

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance

At: Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

On: Tuesday, 5 June 2018

Time: 10.00 am

Convenor: Councillor Chris Holley OBE

Membership:

Councillors: P Downing, P R Hood-Williams, L James, M H Jones, P K Jones, J W Jones, I E Mann, B J Rowlands and D W W Thomas

Agenda

Page No.

- | | | |
|----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence. | |
| 2 | Election of Panel Convener | |
| 3 | Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.
www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests | |
| 4 | Terms of Reference | 1 |
| 5 | Notes, Conveners Letter and Response
To approve & sign the Notes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record. | 2 - 17 |
| 6 | Public Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions must relate to matters on the open part of the Agenda of the meeting, and will be dealt with within a 10 minute period | |
| 7 | Work Plan 2018/19 | 18 - 20 |

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 19 June 2018 at 11.00 am

Shw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday, 30 May 2018
Contact: Scrutiny 636292

Terms of Reference

Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel

1. Why is this topic important?

- Scrutiny can make an important contribution to the budget process by providing a critical friend for the Cabinet and engaging non executive councillors
- Scrutiny can make an important contribution to the annual improvement process, in particular to the Corporate Improvement Plan, Annual Review of Performance and the response to the Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report.
- The Welsh Government states that *“There is a clear role for an authority’s scrutiny function in its improvement processes: as part of its role in holding local decision makers and policy makers to account, and in its policy development role”*.
- The Welsh Government further states that: *“If an authority’s scrutiny processes are sufficiently developed, and there is clear evidence that this is the case then this scrutiny activity can be drawn upon by the Auditor General and relevant regulators in the course of their dealings with the authority¹.”*

2. What is the purpose of this Panel?

To ensure that the Council's budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient.

3. What are the possible lines of inquiry?

- Consider quarterly and annual corporate finance reports
- Consider proposals for the Council’s annual revenue and capital budgets including savings proposals
- Look at medium and long term planning arrangements
- Look at whether financial and policy objectives are aligned
- Consider quarterly and annual performance reports and whether any issues need to be looked at further
- Consider the Council’s overall improvement processes
- Look at the fitness of the Council to discharge the general duty to improve
- Look at the processes that the Council has gone through in the selection of its improvement objectives, including engagement with stakeholders
- Look at how the delivery of improvement objectives are monitored
- Provide challenge and new ideas

¹ Local Government Measure 2009 – Part 1 Guidance to Local Authorities – Wales Programme for Improvement para 3.29 & 3.30.



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 7 February 2018 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
M H Jones
I E Mann

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams
P K Jones
B J Rowlands

Councillor(s)

L James
J W Jones
D W W Thomas

Co-opted Member(s)

Co-opted Member(s)

Co-opted Member(s)

Other Attendees

Robert Francis-Davies

Cabinet Member - Culture, Tourism & Major Projects

Officer(s)

Karen Gibbins
Bethan Hopkins
Frances Jenkins
Ben Smith

Principal Librarian Information And Learning
Scrutiny Officer
Strategic Manager Tourism Marketing and Events
Head of Financial Services & Service Centre and Section
151 Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s):

Co-opted Member(s):

Other Attendees:

12 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Lynda James – Personal interest item 6

13 Minutes.

Approved

14 Public Questions

None

15 Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring

- The overspend scale is improving, however the whole of the contingency fund will be spent
- 67% of savings proposals have been met
- Things are getting tight across all local authorities
- If suggested savings are not made by the end of the year, it compounds the impact on future budgets
- There are difficult decisions for Cabinet and Council
- Any non-savings will have to be met elsewhere as we are not drawing from general reserves
- Still working through full settlements regarding grants
- Reductions in grants will impact services
- This can disproportionately impact some services over others
- Very little unencumbered money comes to the Council
- The enhanced ER/VR rate is for a limited time and is an invest to save approach

16 Welsh Public Library Standards - Annual Performance Report 16/17

- The quality framework for libraries ensures that libraries meet certain standards
- There are 17 libraries in Swansea
- Housebound services for those who can't access libraries
- The libraries are spread throughout the authority
- Over 1.1 million people used the libraries in 16/17
- Link in with council priorities
- There are 18 core entitlements and 16 quality indicators to meet
- There are a couple of areas for improvement but overall the libraries perform very well
- 6th in Wales for physical visits despite the fact that buildings are stand alone and not bringing footfall in from multiuse buildings
- 3rd in Wales for regular and active borrowing
- 2nd highest in Wales for audio-visual and electronic borrowing
- There are high levels of customer satisfaction within the library service
- Reservations and requests are improving
- All libraries have wifi
- There is a new framework for 2017/2020 with an emphasis on health and wellbeing targeting people in the community with specific needs
- There are more targeted services and evaluations
- Cabinet Member noted that the libraries are now multi use and people are accessing them for a range of reasons and to access services which are being provided. This includes social interaction and helping tackle loneliness
- The Panel thanked the staff for their service in light of consistent cuts
- Cabinet member and head of service thanked the team for their contributions and hard work in difficult staffing circumstances

17 Work Plan 2017/18

- The next meeting on 12th February at 10.30am will be a pre-scrutiny of the Highways and Transportation Commissioning Review
- The meeting on 14th February at 10am and will look at the budget

The meeting ended at 11.50 am

Chair



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 12 February 2018 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)
P R Hood-Williams
J W Jones

Councillor(s)
L James

Councillor(s)
M H Jones

Other Attendees

Mark Thomas

Cabinet Member - Environment Services

Officer(s)

Stuart Davies

Head of Highways & Transportation

Bethan Hopkins

Scrutiny Officer

Phillip John

Project Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P Downing, P K Jones, I E Mann, B J Rowlands and D W W Thomas

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Public Questions

None

3 Highways and Transportation Commissioning Review

Meeting abandoned due to issues with Cabinet papers.
Further meeting to be advised.

