a financial interest.
2. A “financial interest” is defined as any interest affecting the financial position of the Officer, either to his/her benefit or to his/her detriment. It also includes an interest on the same basis for any member of the Officers family or a close friend and any company firm or business from which an Officer or a member of his/her family receives any remuneration. There is no financial interest for an Officer where a decision on a report affects all of the Officers of the Council or all of the officers in a Department or Service.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3A, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
MONDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2015 AT 4.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

U C Clay
A M Cook
T J Hennegan
R V Smith

Councillor(s)

A C S Colburn
S E Crouch
J W Jones

Councillor(s)

D W Cole
N J Davies
P M Meara

Co-opted Member(s)

F M Gordon

Co-opted Member(s)

P R Hood-Williams

Officer(s)

P Holmes
B Madahar

Officer(s)

W Parkin
L Richards

Officer(s)

P Roberts
S Woon

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): J P Curtice, E W Fitzgerald, D J Lewis and G J Tanner
Co-opted Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas

91 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL & PREJUDICIAL INTEREST.**

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

92 **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.

93 **MINUTES:**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 9 November, 2015 and 18 November, 2015, be agreed as a correct record.

94 **CO-OPTION OF SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL CONVENERS.**

The Chair presented a report which sought Committee approval for the co-option of Scrutiny Performance Panel Conveners to enable attendance at Committee meetings.

Members noted the guidance on co-option and the benefits of their co-option to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

RESOLVED that Performance Panel Conveners be co-opted to the Scrutiny Programme Committee:

Service Improvement & Finance	–	Cllr. Chris Holley
Child & Family Services	–	Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams
Schools	–	Cllr. Fiona Gordon

95 **SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORT - CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES.**

The Convenor of the Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel, Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, presented a panel update.

He referred to the findings of the recent CSSIW report and some performance issues raised, which the Panel will continue to monitor.

He referred to the work carried out over the last few months by the Panel contained in the update report.

He stated that the Panel had also been engaged in scrutinising the development of Post 16 Service over the last 2 years and had been able to give views on important aspects of the development. He reported that the Panel was pleased that the new contract had been awarded and it had been agreed to engage with Barnardo's once the service was up and running. The Panel would continue to receive monitoring reports on the new service.

In response to Member questions, the Convenor stated that:

- sickness absence remained a problem within Child and Family Services. A lot of work was on-going with the Department to address the situation;
- The numbers of Looked After Children has fallen over the last year (from 610 to just over 500) and the LAC reduction strategy was in place and being monitored; and
- The issues raised in relation to Children in Need (CIN) and numbers of unborn and under 3-month babies on the Child Protection Register was being closely monitored. It was noted that the increase was a national problem.

The Chair thanked the Convenor of the Child & Family Service Scrutiny Performance Panel for his informative update.

RESOLVED that the update report be **NOTED**.

96 **CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & STRATEGY (LEADER).**

The Committee took the opportunity to question Councillor Rob Stewart, Leader of the Council (Chair of Cabinet).

The questions session focused on Councillor Stewart's role as both Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy, in terms of priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

Councillor Stewart was invited to make any opening remarks before taking questions from the committee.

The question session led to discussion around the following topics:

- The current challenging financial position and projections
- Anti-poverty work
- Development of the City Region and benefits
- Progress with the marketing of Civic Centre and St. David's sites in the City Centre
- Role of the Cabinet Advisory Committees
- Leader's programme of visiting all wards
- Challenges in the next 12 months (including financial, joint working ahead of formal local government reorganisation)
- Expectations for the year ahead (including progress on city centre development, continuation of rebuilding schools programme, completion of commissioning reviews, developments in housebuilding, creation of a more commercial council, innovation)

In response to Member questions the Leader confirmed that:

- The Council had made savings from the current year which equated to around 85% of the target and were on track to achieve savings of 100% by the end of the year;
- The overall financial position cannot be determined until the grants (e.g., Communities First, EMLAS, Flying Start etc) figure is known;
- Schools must not get into the trap of thinking that the reduced funding will only affect this year. Austerity will continue for next 3 years. Headteachers and Governors must continue to plan for up to 2019. This year the Minister is giving £1.85m protection, but there are additional pressures faced by schools. The authority is working with schools to help mitigate implications of austerity. It is clear that in 3-4 years' time we will not be able to fund education in the way we are doing now;
- With regard to the 21 Century Schools Programme, a funding gap still remains;
- He was unable to confirm the exact level of cut for Education and Social Services yet, however, funding will likely reduce by 5% a year;
- Whilst it is not yet known what cuts are to be made to services and what buildings would be closed/disposed of prior to January 2016 when Community Councils set their budgets, the authority is happy to speak to communities about specific buildings / facilities of interest and provide advice and support regarding asset transfer if required. There is already information in the public domain about specific service savings proposals although more decisions will be taken as a result of the outcome of various commissioning reviews underway.

The Chair thanked the Leader for his attendance.

RESOLVED that the Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Leader, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

97 **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE.**

The Chair presented a report which provided guidance on pre-decision scrutiny ahead of consideration of the Cabinet report on 'City Centre Development Sites – Selection of Preferred Development Partner(s)'.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

98 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC.**

The Committee was requested to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of the item of business identified in the recommendations to the report on the grounds that it/they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph of 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation)(Wales) Order 2007 relevant to the item of business as set out in the report.

The Committee considered the public interest test in deciding to exclude the public from the meeting for the items of business where the public interest test was relevant, as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the public be excluded for the following items of business.

CLOSED SESSION

99 **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT SITES - SELECTION OF PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT PARTNER(S) - REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION.**

The Director of Place, assisted by the Head of Regeneration & Planning, and Physical Regeneration Manager, provided an overview of the cabinet report which contained recommendations regarding the St David's and Civic Centre Sites. The Leader was present to discuss aspects of the report and along with officers responded to various questions.

The Committee highlighted a number of issues about the report and proposals.

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee presents the views, conclusions and recommendations regarding the report to the Special Cabinet meeting on 17 December, 2015, prior to the Cabinet decision.

OPEN SESSION

100 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16.**

The report of the Chair reviewed the scrutiny work programme.

The report provided the committee with:

- The current scrutiny work programme
- A plan for future committee meetings
- A progress report on the various existing Panels and Working Groups
- Cabinet forward plan for opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny

The chair referred to the plan to introduce a Public Question Time for future committee meetings in order to develop opportunities for public participation.

Councillor U Clay sought approval for the Transformation of Adult Social Services to undertake pre decision scrutiny in respect of a report scheduled for Cabinet on 21 January, 2016 entitled 'Review of Abergelli and The Beeches'.

Further to a previous inquiry carried out on Public Transport, issues were raised which members felt further scrutiny.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the committee work plan be accepted;
- 2) a Public Question Time be introduced on all future Scrutiny Programme Agendas taking effect from 11 January, 2016;
- 3) the request for pre-decision scrutiny in respect of the 'Review of Abergelli and The Beeches' report scheduled for Cabinet on 21 January, 2016, be agreed and considered at the next meeting of the TASS Panel on 11 January, 2016; and
- 4) further work in relation to scrutiny of Public Transport be arranged.

101 **MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY PANELS AND WORKING GROUPS.**

No changes were submitted.

102 **SCRUTINY LETTERS.**

The Chair reported the Scrutiny Letters Log and referred to the recent correspondence between Scrutiny and Cabinet Members.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Letters Log be **NOTED**.

103 **FEEDBACK FROM RECENT SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

None.

104 **UPCOMING SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

None.

105 **AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PLAN.**

RESOLVED that the Audit Committee work plan be **NOTED**.

106 **DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2015/16 MUNICIPAL YEAR (ALL AT 4.30 P.M. EXCEPT WHERE NOTED):**

The date and time of future Committee Meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year was noted.

107 **DATE AND TIME OF UPCOMING PANEL / WORKING GROUP MEETINGS:**

The date and time of upcoming Panel/Working Group meetings were provided for information to help increase the visibility of this work and encourage participation.

The meeting ended at 7.00

CHAIR

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION

Purpose	To enable the committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The committee's questions will broadly explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to areas of responsibility.
Content	The following Cabinet Member will appear before the committee to participate in a question and answer session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Will Evans – Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question the Cabinet Member on relevant matters • Make comments and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the council's cabinet to account. The cabinet is made up of the Leader and 9 additional councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific responsibilities.
- 1.2 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and monitor performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.
- 1.3 Cabinet Member Question Sessions have become a feature of committee meetings over the past 2 years. At least one cabinet member is scheduled to appear at each committee meeting, ensuring all 10 Cabinet Members appear before the committee over the course of a year, in order to ask questions on their work. Questions will focus on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

2. Cabinet Member Question Session – 11 January

2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the committee:

a) Councillor Will Evans – Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty

Within this Cabinet portfolio, Councillor Evans is responsible for:

- a. Poverty Strategy
- b. Communities First
- c. Welfare Rights
- d. 3rd Sector
- e. Social Inclusion
- f. Localised Services
- g. Welfare Reform
- h. Financial Information
- i. Digital Inclusion
- j. Food Access/Growing
- k. Community Cohesion
- l. Community Development
- m. Homelessness
- n. Neighbourhood Working
- o. Lead elements of Sustainable Swansea.

2.2 The Cabinet Member has provided some 'headlines' in relation to portfolio objectives to help the committee focus on priorities, actions, achievements and impact (see **Appendix 1**).

3. Approach to Questions

3.1 At the Cabinet Member Question Sessions the committee will generally ask cabinet members about:

- priorities / objectives
- specific activities and achievements, progress against policy commitments, key decisions taken, and impact / difference made
- headlines on the performance of services and the key targets monitored to measure improvement and success
- their engagement with service users / public and what influence this has had
- what they hope to achieve over the next 12 months and challenges (e.g. resources / budget)
- key decisions they are expecting to take to Cabinet over the next year
- interactions with scrutiny over the last year, and whether there is any specific scrutiny activity they would welcome

- 3.2 Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the committee. Following the session the chair will write to the Cabinet Member in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the committee, and any actions for the Cabinet Member to consider.
- 3.3 If the committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during this item then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

4. Previous Correspondence with Councillor Evans

- 4.1 The committee last met with Councillor Evans in March 2015. Amongst the issues discussed included:
- Target Areas
 - Health Inequalities
 - Welfare Reforms
 - the LIFT Programme
 - Community Food Growing

The actual correspondence with Councillor Evans relating to the March meeting is attached as the committee may wish to follow up on these issues, as necessary.

5. Other Questions

- 5.1 For each Cabinet Member Q & A Sessions the committee invites members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the committee) to suggest questions.
- 5.2 On this occasion no questions were received.

6. Legal Implications

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

7. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty

1. Portfolio priorities / objectives

Anti-Poverty Portfolio Objectives	Indicators for success	Updated information						
<p>PO 1) The effective running of the Communities First Programme – Welsh Government’s tackling poverty programme in communities</p>	<p>1. The funding allocation is spent appropriately within the financial year – with minimal underspend 2. The Programme is delivering its targets and achieving the required outcomes 3. The programme is actively engaging the residents of each of the cluster areas in activities</p>	<p>1. The total grant in 2014/15 was £2,844,812. Reducing the amount of underspend being returned to the Welsh Government has been a high priority. The total amounts being returned have been reducing dramatically.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>£558,418</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014/15</td> <td>£204,689</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015/16</td> <td>£159,472 (latest estimate)</td> </tr> </table> <p>2. 2015/16 Performance measures are generally on or ahead of target for the whole of the Communities First Programme. Targets for projects under the PDG Match Fund will show progress mainly in quarters 3 and 4 due to the alignment with school terms. All Cluster Delivery Plans have been reviewed with the Head of Tackling Poverty, Compliance Officer and Cluster Managers to ensure that plans stay current, that targets are revised if necessary with agreement of the Welsh Government.</p> <p>3. The Communities First Programme works closely with its partners and communities. Recent engagement with the Job Centre Plus has influenced how people are referred to the Communities First programme resulting in a referral mechanism which ensures that people are referred appropriately and timely so they receive effective support from the programme and that the programme is targeting the most marginalised members of the community.</p> <p>Each Communities First Cluster undertakes a range of engagement activities from newsletters to street meets, door knocking and Community Meetings to ensure that we are supporting people and families to engage with the programme and their communities.</p>	2013/14	£558,418	2014/15	£204,689	2015/16	£159,472 (latest estimate)
2013/14	£558,418							
2014/15	£204,689							
2015/16	£159,472 (latest estimate)							

<p>PO 2) To deliver the poverty strategies main actions over the next 12 months ensuring the Council is progressing towards delivering the targets for 2017.</p>	<p>1. The Tackling poverty action plan milestones and activities are achieved 2. The performance management framework targets are being achieved</p>	<p>1. These actions have been completed: 1. ASK of Welsh Government 2. Change to job descriptions</p> <p>These actions are underway: 3. Review of the tackling poverty strategy 4. Embed community development in Ward Member's roles 5. Strategy for the use of community buildings – assets strand of Sustainable Swansea 6. Tackling poverty training 7. Employee Pledge for volunteering</p> <p>These actions have proposals developed for delivery: 8. Neighbourhood Working – assignment of HoS/Directors, redirection of resources into target areas – part of the commissioning reviews 9. Develop a community action learning programmes 10. Incentives for staff 11. Introduction of a poverty challenge</p> <p>These are not actions which will all be completed over a 12-18 month period. The life of the strategy and its delivery needs to be seen over a 5-10 year + period. The poverty strategy action plan is available on request, along with the performance management framework.</p>
<p>PO3) Mitigating against the impact of Welfare Reform – particularly the introduction of Universal Credit</p>	<p>1. Production and implementation of a Local Delivery Framework/action plan for Universal Credit 2. Effective partnerships with other public and third sector providers supporting the roll out of Universal Credit and other reforms.</p>	<p>1. Local delivery plan for Universal Credit is being delivered</p> <p>2. There is a very effective Financial Inclusion Steering Group including partners within the public and third sectors.</p> <p>The FISG action plan can be made available on request.</p>

Other areas of responsibility:

Third Sector Funding (Swansea Change Fund) and Community Action Transformation Fund

Swansea Change Fund is the City and County of Swansea's Major Third Sector Grant fund. It is a mix of Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and Grants awarded in an open competition round. The Fund is currently in its 5th Year.

Community Action Transformation Fund (CATF) - The Fund was created in 2014 to support the delivery of the aims of the Community Action strand, There have been 3 rounds to date. In particular, funding will be aimed at proposals from community groups to:

- Develop proposals to run Council services locally and/or
- Facilitate the transfer of community assets.

Grow Local

Budget for 2015-16 - £20k.

8 applications received to date, total amount requested £12968. The panel met early December and made 6 awards, to the value of £9.4k. Two applications have been deferred and are pending.

Further applications are expected and it is anticipated that the £20k budget will be spent by the end of March 2016.

Homelessness Prevention

The Council has long had statutory duties relating to homelessness. Swansea has always taken a proactive approach to homelessness with prevention being an integral part of helping persons presenting to us.

In April 2015 we saw the enactment of the Housing Act (Wales) 2014. This introduced additional duties on the Council including a duty to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

In 2014/15 there were nearly 3200 homelessness presentations. Figures have consistently been 2500-3000 in recent years but rises are expected in the future due to issues such as Welfare Reform. Importantly 63% of cases presenting in 2014/15 were prevented or found not homeless.

The national performance management and reporting framework for homelessness in 2015/16 is still in development to take account of the new legislation. We continue to work with partners in the statutory and voluntary sector to maintain and improve our homelessness prevention services. A key area of focus for the next 12 months is development of the private rented sector locally to offer good quality affordable accommodation as a housing solution to those who need it.



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To/
Councillor Will Evans,
Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty**

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Scrutiny
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line: 01792 637257
Llinell Uniongyrochol:
e-Mail scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
e-Bost:
Our Ref SPC/2014-15/13
Ein Cyf:
Your Ref
Eich Cyf:
Date 10 April 2015
Dyddiad:

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty following the meeting of the Committee on the 16th March 2015. It reflects on the question and answer session held with the Cabinet Member about their portfolio responsibilities, including Target Areas, Health Inequalities, Welfare Reforms, the LIFT Programme and Community Food Growing. It includes conclusions and proposals for the Cabinet Member.

Dear Councillor Evans,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 16 March

Thank you for your attendance at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 16 March 2015, answering questions on your work and for submitting a written report ahead of the meeting. Your report helped to provide a focus for the session and explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact, in relation to your areas of responsibility.

You emphasised the cross cutting nature of this new portfolio and joint working with other Cabinet Members. You also provided a stark indication of the nature of the problem, and cited the growth in the number of food banks in the area, impact of austerity measures, and inequalities in Swansea. We are writing to you in order to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the committee, and raise any outstanding issues / actions for your response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

Target Areas

We noted that the anti-poverty portfolio is a new cabinet portfolio for the Council and taking on board elements of the previous leaders, and the old Target Areas Cabinet member portfolio. As far as the committee was aware

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

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

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

the Target Areas approach was adopted as Council policy in July 2012, however you seemed to have a different view on this. You stated that the emphasis was tackling poverty wherever it existed, not a defined area. The committee would like some clarity on if / when / how the policy has changed and what strategies are in place instead to tackle poverty and deprivation in the areas worst affected, with the greatest need.

We have previously identified Target Areas as a future Scrutiny Working Group topic. This would be to get an assessment on progress with target areas work and enable scrutiny councillors to ask about achievements and the impact of this approach. Therefore your response on our question above will be very helpful to guide our thinking on this and determine whether this should remain in the work programme.

Health Inequalities

You mentioned to the committee some figures which showed significant differences in life expectancy between east and west Swansea. We believe you stated that it was as much as 23 years. Could you provide some clarification about this information? The indication is that the gap is increasing. What we did not understand was how east and west Swansea was being defined in this assessment.

Welfare Reforms

You stated that one of your key portfolio objectives was mitigating against the impact of Welfare Reform, particularly the introduction of universal credit. We asked about the production and implementation of a Local Delivery Framework for the first phase of roll out of Universal Credit. You stated that this was in progress however we would appreciate some clarification about when the framework will be available given the roll out is planned for July 2015. Also can you provide some more information about the role of Cabinet Members and (in particular) all Ward Members in the development and delivery with regard to implementation of Universal Credit?

We acknowledged that a number of seminars are being arranged for councillors, staff and partners in order to raise awareness on requirements and potential impacts. We asked about the relationship between the authority and the Department for Work and Pensions and noted some issues relating to information and communication which we hope are being resolved.

LIFT Programme

We asked for an update on the LIFT project in the North West Cluster Penderry, which is focussed on getting people back into work and on to the jobs ladder. You stated that the programme was successful within Penderry, engaging with workless households, those who have spent more than six

months out of work or training, and helped people to gain skills that will increase employment prospects.

We were interested to know how the programme was developing. You pointed out that this was a programme funded by the Welsh Government and depended on evaluation against targets and continuity of funding. We noted that the initial 12 months of the Programme was about to come up. We were pleased to hear that between April and December 2014 127 adults had found employment and many more had gained a qualification and gained IT skills. However we noted this was from the overall Communities First programme not specifically the LIFT Programme. It would be helpful if you could provide some information about achievements directly related to the LIFT Programme.

