



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Audit Committee

At: Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

On: Tuesday, 9 October 2018

Time: 2.00 pm

Chair: Paula O'Connor (Independent Chair)

Membership:

Councillors: C Anderson, P M Black, T J Hennegan, P R Hood-Williams, O G James, P K Jones, J W Jones, E T Kirchner, M B Lewis, S Pritchard, W G Thomas, L V Walton and T M White

Agenda

Page No.

- | | | |
|-----------|---|------------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence. | |
| 2 | Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.
www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests | |
| 3 | Minutes.
To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record. | 1 - 6 |
| 4 | For Information: Scrutiny Work Programme 2018-19. | 7 - 62 |
| 5 | Work of Policy Development Committees. | 63 - 82 |
| 6 | Annual Report of School Audits 2017/18. | 83 - 100 |
| 7 | Wales Audit Office - Annual Improvement Report 2017/18. | 101 - 126 |
| 8 | City & County of Swansea - Audit Committee Update – October 2018. | 127 - 133 |
| 9 | Audit Committee Action Tracker Report. (For Information) | 134 - 139 |
| 10 | Audit Committee Work Plan. (For Information) | 140 - 147 |

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 11 December 2018 at 2.00 pm

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday, 2 October 2018

Contact: Democratic Services: - 636923

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Audit Committee**

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Tuesday, 11 September 2018 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor P R Hood-Williams (Vice-Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
P R Hood-Williams
M B Lewis
T M White

Councillor(s)

P M Black
P K Jones
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

T J Hennegan
J W Jones
W G Thomas

Officer(s)

Simon Cockings
Jo Harley
Jeff Fish
Tracey Meredith
Jeremy Parkhouse
Jonathon Rogers

Chief Auditor
Head of Digital and Transformation Services (Interim)
Corporate Fraud Team Investigator
Chief Legal Officer
Democratic Services Officer
Corporate Fraud Team Investigator

Also Present: -

Anthony Veale
Geraint Norman
David Williams

Wales Audit Office
Wales Audit Office
Wales Audit Office

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): L V Walton
Independent Member(s): P O'Connor

38 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

Councillor P M Black – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – Member of governing body of Burlais Primary School – personal.

Councillor T J Hennegan – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – School Governor at Clwyd Community School – personal.

Councillor P R Hood-Williams – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – School Governor at Crwys Primary School – personal.

Councillor J W Jones – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – School Governor at Dunvant School and my wife is Governor at Hendrefoilan School – personal.

Councillor P K Jones – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – School Governor at Bishop Gore School – personal.

Councillor M B Lewis – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – School Governor at Gwyrosydd Primary School and Pension Fund Committee Member – personal.

Councillor W G Thomas – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – School Governor at Newton Primary School and Pension Fund Committee Member – personal.

Councillor T M White – Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 and Minute No.42 - Wales Audit Office ISA 260 Report CCS Pension Fund - Chair of Governors at Brynhyfryd Primary School, Pension Fund Committee Member and benefactor of the Pension Fund – personal.

Geraint Norman (Wales Audit Office) - Minute No.40 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19 – My wife is the Head Teacher of Pontlliw Primary School. The Wales Audit Office has controls in place to mitigate – personal.

39 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the previous meetings of the Audit Committee held on 14 and 23 August 2018 be approved as correct records.

40 Internal Audit Monitoring Report - Q1 2018/19.

The Chief Auditor presented the audits finalised and any other work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section during the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018.

A total of 30 audits were finalised during Quarter 1. The audits finalised were listed in Appendix 1, which also showed the level of assurance given at the end of the audit and the number of recommendations made and agreed. A total of 247 audit recommendations were made and management agreed to implement all but one of the recommendations i.e. 99.6% against a target of 95%.

Appendix 2 outlined that by the end of June 2018, approximately 66% of the Audit Plan was either completed or in progress. Out of the 30 audits finalised in Quarter 1, 18 had been audits that were included in the 2017/18 audit plan that were ongoing at the end of the financial year, that had since been finalised in 2018/19.

Information regarding additional work and details of follow-ups completed between 1 April and 30 June 2018 were specified.

Details of the significant issue which led to a moderate rating issued in the Quarter for Disaster Recover & Business Continuity were provided. The Audit objectives were to ensure that the Authority had an ICT Disaster Recovery Plan (DR Plan) in place and that the plan was regularly reviewed, tested and updated. The audit included the testing of controls established by management over the following areas within the DR Plan: Ownership and Management; Risk Assessment and Prevention; The Corporate Plan; IT User Plans; Resourcing and Training.

The reasons for the moderate rating were provided as follows: -

- Checks were carried out to confirm that the responsibility for the Councils IT Disaster Recovery Policy and Recovery Plan had been formally assigned. No Terms of Reference had been established for the Disaster Recovery Team.
- It was found that the Team had not carried out regular reviews of the Disaster Recovery Plan. A review of the Disaster Recovery Plan revealed that it had not been updated on at least an annual basis. The last review was undertaken in April 2017.
- Testing was carried out of the Information Asset Register to ensure that data in relation to each system, interface and its users was recorded. A sample of three system entries was selected for checking. For the sample of systems selected it was found that:
 - There was no indication of the length of time that the Council could function without the system / systems.
 - Minimum resources required to get the system up and running again in respect of hardware, software and communications were not detailed.
- A further sample check of these systems was carried out to confirm that the Register contained details of the systems objectives and that there were explanations detailed of how each element of the IT service will address the objectives. It was found that the objectives of the systems were recorded, however, there was no information detailed as to how the IT service would address the objectives.
- A review of the Councils Risk Registers to check that each system risk had been recorded revealed that risks were not listed individually in the Registers. It was noted that only a general entry had been made regarding the risk of not having a full Disaster Recovery Plan in place.
- A review of the current Corporate Disaster Plan to confirm that all required information was detailed revealed that:
 - Full details of Risk Assessments were not recorded.
 - Recovery sites had not been established.
- A sample of four key IT system users were contacted and asked to provide copies of their Business Continuity Plans, particularly in relation to Hardware and Software. For all Plans, hardware and software issues had not been addressed in the individual Business Continuity Plans.
- Information was requested from the Insurance Section to confirm that a policy was in place to cover a disaster situation should one occur, however, to date no evidence had been received.
- It was also confirmed that no formal testing took place in relation to the Disaster Recovery Plan.

Jo Harley, the Interim Head of Digital and Transformation Services provided the Committee with a thorough explanation on the progress made in respect of the issues raised in the moderate rating. She referred to each specific reason and confirmed the progress / developments made in order to provide the Committee with assurance that improvements were being implemented.

The Committee asked questions of the Officer, who responded accordingly.
Discussions centred around: -

- Companies providing Cloud based systems being located in the UK;
- Concern regarding BT infrastructure;
- Consideration being given to each system prior to any cloud migration decision. This will lead to a hybrid solution of cloud and on premise systems;
- Potential cost of transferring to the Cloud and the different options / packages available;
- Risk assessments of the Service Areas systems is the responsibility of services;
- Internal Audit keep pace with the changes in IT.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

41 Wales Audit Office - ISA 260 Report - City and County of Swansea.

Geraint Norman and Anthony Veale, Wales Audit Office presented Wales Audit Office ISA 260 report 2017/18 – City and County of Swansea. The report set out for consideration, matters arising from the audit of the 2017-18 financial statements for the Council that required reporting under ISA 260. It was stated that it was the Auditor General's intention to issue an unqualified audit report on the financial statements.

It was added that the auditors had received the draft financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 on 4 June, prior to the deadline of 30 June 2018. The Wales Audit Office were reporting the more significant issues arising from the audit, which they believed must be considered prior to approval of the financial statements. These issues had already been discussed with the Section 151 Officer.

It was the Auditor General's intention to issue an unqualified audit report on the 2017-18 financial statements. The final letter of representation was contained at Appendix 1, the proposed audit report was provided at Appendix 2, the corrected mis-statements were provided at Appendix 3 and the key recommendations arising from the financial audit work were set out in Appendix 4.

The Committee asked questions in relation to the following which were responded to by the Wales Audit Office Representatives: -

- Capital Accounting advice regarding current arrangements;
- Progress made regarding registering deeds with the Land Registry;
- Reconciliation of the Council's Revaluation Reserve.

The Chair expressed his appreciation to the Finance staff for providing the accounts to the Wales Audit Office well before the required deadline.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

42 Wales Audit Office - ISA 260 Report - City & County of Swansea Pension Fund.

David Williams, Wales Audit Office presented a report that set out for consideration the matters arising from the audit of the financial statements of the Pension Fund for 2017/18, which required reporting under ISA 260.

The gross assets controlled by the Pension Fund amounted to £1.9 billion. The quantitative levels at which misstatements were judged to be material for the Pension Fund is £19.1 million. The report provided the matters arising from the audit of the financial statements of the Pension Fund for 2017-18.

The draft financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 were received on 25 May 2018, prior to the 30 June 2018 deadline. The Wales Audit Office were reporting the more significant issues arising from the audit, which they believed must be considered prior to approval of the financial statements. These issues had already been discussed with the Section 151 Officer.

It was the Auditor General's intention to issue an unqualified audit report on the financial statements once the Authority had provided a Letter of Representation based on that set out in Appendix 1.

The proposed audit report was set out in Appendix 2. The Pension Fund was included within the Council's main financial statements and therefore the opinion shown was that proposed for the Council's main financial statements incorporating the Pension Fund.

It was outlined that there were no non-trivial misstatements identified in the financial statements which remained uncorrected. There were misstatements which had been corrected by management but which the auditors felt should be highlighted due to their relevance to the responsibilities of the Authority over the financial reporting process. These were set out with explanations in Appendix 3. These amendments increased the value of investments in the Net Assets Statement by £2.5 million. There were also a number of other presentational amendments made to the draft financial statements arising from the audit. Other significant issues arising from the audit were also reported.

The key recommendations arising from the financial audit work were set out in Appendix 4. Management had responded to them and progress would be checked during next year's audit. Where any actions were outstanding, the auditors would continue to monitor progress and include it in the report next year.

The Chair expressed his appreciation to the Finance staff for providing the accounts to the Wales Audit Office well before the required deadline.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

43 Corporate Fraud Annual Report 2017/18.

Jeff Fish and Jonathan Rogers presented a summary of the work completed by the Fraud Function of Internal Audit in 2017/18.

The report provided the background to the Fraud Function, an overview of activities and its value. The key activities in 2017/18 covered the following areas of work: -

- Review of Direct Payment Strategy / forms;
- Joint work with DWP's Fraud and Error Service;
- National Fraud Initiative 2016
- Fraud Awareness;
- Inter-Agency work and Data Exchange;
- Special investigations.

The Review of the Fraud Function Plan for 2017/18 reported that out of the 9 planned activities, 6 were fully achieved and 3 partly achieved. Appendix 3 of the report provided details of these activities.

The Committee asked questions of the Officers, who responded accordingly. Discussions centred around the following: -

- Overpayments, the reasons surrounding why they had occurred and the follow up process;
- The pilot scheme relating to overpayments.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

44 Audit Committee Action Tracker Report. (For Information)

The Chief Auditor presented the Audit Committee Tracker Report for information.

He highlighted two additional actions in relation to the Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2017/18 and outcomes that required reports being provided to future Committee meetings.

45 Audit Committee Work Plan. (For Information)

The Audit Committee Work Plan was reported for information.

The Chief Auditor highlighted two updated actions at Appendix 2 relating to the Wales Audit Office. Geraint Norman stated that it was for the Committee to decide how it wished to progress the issues.

Resolved that the items be discussed at the next scheduled meeting.

The meeting ended at 3.21 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Audit Committee – 9 October 2018

For Information: Scrutiny Work Programme 2018-19

Purpose:	<p>This report supports the developing relationship between scrutiny and the Audit Committee and sharing of information. It explains the background and purpose of the scrutiny work programme, which is developed, managed and monitored by the Scrutiny Programme Committee.</p> <p>The report shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the overall agreed Scrutiny Work Programme, including work being carried out through various Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups established by the Committee;• the work plan of the Scrutiny Programme Committee itself;• the work plan of the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel and• The Scrutiny Annual Report for 2017-18 which will be reported to Council on 25 October.
Policy Framework:	Council Constitution
Consultation:	Legal, Finance and Access to Services
Recommendation:	The Committee is invited to make comments as necessary in support of the relationship between scrutiny and the Audit Committee.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Nick Davies
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Developing the Relationship between Scrutiny and the Audit Committee.

1.1 It has been previously identified and agreed that there is a need for:

- Mutual awareness and understanding of the work of scrutiny and audit committee
- Respective work plans to be coordinated and avoid duplication / gaps
- Clear mechanism for referral of issues, if necessary

1.2 In support of this the follow actions were agreed in 2015-16:

- i) Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee / Convener of Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel copied into Audit Committee agenda and vice versa
- ii) Scrutiny Work Programme / Service Improvement & Finance Panel Work Plan published in Audit Committee agenda for information and vice versa
- iii) At least once a year chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee appears at Audit Committee to share work plan and for a 'health-check' and vice-versa
- iv) Audit Committee chair invited to Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference
- v) Chairs raise any issues re. coordination / duplication on ongoing basis
- vi) Where matters to be referred from Audit Committee chair writes letter to chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee

2. The Scrutiny Work Programme

2.1 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.

2.2 The broad aim of the scrutiny function is:

To carry out a significant and constructive programme of activities that will:

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

2.3 At the same time the committee must ensure that the work of scrutiny is:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
- relevant to corporate priorities and focused on significant areas
- adding value and having maximum impact
- coordinated and avoids duplication

2.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of scrutiny time and resources.

3. **Methods of Working**

3.1 The work of scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the committee itself and by establishing informal panels (for in-depth activities) or one-off working groups:

- a) **Formal committee meetings** – as well as developing and managing the overall work programme and keeping an oversight on all scrutiny activities, the committee will focus on holding Cabinet Members to account by holding formal questioning sessions, and provide challenge on a broad range of policy and service issues over the course of the year. Matters considered at committee meetings will typically be ‘one-off’ opportunities for questions, which will result in the committee communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement through chairs letters to Cabinet Members, and where appropriate by producing reports.
- **Informal panels** – Scrutiny panels are established, with conveners and members appointed by the committee, to carry out in-depth inquiries or undertake in-depth monitoring of particular services. The use of panels helps to ensure that scrutiny can be flexible and responsive to issues of concern:

i) Inquiry Panels: to undertake discrete in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis. These would be significant topics where scrutiny can make a real difference. Inquiry panels are expected to take no longer than six months to complete and 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 implementation of agreed recommendations and cabinet action plans, and the impact of their work – usually 6-12 months following cabinet decision, with a further follow up arranged if required.

ii) Performance Panels: to provide in-depth monitoring and challenge for clearly defined service areas. 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.

b) **Informal working groups** – although the majority of scrutiny work is carried out through the Committee and Panels, the Committee can also establish informal Working Groups of councillors. This supports flexible working where it has been agreed that a matter should be carried out outside of the Committee but does not necessitate the establishment of a Panel. This method of working is intended to be light-touch – effectively a one-off meeting to consider a specific report or information, resulting in a letter to relevant Cabinet Member(s) with views and recommendations.

3.2 These arrangements help to achieve more focused scrutiny activity and provide flexibility to deal with things in different ways, depending on the issue, and improve impact.

3.3 Non executive councillors who are not members of the committee have the opportunity to participate in panels and other informal task and finish groups. New panel / working group topics, once agreed, are advertised to all non executive councillors and expressions of interest sought. The membership of panels and working groups is then determined by the committee. More than one political group should be represented on each panel / working groups. These bodies also need to be of a manageable size in terms of team working and effective questioning. A minimum of 3 members should be present at all meetings.

3.4 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, letters relating to all such scrutiny activities will be published, in the same manner as the committee, on the Council's modern.gov online platform:

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

3.5 The following information is appended:

- the overall agreed Scrutiny Work Programme, including work being carried out through various Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups established by the Committee (*Appendix 1*)
- the work plan of the Scrutiny Programme Committee itself (*Appendix 2*)
- the work plan of the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel (*Appendix 3*)
- Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18 (*Appendix 4*)

4. Monitoring the Work Programme

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee maintain an overview of all scrutiny activities to ensure that the work programme is co-ordinated and effective. In particular the committee monitors progress of work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility. Performance Panel conveners provide regular updates on their work which enables discussion on key activities and impact.

5. Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18

- 5.1 Every year Council requires that an annual report is produced for the work of scrutiny for the previous municipal year.

- 5.2 The Scrutiny Annual Report is used to:

- Highlight the work carried out by scrutiny
- Show how scrutiny has made a difference
- Support continuous improvement for the scrutiny function

- 5.3 The Annual Report looking back at 2017-18 has recently been drafted and, subject to the endorsement of the Scrutiny Programme Committee (8 October), the Annual Report will be presented to Council on 25 October for discussion. This report can be found as **Appendix 4**

- 5.4 The report takes a 'results based' approach, to show:

- How much scrutiny we did
- How well we did
- How much scrutiny affected the business of the Council
- The outcomes of scrutiny

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Any costs that arise out of work plan activities, for example expenses for witnesses or transport costs, are not envisaged to be significant and will be contained within the existing Scrutiny Budget.

7. Legal Implications

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

8. Equality & Engagement Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific equality and engagement implications raised by this report.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

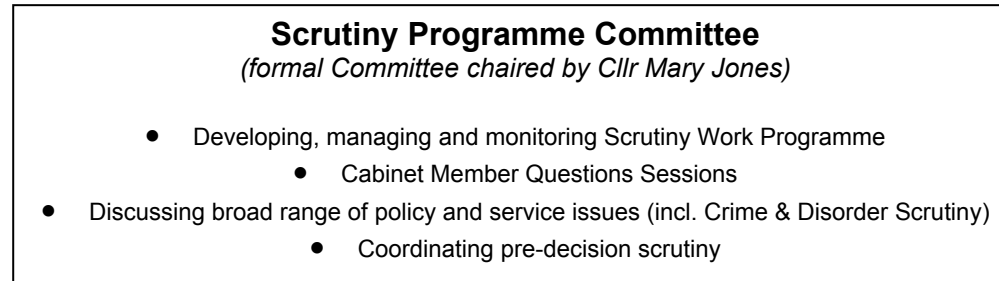
Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2018-19

Appendix 2: The Committee Work Plan 2018-19

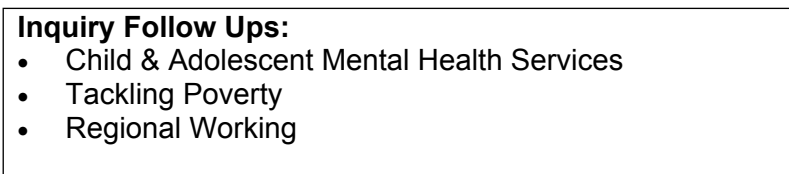
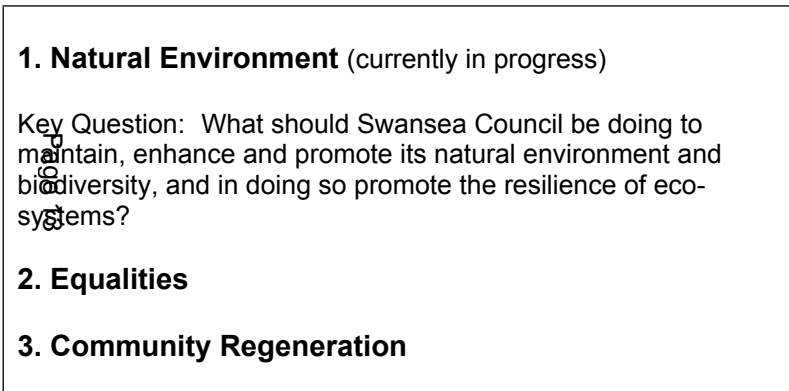
Appendix 3: Service Improvement & Finance Panel Work Plan 2018-19

Appendix 4: Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19



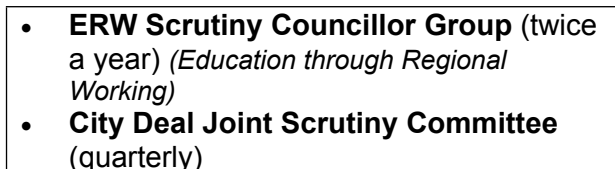
Inquiry Panels:
(time-limited in-depth inquiries)



Performance Panels:
(on-going in-depth monitoring)



Regional Scrutiny:



Working Groups:
(light touch / one-off meetings)



Issues referred to Performance Panels as part of their monitoring activities:

Adult Services:

- **Safeguarding - Modern Slavery / Human Trafficking** - (is there a problem in Swansea? what is happening to prevent?)

Child & Family Services:

- **Safeguarding - Child Sexual Exploitation** (is there a problem in Swansea? what is happening to prevent?)

Development & Regeneration:

- **City Centre** Re-development
- **Skyline** Development (ask about consultation with local community)
- **Local Manufacturing**

Schools:

- **Pupil Development Grant**
- **Special Education Needs** (concern about increase in no. of cases going to tribunal)
- **School Transport**
- **Free School Meals / LAC** attainment

Service Improvement & Finance:

- **Planning Enforcement** (discuss as part of annual performance report incl. around developer commitments)
- **Waste** (ask about waste treatment as part of annual performance report)
- **Welsh Housing Quality Standard** (annual position statement about progress in delivering WHQS by 2020/21 target)

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2018/19

Standing / Recurring Agenda Items:

Role of the Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure understanding about the role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee, and discuss effective working
Scrutiny Work Programme	<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 To maintain overview on scrutiny work, monitor progress, and coordinate as necessary To receive progress reports from Conveners of Performance Panels on headlines from the Panel's work and achievements 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
Scrutiny Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the annual report of the work of overview & scrutiny for the previous municipal year, as required by the Council Constitution
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive final reports (including conclusions and recommendations) of Inquiry Panel prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
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)
Annual Work Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reflect on the year's work, achievements, experiences, issues, ideas for future scrutiny

ACTIVITY	19 June 2018*	9 July 2018	20 July 2018*	13 August 2018	10 September 2018	1 October 2018*
Scrutiny Work Programme		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the Committee • Draft Work Programme for Agreement • Scrutiny Improvement & Development Objectives 			Wales Audit Office Report – Overview & Scrutiny: Fit for the Future?	
Cabinet Member Question & Answer Sessions				Homes & Energy	Business Transformation & Performance (Deputy Leader)	
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports			Swansea Bay City Deal Joint Scrutiny Committee			Consultation on Draft Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports				Service Improvement & Finance	Adult Services	
Pre-decision Scrutiny	More Homes Parc Yr Helyg Site Options Appraisal					
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports						
Scrutiny Reports to Council						

ACTIVITY	8 October 2018	12 November 2018	10 December 2018	14 January 2019	11 February 2019	11 March 2019
Scrutiny Work Programme		Wales Audit Office Report – Overview & Scrutiny: Fit for the Future? Action Plan				
Cabinet Member Question & Answer Sessions	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	Children Services (Early Years and Young People)	Care, Health & Ageing Well	Economy & Strategy (Leader)	Environment & Infrastructure Management	Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports Page 17	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Swansea – Commissioning Reviews: Service Areas – Post Implementation Updates Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme – Compliance and Progress 				
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports	Schools	Child & Family Services	Development & Regeneration	Service Improvement & Finance	Adult Services	Schools
Pre-decision Scrutiny						
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports			Natural Environment			
Scrutiny Reports to Council	Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18	Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report			Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report	

ACTIVITY	8 April 2019	13 May 2018				
Scrutiny Work Programme		Annual Work Plan Review				
Cabinet Member Question & Answer Sessions	Better Communities (People and Place)	Delivery				
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports						
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports	Public Services Board					
Pre-decision Scrutiny						
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports						
Scrutiny Reports to Council		Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report				

* denotes extra meeting

To Be Arranged:

Scrutiny / Audit Committee Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Audit Committee to attend to share work plan of Audit Committee / Annual Report. 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
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 (extra meeting around March 2019).

Specific Recurring Reports to Committee:

Sustainable Swansea Programme – Commissioning Reviews: Service Areas – Post Implementation Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular update on progress in implementation of service changes following Commissioning Reviews / outcomes.
Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider report of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group. The report is cross cutting (i.e. covers safeguarding of adults and children) and is not a report on social services performance but on how the Council as whole is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities.
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).

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel


Work Plan 2018/2019

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

Meeting 1 Tuesday June 5th	1. Election of Convener 2. Role of Panel and Terms of Reference <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Chris Holley 3. Work Plan 2018-2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Chris Holley
Meeting 2 Commissioning Review Tuesday June 19th 11am – 1pm	Cultural Programme – Final Bidder Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Martin Nicholls – Director Place• Tracey McNulty – Head of Cultural Services• Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member Culture, Tourism and Major Projects
Meeting 3 Tuesday July 10th Committee Room 3 Civic Centre	1. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2017/18 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Julie Nicholas Humphreys - Customer Services Manager• Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance 2. Charges Item <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chris Williams – Head of Commercial Services• Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance
Meeting 4 Tuesday August 14th	1. End of Year 2017/18 Performance Monitoring Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager
Meeting 5 Tuesday September 11th	1. Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chris Howell – Head of Waste Management and Parks• Cllr Mark Thomas – Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure Management

<p>Meeting 6 Thursday September 27th Committee Room 2 Civic Centre</p>	<p>1. Equality Review Report 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager • Cllr Mary Sherwood – Cabinet Member for Better Communities <p>2. Q1 2018/19 Performance Monitoring Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager
<p>Meeting 7 Monday October 29th</p>	<p>1. Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julie Nicholas Humphreys - Customer Services Manager • Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance <p>2. Q1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2018/19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>3. Revenue Outturn and Savings Tracker 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>4. Revenue Outturn 2017/18 (HRA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>5. Capital Outturn and Financing 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre
<p>Meeting 8 Tuesday November 13th</p>	<p>1. Q2 Budget Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>2. Annual Review of Performance 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager • Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance <p>3. Reserve Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>4. Mid-Year Budget Statement 2018/19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and

	Service Centre
Meeting 9 Tuesday December 11th	<p>1. Annual Review of Well-being Objectives and Corporate Plan 2018/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager • Cllr Rob Stewart – Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy <p>2. Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Gibbins - Principal Librarian for Information & Learning • Cllr June Burtonshaw – Cabinet Member for Better Communities – Place <p>3. Planning Annual Performance Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryan Thomas - Development Conservation and Design Manager • Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Delivery
Meeting 10 Tuesday January 15th	<p>1. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager <p>2. Budget Proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre • Cllr Rob Stewart – Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy
Meeting 11 Tuesday February 12th Chamber Meeting Room Civic (Room 2.1.19) BUDGET MEETING	<p>1. Q3 Budget Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>2. Annual Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre
Meeting 12 Wednesday March 6th	<p>1. Review of Community Groups – Friends of Parks/Community Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracey McNulty – Head of Cultural Services • Cllr June Burtonshaw – Cabinet Member for Better Communities - Place
Meeting 13 Tuesday April 9th	<p>1. Q3 Performance Monitoring Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager



To be scheduled;

- Commissioning Reviews 2016/17 Evaluation Item
- Additional Commissioning Reviews (TBA)
- Welsh Housing Quality Standards (TBA)
- Local Government Performance Bulletin 2017/18

Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

DRAFT



Contents

1.	Chair's Foreword	1
2.	Swansea Scrutiny Results Scorecard 2017-18	2
3.	About the Indicators	3
3.a	How much scrutiny did we do?	3
3.b	How well did we do?	6
3.c	How much did scrutiny affect the business of the Council?	13
3.d	What were the outcomes of scrutiny?	17
4.	Impact	22
4.1	How Scrutiny Councillors have made a difference	22
5.	Feedback and Improvement	23
5.1	Improving scrutiny	23
5.2	How people see scrutiny	23
5.3	What people like about scrutiny	24
5.4	Things that could be improved	25
5.5	Five improvement objectives	26
5.6	Wales Audit Office Review of Scrutiny	27
	For further information	29
	Appendix:	
	Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report - January 2018	
	Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report - April 2018	

1. Chair's Foreword

Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee



I am proud to present our first annual report of this new Council term. I was pleased to be again elected as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

We started off scrutiny this year with an induction into the subject mindful that 19 new Councillors were elected. I believe this induction is important equally for new and returning councillors. We also used that session to focus on effective questioning techniques.

We are at the start of our five year scrutiny journey. Though I feel it is important to build upon the good work that has already been carried out and continue to develop scrutiny moving forward. We talked at the start of the year about the powerful opportunities that scrutiny provides for questioning, inquiry, monitoring, and providing challenge to decision-makers. We hope that this report provides you with assurance and confidence that councillors involved in scrutiny are contributing to better services, policies and decisions, and making a difference by:

- Ensuring that Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers) are held to account through public question and answer sessions
- Making evidence based proposals on topics of concern through task and finish Scrutiny Inquiry Panels that report to Cabinet
- Monitoring and challenging service performance and improvement through standing Scrutiny Performance Panels
- Addressing issues of concern through one off working groups
- Acting as a 'check' on the key decisions through pre-decision scrutiny

We cannot look at everything so we have focussed on and aligned our work to the Council priorities, but balanced that with issues of community concern.

It was a significant and challenging year which included a review of our scrutiny arrangements by the Wales Audit Office. I am pleased to say that they found many positives in our practice and we welcome their suggestions for improvement.

Finally, a word of thanks to all of the councillors who have contributed to scrutiny over the past year. We look forward to another busy and productive year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Jones".

2. Swansea Scrutiny Results Scorecard 2017-18

Scrutiny Practice	A. How much scrutiny did we do?	B. How well did we do?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of committee meetings = 13 ↔ (13) 2. Number of panel & working group meetings = 69 ↓ (91) 3. Number of in-depth inquiries completed = 1 ↓ (4) 4. Number of working group topics completed = 7 ↑ (4) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Councillors who say they have a good understanding of the work of scrutiny = 100% ↑ (97%) 6. Staff who say they have a good understanding of the work of scrutiny = 100% ↑ (45%) 7. Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings = 68% ↑ (67%) 8. Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 80% ↑ (76%) 9. Councillors who agree that the level of support provided by the Scrutiny Team is either excellent or very good = 91% ↑ (88%) 10. Staff who agree that the level of support provided by the Scrutiny Team is either excellent or very good = 79% ↑ (63%) 11. Councillors who agree that the scrutiny arrangements are working well = 85% ↓ (89%) 12. Staff who agree that the scrutiny arrangements are working well = 92% ↑ (39%)
Scrutiny Outcomes	C. How much did scrutiny affect the business of the Council?	D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Number of chairs letters written to cabinet members = 63 ↓ (77) 14. In depth inquiries reported to Cabinet = 1 ↓ (4) 15. Action plans agreed = 2 ↓ (4) 16. Follow ups undertaken = 4 ↑ (3) 17. Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre decision scrutiny = 12 ↑ (9) 18. Cabinet members who attended at least one question and answer session at the Scrutiny Programme Committee = 100% ↔ (100%) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Scrutiny recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet = 92% ↑ (81%) 20. Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = 74% ↓ (93%) 21. Councillors who agree that scrutiny has a positive impact on the business of the Council = 84% ↑ (69%) 22. Staff who agree that scrutiny has a positive impact on the business of the Council = 92% ↑ (41%) 23. Councillors who agree that the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance = 85% ↑ (77%) 24. Staff who agree that the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance = 75% ↑ (34%)

Last year in brackets ↑↑ = notable change, ↓↑ = small change, ↔ no change

3. About the Indicators

A. How much scrutiny did we do?

3.1 Number of committee meetings = 13

The Council has a single overarching Scrutiny Committee, called the Scrutiny Programme Committee, which met 13 times during the 2017-18 municipal year.

The Committee is responsible for developing and managing the overall Scrutiny Work Programme. This was informed by the annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference which took place in June 2017, open to all non-executive councillors. Specific scrutiny activities included in the work programme are carried out either by the Committee or by establishing informal Panels and Working Groups.