Meeting took place on 14th February to include an additional report which was not included in the original paperwork.

Notes as follows;

(Note: This meeting was adjourned to the 14th February)

- The report has been ongoing for quite some time but due to cross cutting reviews and changes it has been delayed
- The intention was to pull apart all of the service and analyse what was happening and benchmark where appropriate
- All services are attempting to be streamlined
- Also explored adverse funding proposals and rejected ones which were not appropriate
- Attempting to get staff to multitask as much as possible where appropriate
- There is a limit to the extent of cuts you can make before you damage a service
- The success of the Marina was recognised
- Formation of an Integrated Transport Unit was recognised as a positive
- Roads are hugely underfunded but the department is trying to be innovative
- Completing road safety audits for other local authorities to maximise income
- Very pleased that the bus station management is efficient and cost effective
- Issues around on street parking enforcement and difficulties in implementing residents parking schemes were discussed.
- Some roads are inspected monthly and some annually. There are repair timescales with severe road issues. We are in a better position than many other local authorities but fixing potholes does not improve the road network
- Not enough money is being spent on road maintenance and the maintenance of the areas surrounding the roads
- Explored whether there is a limit of money which can be spent in each electoral ward per year on PATCH Team repair works
- LED lighting has been successful; it has saved not only money but has led to energy reduction and a reduction of carbon emissions. Explored which areas of Swansea are still waiting for LED lights to be fitted
- The review is widespread and in great depth
- Compliments to the team for putting it all together

4 Exclusion of the Public

None

5 Highways and Transportation Commissioning Review

Discussed excluded items

The meeting ended at 11.10 am

Chair

**To/
Councillor Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for Environment
Services**

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:
e-Mail
e-Bost:
Date
Dyddiad:*

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

6th March 2018

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Panel Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Environment Services following the meeting of the Panel on 14th February 2018. It concerns the Highways and Transportation Commissioning Review.

Dear Councillor Thomas,

On 14th February 2018, the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel met to consider the Highways and Transportation Commissioning Review.

We are grateful to everyone involved for providing information and answering questions and we recognise the amount of work which has gone into this commissioning review.

We have made a number of observations that we wish to share with you and have some questions we would be grateful to receive responses to.

1. We feel that this commissioning review is too big. The scope and content of the work is too broad and does not form the basis for a coherent commissioning review. It may have been better to split the services out to create a more manageable document.

2. Regarding 3.2 the Central Transport Unit – we feel that combining the services is the best way going forward and provides for more effective management of the services. A new site (yard) has been talked about for many years. Can you advise what progress has been made?

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU
SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE
www.swansea.gov.uk / www.abertawe.gov.uk

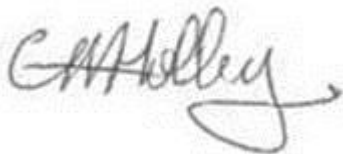
I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall neu yn Gymraeg, cysylltwch â'r person uchod
To receive this information in alternative format, or in Welsh please contact the above

3. Servicing vehicles and undertaking MOTs under a depot reorganisation would create a revenue stream which would be beneficial to the Council.
4. It is important to remember that bus services are vital to many people. Any changes will be a huge pressure for the public and for us as a Council. We should have a clear view of the subsidies and the reasons for them. Can you provide this?
5. In previous years we had an excellent relationship as part of the SWITCH group. It appears that we are moving back (albeit informally) to this arrangement and we believe this is a positive approach.
6. We were very pleased to see that the bus station management is both effective and cost neutral. It is a much improved bus station and this is a good outcome.
7. Not enough money is being spent on roadway and network maintenance. Continually patching roads is not a long term solution. Accompanying this, the areas surrounding the roads need to be looked at and dealt with as part of highways maintenance. Insufficient drainage and water discharging directly onto road surfaces is also contributing to the poor state of roads and causing problematic driving conditions. There is no clear view on the cost effectiveness of patching, in relation to resurfacing a road. Can you provide this?
8. Following on from this, can you advise whether there is a limit to the amount of road patching (in financial terms) which can be done in an electoral ward in one year?
9. We read about the money saving and environmental benefits of LED lighting. Which specific areas of Swansea are yet to have LED street lights installed? As a percentage, how much of Swansea does this represent?

This review was widespread in nature and required a great depth of work into each specific area. It was complex and thorough and we compliment the team for putting together the report.