Community Food & Growing

We looked at your savings targets for 2015/16 which included a reduction in the Grow Local Grants, and to reconfigure the Community Food and Growing team and look establish a Community Interest Company. You stressed the need to make savings and cited successful examples elsewhere. The committee however was interested in the rationale for outsourcing the food and growing service, and how this will be delivered and managed responsibly. We asked how this related to community allotments sites and noted that the plan did not include allotments, responsibility for which would be retained in-house.

Your Response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to:

- Our question about the position with regard to the Target Areas approach previously agreed - if / when / how the policy has changed and what strategies are in place instead to tackle poverty and deprivation in the areas worst affected, with the greatest need;
- Our request for further information about the difference in life expectancy between east and west Swansea;
- Our concern about when the Local Delivery Framework will be available given the roll out of Universal Credit is planned for July 2015. We also wanted to know more about the identified role of all Ward Members in the development and delivery
- Our request for information about achievements directly related to the LIFT Programme; and
- Our concern about changes to the Community Food & Growing team and rationale for a different service model. Could you also provide confirmation whether responsibility for allotments will revert to the Parks Service?

Please provide your response by 1 May. We will then include both letters in the agenda of the next available committee meeting.

Finally, we look forward to meeting you again to follow up on portfolio developments and hearing about achievements and impact.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Jones".

COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
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Councillor Mary Jones
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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Our Ref / Ein Cyf: WE/SH
Your Ref / Eich: SPC/2014-15/13
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad: 30 April 2015

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Jones

Cabinet Member Question Session – 16 March 2015

Thank you for your letter dated the 10 April 2015 regarding the above. I would like to respond as follows:

Our question about the position with regard to the Target Areas approach previously agreed - if / when / how the policy has changed and what strategies are in place instead to tackle poverty and deprivation in the areas worst affected, with the greatest need;

The Target Area approach was agreed within the Labour Manifesto and became part of Council policy in July 2012 with the adoption of the Manifesto commitments. The wording in the Manifesto is; 'A Labour Council will seek to develop a 'target area' approach, bringing together departments.

A further Cabinet Paper was agreed on 28th February 2013 explaining the designated target areas, the process for delivery and the initial actions.

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The target area approach focussed on three Wards of the City & County of Swansea which were Penderry, Castle and Townhill. This Cabinet understands that Poverty is to an extent everywhere and therefore we meet need and tackle poverty where it exists. Part of this approach is learning from the more intensive support in the most deprived areas enabling the Council to identify support mechanisms for those living in poverty elsewhere in the City & County of Swansea.

The Council is therefore taking a needs based approach whether those needs are within specific geographical areas, or within communities of interest. The Council's tackling poverty strategy will work alongside the existing WG tackling poverty programmes of Flying start, Families First and Communities First. These are delivered and focus on the highest areas of need, and therefore the geographical areas with the highest levels of deprivation.

• Our request for further information about the difference in life expectancy between east and west Swansea;

In 2011, the Public Health Wales Observatory published their report 'Measuring Inequalities 2011, Trends in mortality and life expectancy in Wales'. Local authority profiles were also published. The reports can be found here:

[http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf/\(\\$All\)/2089ABAC2C7D658B8025795E005818F1/\\$File/InequalitiesProfilesLA_Swansea_v1.pdf?OpenElement](http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf/($All)/2089ABAC2C7D658B8025795E005818F1/$File/InequalitiesProfilesLA_Swansea_v1.pdf?OpenElement)

The reports tell us that life expectancy in Swansea, as in Wales is increasing. However, increased life expectancy is not experienced equally across all areas. This inequality exists between the most and least deprived areas both nationally and locally. The Slope Index of Inequality measures the absolute gap in years of life expectancy between the most and least deprived. This index tells us that in the period 2005 – 2009, the gap in life expectancy in Swansea between our most and least deprived areas is 12.2 years for males and 7.4 years for females. The gap in healthy life expectancy for males is 22.9 years while females 14.8 years.

The gap has grown since the 2001 – 2005 figures which showed a life expectancy gap of 10.9 years for males and 7.3 years for females while healthy life expectancy was 22.1 years for males and 14.7 years for females.

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The recording of the statement made at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on the 16th March is inaccurate. The 23 year gap is the rounded Healthy Life Expectancy gap for males between our most and least deprived areas, not life expectancy which is 12 years for males.

This data sources are based geographically on Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). In Swansea there are 148 LSOAs, 36 of which form the five Communities First Clusters in Swansea. These Clusters represent the most deprived communities in Swansea according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The data represents the gap between the most and least deprived areas rather than a geographical divide of Swansea east and west. The figures should not be used to describe the gap between the east and the west of the city.

• **Our concern about when the Local Delivery Framework will be available given the roll out of Universal Credit is planned for July 2015. We also wanted to know more about the identified role of all Ward Members in the development and delivery.**

We are currently taking a two-phase approach in terms of being ready for Universal Credit.

Phase one is focused on the imminent introduction of Universal Credit in Swansea on the 20th July 2015. This initial introduction will be for single people who would previously have been making new claims for Job Seekers Allowance. Learning from the trial areas suggests that these are the most straight forward of benefit claims and therefore the least likely to require any complex support. Early indications from colleagues in the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP), based on previous years claimant numbers, suggest we will see something in the region of 120 – 200 people in Swansea being signed up for Universal Credit during the period July 2015 – March 2016.

At this stage the focus of planning is to ensure technical alignment with Housing Benefit Systems etc as those are required by colleagues in DWP to support claims.

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A key area of focus at the moment is completion of a District Partnership Agreement (DPA) between DWP and City & County of Swansea. The content of this agreement is very prescriptive from the DWP and will form the basis of the work that will be undertaken at this introduction phase. Again, learning from LA's who have trialled this process suggest that requests for additional support from this specific group are small.

Phase two, which will commence in April 2016 will see an expansion of Universal Credit to couple households, and is the point at which any agreement under the DPA ceases and a more formal local plan will need to be in place. Early discussions in the regional Universal Support Delivered Locally (USDL) group suggests that a minimum requirement at this stage to access funding via the USDL fund will be an electronic facility that claimants can access via the Local Authorities website that offers links to organisations that provide advice and support with issues like digital exclusion, personal budgeting and basic skills.

The Financial Inclusion Steering Group, a multi-agency group supported by CCS staff is in the process of identifying the range and levels of support Universal Claimants are likely to require to ease the transition over to Universal Credit, The first stage of this work has been to identify potential risks to claimants under the headings of the USDL framework outlined by the DWP; Digital Inclusion, Personal Budgeting, Partnership working and Triage. Follow up work is being undertaken to identify planned activity that contributes to mitigating these risks. The next stage will be to identify those risks that will require a holistic response.

This is the aspect which Ward Members will have a role and will emerge more clearly as the framework develops. It is likely to be concerned with ensuring that people with particular needs are signposted to the best support our partnerships can offer, given their whole set of circumstances.

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• **Our request for information about achievements directly related to the LIFT (Lifting people into work)**

Programme;

The LIFT Programme (which operates in the Communities First North West Cluster) has been successful in its first year of operation:

23 LIFT participants have entered into employment,
30 LIFT participants have taken part in essential skills learning,
LIFT has worked with organisations such as Gwalia, NHS and Boots to create 26 work experience placements for participants.
LIFT has created 106 vocational training opportunities in its first year for its participants.

The City and County of Swansea has received funding to continue to run the programme in its current format until March 31st 2016. It will continue to be based in the Communities First North West Cluster (All of Penderry Ward and Gendros in Cockett Ward), until this date. The Swansea LIFT programme continues to perform strongly when compared with the other pilot areas in Wales.

It is thought (albeit this is at an early stage) that although the full project may not be rolled out fully, elements of the LIFT programme will be introduced into the other Communities First cluster areas. However these elements of good practice will be delivered under the newly proposed Communities4work scheme, which supports residents with learning and training to get back into work.

• **Our concern about changes to the Community Food & Growing team and rationale for a different service model. Could you also provide confirmation whether responsibility for allotments will revert to the Parks Service.**

The Community Food and Growing Team have been exploring alternative business models for the past three years. In light of Sustainable Swansea Fit for the Future, it was felt that the time is now right to progress this work further in order to generate a sustainable source of income to tackle food poverty and create a service that is fit for purpose for the citizens of Swansea.

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Two members of staff will transfer employment to the new enterprise and the Authority will be represented on the board.

The allotment provision is currently subject to a rent review, which the Community Food and Growing Team are completing and implementing.

As the allotment provision makes no direct contribution to the tackling poverty agenda and as the future remit of the team will focus increasingly on tackling food poverty, it is felt that responsibility for the management of allotments should revert back to Parks. Parks currently conduct the maintenance of allotments and discussions are ongoing with regards to future management.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR WILLIAM EVANS
CABINET MEMBER FOR ANTI POVERTY

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Report of the Convener of the School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY INQUIRY – FINAL REPORT

Purpose	To present the final report for the scrutiny inquiry into School Governance
Content	The final report is attached which concludes the inquiry.
Councillors are being asked to	a) Agree the report for submission to Cabinet b) Identify any issues that might be emphasised as the report is presented to Cabinet c) Consider whether any issues arising merit inclusion in the future scrutiny work programme
Lead Councillor	Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener
Lead Officer and Report Author	Dave Mckenna, Scrutiny Manager

1. Details

1.1 The final report arising from the Scrutiny Panel's inquiry into School Governance is presented to the Committee for agreement. The attached report presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from the inquiry that sought to answer the following question:

How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

1.2 The report is structured in the following way:

- Foreword: Why This Matters
- Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations
- Why We Produced this Report
- Evidence Considered
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Further Scrutiny Needed
- Acknowledgements
- About the Inquiry Panel

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

- Sufficient evidence has been gathered in order to address the question that the inquiry aimed to answer;
- The conclusions are supported by the evidence gathered by the Panel;

- The recommendations of the Panel follow from their conclusions and are reasonable, achievable and capable of being actioned and monitored.

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

- 1.4 In considering the report the Committee may wish to emphasise aspects of the Inquiry to Cabinet. Points of this type can be included on the covering report that goes to Cabinet and will be attributed to the Committee.

2. Further Scrutiny Needed

- 2.1 As well as recommendations for Cabinet the Panel has also identified an issue that may require further scrutiny (see paragraph 3.11.4 of the main report).

- 2.2 The Panel proposes that the Committee adds the following topic to its work programme:

- *The function and operation of the LA Governor Panel to ensure that it supports the work of governing bodies.*

3. Legal Implications

- 3.1 There are no specific legal implications at this stage.

4. Financial Implications

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

5. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 5.1 Equality and engagement issues were formally considered at the scoping stage of this inquiry and borne in mind by the panel throughout evidence gathering. The Cabinet Member will need to ensure that implications are considered via application of the corporate Equality Impact Assessment process when considering the response to the recommendations. This is of particular importance for this inquiry as schools are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) in their own right.

Background Papers: *see attached report*

Contact: Dave McKenna, *Scrutiny Officer, 01792 636090*

Date: *04/01/2016*

Legal Officer: *Stephanie Williams*

Finance Officer: *Sue Rees*

Access to Services: *Sherill Hopkins*



A Very Challenging Role

How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

The School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry Panel
City and County of Swansea - Dinas a Sir Abertawe



January 2016

Why This Matters

Foreword by Councillor Fiona Gordon (Convener)

The role of school governors has changed significantly over recent years, with governors playing an increasingly important part in the management of schools, and school improvement. In many schools, governing bodies have responded to this change, seeking new ways of ensuring they adapt to changing demands, but in others, old ways of working remain and need to be updated. Roles can become fixed with a lack of questioning and clarity about those roles, and relationships can become too 'cosy' which can impact on the capacity to challenge schools sufficiently.



Each governing body has a different dynamic, just as each school is unique, and this report aims to point out general principles of good practice which the panel recommends that governors are encouraged to consider. Just as schools have moved to become self-improving and peer-supporting, governing bodies must similarly look at how they can continually improve in their ability to challenge schools. This is important not just because their schools must always be inspection-ready, and governors are part of the Leadership and Management element of the inspection by Estyn, but because an effective governing body aims to ensure that the school is doing the best it can to improve outcomes for learners. In order to do this, governors need to feel confident and supported, with access to information.

In forming our conclusions and making our recommendations we have listened carefully to governors, council officers, clerks to governing bodies, ERW, Estyn and the Cabinet Member for Education. We have also looked at good practice elsewhere and considered the findings of other research such as the Hill Review. I want to personally thank everyone who has taken the time to share their views with us; I hope that they will be happy with this report.

I also want to pay tribute to my colleagues on the panel for their engagement and contribution. Particularly I want to thank Professor Catherine Farrell from the University of South Wales, who gave up her time so generously to be a co-opted member.

Finally, we hope that this report offers practical help to the 1300 school governors in Swansea. The valuable work that they carry out is on a voluntary basis and is all for the benefit of the children in their schools. Long may they continue.

Fiona Gordon.

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

Conclusions

1. Recognise and thank school governors for the vital work that they do
2. Ensure that school governors are clear about what their role means in practice
3. Ensure that general information and advice for school governors is consistent and easy to access
4. Ensure that governors can understand the information they receive from their school
5. Encourage school governors to seek information about their school beyond head teachers' reports
6. Support individual governors to manage their own learning and development
7. Support governing bodies to manage their own learning and development
8. Encourage the involvement of the whole governing body in school improvement work
9. Work with governing bodies to fill their skill gaps
10. Promote the governor role to the private sector and beyond
11. Share good practice through local authority appointed governors
12. Work with head teachers to ensure a culture of challenge in meetings
13. Help governing bodies to identify the support arrangements that are best for them

Recommendations for Cabinet

Long term challenges (12 months+)

1. Develop a council wide mechanism for filling the skills gaps identified by governing bodies either through, transfers, swaps or by matching new governors with particular skills and experience

Medium term improvements (6-12 months)

2. Produce a mini booklet for governors that provides a simple guide to their role
3. Undertake a review of information provided to school governors with ERW, Estyn and Governors Wales with a view to ensuring a shared approach that avoids duplication

4. Provide a standard data template to head teachers and encourage them to use it
5. Work with Estyn to provide information about all training opportunities for governors in one place
6. Move from civic centre based training provision to a flexible model that combines, whole governing body, cluster school and e-learning
7. Develop an online learning log that governors can use to self-manage their training and development
8. Consider how the mandatory new governor training might help governors to think about the self-management of their training and development
9. Build the involvement of all governors into the Autumn Core Visits
10. Undertake a campaign to promote the role of governor targeted at private sector employers and partners in the public and third sector

Quick wins (within 6 months)

11. Write to the chair of governors and head teacher of each school to promote the good practice points included in this report (listed in APPENDIX A)
12. Write to every school governor thanking them for their work on behalf of the Council and highlighting the list of 'what every school governor should expect' (listed at APPENDIX B)
13. Take additional steps to publicise the good work being done by governors and governing bodies
14. Simplify the information on the Council website about school governors which should provide links to the Governors Wales website for all general information
15. Remind all schools that whole governing body and cluster school training can be arranged on request
16. Hold a seminar for LA appointed governors to explore their role in sharing good practice

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1 WHY WE PRODUCED THIS REPORT

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This report focusses on the following question:

How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

1.1.2 In selecting this topic and producing this report we wish to underline the crucial role that governors play in ensuring that schools provide the very best education for all of our children. We recognise that this is a significant period of change for everyone in education and that school governors are feeling this change as much as anyone. The extreme pressure on budgets comes at a time when the expectations on governors are higher than they have ever been. We hope, therefore, that our proposals help governors to do the best that they can.

1.2 Selecting the topic

1.2.1 The Inquiry into School Governance was proposed by the Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference in May 2014 and was subsequently included in the scrutiny work programme by the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

1.2.2 This topic was chosen because ensuring high levels of pupil attainment is one of the Council's five priorities. It is also an issue that many scrutiny councillors are directly involved in as they are also school governors, often in more than one school.

1.2.3 At our pre inquiry meeting we heard from the Cabinet Member of Education that this was a topic of particular importance. She highlighted a number of issues that she hoped we could consider as part of our report. We listed these issues in our letter to her before we started the inquiry:

- The need to consider the recommendations of 'The future delivery of education services in Wales' Review undertaken by Robert Hill Consulting 2013
- That there is a shortage of governors
- There is confusion about the general role of the governor and also confusion about the differences between different types (parent, LA etc)
- That some governor panels are too 'cosy' – the same people have been doing the same thing for years and may not be challenging enough
- Skills analysis should be looked at to ensure that panels have the skills they need as a group
- Closer integration between challenge advisors and governing bodies could be valuable
- The important role of audit in identifying areas of weakness

- 1.2.4 We heard from Estyn during the inquiry that the ‘critical friend’ criteria that they use to assess governors during inspections were typically the weakest element of school leadership. This was particularly the case for primary schools. This further underlines the importance of the inquiry.

1.3 *The Hill Review*

- 1.3.1 A central aspect of the policy context for this inquiry was the Hill Report: The Future Delivery of Education Services in Wales (2013). This review looked at the effectiveness of education at school and local authority level, and considered what should be done at school, local authority, regional and national level in terms of:

- raising standards and improving learner outcomes at all ages
- better support and challenge to schools to improve standards
- developing and strengthening the leadership of schools and the quality of teaching and learning
- ensuring value for money and effective use of resources
- bringing about coherence and strong links between all areas of the education system, including post-16 provision and the wider children’s services agenda.

- 1.3.2 This review suggested the following options:

- Monitoring the impact of the new governor training arrangements to ensure that they are of high quality and support more effective governance in practice
- agreeing with regional consortia a template of what an effective governance support service looks like
- providing a standard school performance data-reporting template for governors
- enabling outstanding chairs of governors to act as Lead Practitioners and so support improvements in governance at other schools
- working with CBI Wales and other employers to develop a register of aspiring and serving business leaders willing to serve as school governors in each region.

- 1.3.3 We have considered each of these options as part of our report.

1.4 *Intended contribution*

- 1.4.1 As a Panel we believe that we can make a valuable contribution to this topic. We recognise that, while there are no easy answers, success will only come from a conversation that everyone is able to contribute to. It is in this spirit that our conclusions and recommendations are offered.

- 1.4.2 Specifically this report aims to contribute to this vital debate by:

- Offering evidenced proposals that will lead to school governors being more effective and school performance being improved
 - Sharing the views of key stakeholders including governors, head teachers, clerks to governing bodies, Estyn and ERW
 - Considering the conclusions and recommendations from regional and national reports and an assessment of the implications for Swansea
 - Increasing councillor understanding about the school governor role and how it contributes to school performance
 - Raising public awareness of the work of school governors
- 1.4.3 During the inquiry we have uncovered a number of examples of what we consider to be good practice and we have included them in our conclusions. As we are proposing that these are shared with the chairs of governing bodies and head teachers we have listed them separately at **APPENDIX A**.
- 1.4.4 Governors Wales have also produced 20 questions that governing bodies can use to inform their self-improvement. Our good practice list is not intended to be a replacement for these questions and we would recommend them wholeheartedly. Rather we wanted to provide a Swansea perspective based on the evidence that we heard. We hope that governing bodies will look at both.
- 1.4.5 We have also identified what we consider to be reasonable expectations for governors. Again, we hope that these can be shared with governors and have listed them at **APPENDIX B**.
- 1.4.6 We are also happy to recognise the limitations of the inquiry. Given the complexity of the topic and the time that we had this report necessarily provides a broad view.
- 1.4.7 Finally, many of our conclusions are in line with the Council's current direction of travel and these are offered in order to provide reassurance. Others may be either additional or contrary to what has already been agreed. These are intended to offer challenge and to stimulate debate. Where we have made recommendations these are intended to help improve the service.