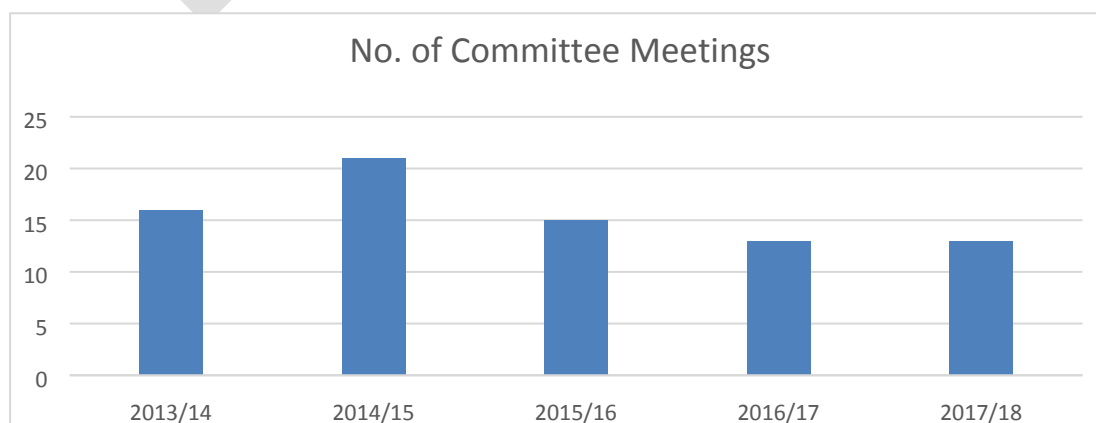
Formal committee meetings for scrutiny are held in public and give councillors the opportunity to hold cabinet members to account and provide challenge on a range of policy and service issues.

This included holding structured Question & Answer sessions with cabinet members to explore their work, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. The following topics were also examined:

- Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report
- Oceana Building Demolition
- Children & Young People's Rights Scheme – Compliance & Progress
- Sustainable Swansea Programme – Commissioning Reviews: Service Areas – Post Implementation Updates

The Committee is also the Council's designated committee for Crime & Disorder Scrutiny and a meeting to discuss the performance of the local Community Safety Partnership, the Safer Swansea Partnership, took place in March 2018.

Comparison with previous years:



3.2 Number of panel & working group meetings = 69

Most of the work of scrutiny is delegated to informal topic based Panels and Working Groups. Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups are established by the Scrutiny Programme Committee, with an appointed convener (chair), to carry out specific scrutiny activities. There are two types of panels:

Inquiry panels - these undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis.

Topics examined during 2017-18:	Convener
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Working (complete) • Natural Environment (continued during 2018-19) 	Cllr. Lyndon Jones Cllr. Peter Jones

Performance panels - these provide in-depth performance / financial monitoring and challenge for clearly defined service areas.

Performance Panels 2017-18:	Convener
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Improvement & Finance (monthly) • Adult Services (monthly) • Schools (monthly) • Child & Family Services (every two months) • Public Services Board (every two months) • Development & Regeneration (quarterly) 	Cllr. Chris Holley Cllr. Peter Black Cllr. Mo Sykes Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams Cllr. Mary Jones Cllr. Jeff Jones

Working groups are one-off meetings established when a matter should be carried out outside of the committee but does not need a panel to be set up, enabling a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern.

Working Groups 2017-18:	Convener
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Planning & Resilience • Community Cohesion & Hate Crime • Car Park Charges • Tethered Horses • Roads & Footway Maintenance • Local Flood Risk Management (meets annually) • Renewable Energy • Homelessness (completed in June 2018) 	Cllr. Mary Jones Cllr. Elliot King Cllr. Will Thomas Cllr. Jeff Jones Cllr. Sam Pritchard Cllr. Peter Jones Cllr. Sam Pritchard Cllr. Peter Black

In our annual councillor survey 96% of those asked felt that scrutiny activities are well-planned (45 respondents).

3.3 Number of in-depth inquiries completed = 1

Work on the following in-depth inquiry was completed during 2017-18:

- Regional Working: *How can the Council, along with its partners, develop and improve regional working for the benefit of Swansea and its residents?*

3.4 Number of working group topics completed = 7

Work on the following topics was completed during 2017-18 through meetings of Working Groups:

- Emergency Planning & Resilience
- Community Cohesion & Hate Crime
- Car Park Charges
- Tethered Horses
- Roads & Footway Maintenance
- Local Flood Risk Management (meets annually)
- Renewable Energy

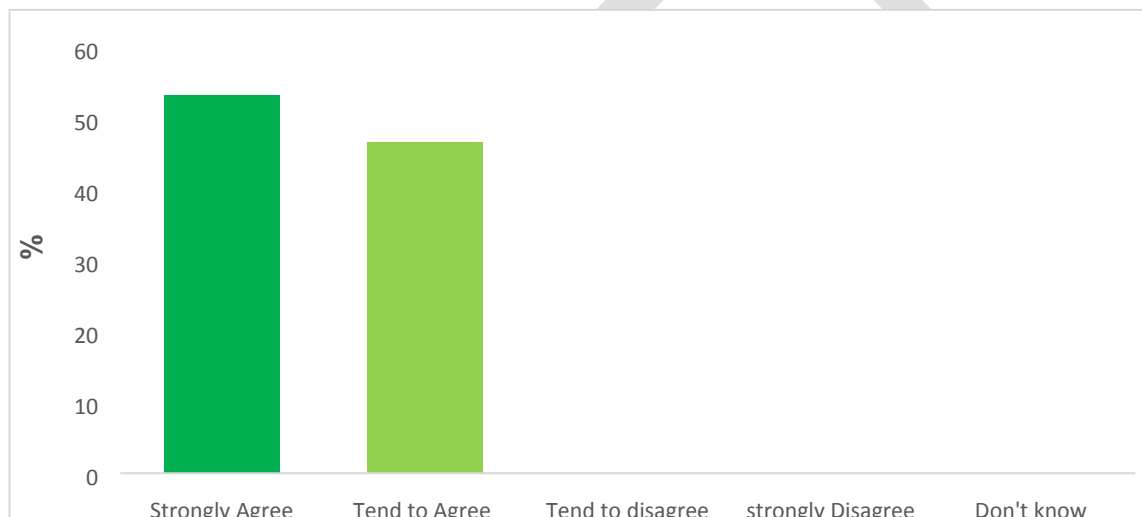
Work on Homelessness was completed during the current municipal year 2018/19.

DRAFT

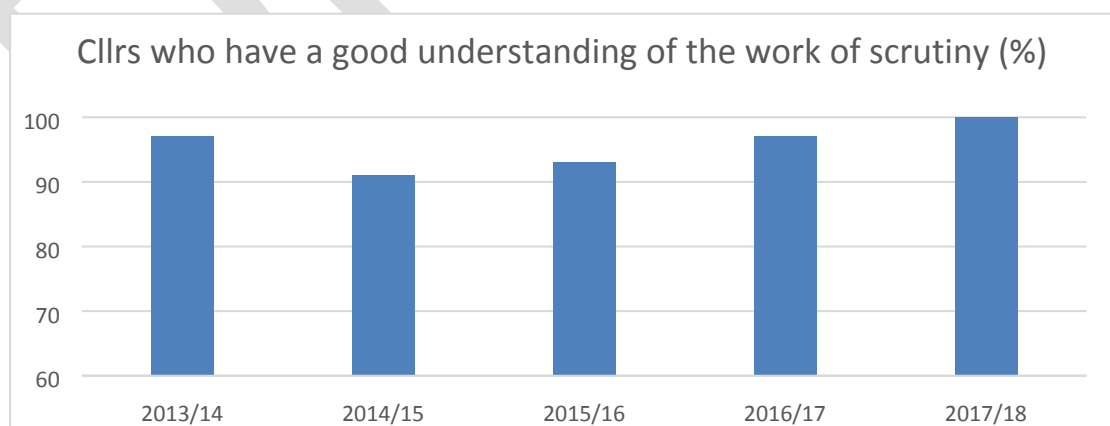
B. How well did we do?

3.5 Councillors who say they have a good understanding of the work of scrutiny = 100%

Awareness and understanding of scrutiny is an important aspect of effectiveness. This data is collected via an annual survey of Councillors (and co-opted members). Many of the questions asked are based on characteristics of effective scrutiny identified by Centre for Public Scrutiny / Wales Audit Office. The numbers of councillors who responded to the survey was 44 (61% of all councillors). This included 40 out of 61 non-executive Councillors (66%). The data also includes the response of 5 co-opted members who were also surveyed. 45 responders were asked this question, representing those who had attended a scrutiny meeting in the last year. 4 non-executive councillors who responded to the survey had not attended a scrutiny meeting during 2017-18.



Comparison with previous years:

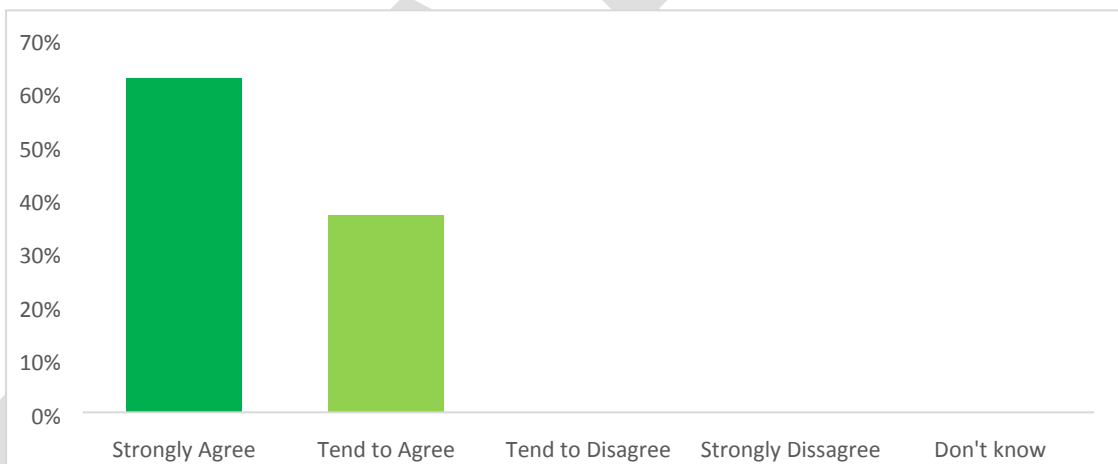


3.6 Staff who say they have a good understanding of the work of scrutiny = 100%

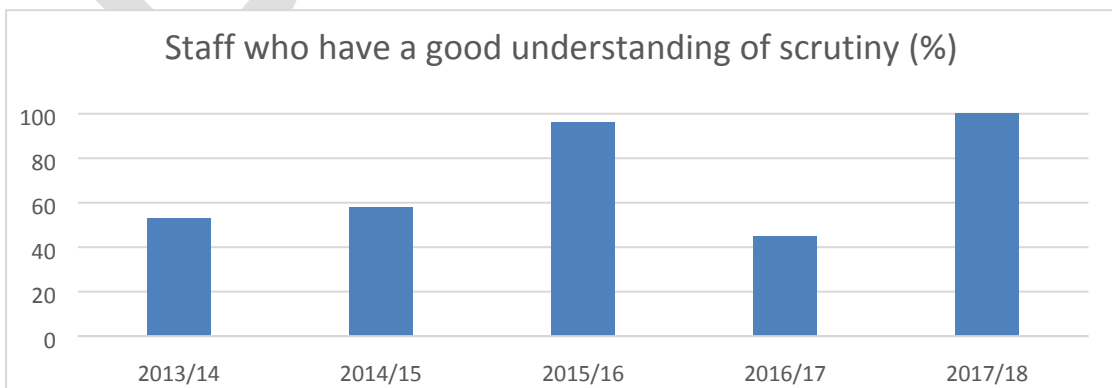
Awareness and understanding of scrutiny is an important aspect of effectiveness. This data is collected via an annual survey of senior members of staff (Corporate Directors, Heads of Services and Senior Managers).

In previous years this question was asked of all staff however the low number of responses meant it was difficult to draw meaningful conclusions. The staff survey is now aimed at senior members of staff, providing a more meaningful indication of understanding amongst those staff in the organisation who will most likely need to be engaged in scrutiny. Overall response rate: 39 staff members - estimated 31% of those surveyed - with an almost even split of staff across the 3 Council Directorates – People, Place & Resources. This question was asked of those who told us that they had some involvement with scrutiny over the last year (24 out of the 39 respondents, or 61.5%)

At the same time we have tried raise awareness of scrutiny and basic understanding amongst all staff generally, through improved online content and staff news stories.



Comparison with previous years:



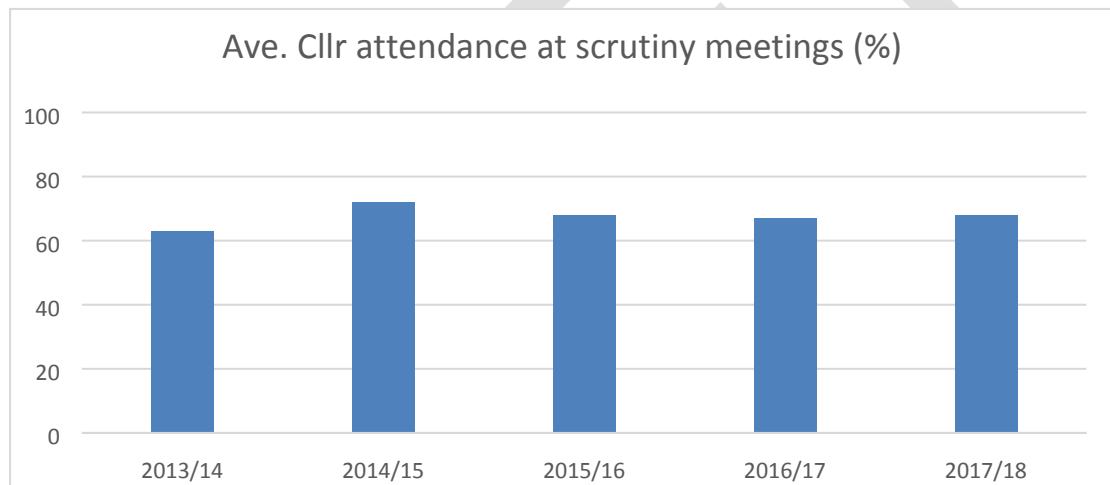
3.7 Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings = 68%

The rate of councillor attendance measures an important aspect of effectiveness as it reflects the engagement of councillors in the scrutiny process.

The membership of the Scrutiny Programme Committee is determined by Council. However, membership of the various informal Panels and Working Groups is based on interest shown by councillors in the topics under scrutiny. Based on expressions of interest the membership of panels and working groups is determined by the Committee.

Attendance figures for councillors are collected by the Council's Democratic Services Team and published on the Council's website. 2017/18's figure is an overall attendance figure that includes the Scrutiny Programme Committee, panel meetings and the working groups.

Comparison with previous years:



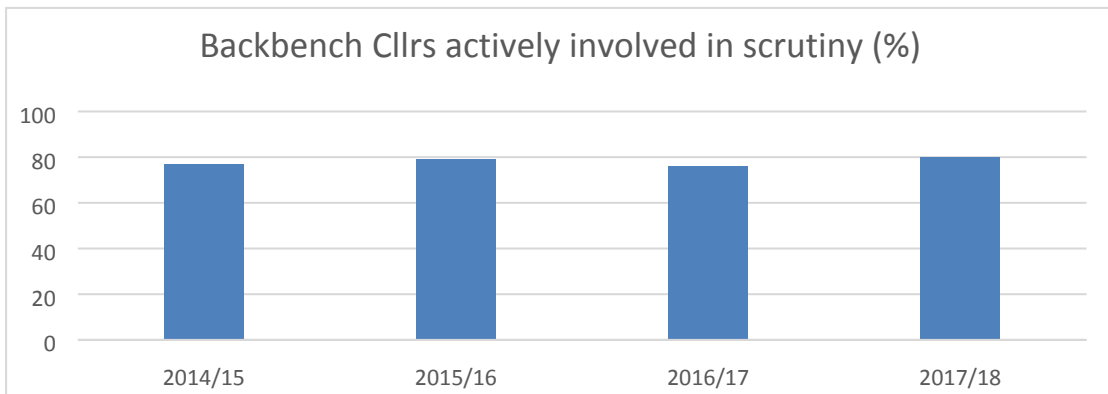
3.8 Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 80%

All backbench councillors have the opportunity to participate in scrutiny work regardless of committee membership. New scrutiny topics, once agreed, were advertised to all non-executive councillors and expressions of interest sought to lead and/or participate in these activities. It enables councillors to participate based on interest, and enables them to build up specialist expertise.