I would be grateful if you could reply to this letter by 27th March 2018.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and
Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

Please ask for: Councillor Mark Thomas
Direct Line: 01792 63 6926
E-Mail: cllr.mark.thomas@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: MT/JW
Your Ref:
Date: 22 March 2018

BY EMAIL

Dear Councillor Holley

**SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND FINANCE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL,
14 FEBRUARY 2018 - HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONING
REVIEW**

Thank you for your letter dated 6th March which included a number of positive observations and recognition of the work put in to this review. These compliments have been passed on to the officers involved. It is recognised that the Highways and Transportation service is a large and complex service and hence it is unavoidable that the commissioning review was a very significant piece of work. It is very important that the review was a comprehensive and thorough assessment of the Service and I feel that this has been achieved.

I respond to the questions raised as follows:

- 2. Regarding 3.2 the Central Transport Unit – we feel that combining services is the best way going forward and provides for more effective management of the services. A new site (yard) has been talked about for many years. Can you advise what progress has been made?**

In marketing the Pipehouse Wharf site (in support of the river corridor development) Cabinet and officers are committed to relocating the services currently based at the site, namely Central Transport Unit and Refuse and Cleansing, to alternative practical locations.

Whereas in previous years much consideration was given to a ‘super depot’, under current financial constraints this is not the most appropriate way forward.

Commercial discussions and background works are underway to facilitate:

- a) the movement of Refuse and Cleansing operations up to Ferryboat Close where they will be in close proximity to our other waste operations; and

- b) the movement of our Central Transport Unit (fleet management) to a site further east on the Enterprise Park.

Alongside the commercial acquisitions process for these sites, the Council is engaged in drawing up and pricing designs for groundworks as appropriate. Given the current state of play it is hoped that these moves will take place during Spring 2019.

4. It is important to remember that bus services are vital to many people. Any changes will be a huge pressure for the public and for us as a Council. We should have a clear view of the subsidies and the reasons for them. Can you provide this?

The majority of bus services in the Swansea area are provided on a commercial basis by the bus companies. The Council's role is to monitor the commercial bus service network and identify any gaps in provision. If there are gaps, the Council has the authority to fill them by seeking competitive tenders for services that it feels are 'socially necessary'.

At present the Council funding for these services is in the region of £1.13m per annum and of this, around £500k is from a Welsh Government Bus Services Support Grant. Services provided by the Council are not allowed to compete with or undermine the viability of services provided by companies on a commercial basis.

The services that receive funding are those that the bus companies do not consider profitable so they are at times and on days where fewer people travel. The contracts range from single journeys to several journeys at particular times of day to whole networks in rural areas, such as Gower. Many of the services operate on weekdays in the early mornings and evenings, in rural areas, to housing estates off the main bus corridors and on Sundays / Bank holidays.

A summary of the current contracts is attached and can also be viewed on the Council's website at: www.swansea.gov.uk/article/7026/Bus-services-funded-by-the-council

The next planned round of tendering will be in 2019 but there are ongoing reviews in the light of decisions made by commercial bus operators and the need to consider replacement facilities for any services they decide to withdraw.

In order to monitor usage, contractors are required to supply information on passengers carried on a monthly basis and this is supplemented by on bus passenger surveys carried out by the Council's monitoring staff.

- 7. Not enough money is being spent on roadway and network maintenance. Continually patching roads is not a long term solution. Accompanying this, the areas surrounding the roads need to be looked at and dealt with as part of highways maintenance. Insufficient drainage and water discharging directly onto road surfaces is also contributing to the poor state of roads and causing problematic driving conditions. There is no clear view on the cost effectiveness of patching, in relation to resurfacing a road. Can you provide this?**

It is recognised across the UK that there is a significant highways maintenance backlog and prioritising additional funding is the only way to tackle the problem. In Swansea an additional £1m of insurance fund money has been spent on highways every year over the last four years and a further £1.4m of expenditure has been allocated on highways this year in response to the commissioning review. In addition to this the Welsh Government have provided an additional capital contribution of £1.8m for highway maintenance during 2017/18.

There is a very clear view over the cost effectiveness of reactive repairs and patching compared to resurfacing works. In short it is an accepted industry fact that the most cost effective treatments are preventative, followed by large scale quality resurfacing, structural patching and finally reactive measures. These issues are well understood and form the principals of the All Wales Asset Management Programme of which the Authority is a lead member.

In terms of value for money reactive maintenance is far more expensive than resurfacing, with 8 to 10 times being typical examples being quoted. No exact figure can be given as it will vary between repairs and treatments but this is an accepted principal. The authority aims to maximise its spend on both preventative maintenance, resurfacing and proactive patching however safety maintenance is a statutory requirement and therefore as network condition deteriorates the percentage spend on reactive maintenance will increase.

- 8. Following on from this, can you advise whether there is a limit to the amount of road patching (in financial terms) which can be done in an electoral ward in one year?**

In terms of the PATCH programme we are currently committed to 1 week per ward per year with the remaining weeks of the programme allocated on an engineering needs basis determined by the condition of the road. In terms of safety patching this is carried out as a result of routine safety inspections. In terms of finance there is no limit as each scheme will be designed on need and costed accordingly.

9. We read about the money saving and environmental benefits of LED lighting. Which specific areas of Swansea are yet to have LED street lights installed? As a percentage, how much of Swansea does this represent?

In general all areas of Swansea have had LED street lamps installed. The exceptions to this are as follows:

- Columns that have been identified as needing to be changed under the structural testing programme (1.4% of the network).
- Main roads - due to the costs of lanterns for the taller columns (10M and 12M) dimming gear has been fitted as an economic alternative (13.5% of the network).
- Lights on non-adopted highway - these are spread through the County (3.8% of the network).