1.5 Use of key terms

- 1.5.1 Education as a service area is rife with technical terms and acronyms in particular. In the report we have tried to write for the layperson and have avoided acronyms whenever possible. There are, however, a few terms that we use throughout the report that should be clarified from the outset.
- 1.5.2 **Challenge** – this word is right at the centre of the inquiry but is nevertheless sometimes difficult to be precise about. Indeed, we did wonder whether another word should be used instead. However, the word 'challenge' is firmly fixed in the conversations about how governors work so we will stick with it and say a little about what we think it means.

- 1.5.3 A challenge is not simply a request for information or clarification (although we did come across the word being used this way). Providing challenge, in our view, means one of the following:
- Asking for a particular course of action to be justified as better than another course of action
 - Suggesting an alternative course of action and asking for the relative merits of this course to be considered
 - Identifying a flaw in either the information or assumptions that underpin a particular course of action
 - Suggesting new information or assumptions that might lead to a different course of action
- 1.5.4 We would expect a challenge to either add reassurance that the **right thing** is being done or to lead to things being **done differently**. In this regard we were struck by evidence that we heard from Estyn that, while many governors were able to point to examples of ‘challenge’ in meetings, they subsequently struggled to describe what, if anything, had changed as a result. The key point here is that governors should be able to see the challenge that they provide in meetings have a direct bearing on how the school operates.
- 1.5.5 **Challenge Adviser** – this is someone who is employed by the local authority under the umbrella of ERW. Their role is to work with schools to raise standards and ensure high quality education.
- 1.5.6 **ERW** (Education through Regional Working) – is an alliance of six local authorities, bound by a legal agreement, working to deliver school improvement services. The six authorities are; Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port-Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea.
- 1.5.7 **Estyn** – Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. Estyn is independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales. Its purpose is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales.
- 1.5.8 **School Development Plan** – this is the school’s strategic plan for improvement. It reflects the school’s self-assessment and sets out the actions a school will take to improve learner outcomes.
- 1.5.9 **Autumn core visit** - Each autumn term, challenge advisers visit all schools. They meet with the Head teacher and Chair of Governors in order to challenge the school's self-assessment processes and also to scrutinise data. They also monitor the school's strategic planning for improvement.

2 EVIDENCE

2.1 Evidence collected

- 2.1.1 Evidence was collected between January and September 2014. In total 17 evidence gathering activities were undertaken by the Panel as follows:

- a. Overview of governor support service from the School, Governor and Student Services Manager
 - b. Examples of Research into School Governance
 - c. Informal visit to the Clerks Forum to hear views of clerks to governing body
 - d. Session with representatives of Swansea Association of Governing Bodies and Governors Wales (or representative)
 - e. Session with the Head of Education Improvement and Student Services Manager including feedback from the recent Swansea / Neath Port Talbot governors' conference
 - f. Session with Estyn Inspector
 - g. Session with ERW officers
 - h. Session with three schools identified as having Good Practice (Hafod Primary, Bishopston Comprehensive and Ysgol Bryn Tawe)
 - i. Informal Session with recently trained new governors
 - j. Observations of governing bodies of good practice schools (Hafod Primary, Bishopston Comprehensive and Ysgol Bryn Tawe)
 - k. Question and Answer session with the Cabinet Member for Education
 - l. Survey of Swansea Governors conducted for this inquiry
 - m. Research comparing Swansea with Cardiff and Newport conducted for this inquiry
- 2.1.2 Professor Catherine Farrell (University of South Wales) participated in the inquiry as a co-opted member of the Panel. Her contribution reflected her previous work and research in this field. Please see, for example:
- Welsh Government (2013), *School Governance Task and Finish Group Report*
- Catherine Farrell (2014) *School Governance in Wales*, Local Government Studies
- Both can be downloaded at: csp.southwales.ac.uk/publications
- 2.1.3 For full details of the evidence gathered including details of all of the findings from each session please see the evidence pack for this inquiry. This can be downloaded at www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutinypublications

3 CONCLUSIONS

This report considers how the Council can ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools. Each of these conclusions, therefore, is a suggestion about how the Council's Cabinet might approach this problem. Specific proposals are identified throughout and listed separately in the Recommendations section that follows.

We recognise that schools are relatively independent from local authority control. There are, however, a number of ways that Cabinet can influence the work of governing bodies such as through information, advice, training, the work of the Governor Support Unit and the work of the Challenge Advisors. It is to these channels that we have looked in this report.

3.1 Recognise and thank school governors for the vital work that they do

- 3.1.1 A consistent message from our evidence gathering was that, while governors are volunteers, the role that they carry out is becoming more and more difficult to perform.
- 3.1.2 The Swansea Association of Governing Bodies, for example, told us that it is difficult for governors to cope with all of the things that they are now being asked to do and that new responsibilities are being placed on them all of the time. Given this increasing burden, particularly in the context of the cuts, they asked; 'why would anyone want to do it?'
- 3.1.3 We also heard from Council officers at the start of the inquiry just how the role of governors is becoming increasingly challenging; with budget reductions they will be increasingly involved in making school staff redundant.
- 3.1.4 For this reason alone we should be publicly praising the work of governors and the vital difference they make to their schools. As a Panel we certainly want to record our thanks and admiration to school governors.
- 3.1.5 However, we should be recognising the work of governors not just because this is the right thing to do but also because it provides encouragement and it lets them know that they have the support and backing of the wider community. This might just be the difference between a governor staying on or choosing to step down. Indeed, a number of respondents to the survey suggested that there should be more publicity around the role of the governor.
- 3.1.6 We propose, therefore, that Cabinet considers what extra steps might be taken to recognise the good work being done by individual governors and governing bodies. This might be through letters from the Cabinet Member, a media campaign or an award scheme of some kind. Cabinet may also consider suggesting to Welsh Government that a St David's Prize could be awarded for the most effective governing body.

3.1.7 School's achieving the Bronze Governing Body Award status is another good news story that could be shared more. We were pleased to hear that eight governing bodies have so far been successful and that a further 23 will soon be assessed.

3.2 *Ensure that school governors are clear about what their role means in practice*

3.2.1 Given the challenging nature of the job we believe that every school governor is entitled to have their role set out clearly and meaningfully. Estyn also consider this to be important and use 'how well governors understand their roles' as one of their inspection criteria. If governors are to provide effective challenge they need to be clear about their role.

3.2.2 The Cabinet Member also asked us to consider whether governors were clear about their general role and clear about the differences between the different governor roles.

3.2.3 Our survey suggested that the majority of governors are more or less clear about their role. When asked whether governors in my school are clear about their roles and responsibilities' 29% strongly agreed and 55% tended to agree. However, a number also pointed to a lack of role awareness and the need for further training.

3.2.4 While we believe the general governor role is straightforward and uncontroversial, there are a number of aspects that can present difficulties.

3.2.5 The first is that, while confidence in the role appears to come from experience, newer governors do not have the understanding of the role that they should. As a Panel we were concerned to hear from recently trained governors that they felt unprepared for their role. In part this was because they felt that the induction training was useful in theory but did not prepare governors for the role in practice. One said that his training 'explains the role of the governor in black and white but it is not always like that in reality'.

3.2.6 At our meeting with the clerks to governing bodies we heard how a well thought out induction and mentoring scheme can help new governors bridge this gap between the theory of training and the practice of governing body meetings. This was confirmed at our meeting with the new governors where one said that: "Having another governor to mentor and encourage was the biggest help received." We do not believe, however, that mentoring schemes are happening in all schools and would like to see this made into a clear expectation.

3.2.7 We also heard the suggestion at our meeting with new governors that there should be a mini booklet / guide for new governors that they can take around with them. This is a proposal that we support.

3.2.8 A second difficulty is that governors have to both challenge and support as part of their role. We heard from Governors Wales, for example, that 'high levels of challenge and support from governors are required at the same time'. We also heard from the Council's Head of Education Inclusion that it

can be difficult to get the right balance. A finding from the Joint Governing Body Conference held in April 2015 was that there is a 'risk that there can be "an overbalance of cheerleading" in the governing body.

- 3.2.9 Our view is that the right balance between challenge and support cannot be defined as an absolute but should be a matter for each governing body to determine. As a minimum, and given the critical importance of this issue we feel strongly that every governing body should explicitly discuss this issue as a separate agenda item at a meeting and preferably at the first meeting of the year.
- 3.2.10 A third issue that we encountered was the increasing use of link governors who have been given the responsibility to look after a particular subject area or other topic on behalf of the school. We noticed during our observations, for example, that governors needed to ask what the role entailed during discussions about who should be allocated to be which link governor. Ideally we would expect that the link governor role should be clear to all governors from the start.
- 3.2.11 Again, we would like to see a clear statement of the link governor role presented to the governing body by the head teacher for awareness and discussion.

3.3 *Ensure that general information and advice for school governors is consistent and easy to access*

- 3.3.1 Given the challenging nature of the role all governors will have questions they need answered from time to time. Every governor should expect to be able to access general information about their role in as easy, accessible and straightforward a way as possible.
- 3.3.2 We heard from Governors Wales that while there is plenty of information available, governors do not always get the information that they need. The recent joint governors' conference also pointed to the problems created by jargon and acronyms.
- 3.3.3 We found that governors were able to get their information from four different websites (Swansea Council, ERW, Estyn and Governors Wales).
- 3.3.4 We heard that the information provided was inconsistent between the websites and we found that different answers were given to the same 'frequently asked question' on different websites. While we are not suggesting that any of the information provided is incorrect we think that there is certainly the potential for confusion and unnecessary duplication.
- 3.3.5 We believe, therefore, that information for governors should be provided as far as possible in one place. Many of the people we spoke to suggested that Governors Wales should be the website of choice and we support this.
- 3.3.6 In the short term we ask that the Cabinet Member talks to Governors Wales, Estyn and ERW about applying this principle and moves to ensure that only

locally relevant information is included on the Council website and that, for all general information, governors are directed to Governors Wales.

- 3.3.7 In the medium term we would like to see a piece of work conducted that properly considers the information needs of governors from a user perspective. It would make sense if this was a national project conducted by Governors Wales. It should consider newsletters, email and social media as well as websites.

3.4 *Ensure that governors can understand the information they receive from their school*

- 3.4.1 If governors are to be able to provide effective challenge they need to have a clear understanding of how their school is performing. Governors are not necessarily education professionals and this implies two things; school governors must have a minimum level of competence when it comes to understanding data and data must be provided in a format that can be easily understood.
- 3.4.2 Our survey found that governors believe information is provided in a format that they can understand. Nearly 50% agreed that this was the case and a further 40% tended to agree. We conclude, therefore, that schools are doing a good job when providing data to governors.
- 3.4.3 There are nevertheless some areas for improvement suggested by the survey.
- 3.4.4 A number of respondents pointed to the importance of data training. The suggestion was made that it should be compulsory for all governors to attend the interpretation of data course run by the local authority. We heard good things about this course, particularly from the Swansea Association of Governing Bodies. We understand that it is already a mandatory course for new and reappointed governors; we hope that all governors can be encouraged to attend.
- 3.4.5 Other comments we received from the survey referred to consistency in the way that information was provided and the use of technical language. On this basis we agree with the idea in the Hill review that there should be a standard template for reporting school data. Indeed, from our observations of good practice schools we would say this is already happening with schools following a very similar format.
- 3.4.6 We hope that head teachers will be encouraged to review the way that they provide data and to check with their governors that they do not have any of these concerns.
- 3.4.7 As well as data, governors need to be clear about how the school is progressing with the priorities set out in the school Development Plan. We heard from the Head of Education Improvement that if schools are monitoring actions and impact robustly and relaying this information to governors, for example, with a basic red-amber-yellow-green rating, then this can help with governors challenging progress in particular priority areas.

3.5 *Encourage school governors to seek information about their school beyond head teachers' reports*

- 3.5.1 If governors are to challenge effectively they need to be able to balance what they receive from their schools with information from elsewhere.
- 3.5.2 The importance of being able to 'triangulate' data was stressed to us by the Head of Education Inclusion who suggested that governors should be both speaking to children and viewing their work.
- 3.5.3 The idea of book scrutiny came up a number of times as an important activity for governors. We understand that governors are not there to comment on professional teaching practice but they should be able to form a view of how well the children are doing independently of what they hear from the head teacher.
- 3.5.4 More generally we heard from the good practice schools that we spoke to about the value of governors having contact with a wide range of staff, not just the head teacher. We also observed this in meetings. Where link governors are able to engage directly with teachers, particularly in the classroom setting, we believe that this gives them broader knowledge base from which to contribute to governors meetings.
- 3.5.5 As well as involving staff we were also impressed with the way that the good practice schools involved pupils in their meetings through presentations or, at secondary level, through the involvement of pupil governors. Presentations in particular give governors the opportunity to see the children first hand talking about the things they have been doing in school.
- 3.5.6 At the same time we observed how governors with strong links to the community were able to bring this experience into meetings. Governors working with community projects are able to make the links to school activities and draw on community resources. We also recognise the value of governors acting as a link to the community outside of the school. Many parents maybe more willing to talk to a governor about an issue of concern than to talk to the school. This type of community intelligence can be invaluable to the governing body and may provide a useful source of challenge. Linked to this we hope that governing bodies will strive to be as representative of the community as they can be.
- 3.5.7 It is also important for governors to independently gather data about their school. To this end we believe that all governors should be accessing information through the mylocalschool website. This site, recommended by Estyn amongst others, provides a range of data for each school and a link to the most recent Estyn report. The website also provides comparative information relating to all schools and governors should be encouraged to use this to help develop challenge. We believe that the Cabinet Member should be taking steps to encourage all governors to use it.

3.6 Support individual governors to manage their own learning and development

- 3.6.1 We believe that, in order to be effective, individual governors should take responsibility for their own learning and development. While we think that this is right in any case, the reduced resource available to support training and development also provides a practical justification for this.
- 3.6.2 At the same time, we also believe that the skills and experience that governors have to offer goes beyond the formal qualifications that they may have and the formal training that they may have attended. Any discussion about skills should start with recognition of what each individual governor has to offer in the broadest sense.
- 3.6.3 One important factor, not always easy to quantify, is that of confidence. The importance of confidence in respect of challenge was raised both at the Clerks Forum and by Estyn. We feel strongly that confidence needs to be included in any conversations about learning and development.
- 3.6.4 While in our survey, 83% agreed that governors at their school had the right skills, training nevertheless emerged as the main way that council support for governors could be improved.
- 3.6.5 We heard from a number of people that the accessibility of training could be improved. Issues were highlighted around training being more accessible to governors, specifically more training at schools and outside of working hours. We also heard that some governors are not keen to come to the Civic Centre for training.
- 3.6.6 At the same time we heard that the local authority are willing to offer training in exactly this way and that ERW are looking at how training might be delivered for a cluster of schools. This fits well with a point we make later in the report about the value of all governors in a governing body attending training at the same time.
- 3.6.7 The problem seems to be one of communication. We suggest, therefore, that the training offer from both the local authority and ERW is clearly articulated and shared with governors.
- 3.6.8 We also would like to see more training delivered online where this is appropriate. Not only is this a better option for governors with busy lives, it is also more cost effective.
- 3.6.9 Given that the provision of formal training is likely to reduce over time, individual governors will need to think more broadly and more carefully about their own training and development need and how they might be met. There are three things that we think can help with this.
- 3.6.10 The first is to help governors record their training and development experiences. We heard that there is no single way of recording training as only the local authority keeps a record and school training is not provided on this. We feel that an online learning log for individual governors should be

developed so that governors can record and manage their own learning and development.

- 3.6.11 The second thing that can be done is to provide information about training opportunities in a clear and consistent way. On this point we would echo the argument we made about information earlier in the report and suggest that the different providers get together so that training opportunities can be found in a single place – ideally the Governors Wales Website.
- 3.6.12 Finally we like the idea that happens for some housing associations where the chair of the board provides mentoring for individual board members. We hope that chairs of governors can be persuaded to act in a similar way and meet with their governors once a year to discuss their training and development needs and how they can be met.
- 3.6.13 All of this taken together will, we hope, help individual governors to learn and develop. As the Cabinet Member observed in her evidence, governors may want to continue their own personal development and learn something new. This is an important benefit and should be respected.
- 3.6.14 The last point about training for individual governors is training for new governors. The Hill review suggested that new governor training arrangements should be checked to ensure that they were both of high quality and supported effective governance in practice. We are happy that the new governor training is of high quality although, as we have mentioned previously, we need to help new governors translate the theory of the training into the practice of their own governing bodies.
- 3.6.15 We would also like to see new governor training equip new governors with the skills and information they need to manage their own learning. This may already be the case but we believe that it is nevertheless worth reviewing.

3.7 Support governing bodies to manage their own learning and development

- 3.7.1 One of the underlying themes of this report is that governing bodies need to work as a group if they are to provide effective challenge. To this end we believe that governing bodies should consider their training and development needs as a group; they should develop a learning mindset.
- 3.7.2 This can happen in a number of ways.
- 3.7.3 First, time should be made at governing body meetings for the governing body to discuss their learning and development needs. This might be done in conjunction with the skills matrix that the Governors Support Unit has developed.
- 3.7.4 Second, governors attending training or any other events should be given time to feed back to the whole group about their experience and what they have learned. Governing bodies should, however, think about how this can be made meaningful and useful.

- 3.7.5 Third, governing bodies could appoint a link governor for learning and development as it relates to the governing body. Their role would be to liaise with the clerk to meet any training and development needs identified by the governing body.
- 3.7.6 Fourth, training and development activities should, wherever possible, be undertaken by the governing body as a group. This will have the added benefit of supporting teamwork as well as ensuring a consistency of approach and understanding amongst individual governors.
- 3.7.7 Fifth, challenge advisors should consider what training they might usefully provide to governing bodies.
- 3.7.8 Finally, the training and development needs of the governing body should be included within the school's self-evaluation process and school development plan.
- 3.7.9 All of these measures are ultimately the responsibility of the chair of governors working with the head teacher. We hope that the Cabinet member can encourage the chairs to take them up.

3.8 *Encourage the involvement of the whole governing body in school improvement work*

- 3.8.1 As well as considering training and development as a group we believe that governing bodies should engage, as far as possible, in improvement activities as a group.
- 3.8.2 We think that there may be a role here for the Challenge Advisers. A closer integration between Challenge Advisers and governing body was suggested to us by the Cabinet Member as something that might be useful and, to this end we think that challenge advisors should be meeting separately with the governing body to discuss their role in school improvement.
- 3.8.3 Working with governing bodies in this way will not only improve the capacity of governing bodies to challenge but will help governors to understand the challenge adviser role. We found from our survey that a high proportion of governors have never met the challenge advisor or have any idea who they are or what their role is.
- 3.8.4 Further to this we feel strongly that all governors have a role to play in the autumn core visits. We heard from ERW that this might present logistical problems but, nevertheless, we would like to see all governors fully informed if not actively involved. This is an excellent opportunity for all governors to hear directly from the Challenge Adviser about the performance of the school.
- 3.8.5 We also heard from ERW about the importance of all governors being involved in the school development plan process. We know from our own experience as school governors that this is not always the case and even in the good practice schools we visited the involvement of governors seemed to come at the end of the planning process.