The large majority of backbench councillors were involved in scrutiny either through the Scrutiny Programme Committee, panels or working groups.

In our annual councillor survey 98% of those asked agreed that non-executive members have good opportunities to participate in scrutiny (41 respondents).

Comparison with previous years:

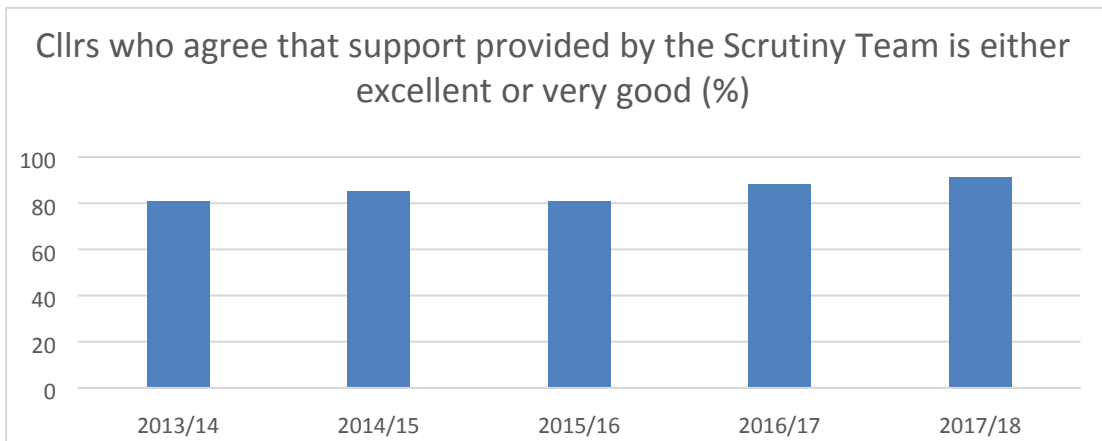


3.9 Councillors who have used the service who agree that the level of support provided by the Scrutiny Team is either excellent or very good = 91%

The Scrutiny Team provides capacity for the committee and the panel meetings/working groups to undertake their work by undertaking, for example, project management, research, report writing and liaison with cabinet and witnesses. This data is collected via our annual survey of councillors. The number of councillors answering this question was 45 (those who had attended a scrutiny meeting during the last year).



Comparison with previous years:

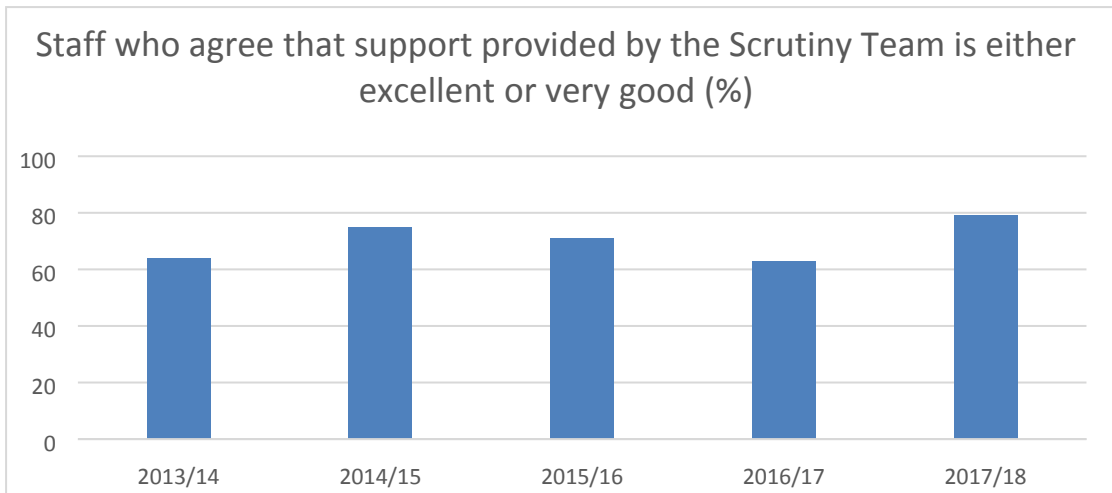


3.10 Staff who agree that the level of support provided by the Scrutiny Team is either excellent or very good = 79%

The Scrutiny Team provides capacity for the committee and the panel meetings/working groups to undertake their work by undertaking, for example, project management, research, report writing and liaison with cabinet and witnesses. This data was collected via our annual survey of senior members of staff. Only those who told us that they have had some involvement in scrutiny over the past year were asked this question. The number of people answering this question was 24.

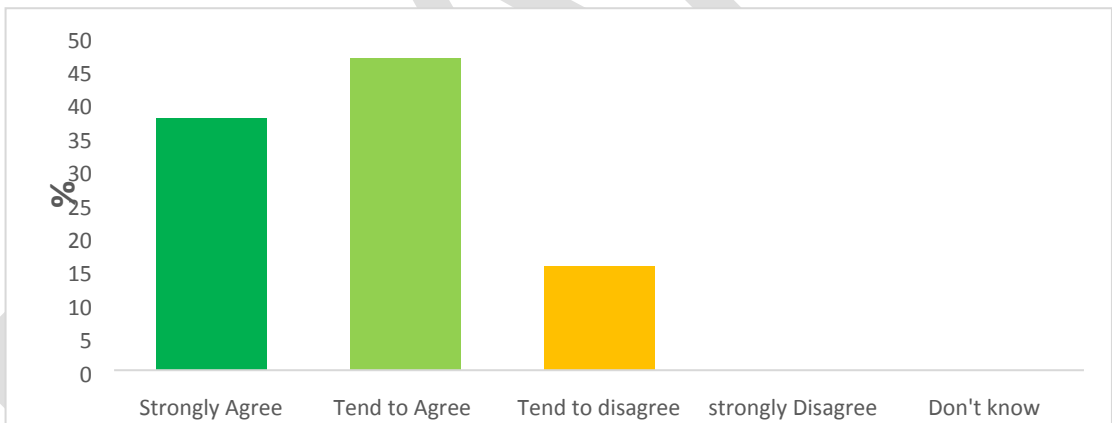
Comparison with previous years:



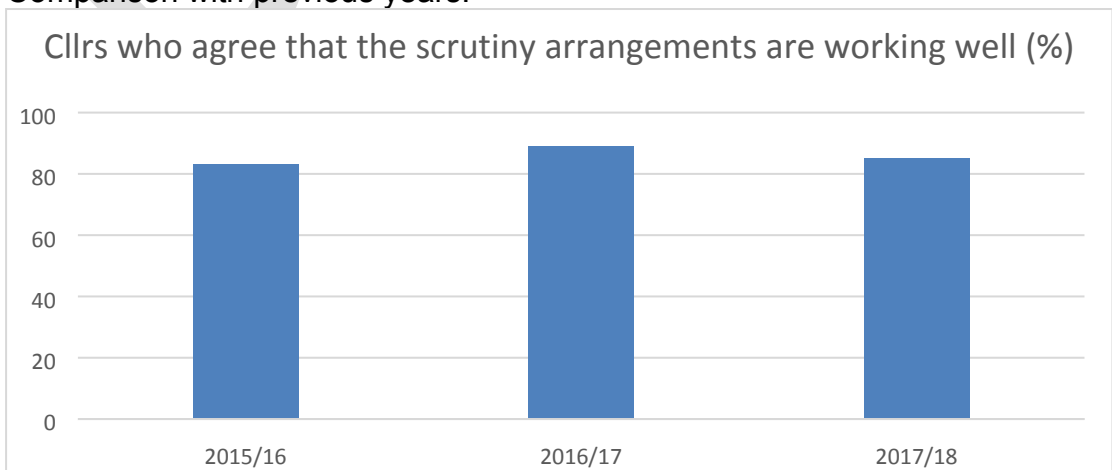


3.11 Councillors who agree that the scrutiny arrangements are working well = 85%

As part of an annual survey, councillors are asked whether they feel the scrutiny arrangements are working well. The number of councillors answering this question was 45 (those who had attended a scrutiny meeting in the last year). This was a new indicator added in 2015/16.

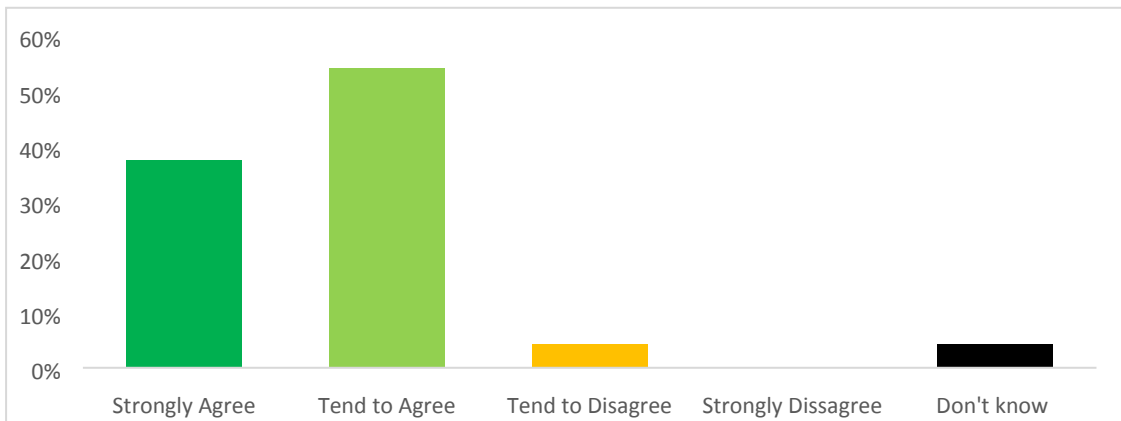


Comparison with previous years:

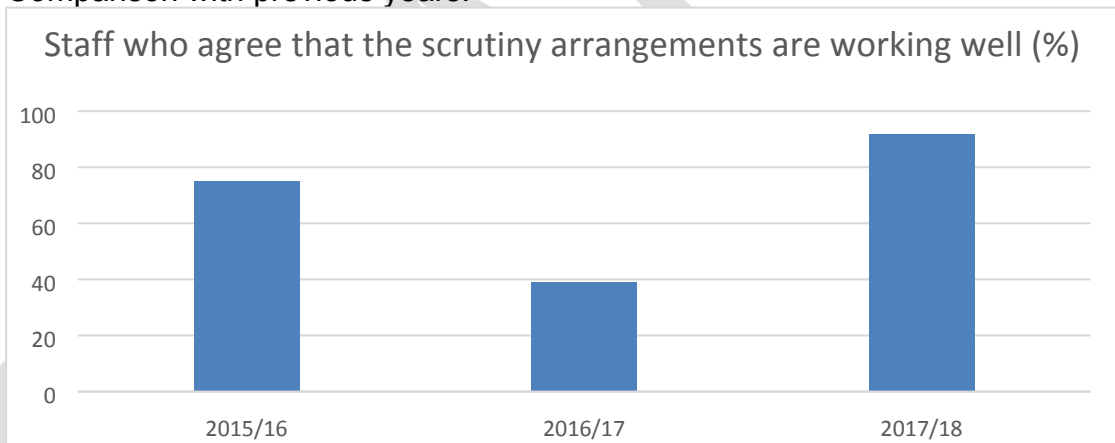


3.12 Staff who agree that the scrutiny arrangements are working well = 92%

As part of an annual survey, senior members of staff were asked whether they feel the scrutiny arrangements are working well. Only those who told us that they have had some involvement in scrutiny over the past year were asked this question. The number of people answering this question was 24. This was a new indicator added in 2015/16.



Comparison with previous years:

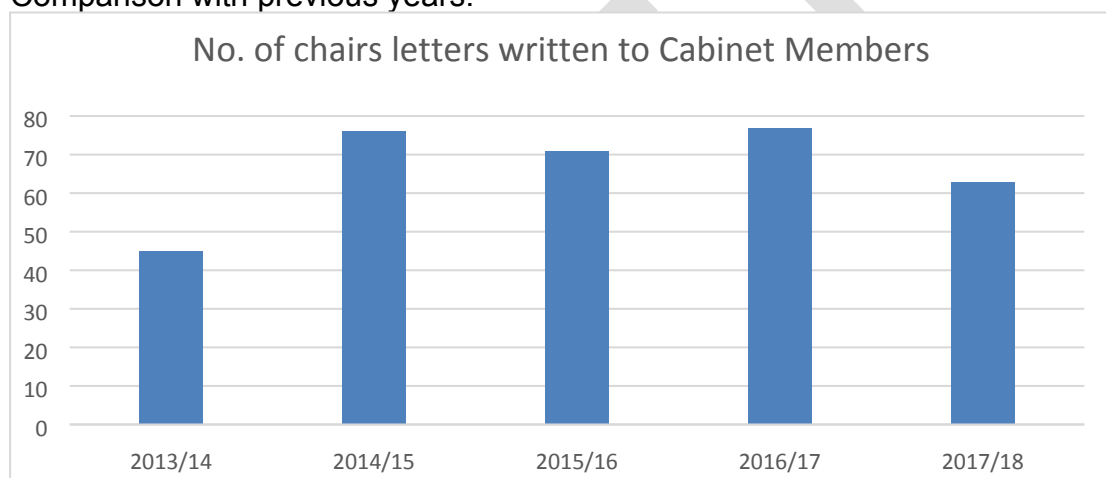


C. How much did scrutiny affect the business of the Council?

3.13 Number of chairs letters written to cabinet members = 63

Chairs letters are an established part of the scrutiny process in Swansea. They allow the committee and panel meetings/working groups to communicate quickly and efficiently directly with relevant cabinet members. They will send letters to raise concerns, recognise good practice, ask for further information and make recommendations for improvement, reflecting discussion at committee / panel / working group meetings. Letters are effectively 'mini-reports' with conclusions and proposals from scrutiny – and where necessary require a response. Average response time for letter sent during 2017-18: 19 days (against target of 21 days). 71% of the 48 letters requiring response were responded to within time.