In addition, there are some lights in the City Centre that have not been converted, these being:

- Kingsway - omitted due to the proposed improvement scheme.
- Wind Street - L.E.D.s are unsuitable for the decorative columns.
- Princess Way - these are taller columns but dimming gear has not been fitted, in support of the night time economy and health and safety.

I trust this information provides a response to the issues recorded at the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel.

Yours sincerely



**COUNCILLOR MARK THOMAS
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT SERVICES**



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 14 February 2018 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams
J W Jones

Councillor(s)

L James
C E Lloyd

Councillor(s)

P K Jones
I E Mann

Officer(s)

Bethan Hopkins
Cllr Rob Stewart
Cllr Clive Lloyd

Scrutiny Officer
Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy
Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and
Business Operations
Head of Financial Services and Service Centre

Ben Smith

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P Downing, M H Jones, B J Rowlands and D W W Thomas

Co-opted Member(s):

Other Attendees:

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Public Questions

None

3 Scrutiny of the Annual Budget

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Budget Discussion Points

The following key points were raised:

- The report overall has been written well by Ben Smith, it is accessible and is the best we have seen in a long time. Compliments to Ben
- The consultation exercise was lacking. It was generic and it did not phrase questions properly to maximise information giving. The way you ask questions and who you ask is important. Should be improved going forward.

- The Capital Financing Charges are a major worry as there is no growth in money from Welsh Government
- It is important to consider details around some investments – for example gearing of rents in properties Council will lease out
- A £3m contingency/reserve budget for next year seems low

Schools Performance Panel

The following key points were raised:

- Are supportive of the education related budget proposals and of how monies have been allocated given the current budget situation.
- The issue of year on year funding from Welsh Government was raised especially in light of the need to plan services over the longer term (as referenced in the Wellbeing and Future Generation Act). The panel recognise that the authority does develop an indicative 3 year medium term plan but this will change year on year depending on the local authority's allocation from Welsh Government. The panel would encourage councils to work together to make representations to Welsh Government around developing a longer term funding plan. The Panel were also keen to see changes made that reduce the lag between allocation of grants from Welsh Government and actual receipt of that funding.
- The Panel had concerns about the impact that the 11% cut to the education improvement grant will have on supporting services in particular the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service but were pleased to hear that the authority are looking to fill the gap for some services from reserves for 1 year.
- The Panel heard that some schools were managing the difficult budgetary situation better than others: the panel felt that sharing good practice across schools in relation to this aspect would be highly beneficial.
- Could look to reduce the cost of school transport by using existing transport resources owned by the Council. Working across departments, for example using social services mini buses.

Adult Services Panel

The following key points were raised:

- Last year Adult Services was £3 million over budget. The Panel feels that the overspend was not controlled last year.
- There is a discrepancy in the figures – Panel told budget for Adult Services next year had been increased by £3.5 million. However on page 118 on the budget proposals it says £2.7 million and on page 182 on the budget proposals it equates to £4.5 million. Need clarification of the correct figure.
- The Panel is concerned over savings not being achieved this year despite being told they could be.
- The Panel was concerned that despite over 70% of consultees being opposed to the new charges for day centres, the recommendation is to go ahead and impose them.

Child and Family Services

The following key points were raised:

- Reasonably satisfied with the budget proposed for CFS for 2018/19 and with the improvements to be increased and enhanced
- Noted the increased budget for CFS is mainly to cover inflationary increases in salaries
- The panel feels that Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) needs to be monitored closely
- The panel feels that early intervention is really important. It welcomes the forward thinking but will want to monitor this going forward.

The meeting ended at 12.45 pm

Chair



To/
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

6th March 2018

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy following the meeting of the Panel on 14th February 2018. It concerns the Annual Budget.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

On 14th February 2018, the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel met to consider the Annual Budget.

Thank you for attending along with Councillor Clive Lloyd and Ben Smith and for providing us with information and answers.

We have made a number of observations that we wish to share with you.

We heard that similar to previous years, austerity continues and the funding Swansea Council will receive is insufficient for its needs. We also heard that the lifting of the public sector pay cap will have financial consequences above what was anticipated which puts further pressure on the budget.

However, we also heard that savings of over 60 million pounds have been made over the last 3 years which is an accomplishment.

We know that more money needs to flow from both Central and Welsh Government just to meet the basic needs of citizens and that Cabinet and Council have some very difficult decisions to make over the foreseeable future.

As part of the budget process, each Scrutiny Performance Panel had an opportunity to feedback on their particular area of work.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU
SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

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

Please find below the observations which have been circulated to the Cabinet and presented at the Cabinet meeting on 15th February 2018.

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

We are grateful to the Leader, Councillor Clive Lloyd and Ben Smith Head of Financial Services and Service Centre, for attending our meeting on 14th February to discuss budget proposals in advance of the Cabinet Meeting, and answering questions from the panel.