- 3.8.6 We would like to see, therefore, head teachers being encouraged to involve governors as a group, not just the chair, in the school development plan process from the start.
- 3.8.7 Finally, we are aware that, in many schools, audit reports are not shared with all governors. We firmly believe that sharing audit reports with the whole governing body, and ensuring a full and frank discussion of these reports, should be a routine matter.

3.9 Work with governing bodies to fill their skill gaps

- 3.9.1 To challenge effectively a governing body needs to be able to draw on a range of skills and experiences. Neither the capabilities of any individual nor any amount of training can make up for a significant skills gap in a governing body.
- 3.9.2 One of the questions raised by the Cabinet Member at the start of this inquiry was whether there was a shortage of governors. Overall this does not seem to be the case. The vacancy rate for Swansea is about 5% and we heard that this is not high compared with other areas.
- 3.9.3 Nevertheless we were told by the clerks forum and by Swansea Association of Governing Bodies that some schools do have a problem with recruitment whether it is for parent governors or for governors with particular expertise such as for legal or financial issues. This is supported by the survey where around a third of respondents agreed that recruitment was a problem at their school. The problem, therefore, is one for a number of particular schools rather than for schools across the board.
- 3.9.4 We heard from the Manager of the School Governors' Unit that they are in the process of issuing a skills matrix for all schools to use. We feel that this will be a very useful tool and that all governing bodies should be encouraged to use it. Once again, we hope that this will be an exercise for the governing body as a whole and that it will feature as an agenda item for a meeting of the governing body.
- 3.9.5 We also saw from our observations of good practice schools that governing bodies are able to use their community governor appointments to fill identified gaps. This is good practice that we hope can be shared.
- 3.9.6 Apart from helping governing bodies to identify gaps the council should also be taking steps to help them get filled. The School Governor Unit are willing to talk to any governing body about recruitment and this should be a first step for any governing body that identifies a need. In the longer term there are other things that we would like to propose.
- 3.9.7 First the Council should consider facilitating transfers or swaps between governing bodies in order to fill skill gaps.
- 3.9.8 Second the Council should seek general applications for people to be school governors and then direct them to schools as appropriate.

- 3.9.9 Both of these proposals reflect suggestions made by Hill who suggested that outstanding chairs should act as lead practitioners and that there should be a register of aspiring and serving business leaders willing to serve as school governors.
- 3.9.10 A further issue that governing bodies need to be considering is that of succession planning, particularly for chairs. To this end we also support the idea that chairs should be 'rotated' after a set period so that the experience can be shared and built up in the group as a whole. These are ideas that each governing body will have to consider on their merits.

3.10 *Promote the governor role to the private sector and beyond*

- 3.10.1 One of the things that the council can do, that individual schools cannot, is to promote the role of the governor more widely. While business is clearly important in this respect, we also need to think about encouraging third sector and other public sector bodies to support employees to become governors.
- 3.10.2 We know that a number of private companies support their staff to be governors as it contributes to their policies for corporate responsibility. At the same time many individuals in business are keen to put something back into the community. Being a school governor does no harm to an individual's CV.
- 3.10.3 The council, therefore, should be doing all it can to promote the governor role to business and other organisations. The council already has good partnership working with the private sector, whether through the regional partnership or the city centre for example, and should make use of these relationships for this purpose. At the same time the Council should be giving positive publicity to those companies who do have progressive policies in this regard.
- 3.10.4 In terms of the third sector and other public bodies the Council should make use of the Local Service Board to promote positive messages about encouraging staff to become governors. Universities may also have a role to play in so far as the 'community service' element of degree schemes might be pointed toward experience working with governing bodies either as governors or in some other role. All governor appointments should of course be made through the existing processes

3.11 *Share good practice through local authority appointed governors*

- 3.11.1 One group of governors that the council is particularly able to influence are those appointed by the local authority. Most, although not all of these appointments are councillors.
- 3.11.2 As local authority appointees these governors have the potential to suggest and share good practice. Indeed, many are governors at more than one school governing body so can see at first hand potential improvements that might be made.

- 3.11.3 We would like to see the council taking extra steps to encourage this through, perhaps, good practice seminars aimed specifically at local authority appointed governors.
- 3.11.4 During the course of our evidence gathering we heard a number of concerns about governors appointed by the local authority. In particular we heard that they might not always have the commitment expected or were unable to attend meetings due to other commitments. The suggestion was made to us that the panel that makes these appointments could take more advice from schools, in particular where a skills audit has been undertaken, in order to ensure that the best appointments are made. While we are sympathetic to these concerns we do not feel able to take a definitive view and wish to suggest instead that this is matter for a dedicated scrutiny working group.

3.12 *Work with head teachers to ensure a culture of challenge in meetings*

- 3.12.1 The Cabinet Member suggested at the start of the inquiry that some governing bodies may be too cosy and that where the same people had been performing the governing role in a school for a long time that this could mean that the governing body would not be challenging enough.
- 3.12.2 All of the elements that we have discussed so far should create the conditions for governing body meetings to be more challenging. Where governing bodies are clear about their role, have the information and skills they need and are able to operate effectively as a group then everything should be in place for them to provide effective challenge. Meetings are, however, the arena where the challenge should actually take place. We believe, therefore, that chairs of governing bodies and head teachers should take a keen interest in how these meetings work.
- 3.12.3 Our survey found that this is generally the case. Over 75% of respondents agreed that 'governors in my school are encouraged to provide advice and robust challenge to the head teacher.' Of these 45% strongly agreed with the statement.
- 3.12.4 However, 15% of survey respondents did not agree that this was the case and the comments from the survey suggest that the picture is not always as positive as the overall figure suggests. While some talked about the need for governors to have more confidence to challenge, others pointed to the tendency for the head teacher to dominate meetings or for the chair or vice chair to provide the majority of challenge.
- 3.12.5 In our school observations we did see some very good examples of challenge. However, even in these good practice schools we also saw many governors not making any contribution to meetings or only asking for points of clarification.
- 3.12.6 In the school where we saw the widest range of contributions this was encouraged by the way that the chair conducted the meeting; promoting an open and friendly atmosphere and actively asking for contributions. We hope that all chairs can be encouraged to manage meetings in this way. We

recognise that training for chairs is crucial in developing effective chairing skills.

- 3.12.7 In our experience as scrutiny councillors we believe that there are a number of further good practice elements that will help to ensure that governing body meetings support effective challenge.
- 3.12.8 The first thing that governors need is the right questions to ask. The 'Questions for Governors to ask the Headteacher / leadership team in their support and challenge role' is a comprehensive list developed by Governors Wales. This list was suggested to us a number of times and we think that they are an excellent place to start for any governing body. We also saw a head teacher providing questions at a meeting to governors and we think that all heads should be doing this. As one of the ERW officers put it - head teachers should be talking to governors about 'what I would ask if I was you'.
- 3.12.9 The second thing that governors need is the opportunity to prepare properly. We were a little concerned to see during our observations that reports were being provided to governors at the meeting itself. At the same time we also observed reports being circulated in advance by email. This gives governors the chance to digest what can be lengthy reports and cuts down the time that head teachers need to explain reports in meetings. Instead they can say 'you should have all read the report – do you have any questions?' Reports for council meetings are legally required to be provided three working days in advance. We believe this is also reasonable for governor meetings.
- 3.12.10 A third good practice suggestion is that governing bodies hold pre meetings. The purpose of these meetings, that would be for governors only, is to allow governors to consider what they want to get out of the meeting, what questions they would like to ask and to form a collective view, if required, on a topic. We understand that meeting away from the school staff may seem inappropriate for some governors not least because a good relationship with the head is essential for any governing body. For that reason we hope that head teachers will encourage this to happen on the basis that it will strengthen both the governing body and the challenge that they are able to provide. We feel that encouraging governors to meet more informally in this way will develop strong links between governors which will enable better challenge.
- 3.12.11 Finally we would like to see minute taking that captures challenge for the benefit of the governing body not just for the purposes of Estyn inspections. We heard one example of a new governor who was surprised to find her questions for clarification recorded as challenges in the minutes. If every single question is recorded as a challenge then not only does this confuse the issue of what challenge actually means it makes it harder for governors to understand what impact their contributions are making. As we noted earlier, this is in fact something governors may be asked by Estyn.
- 3.12.12 Taken together we hope that these proposals will be useful for governing bodies as they seek to sharpen their effectiveness. We hope, therefore, that

the Cabinet Member will be able to recommend them to the chairs of governing bodies and head teachers.

3.13 *Help governing bodies to identify the support arrangements that are best for them*

- 3.13.1 All of the good practice points that we have suggested in this report need to be underpinned by effective support arrangements. However, we do not agree with the Hill review that there should be a standard regional template for this. Instead, in keeping with our emphasis on self-improvement, we believe that governing bodies should be reaching their own conclusions about the support arrangements that are best for them.
- 3.13.2 The keystone of support for any governing body is their clerk. Apart from minute taking and other meeting support clerks can have a role in organising training and ensuring that governors get the information that they need. Indeed, the knowledge that clerks have of individual governors helps them to tailor what they send out to ensure that it gets read!
- 3.13.3 We heard from the Clerks Forum that sometimes the school clerk and clerk to governors are combined into one role and sometimes they are separate. Given that there may sometimes be a perceived conflict of interest, around disciplinary issues for example, we feel that, in an ideal world, the clerk to governors should be independent of the school. We also appreciate that, given the scarce resources that schools have to work with; this may not always be possible.
- 3.13.4 Of course support comes from more places than the clerk and governing bodies need to be clear about what support is available to them and for what. Generally we think that the local authority's governors support unit provides an excellent service but we also know that this is a limited resource that will not increase and that governing bodies are entitled to purchase their support elsewhere.
- 3.13.5 There are times when governing bodies will need advice and support from the Local Authority beyond the governors unit on legal or finance issues for example. We were a little concerned to hear that emergency advice in particular was not always easy to come by. We were pleased to hear, therefore, from the Cabinet Member, that a 'single point of contact' approach is being developed to ensure that best advice comes out as fast as possible.
- 3.13.6 Overall we recognise that governing bodies have a number of choices that they can make when thinking about their support needs. We hope that they will be able to give these issues full and proper consideration so that their ability to provide effective challenge can be maximised.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

The Panel recognises that the Authority

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

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

Recommendations for Cabinet:

4.1 Long term challenges (12 months+)

- 4.1.1 Develop a council wide mechanism for filling the skills gaps identified by governing bodies either through, transfers, swaps or by matching new governors with particular skills and experience

4.2 Medium term improvements (6-12 months)

- 4.2.1 Produce a mini booklet for governors that provides a simple guide to their role
- 4.2.2 Undertake a review of information provided to school governors with ERW, Estyn and Governors Wales with a view to ensuring a shared approach that avoids duplication
- 4.2.3 Provide a standard data template to head teachers and encourage them to use it
- 4.2.4 Work with Estyn to provide information about all training opportunities for governors in one place
- 4.2.5 Move from civic centre based training provision to flexible model that combines, whole governing body, cluster school and e-learning
- 4.2.6 Develop an online learning log that governors can use to self-manage their training and development
- 4.2.7 Consider how the mandatory new governor training might help governors to think about the self-management of their training and development
- 4.2.8 Build the involvement of all governors into the Autumn Core Visits
- 4.2.9 Undertake a campaign to promote the role of governor targeted at private sector employers and partners in the public and third sector

4.3 Quick wins *(within 6 months)*

- 4.3.1 Write to the chair of governors and head teacher of each school to promote the good practice points included in this report (listed in APPENDIX A)
- 4.3.2 Write to every school governor thanking them for their work on behalf of the Council and highlighting the list of 'what every school governor should expect' (listed in APPENDIX B)
- 4.3.3 Take additional steps to publicise the good work being done by governors and governing bodies
- 4.3.4 Simplify the information on the Council website about school governors which should provide links to the Governors Wales website for all general information
- 4.3.5 Remind all schools that whole governing body and cluster school training can be arranged on request
- 4.3.6 Hold a seminar for LA appointed governors to explore their role in sharing good practice

5 FURTHER SCRUTINY NEEDED

As well as our recommendations for the Cabinet we have also come across an issue that we believe may require further scrutiny. We propose to the Scrutiny Programme Committee, therefore, that it examines:

- 5.1.1 The function and operation of the LA Governor Panel to ensure that it supports the work of governing bodies.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

Particular thanks go to Kathryn Thomas, Alison Gough and the rest of the School Governor Unit. They have provided invaluable help with the evidence gathering and with the survey in particular.

Also to Councillor Jennifer Raynor, the Cabinet Member for Education and Helen Morgan-Rees, Head of Education Inclusion for their contribution generally and at the panel meetings they attended.

To Alan Thomas, Chair of the Audit Committee for his input and support.

We are grateful to the governors and staff at Ysgol Bryn Tawe, Bishopston Comprehensive and Hafod Primary for their friendly welcome and for allowing us to observe their governors meetings.

We would also like to thank the clerks who gave us their views at a Clerks Forum Meeting, the new governors who came to speak to us informally and everyone who took the time to respond to our survey.

The Panel would like to record its thanks to the following people who came and gave evidence to us:

- Beth Thomas (New Governor)
- Betsan O Connor, Managing Director, ERW
- Councillor Beverley Hopkins, Chair of Governors, Hafod Primary School
- Dave Dorsett (New Governor)
- Dereck Roberts, Swansea Association of Governing Bodies
- Felicity Parrot (New Governor)
- Heini Gruffydd, Chair of Governors Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe
- Huw Roberts, Chair ERW Governor Support Group. School Improvement Service, NPT
- Jane Morris (Director), Governors Wales
- Jeff Bird, Head Teacher Bishopston Comprehensive School
- Jeff Bowen (Chair), Swansea Association of Governing Bodies
- Jon Roper, Chair of Governors Bishopston Comprehensive School
- Kathryn Thomas, Manager School, Governor and Student Services
- Kelly Small (New Governor)
- Maldwyn Pryse, HMI, Estyn
- Rachel Webb, Head Teacher, Hafod Primary School
- Simon Davies, Head Teacher, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe

7 ABOUT THE INQUIRY PANEL

The **School Governance Inquiry Panel** is a team of Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet. Their role is to examine a strategic issue of concern and to make recommendations about how policies and services can be improved.

Members of the Panel

Fiona Gordon (Convener)

Dave Anderson-Thomas (Statutory co-optee)

Anthony Colburn

David Cole

Professor Catherine Farrell, University of South Wales (Co-optee)

Lynda James

Sarah Joiner (Statutory Co-optee)

Jeff Jones

Hazel Morris

Cheryl Philpott

Ceinwen Thomas

Linda Tyler-Lloyd

The inquiry was supported by Dave Mckenna from the Council's Scrutiny Unit.


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 01792 637732

APPENDIX A

Ensuring Effective Challenge: Good Practice Advice for Chairs of Governors and Head Teachers

1. Ensure that all new governors have a full induction onto the governing body and an experienced governor to mentor them. This should include a clear statement of the commitment required.
2. Include an agenda item on 'the role of governors' for the first meeting of the governing body each year. This item should give the governing body an opportunity to discuss the main elements of their role, what 'challenge' means and the proper balance between support and challenge that is right for that school. Where link governors are used then these roles should also be discussed.
3. Ensure that all governors have received data training and are confident in their understanding and use of the data provided to them
4. Formally check with the governing body that they are happy with the way that data is being provided to them
5. Put arrangements in place for governors to view children's work and support from staff to help them to interpret what they are viewing
6. Involve a wide variety of staff in governing body meetings and encourage them to lead items on their subject areas
7. Involve a wide variety of children in governing body meetings through presentations about the work that they are doing. Secondary schools should involve pupil governors in governing body meetings.
8. Encourage governors to report on their involvement with any community activities in order to strengthen links between the school and the community
9. Ask the governing body to consider whether they feel that they are broadly representative of the community
10. Encourage governors to use the MyLocalSchool site as an independent source of data
11. Consider whether the chair can provide an annual learning and development interview for every governor to help them identify priorities and opportunities
12. Include an agenda item on 'Learning and Development needs for the Governing Body as a whole' at a meeting and in order to identify priorities and opportunities
13. Include time on all agendas for governors to feedback from any learning or training events they have attended

14. Consider giving one governor specific responsibility for working with the clerk to support the learning and development needs of the governing body
15. Look for opportunities, whenever possible, for the governing body to undertake learning and training as a whole group
16. Ensure that reports from Audit are shared with the whole governing body
17. Invite the Challenge Adviser to attend and contribute to meetings
18. Liaise with the Challenge Adviser to see what training they might provide for the governing body
19. Reference the training and development needs of the governing body within the School Development Plan
20. Consider involving the whole governing body in the School Development Plan process from the start
21. Consider the skills matrix, issued by the Local Authority, at a governing body meeting in order to identify gaps in the governing body
22. Consider how community governor appointments might be used to fill any skills gaps in the governing body
23. Work with the School Governor Unit to fill a significant gaps once these have been identified
24. Undertake succession planning for chairs of governors
25. Consider fixed terms for chairs of governors so that the experience of sharing can be shared
26. Consider whether all governors are contributing to governing body meetings and take steps to encourage this if necessary
27. Make sure that all governors are clear about the questions they should be asking (the questions available from Governors Wales are an excellent starting point)
28. Give governors time to prepare for meetings by sending reports out in advance
29. Ask the governing body to consider holding governor-only pre meetings to help the chair manage the involvement of all governors
30. Ensure that the minutes capture evidence of challenge but do not confuse this with questions seeking clarification
31. Ask the Governing Body to formally consider whether their support needs are being met at a meeting

APPENDIX B

What Every School Governor Should Expect

1. Thanks and recognition for the work that you do
2. Introductory training when you start (a mandatory course is provided by the Local Authority)
3. A clear understanding of your general role and of any additional roles that you are asked to perform
4. An induction onto your governing body and a mentor from the existing governors to guide you
5. A clear understanding of the commitment you are expected to make
6. Clear information about being a governor from Governors Wales, ERW, Estyn and the City and County of Swansea
7. Clear information from your school about how it is performing
8. Data training to help you understand the information that is given to you by the school (a mandatory course is provided by the Local Authority)
9. The opportunity to view the children's work and support from teachers to help you to understand what you are seeing
10. Contact with staff other than the head teacher both at and outside of governing body meetings
11. To hear from pupils at governing body meetings either through presentations about their work or, in secondary schools, through the involvement of pupil governors
12. Access to information about how your school is performing that is provided independently from your school (the MyLocalSchool site is excellent for data and gives a link to the most recent Estyn inspection report for your school)
13. Information about a range of learning and training opportunities
14. Opportunities to discuss your own training and development needs and the training and development needs of the governing body as a whole
15. To be involved in the School Development Plan process from an early stage
16. Sight of any Audit reports for your school
17. To be part of a governing body that has all of the skills it needs
18. A clear idea of what questions you should be asking
19. Meeting papers in plenty of time to allow you to prepare for meetings

Agenda Item 8

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

PROGRESS REPORT – SCHOOLS SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL

Purpose	The committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panel conveners will attend the committee on a regular basis to provide a progress report, updating the committee on headlines from their Panel's work and impact.
Content	This report focuses on the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel. Councillor Fiona Gordon, convener of the Panel, will provide the update.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure awareness / understanding of the work of the Panel• Consider its effectiveness and impact• Consider any issues arising and action required
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener of the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel
Lead Officer & Report Author	Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01792 637256 E-mail: michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel is one of four Performance Panels that have been established by the committee. Whilst the work of Inquiry Panels 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 Performance Panels represent regular monitoring of particular services.
- 1.2 Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services.
- 1.3 The committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panels Conveners will therefore attend the committee throughout the year to provide a progress report to enable a more detailed discussion on the work of each Panel, achievements, effectiveness and impact. The committee may also need to consider any issues arising from Panel activities which may have an impact on the overall scrutiny work programme. These regular

reports ensure awareness amongst the committee as well as visibility across the council and public.