Comparison with previous years:

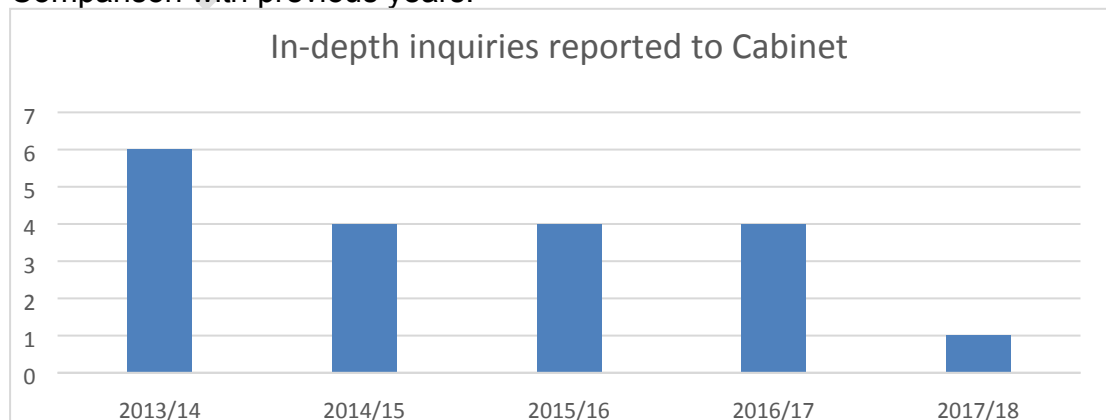


3.14 In-depth inquiries reported to Cabinet = 1

In depth inquiries are reported to Cabinet for a response to the recommendations agreed by scrutiny and action plan on how the recommendations will be implemented. The following in-depth reviews were reported to Cabinet from scrutiny with the number of recommendations from each shown in brackets:

Regional Working (11)

Comparison with previous years:

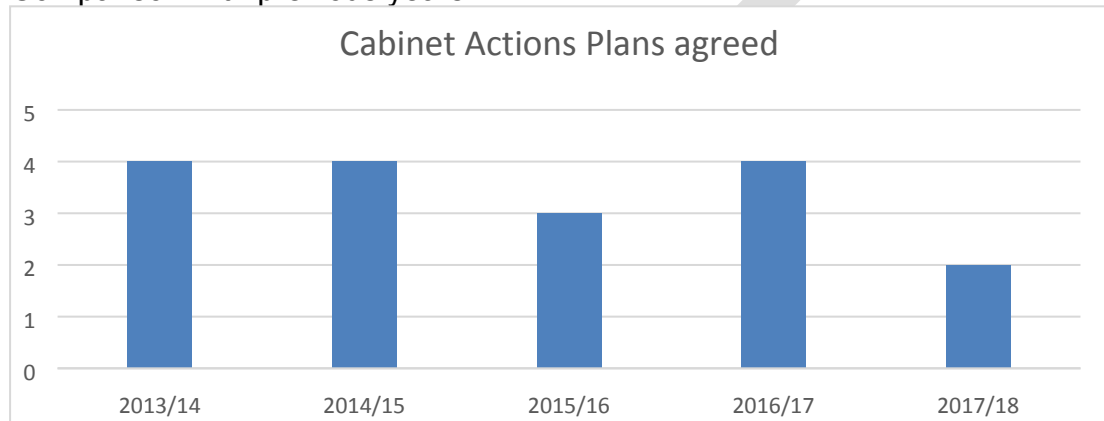


3.15 Action plans agreed = 2

Once recommendations and an action plan have been agreed by cabinet, scrutiny will follow up on progress with implementation and impact. The following action plans were agreed following in-depth inquiries that were originally carried out during 2016-17:

- School Readiness
- Tackling Poverty

Comparison with previous years:



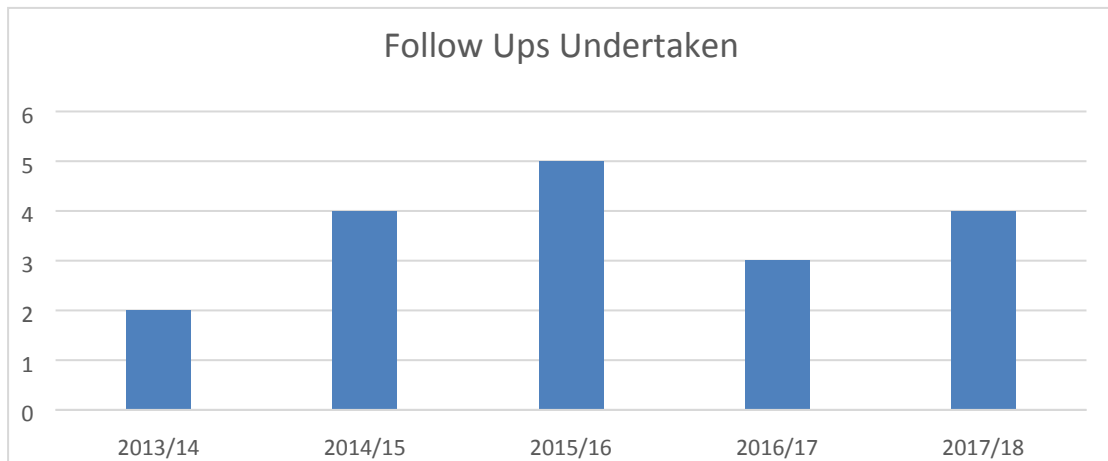
3.16 Follow ups undertaken = 4

Inquiry Panels reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and cabinet action plans, and assess the impact of their work. A meeting will usually be held 6-12 months following cabinet decision, with a further follow up arranged if required.

In order to check whether the agreed action plans have been carried out, scrutiny will ask for follow up reports from cabinet members. If councillors are satisfied they can then conclude the work for that inquiry. The following previous scrutiny inquiries were followed up during the year:

- School Governance (monitoring complete)
- Building Sustainable Communities (monitoring complete)
- School Readiness (monitoring complete)
- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (further follow up in November 2018)

Comparison with previous years:

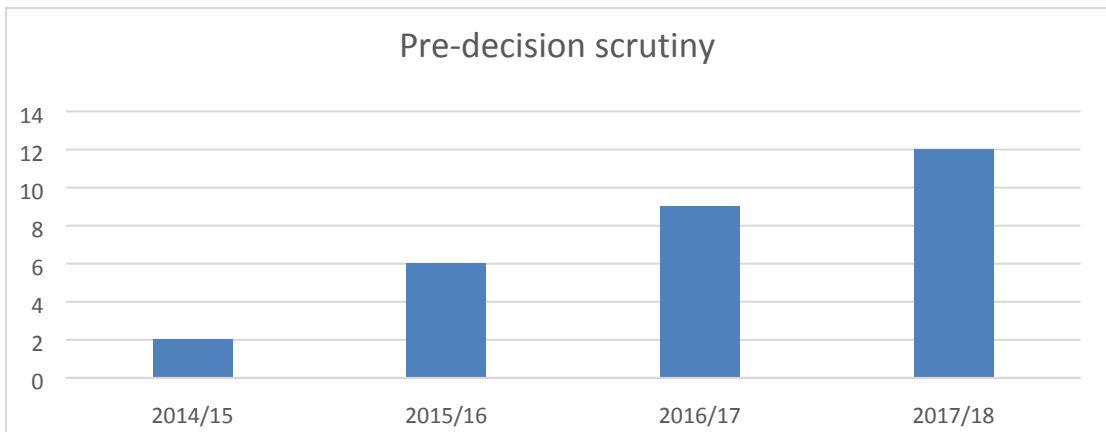


3.17 Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre decision scrutiny = 12

Pre decision scrutiny involves scrutiny councillors considering cabinet reports before cabinet makes a final decision. Taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications, the following 12 cabinet reports were subject to pre-decision scrutiny (carried out by the Committee or relevant Performance Panels), with views reported to Cabinet before decisions were taken:

- Adult Services Commissioning Reviews Consultation Outcome
- Catering Services Commissioning Review
- Planning & City Regeneration Commissioning Review
- Public Protection Commissioning Review
- Castle Square Regeneration
- Family Support (Children with Additional Needs & Disability) Commissioning Review
- More Homes Pilot Scheme
- Liberty Stadium
- Transfer of Management of Allotments
- Highways & Transportation Commissioning Review
- Budget
- Residential Care and Day Services for Older People Commissioning Review

Comparison with previous years:

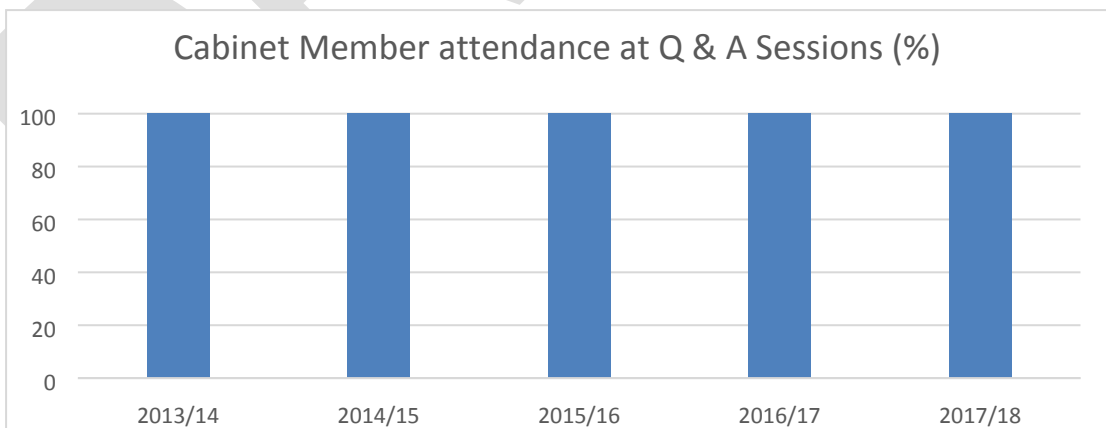


3.18 Cabinet members who attended at least one question and answer session at the Scrutiny Programme Committee – 100%

Cabinet members attend scrutiny meetings to answer questions and provide information. Cabinet attendance at scrutiny meetings is a good indicator that the 'holding to account' role of scrutiny is functioning well. In 2017/18 every Cabinet Member attended at least one question and answer session at the Scrutiny Programme Committee, enabling the committee to explore their work, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. This indicator was added in 2013/14.

In our annual councillor survey 89% of those asked felt that scrutiny provides regular challenge to decision-makers (45 respondents).

Comparison with previous years:

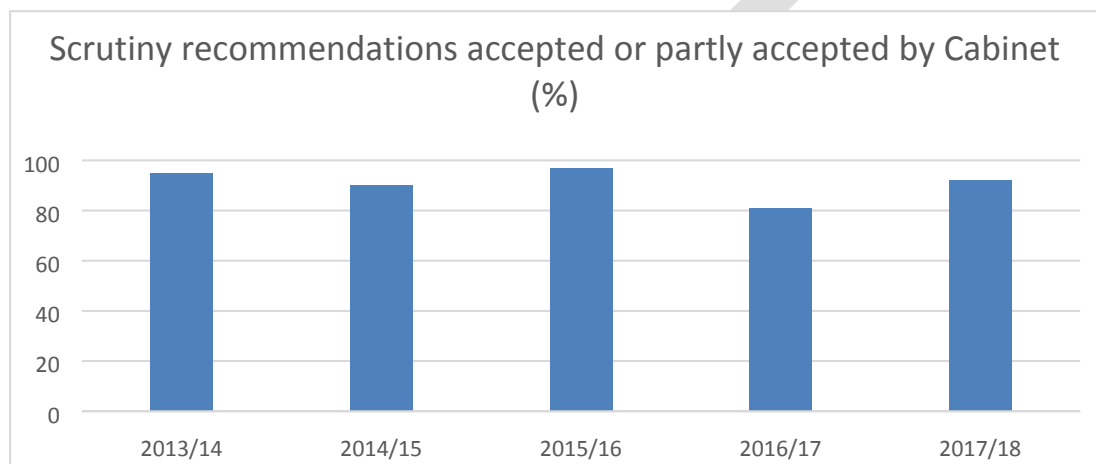


D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?

3.19 Scrutiny recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet = 92%

The rate that cabinet accept scrutiny recommendations is a good indicator of whether scrutiny is making strong recommendations based on robust evidence. Cabinet responded to 24 scrutiny inquiry recommendations in 2017-18 of which 21 were accepted and 1 were partly accepted. 2 were rejected.

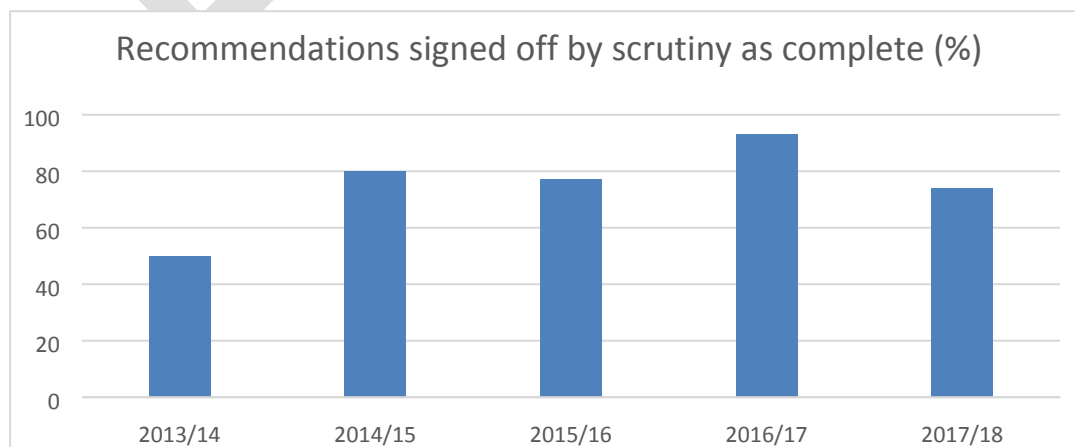
Comparison with previous years:



3.20 Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = 74%

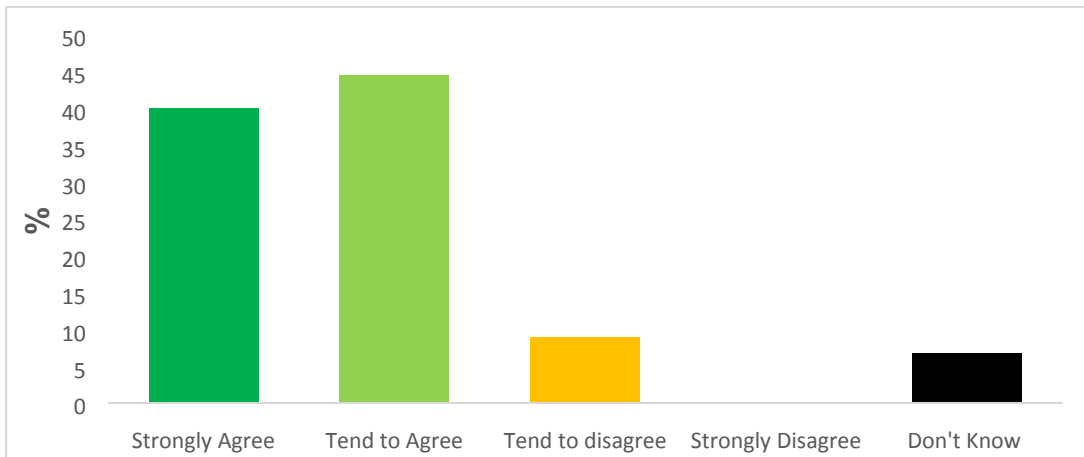
When follow up reports are presented to scrutiny (usually within 12 months following original cabinet decision) they detail which of the recommendations from the in depth inquiry have been completed in line with the cabinet member's action plan and which have not. Scrutiny councillors then consider whether they agree with the assessment taking into account the evidence they are presented with. This indicator represents the percentage of recommendations accepted by scrutiny as being completed for the year (35 recommendations were considered of which 26 were considered as complete).

Comparison with previous years:

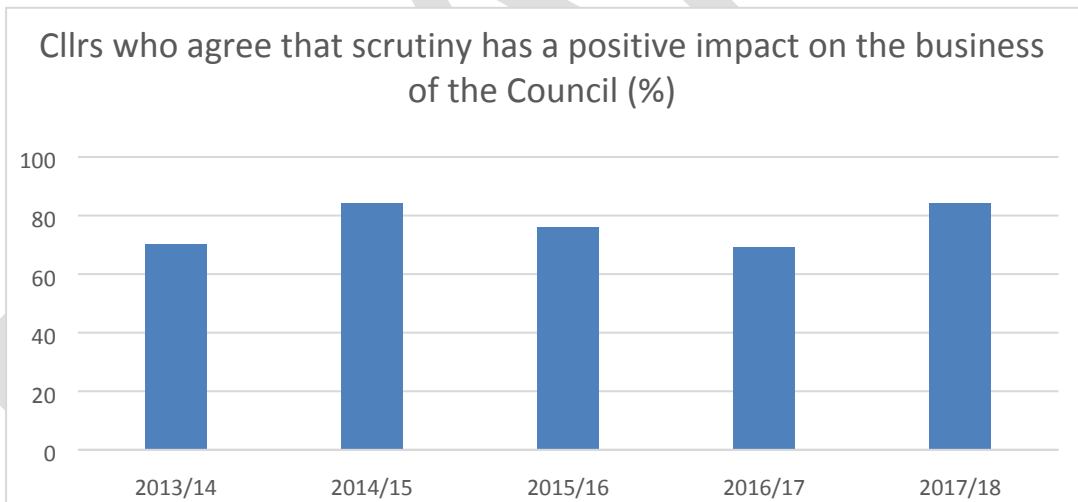


3.21 Councillors who agree that scrutiny has a positive impact on the business of the Council = 84%

As part of our annual survey, councillors are asked whether they believe that scrutiny has made a difference. The numbers of councillors who responded to the survey was 45 (those who had attended a scrutiny meeting in the last year).