The following key points were raised:

- The consultation exercise was lacking. It was generic and it did not phrase questions properly to maximise information giving. The way you ask questions and who you ask is important. Should be improved going forward. We suggest that a longer term solution to this could be looked at to engage more people.
- The Capital Financing Charges are a major worry as there is no growth in money from Welsh Government
- It is important to consider details around some investments – for example gearing of rents in properties Council will lease out
- A £3m reserves budget for next year seems low

Schools Performance Panel

The Panel met and consider the budget papers for Cabinet 13 February. The Panel is grateful to Cllr Jen Raynor, Cabinet member for Education, Nick Williams, Chief Education Officer and Brian Roles, Head of Education Planning & Resources who attended and provided advice and answers to questions.

The following key points were raised:

- The Panel are supportive of the education related budget proposals and of how monies have been allocated given the current budget situation.
- The issue of year on year funding from Welsh Government was raised especially in light of the need to plan services over the longer term (as referenced in the Wellbeing and Future Generation Act). The panel recognise that the authority does develop an indicative 3 year medium term plan but this will change year on year depending on the local authority's allocation from Welsh Government. The panel would encourage councils to work together to make representations to Welsh Government around developing a longer term funding plan. The Panel were also keen to see changes made that reduce the lag between allocation of grants from Welsh Government and actual receipt of that funding.
- The Panel had concerns about the impact that the 11% cut to the education improvement grant will have on supporting services in particular the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service but were pleased to hear that the authority are looking to fill the gap for some services from reserves for 1 year.

- The Panel heard that some schools were managing the difficult budgetary situation better than others: the panel felt that sharing good practice across schools in relation to this aspect would be highly beneficial.
- Reduce the cost of school transport by using existing transport resources owned by the Council. Working across departments, for example using social services mini buses.

Adult Services Performance Panel

The panel met and considered the budget papers for Cabinet 13 February including the revenue budget and savings proposals. The panel is grateful to Alex Williams and Dave Howes who attended the meeting and provided helpful advice and answers to questions

The following key points were raised:

- Last year Adult Services was £3 million over budget. The Panel feels that the overspend was not controlled last year.
- There is a discrepancy in the figures – Panel told budget for Adult Services next year had been increased by £3.5 million. However on page 118 on the budget proposals it says £2.7 million and on page 182 on the budget proposals it equates to £4.5 million. Please clarify.
- The Panel is concerned over savings not being achieved this year despite being told they could be.
- The Panel was concerned that despite over 70% of consultees being opposed to the new charges for day centres, the recommendation is to go ahead and impose them.
- In relation to safeguarding/wellbeing, we noted that this is the only line in the proposed budget which reduces. Please can you provide clarification of what this reduction is?

Child and Family Services Performance Panel

The panel met and considered the budget papers for Cabinet 13 February including the revenue budget and savings proposals The panel is grateful to Julie Thomas and Dave Howes who attended the meeting and provided helpful advice and answers to questions

The following key points were raised:

- Reasonably satisfied with the budget proposed for CFS for 2018/19 and with the improvements to be increased and enhanced
- Noted the increased budget for CFS is mainly to cover inflationary increases in salaries
- The panel feels that Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) needs to be monitored closely
- The panel feels that early intervention is really important. It welcomes the forward thinking but will want to monitor this going forward.

These points were presented to Cabinet by Councillor Chris Holley on 15th February however we have included them in this letter for your record.

We feel that regarding layout and content, Ben Smith has put together the best budget we have seen in a long time. The issues have been highlighted well and barring a few tables which could have benefited from more detailed explanation we feel that it is accessible and very well written.

Please respond by 27th March 2018.

Yours sincerely,

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

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk

Councillor Chris Holley
**Convener – Service Improvement &
Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel**

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor Rob Stewart
Direct Line: 01792 63 6141
E-Mail: cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: RS/KH
Your Ref:
Date: 26th March 2018

Dear Councillor Holley

Thank you for your letter of 6th March 2018 relating to the various performance panels views and for having afforded me the opportunity to attend in person your own performance panel on 14th February 2018. You of course, in tandem with the other panel convenors updated Cabinet verbally on 15th February 2018 before the budget reports were considered. My thanks for following up in writing for the record and for the opportunity to respond.

I thank you and your fellow convenors and panels for recognising indeed the very difficult financial decisions facing all councils and councillors, for the foreseeable future, and for your helpful and constructive scrutiny and feedback.

In relation to your summary points I would respond as follows:

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

Consultation

We will continuously review the approach we take to openly engaging in consultation with all affected stakeholders. I would welcome any specific examples or views the panel have on how they would have better-phrased questions. I am open to widening opportunities for numbers involved to be expanded and encouraged to reply, simply, the more the better, as long as costs are proportionate and affordable.

Capital financing charges

The budget reports make provision for additional capital financing charges and the S151 officer has made clear his prudent views as to likely worst-case future funding costs. I remain much more optimistic that when the funding opportunities and income streams are developed fully and considered as part of the individual business cases, the capital programme affordability and ambition will look much more attractive. In any case i am not overly concerned at an overall revenue programme that may see capital financing costs rise form over 7% to over 10%, that seems to me to be a reasonable proportion of current spending to invest in future generations and revitalise and regenerate our city. I am prepare dot advocate this via Cabinet and Council

even though overall resources remain constrained and we may have to make difficult decisions elsewhere in the shorter term to maximise the future benefit.

Reserves

The S151 officer has advised that an in year contingency fund of £3.450m is adequate. That general reserves of £8-9m are adequate, albeit at the minimum level he considers acceptable. Further, that he considers earmarked reserves are also reasonable and adequate. I totally agree a £3m reserves budget would be too low, that is precisely why we haven't gone anywhere near that low.