- 1.4 This report focuses on the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel. Councillor Fiona Gordon, convener of the Panel, will provide a progress report. To focus the discussion, a short written report is attached as **Appendix 1**. This includes a summary of Panel activities, correspondence between the Panel and Cabinet Members, proposals made and impact.
- 1.5 The current Membership of the Panel (9) is as follows:

Labour Councillors: 4

Beverley Hopkins	Hazel Morris
Fiona Gordon (CONVENER)	Robert Smith

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 3

Mike Day	Cheryl Philpott
Paul Meara	

Conservative Councillor: 1

Anthony Colburn	
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Other:

Statutory Co-opted Members: 1

David Anderson-Thomas	Parent Governor
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2. Legal Implications

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

3. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the panel is to: provide ongoing challenge to schools 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 (see attached work timetable) and the work completed since the last update in September includes:

- a) In September the panel meet twice to look at the performance and support for Looked After Children and for Gypsy Traveller Children and will also to review the work of the School Improvement Service.
- b) In October the Panel also met twice to meet with the Challenge Advisor, Headteacher and the Chair of Governors of a Primary School and again to carry out pre-decision scrutiny on a report about the future of Education Other Than At School Services
- c) In November the Panel looked at the Post Inspection Action Plan arising from the Estyn Inspection 1 year on plus the Annual Audit of Schools report.
- d) Over this period the Panel has also kept up to date with individual school Estyn Inspections publications and any advisory/practice documents including for example: relevant Estyn Inspection outcomes for Swansea, Estyn and other guidance information.

3. Achievements / Impact

The convener's letters to the Cabinet Member have raised some of the points below, some requiring a response from the Cabinet member which have been received. Examples from letters include:

- The Panel met with a primary school in October that had been identified as causing concern, speaking to the new Headteacher, chair of governors and the allocated challenge advisor. They were please to find improvements made with the development of an effective management team and all the building blocks in place for improvement moving forward.
- The Panel at a meeting in September suggested that skills and good practice learnt in developing Gypsy Traveller education at Cefn Hengoed Community School is shared with others; particularly EOTAS services. This was seen as a helpful comment by cabinet member and it was passed on to all relevant parties who have been encouraged to develop this suggestion to achieve practical outcomes.
- The issue of tracking the progress of pupils was also discussed and the panel were concerned to hear that there had been little progress being made by schools with regard to using the pupil tracking aspect of the SIMS package. The panel felt that this needed to be addressed. So they made a recommendation to the Cabinet member 'the use of the pupil tracking aspect of the SIMS computer programme is reviewed to understand why it is not being used and remove any barriers to schools making use of this facility'.

4. Future Work Programme

In January the Panel will look at the Annual Education Performance Report which includes all the verified performance data for Swansea along with comparisons with other local authorities. The will also consider the school categorisation matrix resulting from the autumn term school visits.

TIMETABLE/PLAN OF WORK 2015/2016
Schools Performance Scrutiny Panel

Meeting date and venue	Item to be discussed
Meeting 1 18 May 15 – 4.00pm Room 110, Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree Panel work programme for the coming year • Update on current position with EMLAS • Briefing on the Education Improvement Grant • Revisit Elective Home Education letter and Cabinet Response
Meeting 2 18 June 15 – 4.00pm CR6, Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERW Business Plan (Betsan O'Connor, Managing Director ERW, Lindsay Harvey, Helen Morgan-Rees) • Home to School Transport – consultation on policy changes
Meeting 3 16 July 14 – 4.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked after Children Educational – Performance and support • Gypsy Traveller Children Education – Performance and support MEETING CANCELLED
Meeting 3 13 Aug 15 – 4.00pm	SEN/ALN reform – What are we doing around this reform agenda
Meeting 4 10 Sep 15 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked after Children Educational - Performance and support (Sue Phillips, LAC Co-ordinator) • Gypsy Traveller Children Education - Performance and support (Sue Hollister, Headteacher, Cefn Hengoed School)
**Extra meeting 5 21 Sep 15 – 4pm 3.4.1, Civic Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of curriculum change including implications for schools • Reviewing the work of the School Improvement Service Helen Morgan Rees (Hub Head of School Improvement)
Meeting 6 8 Oct 15 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	School 1 Casllwchwr Primary School (Headteacher and Chair of Governors) <i>Pre meeting with Challenge Advisor</i>
**Extra meeting 7 14 Oct 15 – 4.00pm	Pre-decision Scrutiny on the Future of Education Other Than At School Services
Meeting 8 3 Nov 15 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Inspection Action Plan progress report - arising from Estyn Inspection 1 year on (Cabinet report 15 Oct 15 - forward look) Cabinet Member Cllr Raynor and CEO Lindsay Harvey
Meeting 9 3 Dec 15 – 4.00pm	Meeting cancelled
Meeting 10 21 Jan 16 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	Annual Education Performance Reporting including pupil attendance and exclusion data (verified data); and Latest School Categorisation <i>Lindsay Harvey, Chief Education Officer and Helen Morgan Rees, Hub Head of School Improvement.</i>
Meeting 11 18 Feb 16 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How schools are sharing good practice • Feedback from schools on good practice examples (<i>contact schools</i>) Blog, email and put in education newsletter
Meeting 12 17 Mar 16 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	School 2 – to be contacted Brynhyfryd Primary School (Headteacher and Chair of Governors) <i>Pre meeting with Challenge Advisor for school</i> Local ward members invited (Cllr P Black, Cllr G Thomas, Cllr C Holley)
Meeting 13 14 Apr 16 – 4.00pm CR3b, Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate your year • Plan for year ahead

As at: 04/01/2016

Agenda Item 9

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

SCRUTINY DISPATCHES – QUARTERLY IMPACT REPORT

Purpose	To present a draft of the quarterly report from the committee to council on the impact of scrutiny.
Content	The report appends the draft 'Scrutiny Dispatches' report, which headlines recent activities and impact for council and public awareness.
Councillors are being asked to	approve content of the draft 'Scrutiny Dispatches' for submission to Council.
Lead Councillor(s)	Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for the overall work programme, including the various informal scrutiny activities, and monitoring progress to ensure that the work is effective.
- 1.2 The committee is also concerned about improving communication and public engagement, and getting more coverage in the media so that the public are more aware of the work of scrutiny.
- 1.3 In order to provide 'headlines' from scrutiny activity and give the work of scrutiny greater visibility, both for council and public audience, a quarterly 'Scrutiny Dispatches' report is published.

2. Scrutiny Dispatches

- 2.1 The next quarterly report has been drafted for approval (**attached**). This will then be submitted to 28 January Council meeting for discussion.
- 2.2 'Scrutiny Dispatches' is intended to demonstrate scrutiny achievements and outcomes. It is effectively a regular report about impact and how scrutiny is making a difference, rather than a descriptive account of scrutiny activities. The aim is to focus on and promote a small number

of 'significant stories'. A chair's roundup is also featured to highlight other work.

- 2.3 As well as being a report to council the content will be shared more widely, with advice and support from the Council's Communications Team and utilising social media. This should help raise awareness of the work and impact of scrutiny, and hopefully encourage more public engagement and participation in scrutiny. It is anticipated that some of the impact stories within Scrutiny Dispatches will generate press releases.
- 2.4 In order to ensure that people are informed more generally about the work of scrutiny a monthly information list is also being produced. This list is shared via an email subscription, and includes details of:
- Forthcoming panel and working group meetings
 - Topics being looked at by scrutiny
 - Progress with current activities

3. Legal Implications

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

4. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

‘How scrutiny councillors are making a difference’

Championing Children’s Rights

(Lead: Councillor Mary Jones, Fiona Gordon, Paxton Hood-Williams)

Scrutiny is championing children’s rights in Swansea.

Scrutiny Councillors have identified ways in which they can champion children’s rights in Swansea, and ask the right questions to assess the work of the Council in this area.

For relevant scrutiny activities questioning strategies are going to be tailored, based on the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and the following were identified as useful questions:

- Is the work being scrutinised designed/planned in the best interests of children and young people?
- Does the work being scrutinised:
 - foster good relationships between different groups?
 - advance equality of opportunity between different groups?
 - eliminate/reduce discrimination and/or social exclusion and how does it do this?
- Does the work being scrutinised contain adequate provision to safeguard those involved?
- Does the work being scrutinised offer resources, skills and contributions necessary for the survival and full development of children and young people?
- What consultation and engagement has been undertaken? Does it meet the National Participation Standards for Children and Young People?

This is in response to two key developments:

- Council agreement (September 2013) to embed the UNCRC within the Council’s policy framework; and
- the launch of a Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme by Cabinet (November 2014) which provided an overview of the arrangements in place to demonstrate ‘due regard’ to the UNCRC and consider the rights of the child in decision making processes.

A training session was also held in October to develop understanding of children’s rights and the policy context within which they sit in Swansea.

The Scrutiny Programme Committee recently monitored progress on the implementation of the Council’s Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme and recognised a lot of good work, but made a number of suggestions:

- Making a session on ‘Children’s Rights’ part of the councillor induction programme
- Clearer mapping of schools to show the level of engagement with the Rights Respecting School initiative.
- Close working with Governors (which include councillors) in encouraging those schools not already engaged in the Rights Respecting School Initiative, as well as supporting the rights of children and young people generally.
- More use of social media to develop the involvement and participation of children and young people.
- Promotion of the City & County of Swansea as ‘rights respecting’ in corporate branding.

Public Question Time introduced

(Lead: Councillor Mary Jones)

Public Question Time is now on the scrutiny agenda.

There is now more opportunity for the public to get involved in the work of scrutiny and participate in meetings. Scrutiny councillors are committed to getting more members of the public contributing in the work of scrutiny so that they can reflect their views.

Following a commitment to develop opportunities for public participation a 'Public Question Time' will be in the agenda of future Scrutiny Programme Committee meetings, starting with the meeting on 11 January 2016.

Public Question Time will operate in the same way that it operates at Council and Cabinet. In practice for the committee this means:

- Any member of the public present may put a question to the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and any Cabinet Member(s) present on matters included on the open part of the agenda.
- A 10 minute period will be allocated for Public Question Time
- No notice has to be given of a Public Question but any submitted in advance will receive priority within the allotted 10 minutes.

The introduction of a Public Question Time is one action to help deliver agreed priorities for scrutiny. Public Question Time is in addition to existing opportunities for the public to suggest questions to the committee for Cabinet Member Question & Answer Sessions, as well as make requests for scrutiny.

Developing a 'can do' culture

(Lead: Councillor Andrew Jones)

Cabinet has agreed to implement recommendations contained within a report on the council's corporate culture made by scrutiny councillors.

An in-depth inquiry on the Council's Corporate Culture found that there was no one overarching culture within the Council, rather a number of shared cultures that operated within the Council to bind us together as one organisation. The challenges faced by cuts to Council budgets and the implications of public sector re-organisation posed a serious threat to that notion of a shared culture. Therefore as Councillors, management and staff we had a shared responsibility to respond to these challenges by developing a "can do culture" that ensures the citizens of Swansea continue to receive the best Council service possible.

The evidence showed that there was a genuine will and enthusiasm from all involved to develop a "can do culture" throughout the Council. However this can only be achieved through the development of a clear shared vision that encourages innovation, values staff and puts in place mechanisms that empower and motivate all involved to deliver high quality services.

Cabinet agreed all 19 recommendations made by scrutiny and will draw up an action plan for taking them forward over the coming months. The Panel will reconvene during 2016 to monitor implementation of recommendation and assess the impact of this inquiry.

This topic was chosen for scrutiny because as a Council our corporate culture underpins everything we do, from how we engage with our citizens and provide services to how we treat our staff and how we grow and develop as an organisation. The Corporate Culture Scrutiny Inquiry Panel originally reported its findings and recommendations to Cabinet on 20 August. The Cabinet response was made on 15 October.

Shining a light on Mental Health

(Lead: Councillor Mary Jones)

Scrutiny is looking at a serious issue which has for too long been neglected – children’s mental health.

A new scrutiny inquiry has been agreed, looking at ways in which the council and its partners can reduce the demand for specialist child & adolescent mental health services. There is concern because the number of referrals into specialist child and adolescent mental health services has doubled in the last 4 years and resources are getting scarcer. Specialist Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services are commissioned by the Local Health Board.

The Panel’s work will lead to:

- Evidenced proposals that will lead to better access to child & adolescent mental health services
- Increased councillor understanding about how child and adolescent mental health services are delivered and the effectiveness of the services
- Greater public awareness of child and adolescent mental health services.

This will be carried out by a cross-party Panel of scrutiny councillors, but they need your help. A ‘call for evidence’ has been issued. Over the next few months the Panel will be seeking a range of perspectives into this area so that they can propose practical changes for improvement.

Interested groups or individuals are encouraged to submit written evidence to the inquiry by email to scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk. The Panel may contact you to discuss your evidence. All evidence that is submitted will usually be published as part of the inquiry, unless specifically requested otherwise.

Chair’s Roundup:

This is my second quarterly roundup of the work of [scrutiny](#).

Improving Social Services

Some good news! The Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) has recently praised our scrutiny of child & family services and adult services, noting “effective and well managed scrutiny arrangements”. This is recognition of the hard work of both the Child & Family Services and Transformation of Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panels, and their contribution to improving social services. The report said that our work programmes are clear, both panels’ scrutiny of performance by councillors is robust and challenging, there is evidence of member led policy development and challenge to decision making and we’re getting our message out there through social media and other means, to improve information about scrutiny activities. Amongst these positive comments inspectors noted close working with the executive and officers. These comments can be found in the recently published Performance Evaluation Report for 2014/15.

Developing the Relationship with Audit Committee

We have been looking at developing the relationship between the Scrutiny Programme Committee and the Audit Committee. The committee recently met with the Chair of the Audit Committee, Alan Thomas, who told us that he was pleased with the relationship between the two committees, coordination, and mechanisms for dialogue and raising issues. He was also pleased at being able to participate in the Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference. He did not feel there were any concerns about duplication in work plans. He also remarked at the significant amount of scrutiny being undertaken and work completed, and praised the commitment of those scrutiny councillors involved and management of the overall work programme.

Scrutiny of Education through Regional Working

We have been working with the six councils participating in Education through Regional Working (ERW). ERW is the regional school improvement service and we have been meeting with colleagues across the region in order to coordinate scrutiny work across the region and ensure a consistent approach. A Scrutiny Councillor Group has been set up to support this. I am pleased that the Swansea Scrutiny Team is providing support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW. The Group will meet for the first time in Swansea during March 2016.

Holding Cabinet Members to account.

Each month's Scrutiny Programme Committee meeting features a Q & A session with a Cabinet Member in order to hold them to account for their work. As I write we are due to meet with the Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty in January and Cabinet Member for Adults and Vulnerable People in February. We have developed a programme for all Cabinet Members to come before the committee during the year. Acting as a 'critical friend' we question and challenge them on their priorities, actions, achievement and impact. We invite members of the public and all scrutiny councillors to contribute ideas to ensure the committee asks the right questions. A summary of each session and views of the committee are published in the form of letter to relevant Cabinet Members. Over the last few months we have put questions to the Cabinet Members for Education, Transformation & Performance, and the Leader / Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy.

Working in different ways to look at some issues.

Adopting a more light-touch approach, some of the topics which we have looked at recently through one-off Working Groups have included Civic Events and Local Flood Risk Management, sharing our views and recommendations with relevant Cabinet Members. Others in the pipeline include a look at the issue of Tethered Horses, and progress in relation to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

Co-opting Scrutiny Performance Panel Conveners

The valuable contribution of Scrutiny Performance Panel Conveners has been recognised by their co-option to the Scrutiny Programme Committee. We recognised that they have developed knowledge and expertise about specific services and would add value to the work of committee when those areas are being discussed, with their contribution to questioning. I think there is also wider benefit to the work programme from co-option, enabling better co-ordination between the work of the Committee and Performance Panels.

Making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible.

Something really important to us is making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible. That's why we have created an on-line '[publications page](#)'. Here you can access all scrutiny agenda packs, reports and letters as well as responses from Cabinet Members. Filters enable easy access to publications by topic, publication type or meeting type. Publications linked to a specific piece of work can now be viewed in one place. This initiative follows a suggestion from Wales Audit Office during the recent corporate assessment.

We want to know if people have any issues of concern.

Even with a work programme established [requests for scrutiny](#) from all scrutiny councillors or members of the public can be made throughout the year. I will consider any issue raised and, with the committee's agreement, determine how best scrutiny can deal with it to make a difference.

Connect with Scrutiny:

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Bulletin Board: www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk

Agenda Item 10

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Purpose	This report reviews the current scrutiny work programme.
Content	The current work programme is described, including the plan for future committee meetings, and progress of panels and working groups.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• accept or make changes to the scrutiny work programme• plan for the committee meetings ahead• review progress of established panels and working groups• consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny
Lead Councillor	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair
Lead Officer	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

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 The work of scrutiny aims to:

- help improve services
- provide an effective challenge to the executive
- engage members in the development of policies, strategies and plans
- engage the public

1.3 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 scrutiny time and resources.

It also needs to be:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available
- relevant to council priorities
- adding value and having maximum impact
- coordinated and avoid duplication

- 1.4 The work of scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the committee itself, by establishing informal panels or via one-off working groups.
- 1.5 Scrutiny will regularly send letters to Cabinet Members communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, by producing reports. Inquiry panels will 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.
- 1.6 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 scrutiny activities are published on-line: <http://swansea.gov.uk/scrutinypublications>.

2. Scrutiny Work Programme

2.1 Scrutiny Programme Committee:

- 2.1.1 The committee's work plan for the year ahead is attached as **Appendix 1**. This includes a schedule of future Cabinet Member Question & Answer Sessions. This should be kept under review to ensure it represents a robust and effective plan.
- 2.1.2 Committee members should review and confirm items for the next and future meetings giving specific consideration to who should attend so that meetings are always well planned and prepared for, e.g. information required and key questions that the committee wishes to ask. The committee will have the opportunity to review priorities and introduce issues of concern as and when they arise, e.g. pre-decision scrutiny which may require extra meetings.
- 2.1.3 Pre-decision scrutiny – the committee is invited to consider the available information on future cabinet business (see Forward Look attached as **Appendix 2**) and any opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny, taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications. 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.