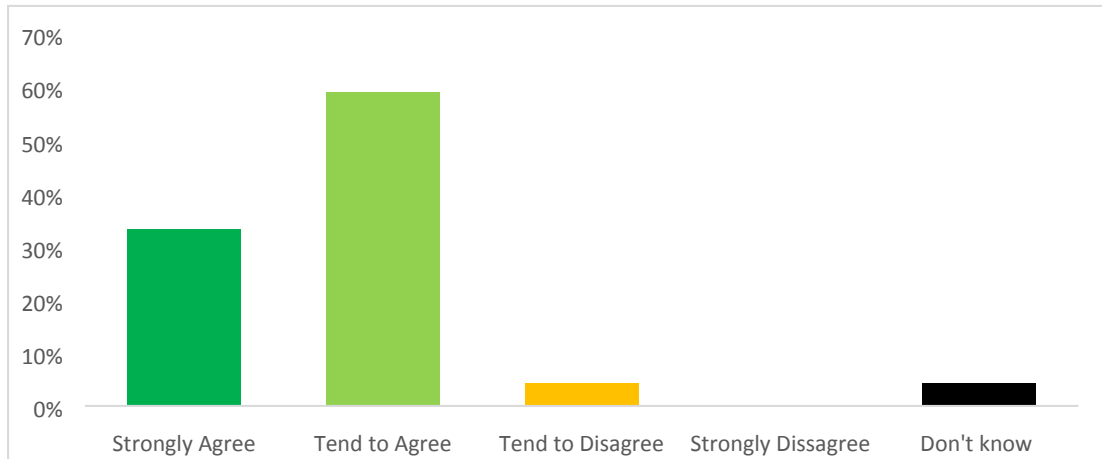


Comparison with previous years:

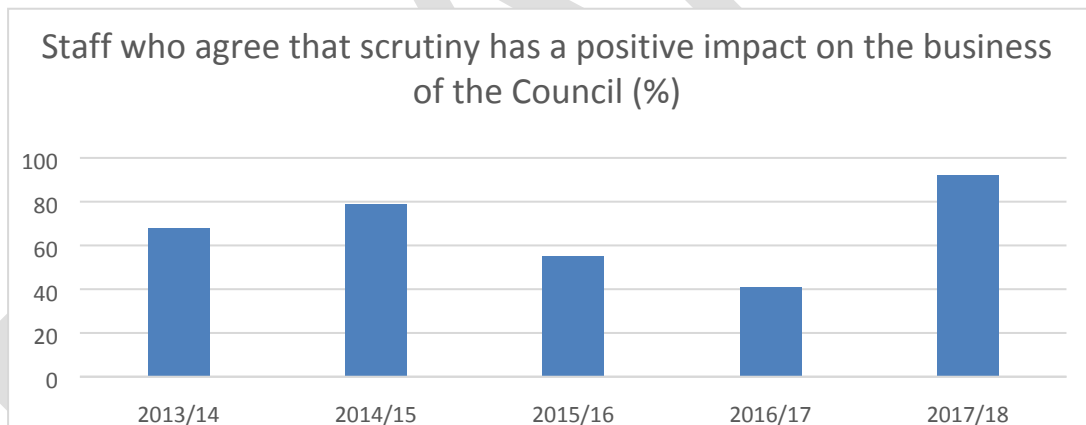


3.22 Staff who agree that scrutiny has a positive impact on the business of the Council = 92%

As part of an annual survey, senior members of staff were asked whether they believe that scrutiny has made a difference. The number of people answering this question was 24.



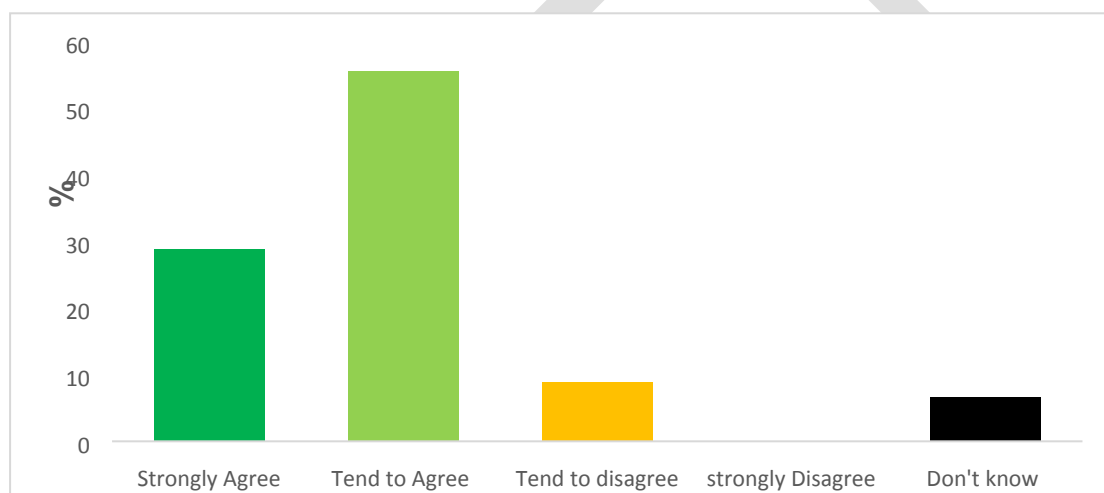
Comparison with previous years:



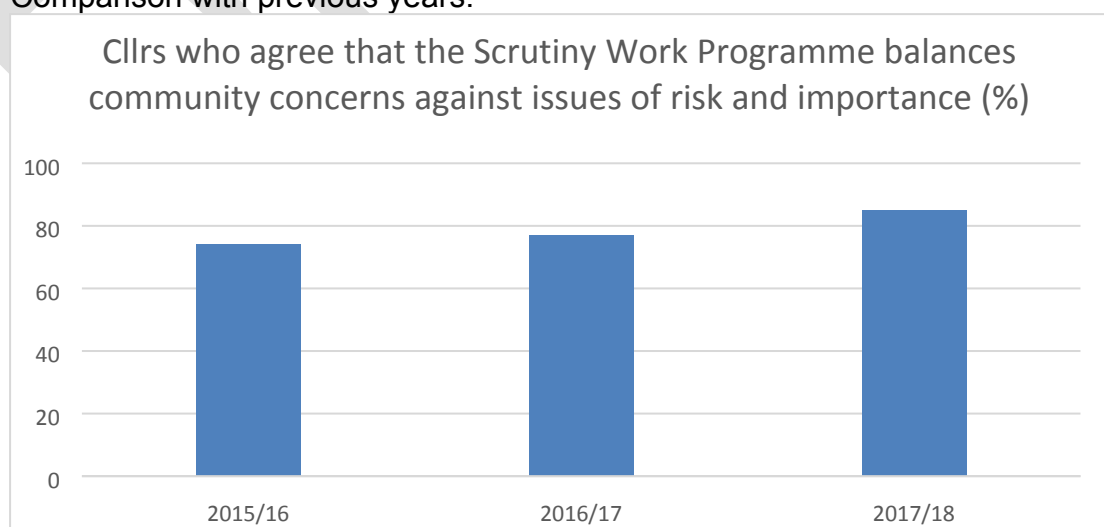
3.23 Councillors who agree that the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance = 85%

Overarching priorities are shaped by an annual work planning conference (open to all non-executive councillors) that hears a range of perspectives on what should be included. All councillors can suggest particular topics of concern for possible scrutiny. 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 is important that the Scrutiny Work Programme strikes a balance between community concerns and strategic issues. As part of the annual survey, councillors are asked whether they believe that the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance. This was a new indicator added in 2015/16.

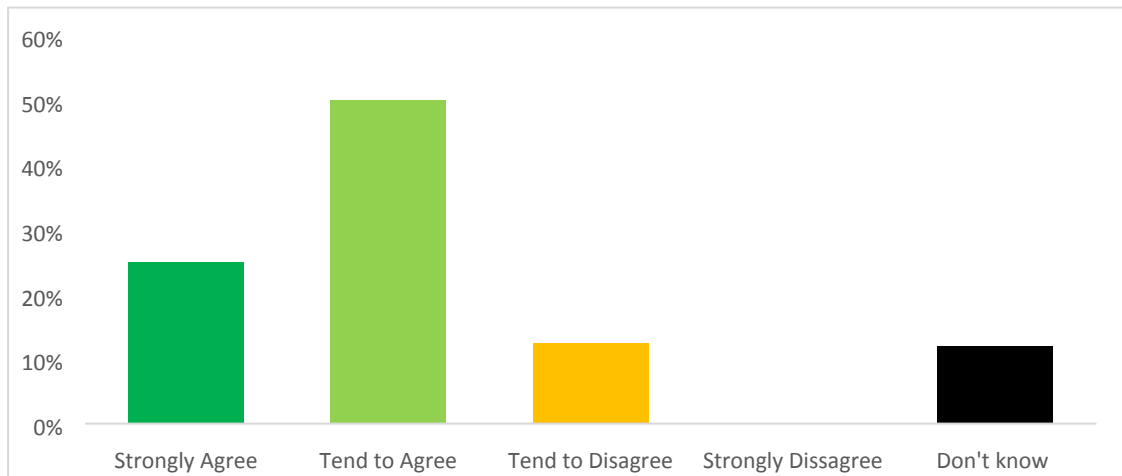


Comparison with previous years:

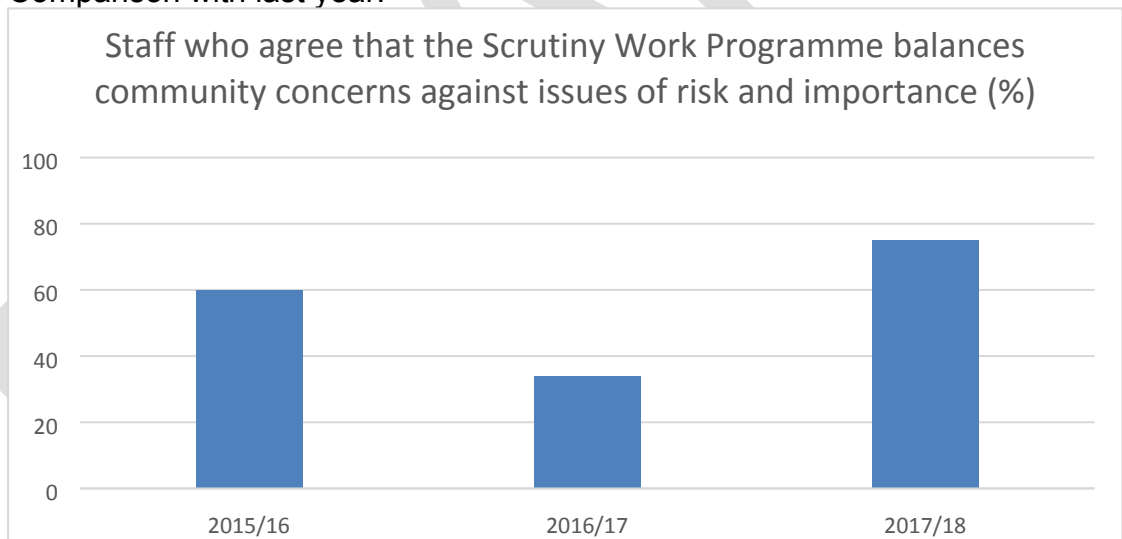


3.24 Staff who agree that the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance = 75%

It is important that the Scrutiny Work Programme strikes a balance between community concerns and strategic issues. As part of the annual survey, senior members of staff were asked whether they believe that the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance. This was a new indicator added in 2015/16.



Comparison with last year:



4. Impact

4.1 How Scrutiny Councillors have made a difference

4.1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee produced a quarterly summary of the headlines from the work of scrutiny for council and the public, which focussed on impact and how scrutiny is making a difference. It was reported to Council in January and April 2018.

4.1.2 It is important to know that the work and the efforts of scrutiny councillors are having a positive impact and are delivering effective scrutiny. We make sure that the recommendations we make, in whatever scrutiny forum, are followed up to check on implementation and assess the impact of this work.

4.1.3 The difference made and impact of the overall work of scrutiny is also communicated via:

- press releases to the local media;
- regular posts to our Swansea Scrutiny blog;
- an email monthly subscription newsletter; and
- use of social media, including Twitter.

4.1.4 A selection of stories from the past year of scrutiny from Scrutiny Dispatches, which demonstrate the impact made, are **appended**. This includes reference to:

- Identifying ways in which school readiness can be improved (School Readiness Inquiry)
- How communities can be better supported to take control of local services (Building Sustainable Communities Inquiry)
- Strengthening emergency planning and resilience (Working Group)
- Improving school governance e.g. recommended closer working between governing bodies and school challenge advisors (School Governance Inquiry)
- Scrutiny of Commissioning Reviews - questioning Cabinet Members on proposals, e.g. rationale, potential impact / implications, options considered, consultation undertaken, and presenting views to Cabinet ahead of decisions.
- Developing regional scrutiny of school improvement services (Education Thorough Regional Working)
- Improving the welfare of tethered horses through partnership working (Working Group)
- Challenging our schools in order to ensure that pupils in Swansea are receiving a high quality education and that they are meeting objectives to improve schools standards and pupil attainment. (Schools Performance Panel)
- Raising debate about the management of the Council's car parks and charges, including the effect of the introduction of winter charges on tourism and footfall, and the quality of provision (Working Group)

5. Feedback and Improvement

5.1 Improving Scrutiny

- 5.1.1 It is good practice for those involved in the scrutiny function to undertake regular self-evaluation of this work. Taking into account characteristics of effective scrutiny and experiences it is important for the continuous improvement of the function that any issues identified about current scrutiny practice are discussed and addressed.
- 5.1.2 In previous years efforts have included a focus on improving communication with cabinet members, the alignment of scrutiny work with corporate priorities and things that matter most, getting more coverage in the media to raise awareness of scrutiny, and getting more public engagement in scrutiny meeting.
- 5.1.3 This annual report marks the start of a new five year Council. The end of the first year was marked by scrutiny councillors with a look back at work carried out, achievements and the effectiveness of scrutiny.
- 5.1.4 Opportunities for those involved or interested in scrutiny to feedback views are provided each year though well-established surveys, as well as through annual review discussions within the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Scrutiny Performance Panels.

5.2 How people see Scrutiny

Some further findings from Annual Survey about how scrutiny is viewed:

Statement	Agreed	
	Councillor Survey	Staff Survey
The Work of Scrutiny is Councillor-Led	98%	92%
Scrutiny works in a cross-cutting fashion and is not restricted to departmental silos	83%	83%
Scrutiny has the officer support it needs to be effective	89%	92%
Scrutiny provides regular challenge to decision-makers	89%	92%
Scrutiny is important as a mechanism for community Engagement	87%	84%
Scrutiny councillors have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake the role effectively	78%	46%

5.3 What people like about scrutiny

These are the sort of things that people have told us they like about scrutiny:

1. *The scrutiny role itself*

The scrutiny role itself and various opportunities it provides to discuss issues (often cross-cutting) in some depth and challenge and hold to account decision-makers, and reflect on service performance. It operates in a constructive environment. There is praise for the open, transparent, democratic, informed debate that takes place.

2. *Member-led*

The Member-led process provides freedom for Councillors to explore what matters to them, and require responses to issues raised, and act quickly upon requests from councillors and the public to look at specific matters. People have also praised scrutiny councillors for listening to issues, in order to make informed assessments about service delivery and performance.

3. *The Work Programme*

People feel that the work programme is balanced and focussed on the key issues, including a continued focus on the two most significant areas of council spending - social services and education. Balancing strategic and local issues and timely involvement is nevertheless an ongoing challenge.

3. *Cross-party Working*

There is good cross-party working, and 'all in it together' attitude - working together to improve Swansea. Inclusive and giving every councillor a voice.

4. *Pre-decision Scrutiny*

The number of times that pre-decision scrutiny was used continues to increase and is valued as an opportunity to feed directly into decision-making.

5. *Learning & Development*

There are opportunities to learn and develop, e.g. involvement in Performance Panels enables councillors to build up in-depth knowledge and expertise in specific service areas, and Working Groups enable councillors to learn more about a topic.

6. *Officer Support*

We have very good and well-established Officer support for scrutiny which means activities are well-managed and supported effectively, and there is good communication all round, fostering good working relationships between members and officers.