Schools Performance Panel

I am please the panel supports the clear investment we have put into schools and wider education services both on a permanent basis and for the top up additional one off funding.

I agree entirely I would like to see longer term consistent logical and fair funding for councils from both the UK and Welsh Government ensuring that all services, not just schools, are properly funded for decisions made in Westminster, which increase our costs. Firm longer term funding from Welsh Government, treating councils equally with health, would clearly help all our planning. I continue to do all I can to achieve greater certainty and fairness of funding.

I too would like to see more rapid funding flows by Welsh Government. As pleasing, as it was to receive over £1m as our share of schools repair and maintenance money from the Cabinet Secretary for Education, receiving an announcement three to four weeks before the end of the financial year is hardly great planning. In contrast, we have made arrangements and paid cash to schools the same week we got the announcement. Fleet of foot rapid reaction. When money flows, we can "go with the flow" and inject targeted resource rapidly.

I share entirely the panel concerns about the impact that the 11% cut to the education improvement grant will have on supporting services. We still await details from the Welsh government. In relation to the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service we have secured some initial interim funding from Welsh Government because of the very strong stance taken by officers and members at this authority, with support from all other Welsh councils. We continue to negotiate for more funding and a more permanent solution. Likewise, we have taken clear S151 officer advice as a Cabinet and as a whole Council to ensure we do not compound the difficulties Welsh Government has created for this very important service for our minority ethnic children and pupils and their families. The budget approved at Council did the right thing in providing interim support from our own resources, we frankly can barely afford.

Education colleagues and school for will I am sure continue to share good practice across schools in relation to financial management

All transport costs are being reviewed through our well establish commissioning review process and this includes school transport and the better use of our own resources , including social services mini buses.

Adult Services Performance Panel

I do not agree that the overspend was not controlled. Quite the contrary. The overspend was caused by us having an unrealistic level of government funding to meet cost and demographic pressures in adult services in the first place. All councils with social care responsibility face

similar spending pressures. We tried a raft of cost saving mitigations to contain spending to broadly the same level as the year before. If they had fully worked that would have been a remarkable achievement. Regrettably, they could not fully stem the tide of demand. The cost pressures and overspending were recognised immediately and have been reported and managed through the year down to a level of overspend that can be “afforded” by the Council as a whole. That will, it has to be acknowledged, be partly helped by receipt of late, but nonetheless welcome additional funding from Welsh Government to all 22 councils recognising the clear pressures social care has been under in 2017-18.

The very clear budget strategy for 2018-19 was not only to inject additional cash to rebase that starting budget pressure but to invest, again within the confines of a very limited amount of new resource, additional cash to meet other pressures and demands. More importantly to again “invest to save” where possible to seek to move to more preventive services to reduce demand and more costly later intervention.

The difference in the figures quoted were explained in attendance at your scrutiny panel and again referred to subsequently in Council.

I note the panel concerns around charges for day centres and it has been subject to much further discussion and debate including in Council. As the Cabinet member indicated he was surprised the objection rate was not higher still given a free service is now being proposed to be charged for albeit on a means basis with an overall charge cap in line with other social care services. As you will be aware, social care is not set up, unlike the NHS, to be free at point of use. Again, as the Cabinet member indicated in Council, it could be made so if we added (theoretically of course) £70 million to the Council Tax. It is one reason the Welsh Government is looking at alternative tax and charging powers for social care in Wales. Furthermore, this charging measure actually brings day care more into line with other social care charges and services but with appropriate checks and balances in terms of assessing affordability to make a personal financial contribution by service users and subject to Welsh Government overall weekly caps on charging for social care. Cabinet has made the decision to charge, on equity (in line with other social care services) and sustainability (affordability for public subsidy) grounds but also agreed to defer implementation until those financial assessments have been thoroughly undertaken for individual users. I am pleased that Council agreed with Cabinet’s budget proposals to defer rather than seek to stop implementation. I do think, despite the wide feedback received that this is a fairer more equitable more sustainable longer-term solution to keep the services running. Tough times and tough funding require tough choices to be made, tough choices I will not shy away from leading on.

Child and Family Services Performance Panel

I agree with all the comments raised. There is funding for improvements to services but also savings planned to be made and indeed the net position is that the increased budget for Child and Family services is mainly to cover inflationary increases in salaries. All of course found by this Council, through its robust financial management not funded by Westminster.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) remain a concern and do need to be monitored closely especially given the budget constraints our health service partners also face despite their far better funding.

I am pleased the panel has noted our strategy for maintaining and improving services and leaving them on a more sustainable footing as financial pressures continue is by early intervention.

Format of reports

In terms of your feedback to Mr Smith, he has advised that whilst of course pleased to note the feedback, he has had of course the benefit of previous comments and advice from scrutiny and performance panels in prior years and had many contributors to this year's suite of reports. He has gratefully relayed that feedback on to all contributors.

Yours sincerely

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

**COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY & STRATEGY**



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 28 March 2018 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
P K Jones
B J Rowlands

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams
J W Jones
D W W Thomas

Councillor(s)

L James
I E Mann

Officer(s)

Bethan Hopkins
Richard Rowlands

Scrutiny Officer
Corporate Performance Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): M H Jones

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Minutes.