2.1.4 Committee Review - the review of the Gypsy & Traveller Site Search Process (commenced in February 2014) has been carried out via special meetings of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. Evidence gathering has now been completed and a final report is being prepared to conclude this review. It is anticipated that this will be presented to committee for agreement by the end of January / early February.

2.2 Panels and Working Groups:

2.2.1 **Appendix 3a & 3b** provide a snapshot of progress with the informal panels and working groups established by the committee to carry out specific activities and their current position.

2.2.2 For further information a contact list for lead scrutiny members and officers is also contained in **Appendix 4**.

3. **Public Requests for Scrutiny / Councillor Calls for Action**

3.1 None.

4. **Financial Implications**

4.1 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.

5. **Legal Implications**

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

Background papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Committee Work Plan 2015/16

Appendix 2: Forward Look (Cabinet Business)

Appendix 3a: Overall Scrutiny Work Programme Timetable 2015/16

Appendix 3b: Progress of Panels and Working Groups

Appendix 4: Scrutiny Councillor / Officer Leads

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan

Standing Agenda Items:

Scrutiny Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain overview on scrutiny work, monitor progress, and coordinate as necessary To plan for future committee meetings including key expectations e.g. key questions to explore, witnesses / information required To review future cabinet business and consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny To consider any councillor / public requests for scrutiny and/or Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA)
Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups (including appointment of conveners) and subsequent changes
Scrutiny Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review scrutiny letters and Cabinet Member responses arising from scrutiny activities
Scrutiny Dispatches (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve content of Dispatches prior to reporting to Council, ensuring visibility and awareness of headlines from scrutiny activities, achievements and impact (12 Oct; 11 Jan; 11 Apr)
Scrutiny Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about upcoming and feedback from recent scrutiny events (e.g. relevant regional / national scrutiny development & improvement Issues; WLGA / CfPS network meetings)

Items for Specific Meetings:

Meeting	Reports	Purpose
13 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Leader of the Council
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Chris Holley, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Inquiry Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Andrew Jones, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the annual report of the work of overview & scrutiny for the municipal year 2014/15, as required by the constitution
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Programme 2015-16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider feedback from Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference and proposals for the work programme, including work plan for future committee meetings

10 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Services for Children & Young People
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Child & Family Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Support and Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on training and development needs develop knowledge and skills • Consideration of services on offer from the WLGA
14 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Healthy City
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & Young People’s Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider report from Director – People on involvement of scrutiny in assessing the Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme, and possible actions in relation to training needs and becoming champions for this work
12 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Local Service Board Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Inquiry Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Cheryl Philpott, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Local Government Performance Bulletin 2014-15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure awareness of content of the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales report and use to support the scrutiny of service performance
9 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from Director - Corporate Services, on council priorities, strategic challenges, key decisions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme – Compliance and Progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss annual progress report on implementation of Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme, and consider impact (scheme was agreed by Cabinet in October 2014)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny / Audit Committee Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Audit to attend to share work plan of Audit Committee. Discussion to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mutual awareness and understanding of respective work plans and co-ordination - issues relating to work programmes can be discussed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Chris Holley, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
14 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Child & Family Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-decision Scrutiny: City Centre Development Sites – Selection of Preferred Developer(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To undertake pre-decision scrutiny of proposed Cabinet report, of the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration, and decision scheduled for 19 November cabinet meeting.
11 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Services for Anti Poverty
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Inquiry Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Fiona Gordon, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
8 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Services for Adults & Vulnerable People
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Chris Holley, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
14 Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime & Disorder Scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership to attend to provide information and take questions on the performance of the Partnership to enable committee to explore plans / objectives, achievements, impact, challenges etc
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Child & Family Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Inquiry Reports: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from the

11 Apr	▪ CAMHS	convener, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	• Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel	• Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	• Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board	• To consider implication of introduction of statutory Public Services Boards (in place of Local Service Boards) through the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill.
9 May	• Cabinet Member Question Session	• Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation
	• Progress Report – Local Service Board Performance Panel	• Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	• Annual Work Plan Review	• To reflect on the year’s work, achievements, experiences, issues, ideas for future scrutiny

Other:

- Further special meetings re. Gypsy & Traveller Site Provision – Review of Process
- Referrals from other council bodies, such as cabinet

APPENDIX 2 - FORWARD PLAN 2015 – 2016

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
21st Century Schools Update - FPR 7 - Pentrehafod Comprehensive.	To appoint a Contractor for the first phase of the two stage construction process. To approve the submission of a planning application for the phased programme of works at Pentrehafod Comprehensive school to include the refurbishment, curriculum remodelling and extension of existing school buildings. This work will also require the demolition of the existing demountables which are no longer fit for purpose.	Sarah Weir	Cabinet Member - Education	Cabinet	21 Jan 2016	Open

APPENDIX 2 - FORWARD PLAN 2015 – 2016

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<p>Review of Abergelli and The Beeches</p>	<p>The Beeches Alternative Day Service (Uplands) and Abergelli Alternative Day Service (Fforestfach) provide day time support and activities for older people with a learning disability (50+ is an age guide) and some people with a learning disability who need a slower pace of life (yet are still active) than the local day services are able to provide (as they cater for anyone over 18 years). The services run Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4pm. All service users have received their annual review which has identified a range of alternative support to the day services. This means that only one day service is now required. Abergelli ADS is the preferred option as it has better access to people with mobility needs.</p>	<p>Alex Williams</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Services for Adults and Vulnerable People</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>21 Jan 2016</p>	<p>Open</p>

APPENDIX 2 - FORWARD PLAN 2015 – 2016

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Review of Employment Training	The report is outlining options for the future delivery of Employment Training and seeks approval to transfer the work based learning function currently undertaken by the Lifelong Learning and Employment Training Service (LLETS) to Gower College.	Chris Sivers	Cabinet Member - Education	Cabinet	21 Jan 2016	Fully exempt

APPENDIX 2 - FORWARD PLAN 2015 – 2016

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<p>Swansea Change Fund - Discretionary Grant Funding Of the Third Sector Re-commissioning Report</p>	<p>The report contains options for the re-commissioning of Swansea Change Fund – Discretionary Grant Funding for the Third Sector. These funds are allocated to voluntary and community groups for activities and services that support and add value to the Councils priorities for the benefit of people living in the City and County of Swansea. A decision is sought in order to progress the most suitable option going forward taking into consideration the possible impacts on third sector organisations and their service users, whilst ensuring best value.</p>	<p>Jane Whitmore</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Anti-Poverty</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>21 Jan 2016</p>	<p>Fully exempt</p>
<p>The Move to an In-House managed ICT Service Progress Update.</p>	<p>To provide cabinet with an update on progress with the exit from the Capgemini Contract and implementation of an in house managed ICT service and related developments.</p>	<p>Jo Harley</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Finance and Strategy (Leader)</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>21 Jan 2016</p>	<p>Open</p>

APPENDIX 2 - FORWARD PLAN 2015 – 2016

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
21st Century Schools Programme Update - FPR 7 - Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr.	21st Century Schools (Band A) Programme Contract award for curriculum-led remodelling at Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr including to incorporate the former Gowerton Primary School infant site and buildings.	Alayne Smith	Cabinet Member - Education	Cabinet	18 Feb 2016	Open
Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review	In January 2015 Cabinet approved a draft Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review (SCCSFR), which identifies a new role for the City centre, and its potential for regeneration. The report was approved as a basis for public consultation, and this current report outlines the consultation exercise that has been undertaken, summarises the comments received, and recommends refinements to the SCC SFR and its adoption as Council policy.	Gail Evans	Cabinet Member - Enterprise, Development and Regeneration	Cabinet	18 Feb 2016	Open

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APPENDIX 2 - FORWARD PLAN 2015 – 2016

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<p>The Redevelopment of the Surface Level Car Park at Mariner Street, Swansea.</p> <p>Page 80</p>	<p>In February 2008 Cabinet approved the heads of terms to enable the development agreement and all associated documentation to be completed and the development to proceed. The recession unfortunately halted progress. The Developer is now in a position to move forward. The scheme is funded and this report seeks support for the updated heads of terms and recommendations to secure delivery.</p>	<p>Lee Richards</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Enterprise, Development and Regeneration</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>18 Feb 2016</p>	<p>Fully exempt</p>
<p>Delivering for Swansea - Corporate Plan 2015/17 - update for 2016/17.</p>	<p>To publish updates and revisions to the Council's Corporate Plan for 2015/17.</p>	<p>Richard Rowlands</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Finance and Strategy (Leader)</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>17 Mar 2016</p>	<p>Open</p>

Scrutiny Work Programme 2015-16

Appendix 3a

ACTIVITY	November	December	January	February	March	April
Scrutiny Programme Committee	9 18*	14	11	8	14	11
Inquiry Panels						
Current:						
School Governance (started May 2015)	2 19 30					
CAMHS (started Oct 15)	17	1 15	19	2 16		
Building Sustainable Communities			14	27 3 17	3 14	14
Follow Up:						
Inward Investment (Cabinet 20/1/15)					3	
Streetscene (Cabinet 14/4/15)			20			
Social Care at Home (Cabinet 20/8/15)						
Corporate Culture (Cabinet 15/10/15)						
Education Inclusion (Cabinet 19/11/15)						
	Key for Inquiries:					
	Planning		Evidence Gathering		Final Report	Cabinet
Performance Panels						
Service Improvement & Finance	11	9	20	10	9	13
Schools	3		21	18	17	14
Child & Family Services	23	21	18	15	14	11
Local Service Board (multi-agency panel)		7	4	22	21	25
Other Panels / Working Groups						
Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel	16	14	11	8	7	4
Building Sustainable Communities (pre-inquiry)		26				
ERW Regional Councillor Group					11	
Local Flood Risk Management		14				
Civic Events	12					
Welsh Housing Quality Standard						
Tethered Horses			7			

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) **Education Inclusion** (convenor: Cllr Cheryl Philpott)

Key Question: How can the Council improve education for those children who are other than at school?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel’s final report was presented to the Cabinet on 19 November. A response to the recommendations from Cabinet is expected within two months.

Projected End Date: Complete

b) **School Governance** (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

Key Question: How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The evidence gathering has now been completed and the Evidence Pack has been published on the scrutiny publications page. The Convener of the Panel will present the final report to the January meeting of the Committee.

Projected End Date: Complete

c) **Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

Key Question: How is the Council working with health and other partners to reduce demand for specialist child & adolescent mental health services?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel met on 15 December. It gathered evidence from:

- Cllr Harris on the impact of Western Bay on CAMHS services

- Janice Hall, Swansea Locality Manager, Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service.

The Panel next meets on 2 February and will engage with the SCVS Mental Health Forum.

Projected End Date: April 2016

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups:

a) Building Sustainable Communities (convener: Terry Hennegan)

The work commenced on 26 November with a pre-inquiry working group where Officers attended and provide an overview of the Building Sustainable Communities Corporate Priority and particularly the Community Action Strand. The working group has agreed to have an inquiry and will discuss their scope, work timetable and consultation activity at a meeting on 14 January.

3. 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	
Services for Looked After Children	17 Sep 2013	14	1	0	15 Jul 2014 (Follow up complete)
Public Transport	12 Nov 2013	13	1	0	20 Oct 2014 (Follow up complete)
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	3 Dec 2014 (Follow up complete)
Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	17 Nov 2014 (Follow up complete)
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	24 Jun 2015 (Follow up complete)
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	11 Jun 2015 (Follow up complete)
Inward investment	20 Jan 2015	10	0	2	14 Jul 2015 Further follow up (3 March 2016)

Public Engagement	17 Feb 2015	15	1	0	25 Aug 2015 (Follow up complete)
Streetscene	14 Apr 2015	14	4	3	20 Jan 2016
Social Care at Home	20 Aug 2015	16	5	1	May 2016
Corporate Culture	15 Oct 2015	19	0	0	Jul 2016

4. Performance Panels:

a) Service Improvement & Finance (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

The Panel met on the 9 December to consider the Annual Performance Report and return for Libraries and the Welsh Public Library Standards. It also looked at the Annual Performance Monitoring report for Recycling and Landfill and an overview of the work of Procurement. The Panel noted the successes and issues of performance in both areas and discussed the role of procurement strategy, category management and procurement collaboration within the authority. The Panel identified a number of issues from the performance information considered at the meeting and will invite officers to meetings at a later date to discuss these in more detail

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

See separate report - item 7 of the agenda.

c) Local Service Board (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The Panel will next meet on January 4th for a briefing from Cllr Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services and Cllr Jane Harris, Cabinet Member for Services to Adults and Vulnerable People. Both Cabinet Members will give the Panel members an overview of how their portfolios contribute to Older People's Independence

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

The Panel met on 23 November and examined September's child and family services performance report. There was good performance in a number of areas, some examples are: 100% of initial assessments in timescale; continued downward trend in re-referrals; children in need allocations performing well above target; good levels of foster care provided within Swansea; recruitment of local foster carers; continued downward trend of children in residential care; reduction in the number of red performance indicators due to improvements in practice.

The Panel had a number of concerns in the following areas and requested that the Cabinet Member address these in her response: core assessments, referrals, contacts, re-registrations, staff supervision, adoption orders.

The Panel learned that there will be changes to the performance report and the data collected to reflect the principles of the Act. The Panel welcomed this opportunity to refresh the performance report and would like the opportunity to provide its views and comments on any new format.

The Panel discussed the changes to the performance report and the data collected to reflect the principles of the Act. The panel welcomed this opportunity to refresh the performance report and agreed that it would provide its views and comments on the new format.

The Panel meets again on 21 December and this meeting will look at performance in the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service.

5. Other Panels / Working Groups:

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Panels / Working Groups.

a) Transformation of Adult Social Services (convener: Uta Clay)

The Panel met on 14 December and considered performance data related to a range of service agreements in the terms of the Section 33 agreement. The data related to the common access point/intake, performance of reablement and the assessments beds service. The panel also considered a report on income achieved through older people's day, domiciliary and residential care and the Local Area Evaluation report.

The Panel agreed that it would review its function after Christmas to better align its work plan with the new performance framework that Adult Services is developing.

The Panel agreed to carry out pre-decision at its meeting on 11 January on the review of the Beeches and Abergelli day services.

b) Education Through Regional Working (regional scrutiny group)

A meeting for scrutiny councillors and officers from the six councils participating in ERW was held in Port Talbot on 22 September. Swansea was represented by Cllr Fiona Gordon and Cllr Cheryl Philpott. It was agreed that a scrutiny councillors group will be set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach. The next meeting will be held in Swansea and is being arranged for 11 March 2016. Swansea Scrutiny Team will provide the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

c) **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

The Local Flood Risk Management Working Group met on December 14th to consider the Local Flood Risk Management Plan. The Group identified a number of issues and recommendations which will be included in their letter to the Cabinet Member. They felt that the authority should have a joined up, holistic and strategic approach to the management of flood risk. The Working Group will also write to the Committee requesting further meetings to review the plan in nine months time and to look at the priority measures within it.

d) **Civic Events** (convener: Cllr Anthony Colburn)

The Civic Events Working Group met on 12 November and considered a report on the types of events that the Council organises and manages and issues that had arisen from recent events. Overall the panel agreed that the role of the Lord Mayor needed to be safeguarded and that the position should be more widely promoted. The panel was specifically asked for its views on the role of the Lord Mayor in leading Holocaust Memorial Day which has wider appeal than a civic event. The panel recommended that the event be transferred with a small budget to a host school each year. The panel has written to the Cabinet Member with its conclusions and recommendations. The Working Group's letter and the Cabinet Member's response are included in the committee agenda papers.

d) **Welsh Housing Quality Standard** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

The Working Group will be meeting in January/February, with the relevant Cabinet Member and officers, to consider the Council's progress towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard within its social housing stock.

e) **Tethered Horses** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

The Working Group is meeting on 7 January to consider the Council's overall approach to the issue of tethered horses and make recommendations about a petition, submitted to the Council by Friends of Swansea Horses, which presses for a ban on the tethering of horses on public spaces across Swansea.

Further Working Groups to be convened in the future as time and resources allow, in the order of priority shown:

1. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering assessment of current service in relation to TPOs (objectives, procedures and practice, challenges, improvement plans etc.) for questions and discussion. Some issues raised about the identification /

maintenance of TPOs, enforcement process and sanctions, also in relation to the interface with local members about information relevant to their areas.

2. Corporate Building Services

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering assessment of current service (objectives and achievements, procedures and practice, value for money, challenges, improvement plans etc) for questions and discussion. Some issues raised in relation to procurement, costs / competitiveness, joined up working across the Council.

3. Roads / Highway Maintenance

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering service practices and procedures (e.g. dealing with pot holes), use of resources, prospects for improvement. This will enable questions about the quality and effectiveness of highway maintenance and repair, and also issues relating to the relationship with utilities and strategic planning / co-ordination of works to minimise disruption to major access roads.

Appendix 4

Lead Scrutiny Councillor / Officer Contacts:

Activity	Lead Councillor	Lead Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Programme Committee	Mary Jones cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Brij Madahar (01792 637257) brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Inquiry Panels:		
School Governance How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?	Fiona Gordon cllr.fiona.gordon@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services How is the Council working with health and other partners to reduce demand for specialist child and adolescent mental health services?	Mary Jones cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Inquiry Panels (follow up)		
Inward Investment	Jeff Jones cllr.jeff.w.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Streetscene	John Bayliss cllr.john.bayliss@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Social Care at Home	Uta Clay cllr.uta.clay@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
Corporate Culture	Andrew Jones cllr.andrew.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

Education Inclusion	Cheryl Philpott cldr.cheryl.philpott@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Performance Panels:		
Child & Family Services	Paxton Hood-Williams cldr.paxton.hood-williams@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Service Improvement & Finance	Chris Holley cldr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk	Karen Bewen-Chappell (01792 636292) karen.bewen-chappell@swansea.gov.uk
Schools	Fiona Gordon cldr.fiona.gordon@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Local Service Board (multi-agency)	Mary Jones cldr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Karen Bewen-Chappell (01792 636292) karen.bewen-chappell@swansea.gov.uk
Other Panels / Working Groups:		
Transformation of Adult Social Services	Uta Clay cldr.uta.clay@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Local Flood Risk Management	Susan Jones cldr.susan.m.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Karen Bewen-Chappell (01792 636292) karen.bewen-chappell@swansea.gov.uk

Building Sustainable Communities (pre-inquiry)	Terry Hennegan clr.terry.hennegan@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Civic Events	Anthony Colburn clr.anthony.colburn@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Welsh Housing Quality Standard	Terry Hennegan clr.terry.hennegan@swansea.gov.uk	Karen Bewen-Chappell (01792 636292) karen.bewen-chappell@swansea.gov.uk
Tethered Horses	Jeff Jones clr.jeff.w.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree any membership changes of Panels and Working Groups necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer & Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various scrutiny panels / working groups that are established.

2. Revision to Scrutiny Panel / Working Group Membership

- 2.1 There are no membership changes to report. However this report is provided to facilitate any changes that may need to be made at the meeting in respect of scrutiny panel and working group membership.