7. *Involving the Public*

Scrutiny provides the ability to involve the public, and is open and welcoming to input e.g. requests for scrutiny. People like the regular updates published about the work of scrutiny. To support public engagement there has been a good level of media coverage for scrutiny work over the last 12 months.

5.4 Things that could be improved

While overall feedback was positive there were nevertheless a number of general improvement issues raised.

Some of the issues that stood out included:

1. **Councillor Involvement**

A number of survey respondents felt that there should be a wider range of councillors actively involved in the work of scrutiny. We will need to understand the barriers to participation and see what can be done to facilitate the engagement of those not actively involved, e.g. timing of meetings.

2. **Cabinet Responses**

Councillors would like better information in order to be able to track Cabinet Member responses to scrutiny views and recommendations, and therefore more easily see what impact / difference is being made.

3. **Public Engagement**

Despite efforts to raise awareness and promote opportunities to engage in scrutiny low levels of public engagement have been highlighted and requires attention. In our Public Survey we received response from 85 people. Almost half of these had not heard of the Council's Scrutiny function and the work of Scrutiny.

4. **Resources**

Although our agile scrutiny arrangements have received praise, a number of councillors have observed the ongoing challenge of balancing scrutiny activity with available resources. There are limitations on the amount of scrutiny work that can be carried out, but at the same time ever-growing demands for scrutiny, and pressure to deliver effective scrutiny.

5. **Impact**

Councillors recognise the difficulty in demonstrating the impact of scrutiny. Feedback from decision-makers will help to show the contribution that scrutiny makes to improvement. We will need to consider how the visibility of impact both internally across the Council and externally can be increased.

6. **Duplication**

It is important that Councillors and officers have understanding of the role that different bodies play in the overall decision-making and governance of the Council, and their connectivity. There have been issues raised about the respective role of scrutiny and role of the Council's Policy Development Committees, which need to be considered.

5.5 Five Improvement Objectives

5.5.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee attended an 'Improvement & Development' workshop in May 2018 as part of the process to identify improvement objectives for scrutiny for the year ahead. They reviewed findings from the Scrutiny Annual Survey and in particular feedback on where things could be better, as well as reflecting on their own experience, and other feedback received throughout the year. From this emerged a clear sense about what priorities for improving scrutiny should be. Amongst the issues the Committee felt merited attention were: Councillor involvement in scrutiny; reports to scrutiny and reporting arrangements, Cabinet engagement in scrutiny / tracking their response to scrutiny, visibility of impact, and public engagement.

5.5.2 This process of reflection and self-evaluation has helped to guide improvement actions for scrutiny in Swansea for the coming year. The following improvement objectives emerged from this process, reflecting the issues that matter most to scrutiny councillors, and were agreed by the Scrutiny Programme Committee:

- 1) We need more of our work to be reported to Cabinet so that there is more formal consideration of scrutiny conclusions and recommendations.
- 2) We need to be involved at an earlier stage in proposed Cabinet decisions so that our input can be more meaningful.
- 3) We need to increase opportunities for participation so that more councillors can get involved in the work of scrutiny.
- 4) We need to strengthen follow up of all scrutiny recommendations so that the response and difference made can be assessed.
- 5) We need more coverage in the media so that people are more aware of our work.

5.5.3 At the time of writing we are giving thought to specific actions that will help us to achieve these improvement objectives, for example findings from Working Groups being presented via short reports to Cabinet instead of via letter to relevant Cabinet Member, working more closely with communications officers to increase media coverage, holding some meetings in the community. We look forward to writing about these objectives / actions, and progress, in next year's annual report.

5.6 Wales Audit Office Review of Scrutiny

5.6.1 The past year was also significant because the Wales Audit Office carried out a review of scrutiny arrangements in all Welsh local authorities. As well as carrying out a desktop review the Wales Audit Office held focus groups with councillors and interviewed relevant officers. Their findings from their review, dubbed 'Overview & Scrutiny: Fit for the Future?', were published in July 2018.

5.6.2 Overall it is a positive report which recognises good scrutiny practice. The report concludes that scrutiny in Swansea:

- is well-placed to respond to future challenges;
- regularly challenges decision-makers; and
- has arrangements to review its own effectiveness.

5.6.3 The report does however contains some proposals for improvement which will need to be addressed, suggesting that we should:

- develop a training & development programme for scrutiny members
(this recognises financial pressures to support / deliver training but suggests we develop and deliver an appropriate training & development programme that could include further training on the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, as well as other topics that may help members in their role, e.g. scrutiny chairing training)
- strengthen the evaluation of impact and outcomes of scrutiny activity
(this relates mainly to measuring the impact and outcomes of activity on citizens and other stakeholders but suggests: a need to identify measurable outcomes, such as an indicator we want to change, that can be looked at pre and post a scrutiny inquiry to see difference made by scrutiny; tracking of scrutiny recommendations to evaluate impact / effectiveness; and improving the Scrutiny Annual Report to reflect more about activity and impact)
- further clarify the distinction between scrutiny and policy development committee activity in relation to policy development
(this recognises there are processes in place to avoid potential for confusion / duplication between the roles, but suggests the need to further clarify the distinction vis-à-vis the policy development role because some members remain unclear about the difference and therefore potential for overlap remains)

5.6.4 The Audit report also comments on current arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny and suggests that more time to consider proposed cabinet reports would enable sufficient time for effective planning and broader range of evidence gathering, and more meaningful involvement of scrutiny members in the decision-making process. This links to one of the improvement objectives identified by the Committee.

5.6.5 We will be preparing an appropriate action plan that will address the proposals for improvement, and taken together with the already identified improvement objectives we will arrive at a co-ordinated and comprehensive single improvement plan for scrutiny.

5.6.6 Positive feedback from auditors:

- a) Scrutiny is well-placed to respond to future challenges. The Council has an active scrutiny function that benefits from a flexible approach:
- The work of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Performance Panels includes consideration of the Council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements.
 - The Scrutiny Team is well regarded and as well as supporting the delivery of the work programme play a significant role in promoting scrutiny activity through the Council's website, scrutiny blog and social media.
- b) The scrutiny function regularly challenges decision-makers:
- The Council holds an Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference.
 - There are arrangements for engaging in evidence based challenge of decision makers.
 - Meetings are well run with challenging and focused questioning from scrutiny members.
 - Cabinet Members are regularly held to account by scrutiny members.
 - The relationship between Cabinet and the scrutiny function is generally constructive, with Cabinet Member regularly considering and responding to scrutiny questions and recommendations.
 - Meeting settings / room layouts promote understanding of the distinctive roles of Cabinet and scrutiny members.
 - Q & A sessions with Cabinet members are well-structured– scrutiny members are well informed from the papers which support each session and build on previous questioning to develop lines of enquiry. Supports constructive dialogue between the scrutiny function and Cabinet.
 - The Council has sought to improve the way in which overview and scrutiny activity informs, and engages with, stakeholders – scrutiny members frequently invite stakeholders to provide evidence as part of scrutiny activity.
 - The Council has an established approach to promoting the work of its scrutiny function, particularly through social media and its website – Scrutiny Officers work with the Council's Communications Team to generate scrutiny content for Council news pages and press releases. The Scrutiny Team manage dedicated scrutiny web pages, blogs and twitter feeds. The Team also work with scrutiny members to produce Scrutiny Dispatches, a quarterly impact report to Council, and also produce monthly newsletters available to the public to subscribe to.
 - The Council tries to help the public and other stakeholders to understand the proceeding of scrutiny meetings, should they attend.

- c) The scrutiny function has arrangements to review its own effectiveness:
- Inquiry Panels reconvene to follow up on implementation of recommendations and difference made.
 - The Scrutiny Team monitors Cabinet responses to scrutiny letters.
 - The Council produces an annual scrutiny report to assess the scrutiny function's effectiveness as a whole.
 - Scrutiny Dispatches – focuses on achievements and difference made by the work of scrutiny.

For further information:

Making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible

All scrutiny agenda packs are now available on the Council's '[agenda and minutes](#)' [webpage](#). There you can also find all scrutiny letters sent to cabinet members following meetings and responses. All scrutiny meetings are open to the public and anyone living or working in Swansea can [suggest a topic for scrutiny](#). There are also opportunities to suggest questions, and [submit views](#). If you would just like to keep an eye on what's going on we have webpages, a blog and a newsletter, you could even follow us on Twitter – links below.

Connect with Scrutiny:

Address: Gloucester Room, Guildhall, Swansea. SA1 4PE (Tel. 01792 637732)

Email: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

Twitter: [@swanseascrutiny](https://twitter.com/swanseascrutiny)

Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny

Blog: www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk

‘How scrutiny councillors are making a difference’

Is your child school ready?

(Lead: Councillor Hazel Morris)

Scrutiny councillors have identified ways in which children’s readiness for school can be improved, following an in-depth inquiry.

The cross-party Panel published its report earlier this year. Amongst its key findings the scrutiny inquiry found that:

- There is a wealth of evidence that suggests investment in early year’s services including children’s school readiness is hugely beneficial not only to children and their families, but society as a whole. There is evidence that this investment can help to break the cycle of disadvantage in our communities by changing children’s life chances.
- There are gaps in service provision for families in Swansea – for example multi-agency support via [Flying Start](#) is only available to around one quarter of children and families in Swansea. Whilst this is focused on areas of greatest need, there are children across Swansea who could benefit from this programme.

During evidence gathering the Panel saw many examples of good practice that helps make children and parents school ready. This included a visit to St Helen’s Primary School and Flying Start where they are aspiring to be a school that is at the heart of the community, and has been praised by parents. They also visited [Stepping Stones](#) and the [Swansea Children Centre](#) where they are working to develop children’s physical and emotional school readiness and preparing children and their parents for the transition to school.

All [nine recommendations](#) made by the Panel were agreed by [Cabinet in June](#).

The Panel Convener, Councillor Hazel Morris, said:

‘An interesting finding from our inquiry was that it is not only children and parents that need to become more school ready but schools themselves need to be more ‘child ready’. We felt that there could be more robust challenge for schools on this aspect. We have asked for guidance to be drafted on what constitutes a ‘child ready’ school and for schools and governing bodies to develop a community engagement strategy which clearly identifies how they will work with parents pre-school and in the early years. The inquiry looked at the cause and effect of school readiness and tried to identify practical steps that could be taken, informed by good practice, to help our children to be prepared. We need to keep early years high on the agenda and we hope that our recommendations go some way in helping to improve school readiness in Swansea. We recognise that successful outcomes depend on effective working between the Council, Health Board and Third Sector’.

Scrutiny has contributed to this vital debate by providing:

- Evidenced proposals that will lead to improved school readiness
- The views of key stakeholders
- Good practice / research elsewhere
- Raised awareness and increased councillor understanding about issues affecting school readiness

The Panel will meet in March 2018 to follow up on the actions taken to implement the scrutiny recommendations and assess the impact made by the inquiry.

Helping to support community groups

(Lead: Councillor Terry Hennegan)

The work of scrutiny has helped to improve the support provided to community groups and volunteers to run services in their own communities.

A [scrutiny inquiry](#) was carried out last year focussing on the Council priority to build sustainable communities, and was recently [followed up](#) to look at how its recommendations have been implemented and effect this has had.

Councillor Terry Hennegan, convener of the Scrutiny Inquiry, said: 'Our work looked at how the Council is developing and promoting community action that could sustain local services, and build capacity. We were pleased to find that there is now a stronger focus on supporting volunteer participation in relation to community buildings and open spaces, with a range of guidance material available. Overall we are happy with the delivery of actions against our recommendations, including action on improving communication with community groups and establishing an annual celebration of community work.'

The monitoring of this inquiry is now complete.

Emergency planning and resilience

(Lead: Councillor Mary Jones)

Scrutiny councillors have shone a spotlight on the Council's Emergency Management service, a topic of heightened interest across the UK.

A [Scrutiny Working Group](#) asked about the arrangements and resources that are in place, the level of preparedness for emergencies, and challenges to the service.

Amongst recommendations made, the Working Group asked for consideration to be given to establishing a formal Council Committee to monitor and support emergency planning. Scrutiny Councillors were also concerned whether there was enough communication and information with local councillors to support emergency planning and response, and asked for this to be addressed.

The convener of the Working Group, Councillor Mary Jones, said: 'Following our scrutiny meeting in October we wrote a letter to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation & Business Operations and we are pleased that his response confirms action will be taken against each of the scrutiny recommendations, including the establishment of a Members Emergency Planning Forum.'

Improving School Governance

(Lead: Councillor Fiona Gordon)

Scrutiny recommendations to improve school governance were also [followed up](#) recently.

The Inquiry Panel reconvened in September and heard about progress with the implementation of recommendations and impact of the scrutiny inquiry.

The inquiry was credited with prompting reflection on the support and training provided to school governors, and highlighting the need for closer working between governing bodies and school challenge advisors.

The monitoring on the inquiry is now complete but the Panel has written to the Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning with its view on how things have changed since the scrutiny inquiry and outstanding issues that need attention.

The scrutiny annual report for 2016/17

(Lead: Councillor Mary Jones)

Our [annual report](#) of the work of scrutiny was published and presented to Council in July. It aims to highlight the work carried out by scrutiny and show how scrutiny has made a difference.

Set out as a simple scorecard, the report highlights a small number of indicators to illustrate four performance questions, informed by the results of our annual scrutiny survey and feedback from those involved:

- How much scrutiny did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- How much did scrutiny affect the business of the Council?
- What was the impact of scrutiny?

In order to support continuous improvement for the scrutiny function the report provides a reflection on what has worked well and what has not worked so well, to prompt improvement action. For example, this means doing even more to:

- Promote and raise awareness of scrutiny across the organisation and to the public
- Engage with cabinet members to ensure maximum consideration and recognition of our work
- Increase the number of non-executive councillors involved in scrutiny

Chair's Roundup::

This is my first quarterly roundup of the work of [scrutiny](#) for 2017/18, as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

Preparing for new year of scrutiny

We welcomed new and returning [councillors](#) following May's Council elections before preparing for a new year of scrutiny. Scrutiny Induction sessions were held in early June which provided an opportunity for better understanding of the role of scrutiny and how it can make a difference. We plugged the powerful opportunities that it provides for questioning, inquiry, monitoring, and providing challenge to decision-makers. We debated approaches to questioning and discussed key components of effective scrutiny.

Choosing priorities for 2017/18

A [new work programme](#) was agreed by the committee in July with a varied selection of topics, representing both continuity and renewal to ensure that scrutiny is always looking at the right things. This was informed by our annual work planning conference, open to all non-executive councillors to make suggestions and debate priorities. This involved looking back at the previous plan, considering the Council's Corporate Priorities, and thinking about views from the public gathered from various consultations.

With guiding principles in mind (strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and representing a good use of time and resources) the committee agreed to continue with previous Performance Panels to monitor key services and retain focus on social services and education, but added a sixth to focus on regular monitoring of Development & Regeneration activities, given significant plans for city centre re-development and the Swansea Bay City Region Deal.

The programme also includes two inquiry topics, Regional Working (currently in progress), and Swansea's Natural Environment. In terms of one-off Working Groups a list of issues were identified and prioritised. Upcoming topics include Roads & Footway Maintenance, Homelessness, Community Cohesion, and Renewable Energy.

Questioning Cabinet Members

[The committee](#) has continued to focus on holding cabinet members to account and each month's meeting features a Q & A session with a Cabinet Member to discuss their work. As I write we are due to meet with the Cabinet Member for Environment Services in February. 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 a letter to relevant Cabinet Members. We have recently put questions to the Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy & Strategy, and Cabinet Members for Stronger Communities, Health & Wellbeing, Children, Education & Lifelong Learning.

Challenging proposed decisions

One of the ways in which scrutiny hold the cabinet to account is to carry out pre-decision scrutiny. This means questioning Cabinet Members on proposals, taking into account strategic impact, public interest and financial implications, and presenting views and any concerns to [Cabinet](#) ahead of decisions. Amongst these are Commissioning Reviews where Cabinet is taking significant decisions about the future of our services, under the backdrop of financial pressures and sustainability. Scrutiny has already looked at the Catering, Planning & City Regeneration, and Public Protection Commissioning Reviews. Other Cabinet reports looked at have included: Castle Square Regeneration, More Homes Pilot Scheme, and Liberty Stadium Lease Arrangements.