Approved

3 Public Questions

None

4 Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2017/18

- Richard Rowlands attended to give his update on the Q3 Performance Report 2017/18
- 58% of targets have been met in the Corporate Performance Against Target
- Page 13 of the report shows that Transformation and Future Council priority is showing a decline in performance
Priority 1 -Safeguarding
- AS8/AS9/Measure 19 are all showing declining results

- CFS18/CFS19/Measure 24 all have declining trends due to a high demand level – Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams the convener of the Childs Services Scrutiny Performance Panel stated that although the measures have declining trends, it is important that the safeguarding issues are identified and the performance panel are monitoring this

Priority 2 – Education and Skills

- EDU016a has a slight downturn from last year

Priority 3 – Economy and Infrastructure

- EC4 There has been a delay in the building of new houses

Priority 4 – Tackling Poverty

- SUSC1/SUSC3 Both show a gradual decline in performance but the Panel is unsure how effective perception opinions are at measuring performance

Priority 5 – Transformation and Future Council

- CUST6/SUSC2 Decline in trends, again down to public opinions
- CHR002 A task and finish group has been established to review Terms and Conditions including the management of absence policy
- FINA6 – this measure is still achievable but has been delayed
- Because targets change each year, it is very hard to measure consistency
- There are attempts to get consistency in the measures themselves so trends can be developed
- Corporate Performance Manager can bring along trend data for some PIs if he knows which ones the Panel wants in advance

5 Work plan 2017-2018

- Discussed the remainder of the work plan – charges item scheduled for the next meeting

The meeting ended at 11.00 am

Chair

To/
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

e-Mail
e-Bost:

Date
Dyddiad:

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

27th April 2018

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy following the meeting of the Panel on 28th March 2018. It concerns the Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring Report 2017/18.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

On 28th March 2018, the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel met to consider the Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring Report 2017/18.

We would like to thank Richard Rowlands for attending to brief the Panel on the report.

We have made a number of observations that we wish to share with you.

1. The performance of free school meals pupils remains stable at key stages 2 and 3. However, the gap in performance for free schools meals pupils had widened in 2017 at key stages 4 and at foundation phase. We would like to find out if there are any underlying issues and what is being done to address this?
2. We read that commercial floor space continues to be delivered via the Vibrant and Viable Places funded schemes with public and private sector partners across the City Centre. Can you provide us with the figure relating to the amount of floor space which is due to be delivered?
3. Training and employment person weeks are being created by the Councils Beyond Bricks and Mortar scheme for the unemployed and economically inactive. Can you provide us with the number of training weeks being created?

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU
SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

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

4. The number of new housing units created in Swansea City Centre (as a result of V&VP Realising the Potential funding) is below target due to the delay of one scheme. Can you provide details of the delay?

5. The selected operators for the Arena project are very close to signing the legal agreement. Can you provide a timescale for this?

6. We read that demolition of 232 and 233 Oxford St was due to commence in February. Could you please provide us with a breakdown of the demolition? Firstly as a breakdown for each property, then as an overall cost if the combined figure is different.

7. Can you provide us with an update on the funding review which took place in March relating to the mid-term Heritage Lottery Funding review for the Hafod Copperworks?

In addition, the Panel were concerned to read about high levels of staff sickness and we will be contacting the relevant department for a further breakdown relating to this.

Please respond by 18th May 2018.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener – Service Improvement &
Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor Rob Stewart
Direct Line: 01792 63 6141
E-Mail: cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: RS/KH
Your Ref:
Date: 17 May 2018

Dear Councillor Holley

Thank you for your letter dated 27th April 2018.

I respond to the points you raised as follows.

1. The performance of free school meals remains stable at key stages 2 and 3. However, the gap in performance for free school meals pupils had widened in 2017 at key stages 4 and at foundation phase. We would like to find out if there are any underlying issues and what is being done to address this?

The gap has widened at key stage 4 primarily because of changes to qualifications in Wales. There are now fewer options for pupils to take vocational qualifications than in previous years. In schools with high FSM pupils, there has generally been higher uptake of vocational courses at GCSE, up until 2017. For pupils to achieve the L2+, only 2/5 of the 5 GCSEs could be non-GCSEs, down from 60% in previous years.

In addition, the English component of L2+ and CSI became English language only, as opposed to English language or literature. There were also changes to the English language which made written accuracy more demanding. In mathematics, 2017 saw the introduction of an additional maths GCSE – maths/numeracy. Therefore this increased the exam load, and furthermore, the maths/numeracy is very language heavy, which probably impacted on FSM performance as these pupils performed 3% points lower than normal maths nationally.

Overall, these factors impacted on all pupils, but more for those eligible for FSM.

In order to support schools with the qualification changes, regional Leaders of Learning have been appointed to support core subjects at secondary schools.

The last three year 2 cohorts show small reductions in FSM and SEN but a small rise in EAL:-

Year	Cohort	FSM	SEN	EAL A-C	% FSM	% SEN	% EAL A-C
2015	2827	604	864	288	21.4%	30.6%	10.2%
2016	2656	569	806	302	21.4%	30.3%	11.4%
2017	2692	544	799	293	20.2%	29.7%	10.9%

FSM is falling slightly. Eligibility rules have since changed due to universal credit so it's difficult to compare after 2017. SEN for Year 2 is higher than County average each year (about 25% overall in Swansea). EAL is also high for Year 2 – about 3% higher than County average each year due to large numbers of early stage English learners who catch up later.