3. Legal Implications

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

4. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Agenda Item 12

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 11 January 2016

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 year and provides a copy of correspondence between scrutiny and cabinet members, where discussion is 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(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

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 Programme Committee or conveners of panels / working groups, are published on the Council's website (<http://swansea.gov.uk/scrutinypublications>) 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 where specific discussion is required. Letters are included where cabinet member responses were awaited and have now been received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response.

2.3 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 the convener will provide a quarterly progress report to the committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes.

3. Letters Log

3.1 As the current municipal year progresses this report will contain a log of scrutiny letters produced to enable the committee to maintain an overview of letters activity over the year – see **Appendix 1**.

3.2 The following letter(s) are also attached for discussion:

	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a.	Committee – Cabinet Member Q & A	14 Sep	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Healthy City
b.	Committee – Cabinet Member Q & A	9 Nov	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance
c.	Civic Events Working Group	12 Nov	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance

3.3 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 as a result of the views and recommendations made. For this municipal year the letters log now shows the average time taken by Cabinet Members to respond to scrutiny letters.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Scrutiny Letters Log (20 May 2015 - 19 May 2016)

Ave. Response Time (days): 23 (target within 21 days)

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Date	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received	Days Taken	Reported to SPC (if applicable)
1	Schools Performance Panel	18-May	EMLAS and the School Improvement Grant	Education	01-Jun	22-Jun	21	n/a
2	Schools Performance Panel	18-May	Elective Home Education	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	01-Jun	19-Jun	18	n/a
3	Service Improvement & Finance Panel	13-May	ICT - Procurement of Oracle Support via a Third Party Supplier	Transformation & Performance	08-Jun	03-Jul	25	n/a
4	Service Improvement & Finance Panel	13-May	Q & A Session - Progress against Budget Savings Targets	Communities & Housing	08-Jun	17-Jun	9	n/a
5	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	11-May	Child & Family Services Performance Report (March 2015)	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	09-Jun	29-Jun	20	n/a
6	Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel	01-Jun	Social Services and Well Being Act Seminar, Carers Consultation and the Workplan	Services for Adults & Vulnerable People	12-Jun	23-Jun	11	n/a
7	Sustainability Working Group	09-Jun	Food Security	Transformation & Performance	15-Jun	Not required	n/a	13-Jul

8	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	08-Jun	Workplan / Issues from Previous Letters	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	15-Jun	Not required	n/a	n/a
9	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	10-Jun	New Performance Framework & Indicators	Transformation & Performance	24-Jun	25-Aug	62	n/a
10	Attainment & Wellbeing Inquiry Panel	11-Jun	Follow Up on Recommendations and Impact of Inquiry	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	29-Jun	13-Jul	14	10-Aug
11	Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel	29-Jun	Domiciliary Care Commissioning Review	Services for Adults & Vulnerable People	13-Jul	23-Jul	10	n/a
12	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	06-Jul	Signs of Safety Practice Framework	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	22-Jul	28-Jul	6	n/a
13	Economic Inactivity Inquiry Panel	24-Jun	Follow Up on Recommendations and Impact of Inquiry	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	27-Jul	Not required	n/a	10-Aug
14	Committee	13-Jul	Cabinet Member Question Session	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	03-Aug	Not required	n/a	10-Aug
15	Inward Investment Inquiry Panel	14-Jul	Follow Up on Recommendations and Impact of Inquiry	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	06-Aug	Not required	n/a	14-Sep
16	Schools Performance Panel	13-Aug	Additional Learning Needs Reform	Education	01-Sep	21-Sep	20	n/a

17	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	10-Aug	Performance Monitoring Report	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	10-Sep	28-Sep	18	n/a
18	Committee	10-Aug	Cabinet Member Question Session	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	16-Sep	25-Sep	9	12-Oct
19	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	12-Aug	Cabinet Member Question & Answer Session and an overview of Parks & Gardens	Wellbeing & Healthy City	16-Sep	06-Oct	20	n/a
20	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	12-Aug	Cabinet Member Question & Answer Session	Transformation & Performance	16-Sep	05-Oct	19	n/a
21	Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel	24-Aug	Network Hubs	Services for Adults & Vulnerable People	30-Sep	21-Oct	21	n/a
22	Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel	21-Sep	Unit costs - in-house residential and domiciliary care	Services for Adults & Vulnerable People	05-Oct	Not required	n/a	n/a
23	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	16-Sep	Grand Theatre, City Centre Regeneration and Arts & Culture	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	08-Oct	03-Nov	26	n/a
24	Schools Performance Panel	10-Sep	Performance and support for LAC children and for Gypsy and Traveller children	Education	13-Oct	28-Oct	15	n/a
25	Schools Performance Panel	21-Sep	Reviewing the School Improvement Service	Education	14-Oct	28-Oct	14	n/a
26	Committee	14-Sep	Cabinet Member Question & Answer Session	Wellbeing & Healthy City	20-Oct	30-Dec	71	11-Jan

27*	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	16-Sep	Grand Theatre, City Centre Regeneration and Arts & Culture	Welsh National Opera	21-Oct	23-Oct	n/a	n/a
28*	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	16-Sep	Grand Theatre, City Centre Regeneration and Arts & Culture	Arts Council Wales	21-Oct	28-Oct	n/a	n/a
29	Schools Performance Panel	14-Oct	Future of Education other than at School services	Education	26-Oct	02-Dec	37	n/a
30	Schools Performance Panel	08-Oct	Meeting with Casllwchwr Primary School	Education	26-Oct	Not required	n/a	n/a
31	Committee	12-Oct	Cabinet Member Question & Answer Session	Education	28-Oct	25-Nov	28	14-Dec
32	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	28-Sep	Prevention and early intervention	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	09-Nov	30-Nov	21	n/a
33	Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel	19-Oct	Unit costs - in-house residential and domiciliary care	Services for Adults & Vulnerable People	10-Nov	08-Dec	28	n/a
34	Schools Performance Panel	03-Nov	Estyn recommendations 1 year on and Annual Audit of Schools	Education	18-Nov	31-Dec	43	n/a
35	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	26-Oct	Development of the Post-16 Service	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	30-Nov			
36	Civic Events Working Group	12-Nov	Management & Organisation of Civic Events	Transformation & Performance	07-Dec	18-Dec	11	11-Jan
37	Committee	09-Nov	Cabinet Member Question & Answer Session	Transformation & Performance	08-Dec	22-Dec	14	11-Jan



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To/
Councillor Mark Child,
Cabinet Member for Wellbeing &
Healthy City**

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

01792 637257

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

SPC/2015-16/3

BY EMAIL

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

20 October 2015

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Healthy City following the meeting of the Committee on 14 September 2015. It is about Local Area Coordination, Smoking, Parks, Open Spaces, Japanese Knotweed, Healthy Eating, Allotments and Cycling.

Dear Councillor Child,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 14 September

Thank you for your attendance at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 14 September 2015 answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Healthy City. We wanted to explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to your areas of responsibility. Thank you for the written information also provided to the committee that gave us the headlines.

We are writing to you in order to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the committee, and, where necessary, raise any outstanding issues / actions for your response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

Local Area Coordination

We asked about the role of Local Area Co-ordinators. You talked about the rationale for Local Area Coordinators as an important preventative measure, with the aim of reducing demand on social services and health, and helping people to stay independent in their communities. You highlighted the personal support that they can provide individuals; it was not just about giving information. You reported that the 3 Local Area Coordinators in post since June appeared to be working well though it was too early to draw any major

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conclusions. We noted that there will be an effectiveness review late November / early December, carried out by Swansea University, which would help determine scope for expansion, depending on resources. The committee felt it was a positive step forward and looked forward to the outcome of the review. The committee also talked about importance of working with the Fire Authority who also did a good job in community prevention work, spotting vulnerable people and referring issues on.

Best Start in Life

You highlighted work being carried out so that everyone involved in the early years of a child's life in Swansea, is able to contribute to their development with the aim of them being ready for school. You stated that ensuring that children have the best start in life and are ready for school remained the most important thing. There were still examples where children were not toilet trained and unable to attend school and this was likely an indicator of other problems. However, you felt that progress was being made in establishing a shared approach by professionals across sectors so that parents are able to understand and support their child's development.

Smoking

You talked about plans to try to 'de-normalise' smoking, in addition to the direct support and encouragement provided to individuals to stop smoking altogether. For example: tackling issues around peer pressure, and visibility of smoking. You highlighted that smoking was still the biggest factor affecting health and health differentials across Swansea, and a major cause of early deaths in Swansea.

Parks

We heard that you had agreed to participate in the 'Park Lives' scheme, sponsored by Coca Cola, to get more people using parks and take part in activities. You felt this was a positive project which would otherwise be difficult to deliver given budget pressures facing the Council.

We asked about progress in relation to working with community organisations and 'friends of parks' organisations. We were particularly interested in progress with lease of Underhill Park which was a matter of pre-decision scrutiny last November. With regard to Underhill Park you stated that it has taken longer than hoped but the Mumbles Community Association was making progress now and things were on track to proceed with the lease of the Park. You were also pleased at the level of public interest in 'friends of parks' organisations.

We also asked about the use of playing fields by clubs and cost of pitches. You explained that permit fees had to be set in order to cover the Council's costs and were competitive, but clubs were encouraged to consider self-management, in the first instance.

Open Space Strategy

We asked about progress with the Open Space Strategy. You explained that you were working to produce this strategy as a document to support the Local Development Plan (LDP), as the quality of the built environment has a proven direct effect on people's health. You stated that it was important to consider the needs of each community when considering building on open spaces.

Commissioning Reviews and Finance

You talked about significant budget reductions across Leisure services, and need to consider alternatives in order to best maintain provision. You recognised there were difficult choices ahead given the contribution that leisure makes to healthy living, as well to tourism in the area. You highlighted the continued pressure across the Council and increasing reliance on communities to take control of local facilities. This was something the Council was keen to support.

Japanese Knotweed

We asked about specific efforts to adequately control Japanese Knotweed control on Council land. You stressed that the Council wanted to eradicate it, but it was a particularly difficult and resistant weed. You were pleased to inform the committee that the Council was now offering the service commercially to support funding to reinvest into treating Council land. You stated that you would provide a fuller response in writing in relation to work carried to adequately control Japanese Knotweed and resources. You encouraged committee members to contact you to flag up any issues within their local areas that needed attention. We also asked if you had any information about the outcome of trials in Swansea that involved the use of an insect to try to kill the Knotweed.

Healthy Eating

You called this an intractable problem, and a huge challenge. We asked about education in respect of healthy eating. You mentioned the LEAF (Learning about Exercise, Activity and Food) healthy lifestyle project delivered by Swansea Council for Voluntary Service. This project delivers 6 week programmes in family homes and group settings looking at cooking, nutrition and physical activity. You stated that you were also working with health and leisure centres on this important issue and that you were keen to encourage physical activity particularly amongst children and particularly girls to improve health.

We asked about obesity and encouraging walking to school. You were keen to encourage parents to avoid driving children to school and talked about the importance of school gate safety. Linked to anti-smoking efforts you stated that schools would be encouraged to make areas around school gates smoke free zones.

Allotments

We asked about allotments and community garden provision. You confirmed that you wanted to encourage new allotments wherever possible as they were positive for health and wellbeing.

During 2013 a Scrutiny Working Group looked at this matter and wrote to the then Cabinet Member. We were interested in how things have moved forward since then and for your awareness repeat the key points made at the time, for response:

- The Council provides an improved initial online point of contact that is free of jargon and encourages further interest
- Single indicators for community food growing and demand for plots are developed and updated regularly in order to chart progress.
- Usage and demand are mapped against geographic areas of the city and demographic groups
- Usage is benchmarked against other areas.
- Swansea Voices is used to gauge potential further demand.
- Frontline staff in other departments / partner organisations are provided with information about the benefits of community food growing and details of who to signpost people to.
- Community food growing is promoted through a communications campaign including Swansea Leader.
- Community food growing is promoted to and through community and town councils.
- Councillors should also encourage other forms of recreational gardening and growing (e.g. flowerbeds, community orchards, etc).

Cycling

We asked about safety on the Kingsway and the provision of a cycle lane. There was some concern about the temporary arrangements and cycling being restricted to one way only. Of course the concerns about vehicular transport and the safety of pedestrians needed to be addressed but perhaps it gave the wrong signal about cycling. You recognised the concern but felt that the Council needed to be ultra safety conscious, but having one cycling lane was a start, as there was no existing cycle lane, and should be welcomed.

Your Response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to:

- our request for information about work and resources in relation to Japanese Knotweed; and
- whether issues raised by scrutiny in relation to allotments and community food growing have been taken forward.

Please provide your response by 10 November. We will then include both letters in the agenda of the next available committee meeting.

Finally, we look forward to meeting you again to follow up on portfolio developments and hearing about achievements and impact.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
City & County of Swansea

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
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MC/VHD

30th December 2015

**If you require this or any other information in another format
e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me**

Dear Cllr Jones,

In response to your letter of 20th October,

Local Area Co-ordination

Thank you for your interest in this area. The report on the first 3 months is now available, and covers the launch of this initiative. Your point about organisations such as the Fire and rescue service being involved is absolutely right, and we have held an event involving other statutory organisations, the third sector, RSLs and the University along to hear how LAC is being effective in other Authorities, and are now following that up with one to one contacts. The preventative agenda is something we all are faced with, all know it's a difficult nut to crack, but that working together we stand a much greater chance of success with the resources we are able to put in to it. It is pleasing that the Welsh Government have recently asked for more information on our work.

Best Start in Life.

This continues to be the area I feel the biggest long term difference can be made in outcomes for people in Swansea. It is an area we are working increasingly well with ABMU in, but resources remain low and insufficient to fully address it.

-1-

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING & HEALTHY CITY /
AELOD Y CABINET LLES A DINAS IACH

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
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Smoking

We have a massive issue with this in Swansea, and all efforts to address this are needed, and I think we need to be more sophisticated in our approach. I think the council has a significant role to play here alongside our Health colleagues and have asked Cllr Erika Kirchner to help develop this role through the Corporate Services cabinet Advisory Committee.

Open Space Strategy.

I have asked Cllr Dowling to help develop this with officers through the Development Cabinet Advisory Committee.

Commissioning Review and Finance.

This has now passed through the Cabinet in to phase 5 of the review, and a number of elements are now in the public domain as part of the Councils budget consultations.

Regarding Japanese Knotweed,

Natural Control Trials

The council was involved with the first phase of the natural control trial releases between 2011 and 2014 with the international research group CABI and it was the first ever such trial carried out in Europe. The Welsh Government helped fund the project. There were also several sites in England. The psyllid bug (a type of leaf hopper) was released at a release site and there was also a non-release control site both of which were monitored by CABI on a regular basis. The results are positive and confirmed that the bug had no negative impacts on surroundings plant and insect populations. Field trials are continuing in England only as at the present time there is no Welsh funding. It should be remembered that the bug will not eradicate the plant but will be a long term control option.

Information on the economic effects of Japanese Knotweed and other invasive species can be found in the publication of the CABI's report 'The Economic Cost of Invasive Non-Native Species on Great Britain' (attached) on behalf of WAG, DEFRA (the governments Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and the Scottish government which was released in November 2010. This report highlights the economic costs of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) such as knotweed in Great Britain and acknowledges some of the work carried out here in Swansea.

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You may also be interested to know that the council are now involved with CABI again but this time with the natural control trials of a rust for the control of Himalayan balsam.

Private land and the role of the Council

Swansea probably has the biggest problem in the UK with the plant Japanese knotweed and the council survey in 1998 identified 250 acres of the plant throughout the City and County of Swansea area. The councils policy for dealing with knotweed at the present time is that if it is growing on council land then the relevant land holding department eg housing will be responsible for looking into the situation. If the knotweed is causing a problem then that department will arrange for the plant to be controlled by paying the parks department or perhaps an outside contractor to spray the knotweed over a number of years. A problem could include spreading into a garden or affecting the sale of a property. We do not 'remove' knotweed from site and this should not be confused with treatment or control which should always take place in situ. However if there is not a problem eg its growing in the middle of a wood or not spreading then it does not have to be controlled.

There is no dedicated council budget for the control of knotweed although departments do spend several thousand pounds a year dealing with the plant.

I am afraid that due to the scale of the problem in Swansea there is no timescale for the eradication of the plant within the county as a lot of the plant is on private land and the costs would run into millions of pounds.

The council has no real powers to enforce control of knotweed when it is on private land. Knotweed is classed as a controlled waste and must be disposed of at a licensed landfill site if taken off site and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes it an offence to cause the plant to spread in the wild (not into gardens or in urban areas). However both of these pieces of legislation are not dealt with by the local authority but by Natural Resources Wales and/or the police.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 does not mention knotweed and it only gives local authorities a power but not a legal duty to look into knotweed problems. The Home Office information issued is only guidance about how this act might be interpreted.

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The only real power the Council has is if the knotweed is causing a highways safety problem. If this is the case then the Highways dept can take action against the landowner to solve the problem.

The council has been working to deal with the knotweed problem in Swansea for many years and this includes the following initiatives;

- Large scale treatment schemes from 1993-2009 (mainly grant funded)
- Knotweed planning condition
- Knotweed Action Plan
- Knotweed officer
- Launch of the Knotweed Manual
- 'No knotweed' warning on garden waste bags
- Welsh natural control trials
- Parks dept launch a payable knotweed control service for the public
- On-going awareness raising

To help councillors further understand the issues associated with Japanese Knotweed a session was run for councillors on Thursday 26 Nov at 3pm in the Guildhall Council chamber.

From August of this year the Parks Service established its own trial knotweed team from within current resources, following Service Managers discussions we agreed to create a team of two to 'test' the water and see what sort of income we would hope to achieve.

Our initial aim was to cover the setting up costs to ensure the service is cost neutral, following the launch and various avenues of advertising we have received in excess of 190 request for quotations, of which we have been successful in obtaining 171 orders with an expected income figure of £44k, this falls just short of the cost of running the service.

The breakdown of the orders are 19 external and 152 from internal departments. Our quotations insist on a 3 year programme to treat and manage the knotweed, therefore the amount quoted above will be the minimum for the next 3 years, by which time we are confident the service will surpass its cost recovery, if needed we will obviously allocate additional resource to meet extra demands.

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It must be noted the income is from internal departments as well as private house owners. As commented we will invest any profits in knotweed treatment on Parks land alone, such profits will not be used against budget cuts.

At present due to the volume of knotweed across the City it is impossible to have a proactive approach to treating on Parks land or for that matter council land, our policy is to be reactive and treat when notified of any issues, the normal rule of thumb is to treat any knotweed within 7 metres of the properties boundary. For the record following publication of Infrastructure Act 2015 we have undertaken treatment on over 50 Park sites.

Allotments:

The Council presently has a policy not encouraging more allotments which are statutory managed growing spaces maintained by the Council and charged, but instead encouraging people to create growing spaces within their communities, which are community run and maintained without the need for a lease. As you say allotments and other growing spaces are positive for people's health and wellbeing. These facilities come under Cllr Evans – Communities and Anti-poverty portfolio, and I have asked Cllr Evans assistance in responding to this element of your letter.