2. We read that commercial floor space continues to be delivered via the Vibrant and Viable Places funded schemes with public and private sector partners across the City Centre. Can you provide us with the figure relating to the amount of floor space which is due to be delivered?

In the 2017/18 financial year 11,802m² of commercial floor space was delivered via the Vibrant & Viable Places funding scheme.

3. Training and employment person weeks are being created by the Council's Beyond Bricks and Mortar scheme for the unemployed and economically inactive. Can you provide us with the number of training weeks being created?

In 2017/18 in excess of 2300 Training and employment person weeks have been created by the Council's Beyond Bricks & Mortar scheme for the unemployed and economically inactive.

4. The number of new housing units created in Swansea City Centre (as a result of V&VP realizing the Potential funding) is below target due to delay of one scheme. Can you provide details of the delay?

The number of new housing units created in Swansea City Centre (as a result of V&VP funding) was 80 units. The delay of one scheme, 15-20 Castle Street, owing to 3rd party delivery issues, has now been overcome and the scheme is now actually on site. When completed in early 2019, it will deliver an additional 22 units.

5. The selected operators for the Arena project are very close to signing the legal agreement. Can you provide a timescale for this?

The selected operator for the Arena project, Ambassador Theatre Group, have now signed the legal agreement and a launch event has been held in London.

6. We read that demolition of 232 and 233 Oxford street was due to commence in February. Could you please provide us with a breakdown of the demolition? Firstly as a breakdown for each property, then as an overall cost if the combined figure is different.

The pre-start removal of Licensed Asbestos from 232/233 Oxford Street cost £13,836. The tender figure for demolition of 232/233 Oxford Street and soft strip of Barclays Bank is £346,434. This tender includes for building works to Party Walls 231/232 and 233/234, basement infill to 232/233, basement protection to 231/232 and 233/234, site surface water drainage and surfacing the footprint.

7. Can you provide us with an update on the funding review which took place in March relating to the mid-term Heritage Lottery Funding review for the Hafod Copperworks?

The Development Review meeting (mid-term review) held on the 9th March with the Project Team and HLF Case Officer, and HLF Appraiser was well received. Some constructive feedback was received to further refine some documents to support the application in readiness for the Stage 2 submission by the deadline, 24th May 2018 to HLF. The Project Team is therefore progressing at haste the Stage 2 submission by the deadline.

Yours sincerely



**COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY & STRATEGY**

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

Draft Work Plan 2018/2019

**All Meetings will take place in Committee Room 5
10am – 12pm (Unless stated otherwise)**

<p>Meeting 2 Tuesday June 5th</p>	<p>1. Election of Convener</p> <p>2. Role of Panel and Terms of Reference Cllr Chris Holley</p> <p>3. Work Plan 2018-2019 Cllr Chris Holley</p>
<p>Commissioning Review Tuesday June 19th 11am – 1pm</p>	<p>Cultural Programme – Final Bidder Options Martin Nicholls – Director Place Tracey McNulty – Head of Cultural Services Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member Culture, Tourism and Major Projects</p>
<p>Meeting 3 Tuesday July 3rd</p>	<p>1. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2017/18 Julie Nicholas Humphreys - Customer Services Manager</p> <p>2. Q1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2018/19 Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p> <p>3. Charges Item Chris Williams – Head of Commercial Services</p>
<p>Meeting 4 Tuesday August 7th</p>	<p>1. Local Government Performance Bulletin 2017/18</p> <p>2. End of Year 2017/18 Performance Monitoring Report Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager</p> <p>3. Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring 2018/19 Chris Howell – Head of Waste Management and Parks</p> <p>4. Revenue and Capital Outturn and Financing</p>

	<p>2017/18 Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p>
<p>Meeting 5 Tuesday September 4th</p>	<p>1. Reserve Update Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p> <p>2. Mid-Year Budget Statement 2018/19 Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p>
<p>Meeting 6 Tuesday October 2nd</p>	<p>2. Q1 2018/19 Performance Monitoring Report Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager</p> <p>1. Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2017/18 Julie Nicholas Humphreys - Customer Services Manager</p>
<p>Meeting 7 Tuesday November 6th</p>	<p>1. Q2 Budget Monitoring Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p> <p>2. Annual Review of Performance 2017/18 Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager</p> <p>3. Planning Annual Performance Report Ryan Thomas - Development Conservation and Design Manager</p>
<p>Meeting 8 Tuesday December 4th</p>	<p>1. Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2017/18 Karen Gibbins - Principal Librarian for Information & Learning</p>
<p>Meeting 9 Tuesday January 8th</p>	<p>2. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager</p> <p>1. Budget Proposals Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p>
<p>Meeting 10 Tuesday February 5th</p>	<p>1. Q3 Budget Monitoring Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre</p>

Meeting 11 Tuesday March 5th	2. Review of Community Groups – Friends of Parks/Community Centres Tracey McNulty – Head of Cultural Services
Meeting 12 Tuesday April 2nd	2. Q3 Performance Monitoring Report Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager

To be scheduled;

- Budget Meeting (To review and feedback from all Panels)
- Commissioning Reviews 2016/17 Evaluation Item