In October 2014, in line with Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future and the requirement to make budget savings, a decision was taken to reduce the capacity of the Food and Growing Team and reduce the budget for the Grow Local grant scheme. As a result, Council support for community growing is now responsive, rather than proactive. There has been no active promotion of community growing in 2015/16 and requests for information and land are explored and responded to accordingly. In order to maximise limited resources, the Council works in partnership with Swansea Community Growing Network, the Community Land Advisory Service and Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens to continue to develop and support community growing in Swansea.

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- The Council provides an improved initial online point of contact that is free of jargon and encourages further interest – Yes. Requests for information and support are signposted to the following pages on the Council’s website.

www.swansea.gov/foodandgrowing

www.swansea.gov.uk/growlocal

www.swansea.gov.uk/allotments

- Single indicators for community food growing and demand for plots are developed and updated regularly in order to chart progress. An indicator for Community Growing exists in the Council’s Corporate Improvement Plan and is updated on a bi-annual basis. Demand for allotment plots is recorded by a waiting list.
- Usage and demand are mapped against geographic areas of the city and demographic groups. Based on data held, the geographic spread and demographic (based on eligibility for concession), on Council managed Allotment sites can be mapped.
- Usage is benchmarked against other areas. Usage of allotments is full on all sites and there are associated waiting lists on all sites. - Benchmarking of community growing spaces isn’t possible as there is no national register for comparison.
- Swansea Voices is used to gauge potential further demand. - Due to the existence of a waiting list this is not done.
- Frontline staff in other departments / partner organisations are provided with information about the benefits of community food growing and details of who to signpost people to – Yes. Swansea is nationally recognised as a place where community growing is encouraged.
- Community food growing is promoted through a communications campaign including Swansea Leader. - This has reduced with the reduction in the Grow Local Grants this financial year.
- Community food growing is promoted to and through community and town councils. - This is still happening when requested

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- Councillors should also encourage other forms of recreational gardening and growing (e.g. flowerbeds, community orchards, etc.). - Yes and is happening.
Cycling

There are on-going conversations with the cycling fraternity about routes through the City centre, and these have been joined by other groups such as the partially sighted in an effort to ensure a fair, safe and enjoyable balance between all users.

May I also apologise for the delay in replying.

Yours Sincerely,

COUNCILLOR MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING & HEALTHY CITY

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BY EMAIL	<i>Our Ref Ein Cyf:</i>	SPC/2015-16/5
	<i>Your Ref Eich Cyf:</i>	
	<i>Date Dyddiad:</i>	8 December 2015

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance following the meeting of the Committee on 9 November 2015. It is about Sustainable Swansea, Innovation Programme, Performance Improvement, Customer Contact, Commercial Approach and ICT.

Dear Councillor Lloyd,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 9 November

Thank you for your attendance at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 9 November 2015 answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance. We wanted to explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to your areas of responsibility. Thank you for the paper provided to the committee that gave us the headlines from your portfolio. We noted the corporate service priorities and progress in relation to: Sustainable Swansea; Innovation Programme; Performance Improvement; Customer Contact; Commercial Approach; and ICT.

We are writing to you in order to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the committee, and, where necessary, raise any outstanding issues / actions for your response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

Sustainable Swansea

You spoke in particular about the Commissioning Review programme, which is being undertaken as part of the New Models of Delivery Workstream of Sustainable Swansea – fit for the future. We noted the completion of reviews recently in respect of Business Support, Residential & Outdoor Centres, Non-schools Catering & Cleaning, and Cultural Services, which have now been

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agreed by Cabinet. We also noted a number of reviews in progress – Libraries, Domiciliary Care, Day Care, Residential Care and Waste Management.

We discussed the role of councillors in these internal reviews. There seemed to be an inconsistent approach to inviting scrutiny councillors. You accepted this as a learning point and welcomed views about how scrutiny councillors can be most effectively engaged in these important reviews. It was acknowledged however that the timing of any involvement needed to be considered as it may be more appropriate for scrutiny to review final proposals. There also may be any issue in involvement in the other stages, to avoid being too close to 'decision-making'.

We also asked a question about the use of external advisors in the commissioning review process which you agreed to provide some clarification on.

Innovation Programme

You mentioned the contribution of the Corporate Culture Scrutiny Inquiry. We were pleased that Cabinet agreed all of the recommendations. The impact of this inquiry will be followed up in the next 12 months.

You also talked about the staff survey which was issued in September. We also noted the staff engagement event which was taking place at the end of November, which you stated was organised following feedback from last year's staff survey.

Performance Improvement

You referred to the very positive Welsh Audit Office (WAO) Corporate Assessment and stated that an action plan was in place. You also reported good progress on the WLGA Peer Review Action Plan (which is being combined with the WAO report).

You were particularly enthused about the new budget and performance steering groups involving Directors and Cabinet Members reviewing business plans and mentioned how this is improving stewardship across the Council.

Customer Contact

We noted that a Customer Services Manager has been in post for a few months and good progress is being made in bringing together various parts of the council including Environment & Housing Repairs call centres, Blue Badge, Switchboard and the Contact Centre. You reported a 21% reduction in phone contact to call centres in Quarter 1 2015 compared with Quarter 1 2014.

You mentioned a new approach to measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction: a new bi-monthly survey to gain a better customer insight. We were particularly interested in how you were finding out whether people felt they were getting a good service and value for money, and how it might be a more effective survey than Swansea Voices. You stated that this was in early stages of development and would share more information with us about this approach, including questions being asked, number of people surveyed and make up.

We also asked about what work was being carried out in relation to demand management. You agreed to provide a written response.

Commercial Approach

We noted that the Head of Commercial Services was appointed in October and that a commercial framework was being established in light of growing number of opportunities across procurement, income and sponsorship / advertising. You added that challenging targets had been set to raise income over the next year (£1m).

You were clear that this was the right thing to do but would take time to get right. The issues of cuts meant it was even more important to find ways to raise income. You also felt that being more commercial was also part and parcel of the Council having a can do culture.

We asked about progress and opportunities for the council to become more commercial. We were aware that the Council was now offering a Knotweed Treatment Service to private homeowners and businesses on a commercial basis. We were interested in other areas of service that were being explored. You mentioned Design Print as an obvious example that was being looked at. We pointed out possible issues in relation to state aid that will need to be checked. You welcomed a view from scrutiny on ideas for income generation.

You informed the committee that responsibility to identify, implement and deliver income from new commercial models was now part of the new Next Generation Services cabinet portfolio, led by Councillor Andrea Lewis. We will follow up on this when we meet with Councillor Lewis in the New Year.

ICT

We discussed the ICT service which has now been brought back in house. You stated that plans were on target in line with objectives agreed in December 2014 and the new service delivery model was being implemented. You mentioned that a revised ICT/digital strategy was being reported to Cabinet in November called 'Aspiring to a Digital Business 2020'. You welcomed the involvement of scrutiny in making the best use of ICT and its effectiveness.

We asked about the decision to bring the service to an in-house managed service and what other options were explored. You talked about the business case but agreed to provide a more detailed response in writing. We were also interested to know whether all staff who wished to transfer back to the authority from Cap Gemini had been able to do so.

Issues for Scrutiny

As mentioned above we noted that you welcomed a contribution from scrutiny in relation to:

- Commercialism – ideas / opportunities for income generation.
- ICT Service - to ensure best use and effectiveness.

Your Response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to:

- our question seeking clarification about the use of external advisors in the commissioning review process;
- our request for more information behind the new bi-monthly customer survey;
- our question about work being undertaken in relation to demand management;
- the decision to bring the ICT service to an in-house managed service and what other options were explored; and
- our query whether all staff who wished to transfer back to the authority from Cap Gemini were able to do so.

Please provide your response by 30 December. We will then include both letters in the agenda of the next available committee meeting.

Finally, we look forward to meeting you again to follow up on portfolio developments and hearing about achievements and impact.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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Councillor Mary Jones
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22 December 2015

**If you require this or any other information in another format
e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me**

Dear Councillor Jones

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION – 9 NOVEMBER 2015

Thank you for your letter dated 8 December 2015 regarding the above.

I set out below detail as requested in relation to your specific information requests, in the order detailed in your letter:-

Sustainable Swansea/Commissioning Review Process

Our commitment is to seek to implement change across the Council by using internal resources wherever possible.

However, we will always need to use some external support for specific pieces of work, where we don't have the skills or knowledge in house. This is addressed on a case by case basis by the Executive Board and Cabinet Member. Robust processes are in place to ensure we obtain the right support at the most effective cost to the Council. Where it is necessary, we ensure that we learn from the external support so that we are less reliant in the future.

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Customer Contact

In terms of measuring customer satisfaction, we have introduced a telephone survey of 200 people which is carried out six times a year. The sample of 200 people changes during each survey, giving us a total of 1,200 over the year.

We ask them a series of questions based on key customer service and satisfaction issues. These include a number of questions relating to satisfaction and the council's reputation:

- Satisfaction with the way the council runs things;
- Whether the council provides value for money;
- Whether the council acts on people's concerns;
- How well the council keeps residents informed of its services; and,
- Whether people would speak highly of the council to a friend/relative.

Other questions relate to satisfaction with staff and the level of service, including:

- Whether staff were friendly, efficient and knowledgeable;
- If staff treated them with respect; and,
- Satisfaction with the level of customer service.

We also ask respondents to rate individual services including events, roads and pavements, street cleaning, social care, libraries, museums, schools and refuse/recycling.

Unlike Swansea Voices, which was carried out about three times a year, the new telephone survey gives us more timely and up-to-date information. It allows us to track feedback every two months, making comparisons and spotting trends more quickly so that timely action can be taken to address any issues.

Those questioned are asked a number of demographic questions before the survey is undertaken to ensure they are an accurate sample of the overall Swansea population aged 16 years and above.

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In addition to the telephone survey, we also undertake two online surveys each year which is aimed at the Swansea Voices group of about 1,250 people who are representative of the Swansea population, aged 16 and above. This survey goes much wider and addresses a range of other council-related issues including consulting on service development and changes.

In a separate initiative we monitor the Swansea Standard which is the Council's customer service guidelines. Feedback cards are provided for the public in our key customer contact locations such as the Contact Centre, for them to rate the standard of service they received. They can rate a number of indicators, including the friendliness of staff, whether advice was clear and in plain language, and the promptness that their issue was dealt with.

The Swansea Standard feedback is overwhelmingly positive.

Demand Management

Work is progressing well on the Demand Management Strand. Demand Management is now a key plank of the business planning process across the Council which has meant a significant amount of work is now underway within each service to change demand whether that is: to reduce failure points, encourage a shift to cheaper channels for those that prefer using digital, or encouraging the public to take community ownership and resources. All outcomes, both financial and non-financial are being mapped as part of the Strand. Business intelligence is also a key project so that the Council can use customer insight and wider place and people information to inform decision making moving forward. All Heads of Service have been engaged as well as communicating this priority within the Western Bay partners. The Strand would welcome Member involvement in development of the long term strategy in the coming months.

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ICT

On 28 March 2013 Cabinet considered a report on the options available to the Council to ensure the continued provision of ICT services when the current ICT Contract with Capgemini expires. These were:

- Option 1 – ICT Services to be brought back In House
- Option 2 – Capgemini Contract Extension
- Option 3 - Procure a Replacement for the Capgemini Contract
- Option 4 – Best of Breed multi-sourcing - separate ICT Services and Project Services contracts, placed with the most beneficial provider.
- Option 5 - Use of partnering agreements with other LAs or Public Sector organisations.

Cabinet authorised the development of full business cases in respect of 2 options:

- Option 1 – Council Managed Service combining Best of Breed and Collaboration.
- Option 2 – Capgemini Contract Extension.

Following the development of business cases for both options, a further report was taken to Cabinet in January 2014. Cabinet agreed the principle of an in house managed service option for the future delivery of ICT Services and that the current Capgemini contract be terminated earlier to bring forward the benefits of this approach.

Following development of the in house managed service, the next report submitted to Cabinet in December 2014 set out how the Council proposed to deliver key elements of the new proposed service. Following the further investigation into the decision to terminate early, it was recommended that early **transition** and not early termination of the contract would be the least risk and cost to the Council.

The transition project began in January 2015.

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All Cap Gemini staff who wished to transfer back to the Council were able to do so as they were protected by TUPE. 45 staff have transferred back as follows:

- Infrastructure 32
- Service Desk 1
- Applications 12

I trust that this response provides all the information that you requested, but if you require any further detail, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR CLIVE LLOYD
CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION & PERFORMANCE

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07/12/2015

Summary: This is a letter from the Civic Events scrutiny working group to The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance following the meeting of the group on the 12 November 2015. It is about the management and organisation of civic events.

Dear Councillor Lloyd,

Civic Events Working Group, 12 November 2015

The working group met on 12 November to examine the management and organisation of the different types of civic events and the support arrangements.

We would like to thank you and your officers for attending the meeting to present us with a report and answer questions. Below is a summary of our discussion, what was agreed and our recommendations to you.

The office of Lord Mayor

Broadly, we agreed that greater respect needed to be demonstrated towards the office of the Lord Mayor and that the role should be safeguarded and promoted.

We were interested to hear your ideas on generating income from the role of the Lord Mayor to help offset budget reductions. The working group understood that the authority needed to consider doing things differently and we cautiously welcomed the idea of seeking funding from other sources. However, we agreed that the office of Lord Mayor should not become

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commercialised and that event sponsorship would be a positive way to help offset any future budget reductions.

Holocaust Memorial Day

You asked for our views on the role of the Lord Mayor in supporting Holocaust Memorial Day which has a wider appeal than just a civic event. We heard about the jointly planned and managed event at Bishop Vaughan School which marked this year's memorial day and that next year's event will also be a joint event with Cefn Hengoed School. We agreed that given the importance of the message that the day promotes, the success of the event at Bishop Vaughan, that the support and management of the event should be transferred with financial support to a "host" school each year.

Royal visits

We understood from you and officers that the event organisation, management and support of Royal visits were the remit of the HM Lord Lieutenant of West Glamorgan. Given our collective experience of royal visits we would like to propose a number of recommendations that, in our view, would improve the running of these types of events in the areas that the Council can influence. These are listed below in the recommendations section.

Lord Mayor's civic engagements

The panel felt that given the financial situation faced by the Council that it would be a good time to review all the civic engagements that are funded by the Lord Mayor to decide on the appropriateness of the events and to identify budget savings.

Given our discussions we recommend that:

- A review is carried out of the civic engagements that are funded by the Lord Mayor to decide on the appropriateness of each event and to identify budget savings.
- Cost neutral ways for the Lord Mayor to celebrate success are identified
- Consideration is given to improving the commercial offering of the Mansion House
- The support and management of Holocaust Memorial Day be transferred with financial support (£1k) to host schools each year.
- The Leader regularly liaises with the Lord Lieutenant to discuss royal visits and how the Council can help improve the management and organisation of these events
- Councillors are consulted about the appropriate people to invite to the royal visit
- A formal feedback mechanism is established between the Council and the Lord Lieutenant to enable feedback on royal visits.

Your Response

I hope that you find this letter useful and informative. We welcome your views on any of the issues raised in this letter but in particular we would like your views on our recommendations and your intended action.

We would be grateful to receive your response by Tuesday 29 December 2015.

Yours sincerely

CLLR ANTHONY COLBURN
CONVENER OF THE CIVIC EVENTS WORKING GROUP
✉ CLLR.ANTHONY.COLBURN@SWANSEA.GOV.UK



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Anthony Colburn
Convenor
Civic Events Working Group

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CL/SH

18 December 2015

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Colburn

CIVIC EVENTS WORKING GROUP – 12 NOVEMBER 2015

Thank you for your letter dated 7 December 2015 regarding recommendations from the Civic Events Working Group.

In response to the recommendations, the following points are addressed:

1. Civic events review – a review of the appropriateness of civic events will take place at the start of the financial year 2016/17 to manage the budget savings that will be made from the civic hospitality budget.
2. Sponsorship – this will be investigated in early 2016 with the Head of Commercial Services with a view to generating sponsorship for a Lord Mayor's Summer Ball to raise funds to supplement the civic hospitality budget reductions in 2016/2017.
3. Commercialising the Mansion House - Cabinet has made a decision to exploit the potential presented by the Mansion House and we are looking at the commercial opportunities that may exist, such as a wedding and event venue, although it will take time to achieve any income; in parallel work is being undertaken to ascertain the asset value of the Mansion House.

**COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
CLIVE LLOYD**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION & PERFORMANCE /
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CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

- 2 -

This process had already started before the decision to look at commercial opportunities was made and in any case this will provide a guide value should we wish to sell the Mansion House at a future date.

4. Holocaust Memorial Day – a joint event will be held on 27 January 2016 at Cefn Hengoed Community School and this will be the general approach for future events to mark this nationally important date.
5. Lieutenancy liaison – The Leader of the Council will be invited to the initial liaison meeting with the Lord Lieutenant when any official royal visit is planned to discuss issues raised by the Civic Events Working Group. The Leader of the Council will be regularly briefed on arrangements for royal visits, however, some issues are outside the control of the council e.g. landscaping, catering arrangements, and particularly, security, which is a matter for the council to act upon the instruction of the Royal Household and close protection officers.

Where the Council has an involvement in a royal visit, it may be appropriate for councillors to make suggestions for inclusion on guest lists for consideration. This will be pursued at a future royal visit liaison meeting.

The Leader of the Council will be invited to feedback any comments in relation to a royal visit to the Lieutenancy at the regular liaison meeting.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR CLIVE LLOYD
CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION & PERFORMANCE

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
CLIVE LLOYD
CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION & PERFORMANCE /
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Agenda Item 15

FOR INFORMATION

This report provides the Audit Committee work plan to May 2016.

This information is provided to help develop the relationship between scrutiny and the Audit Committee, aiming to ensure:

- mutual awareness and understanding of the work of scrutiny and audit committee
- respective work plans are coordinated and avoid duplication / gaps
- a clear mechanism for referral of issues, if necessary

The Scrutiny Work Programme is also reported to the Audit Committee.

At least once a year respective chairs will attend the committee in order to discuss work programmes and effectiveness.

The Chair of the Audit Committee attended the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 9 November.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee attended the Audit Committee on 15 December.

AUDIT COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2015/16

Date of Meeting	Reports
15 December 2015	Cabinet Advisory Committees – Briefing Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee Corporate Governance Review – Update PwC Annual Audit Letter 2014/15 Risk Management Half Yearly Review 2015/16 Chair’s Letter to Interim Chief Social Services Officer/Head of Adult Services Chair’s Letter to Head of Highways and Transportation
16 February 2016	WLGA Peer Review – Progress Update Wales Audit Office Performance Audit Update YGG Lon Las Lessons Learned – Referral from Cabinet Risk Management – Update Recommendations Tracker Report 2014/15 Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q3 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan 2016/17 – Methodology Audit Committee Review of Performance 2015/16
March 2016 (TBC)	Section 106 Planning Obligations – Update Audit Committee - Training
19 April 2016	External Auditor Annual Financial Audit Outline 2015/16 Internal Audit Charter 2016/17 Internal Audit Annual Plan 2016/17 Risk Management Annual Review 2015/16 Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2015/16