Monitoring the Public Services Board

We have a multi-agency Scrutiny Panel which aims to find out what difference the Swansea Public Services Board (PSB) is making for citizens. The Panel recently scrutinised the Draft Wellbeing Plan which has been developed by the PSB. The Plan is subject to [public consultation](#) until 13 February and Panel Members took the opportunity to make [comments](#). The draft final Plan will be reported back to the Panel before agreement by the PSB.

Preparing for an audit of scrutiny

We have been informed that Swansea's scrutiny arrangements are going to be the subject of a [Wales Audit Office](#) (WAO) inspection. They intend to review how 'fit for the future' the Council's scrutiny function is. As well as looking at the environment scrutiny is operating in, our practice, and its effectiveness, they are particularly interested in how some of the challenges facing the Council are being considered within scrutiny activity, such as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (and scrutiny of the Public Services Board), financial pressures, and regionalisation. WAO intend to observe a committee meeting in the New Year and a number of Performance Panels, and will be reviewing associated documentation and information about scrutiny in Swansea. Their fieldwork will take place during February when they will hold a small number of interviews with key officers and focus groups with key councillors. They will produce a report at the end of the review (around March), and also plan to arrange a shared learning seminar around April / May informed by findings not just here but across Wales.

Making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible

All scrutiny agenda packs are now available on the Council's '[agenda and minutes](#)' webpage. There you can also find all scrutiny letters sent to cabinet members following meetings and responses. All scrutiny meetings are open to the public and anyone living or working in Swansea can [suggest a topic for scrutiny](#). There are also opportunities to suggest questions, and [submit views](#). If you would just like to keep an eye on what's going on we have webpages, a blog and a newsletter, you could even follow us on Twitter – links below.

Connect with Scrutiny:

Gloucester Room, Guildhall, Swansea. SA1 4PE (Tel. 01792 637732)

Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny

Twitter: @swanseascrutiny

Email: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

Blog: www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk

‘How scrutiny councillors are making a difference’

Developing regional scrutiny

(Lead: Councillor Mary Jones)

Scrutiny Councillors in Swansea have helped blaze a trail for regional scrutiny by working with Councillors from five other Councils. Together they are looking at the work of the regional school improvement alliance, known as ERW (Education Through Regional Working).

The purpose of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group, which was set up in September 2015, is to help ensure the best educational outcomes for children in the region by supporting effective scrutiny to:

- support consistent scrutiny across the six councils
- share scrutiny good practice
- encourage shared scrutiny approaches and avoid the duplication of scrutiny work
- provide critical and objective challenge to ERW on topics of interest as required
- contribute to the good and effective governance of ERW

At present this involves two meetings per year and each Council in turn hosts and chairs the meeting. The Group last met on 9 March 2018, hosted by Carmarthenshire Council and discussed the educational outcomes across the region, the effects of poverty in rural wales and progress with the recently established ERW Review and Reform Programme Board. They also met with the Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams, about the future of regional working.

After each meeting the Councillor Group writes a letter to the ERW Joint Committee feeding back their views and recommendations. The ERW Joint Committee is made up of the six local authority Leaders and advised by ERW Board of Directors, external school improvement experts, Headteacher representatives and the Managing Director.

For example the Group has raised concern, and called for action, on:

- the current capacity of Challenge Advisors across the region and consistency of support
- progress being made with the ERW Review and Reform Programme to ensure more effective working for pupils across the region

Swansea is represented by the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Councillor Mary Jones, and Convener of the Schools Performance Panel, Councillor Mo Sykes. Councillor Jones said: ‘The fact that more and more services are being delivered on a regional basis presents a challenge for future scrutiny. There is a need for those involved in carrying out scrutiny to match the regional working to ensure the accountability and transparency of regional bodies. The experience of ERW scrutiny has been positive and could provide a model for developing scrutiny of other bodies, such as the Western Bay Health & Social Care Programme.’

Swansea’s Scrutiny Team is providing the support for the Scrutiny Councillor Group as the Council’s contribution to ERW. Regional work will become an increasingly important feature of scrutiny over the next few years so it is good that Swansea’s provision of support for scrutiny of ERW has worked well and been well received. The ERW Managing Director, Betsan O’Connor, has praised the work of the Scrutiny Councillor Group stating that: “It is coordinated well and the feedback is good”

The next meeting will take place in September 2018 and will be hosted by Neath Port Talbot.

Improving the welfare of tethered horses

(Lead: Councillor Jeff Jones)

There has been a significant progress and improvement in the welfare of tethered horses since scrutiny councillors shone a spotlight on this issue in 2016.

Having arranged a follow up meeting in January with the Cabinet Member for Environment Services, Council officers, and representatives from the RSPCA and FOSH (Friends of Swansea Horses) councillors have found that the outcomes have been positive and constructive:

- hotspot areas have been identified and action taken to inform the public that horses are not permitted, and these locations are now monitored on a monthly basis. This resulted in a reduction in the number of horses being tethered across these areas by 60% since May 2016.
- there has been work on education and building closer relationships with horse owners
- the ideas and suggestions from the original Working Group in 2016 have resulted in a framework for dealing with tethered horses in a partnership approach with the RSPCA and the Hillside Animal Sanctuary.
- the relationship between the Council, RSPCA and Hillside remains strong and effective and there are clear procedures for dealing with tethered horses in Swansea.
- the Council and partners have established a 'Swansea Equine Forum' to maintain communication and improvement.
- Friends of Swansea Horses (FOSH) have now disbanded as they feel their aims have been achieved, which is excellent news.

This has been recognised as an example of successful partnership working. The Working Group received positive feedback and thanks from the RSPCA and FOSH for their support and raising awareness of the issue through scrutiny. The Convener of the Working Group, Councillor Jeff Jones also highlighted that the improvements seen were a team effort which could not have been achieved without all agencies involved. He said 'We are pleased there has been great progress but we need to keep this momentum going and continue to improve the conditions at which horses are kept in Swansea'

Challenging our schools

(Lead: Councillor Mo Sykes)

Scrutiny councillors have been talking directly to schools to assess and monitor performance.

The Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel provides ongoing challenge to schools performance in order to ensure that pupils in Swansea are receiving a high quality education and that they are meeting objectives to improve schools standards and pupil attainment. As well as discussing a range of education improvement issues that affect all schools, the Panel identifies a small number of schools each year to engage directly with, based on relevant performance data. The Panel has recently focused on Morrision Primary School. The Panel met the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, and Challenge Advisor, to look at their current performance and prospects for improvements. The Panel praised the work going on at Morrision Primary and commitment to driving improvement at the school following an Estyn rating of 'adequate' last year. The Panel concluded that there was now a much improved picture at the school. Overall, councillors were pleased to see a strong leadership team at the school emerging along with a supportive and challenging governing body.

Looking at different ways in which scrutiny can engage with schools the Panel also met with pupils, headteachers, Chair of Governors and the challenge advisors for Parklands Primary and Olchfa Comprehensive Schools. The Panel found out about the collaboration work they are doing, as pioneer schools, in relation to the New Curriculum for Wales. They were able to ask pupils how they feel the new curriculum is improving their learning. Councillors were impressed with both schools' commitment and drive in improving the outcomes of their pupils. They recognised that both schools have embraced this opportunity to shape new practice.

Reviewing car park charges

(Lead: Councillor Will Thomas)

Scrutiny councillors have raised debate about the management of car parks and charges.

The Working Group discussed a range of issues relating to car parks and charging, including: the effect of winter charges; effect of charges on tourism and city centre footfall; and, quality of provision. As well as speaking to the relevant Cabinet Member and officers, the Panel was able to hear views from a number of members of the public about matters relating to foreshore car parks. The convener of the Working Group, Councillor Will Thomas, said: 'Following our scrutiny meeting in November we wrote a letter to the Cabinet Member for Environment Services and we are pleased that his response confirms action will be taken against each of the scrutiny recommendations, including looking at options as to how winter charges in foreshore car parks could be reviewed. One of the options is to look at increasing summer charges to compensate for a reduction in winter charges'

The Working Group had also raised concerns about the problems associated with car parking ticket machines across our managed car parks. The Cabinet Member has confirmed that officers have been working with neighbouring authorities, through the British Parking Association, to develop a joint procurement opportunity, which will provide a number of benefits including greater purchasing power, better technical support from the chosen manufacturer, and greater emphasis for any contractor to perform as failure will affect future contracts from this region. It is expected that combined procurement and bargaining power will bring about an improvement in the service.

Chair's Roundup:

This is my second quarterly roundup of the work of scrutiny for 2017/18, as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

Progressing our priorities for 2017/18

We have made good progress over the year so far. The work programme is dominated by our six Performance Panels, which meet on an ongoing and regular basis. This has ensured a continued focus on monitoring performance of Adult Services, Child & Family Services, Schools, and the Public Services Board. The Service Improvement & Finance Panel keeps an eye on performance & spending across the Council. Our sixth and new Panel focussing on Development & Regeneration Panel is meeting quarterly. We have two in-depth inquiries in progress - our examination of Regional Working is almost complete and a final report will be published soon. Work on Swansea's Natural Environment has just started, and the Panel will be shortly agreeing the key question and focus for this inquiry which may take up to six months. We arrange Working Groups for a 'quick look' at issues and I am pleased that scrutiny has been able to look at the following issues so far: Emergency Planning & Resilience, Community Cohesion & Hate Crime, Car Park Charges, Tethered Horses, Roads & Footway Maintenance, Local Flood Risk Management, and Renewable Energy. All of this work leads to the views and recommendations for improvement, of scrutiny councillors, being sent to Cabinet Members. We also have arrangements in place to check on implementation of previous inquiry recommendations and assess the impact of our work. Because of good progress Councillors were able to conclude monitoring of the inquiries on School Governance and Building Sustainable Communities.

Questioning Cabinet Members

The committee continues to focus on holding cabinet members to account. Each monthly meeting features a Q & A session with a Cabinet Member to discuss their work. As I write we are due to meet with the Cabinet Member for Commercial Opportunities & Innovation in May. Acting as a 'critical friend' we question and challenge them on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact. We invite 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 a letter to relevant Cabinet Members. We have recently put questions to the Cabinet Members for Future Generations, Culture, Tourism & Major Projects, and Environment Services.

Challenging proposed decisions

One of the ways in which scrutiny hold the Cabinet to account is to carry out pre-decision scrutiny. This means questioning Cabinet Members on proposals, taking into account strategic impact, public interest and financial implications, and presenting views and any concerns to Cabinet ahead of decisions. Amongst these are Commissioning Reviews where Cabinet is taking significant decisions about the future of services, given financial pressures and importance of sustainability. In the last quarter scrutiny has looked at the Commissioning Reviews on Family Support (Child Disability) and Highways & Transportation, as well as Cabinet reports on the Council Budget, and the Transfer of Allotments to Management Associations.

Appointing Education Scrutiny Statutory Co-optees

We have a seat for parent governor representatives and church representatives on the Scrutiny Programme Committee who will be able to participate in scrutiny of education services. We have invited interest to fill vacant positions, and await the outcome. We look forward to their contribution to scrutiny.

Raising Awareness of Scrutiny

Whether members of staff have just started working for the Council or have many years of service there's a good chance that no one has ever explained what scrutiny is all about. We've recognised that we need to raise awareness amongst council staff. We have tried to bridge the gap by putting together a staff news story to explain the 'why', the 'how', and the 'what' of scrutiny and spread the message, and the feedback has been good. This could also be a good starting point for anyone, not just council officers, to learn about scrutiny.

Getting feedback

One of the hallmarks of an effective scrutiny function is one that reflects on and learns from experience. For this reason we have been busy over the last month carrying out our Annual Councillor Scrutiny Survey. We will be closely looking at the results to help guide future practice. Also, we are currently inviting feedback from senior members of staff, and will shortly be issuing a public survey. The surveys also help us to collect views about the focus of future scrutiny. Any topic suggestions received will be fed into the upcoming Scrutiny Work Planning Conference.

Awaiting the results of the audit of scrutiny

As well as survey findings we await with interest the view of the Wales Audit Office (WAO), who recently carried out a review of our scrutiny arrangements. Their review focussed on assessing how 'fit for the future' the Council's scrutiny function is, looking at the environment scrutiny is operating in, our practice, and its effectiveness. As well as desktop research, the WAO held a number of focus groups with Councillors, interviewed key officers, and observed meetings. We understand that WAO will issue a report but also are planning a shared learning seminar informed by findings not just here but across Wales.

Making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible

All scrutiny agenda packs are available on the Council's ['agenda and minutes' webpage](#). There you can also find all scrutiny letters sent to cabinet members following meetings and responses. All scrutiny meetings are open to the public and anyone living or working in Swansea can [suggest a topic for scrutiny](#). There are also opportunities to suggest questions, and submit views. If you would just like to keep an eye on what's going on we have webpages, a blog and a newsletter - you could even follow us on Twitter – links below.

Councillor Mary Jones

Connect with Scrutiny:

Gloucester Room, Guildhall, Swansea. SA1 4PE (Tel. 01792 637732)

Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny

Twitter: @swanaseascrutiny

Email: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

Blog: www.swanaseascrutiny.co.uk

Agenda Item 5



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Audit Committee - 9 October 2018

Work of Policy Development Committees

Purpose:	To provide feedback to the Audit Committee in relation to its questions about the Work of the Policy Development Committees.
Report Author:	Huw Evans
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

For Information

1. Introduction

1.1 The Leader of the Council (Councillor R C Stewart) provided an update on the progress of the Policy Development & Delivery Committees to the Audit Committee on 10 April 2018.

1.2 The Audit Committee resolved that:

- i) *“The update on the Policy Development and Delivery Committees be noted;*
- ii) *The Audit Committee be supplied with a written explanation of the role of the Policy Development and Delivery Committees as well as their link with the Corporate Objectives;*
- iii) *The Audit Committee be supplied with the end of year reports for the Policy Development and Delivery Committees for the current Municipal year;*
- iv) *The Audit Committee be supplied with the structure / work plan for the next Municipal year for each Policy Development and Delivery Committee, including expected outcomes and timelines.”*

2. Role of the Policy Development Committees (PDC's)

2.1 The Policy Development & Delivery Committees were abolished at the Annual Meeting of Council on 24 May 2018. The 5 Committees were replaced with 5 Policy Development Committees namely:

- Economy & Infrastructure;
- Education & Skills;
- People;
- Poverty Reduction;
- Transformation & Future Council.

2.2 The terms of reference of the PDC's are set out in **Appendix A** of this report.

2.3 The PDC's work plans are set following discussions between the Chair of the Committee, the Director / Head of Service, the Committee itself and with involvement from the relevant Cabinet Member in order to ensure that their work links to the Corporate Plan. Additionally, Principle D "Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes" of the Annual Governance Statement 2017-2018" as set out in **Appendix B** of this report also addresses the issue of the links to Corporate Governance.

2.4 The "Policy Development and Delivery Committee Annual Report 2017-2018" was presented to the Annual Meeting of Council on 24 May 2018. This report is attached as **Appendix C**. One of the recommendations within that report stated:

"PDC Work Plans are concise and deliverable, are aligned to the Council's budget and Corporate priorities, do not duplicate the work of Scrutiny and are properly resourced."

2.5 The Scrutiny Programme Committee of 10 September 2018 received the Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on "Overview and Scrutiny: Fit for the Future". The following is an extract of that report setting out the WAO's comment relating to PDC's:

"The Council should further clarify the distinction between scrutiny and Policy Development Committee activity in relation to policy development

This recognises there are processes in place to avoid potential for confusion / duplication between the roles, but suggests the need to further clarify the distinction vis-à-vis the policy development role because some members remain unclear about the difference and therefore potential for overlap remains."

2.6 This is an area that the Authority continues to address by outlining to Councillors the clear differences between PDC's and Scrutiny.

3. Policy Development and Delivery Committees Annual Report 2017-2018

3.1 The “Policy Development and Delivery Committee Annual Report 2017-2018” was presented to the Annual Meeting of Council on 24 May 2018. This report is attached as **Appendix C**.

3.2 This report sets out the work of the Policy Development and Delivery Committees during 2017-2018.

4. Structure / Work Plan of the Policy Development Committees 2018-2019

4.1 Since being established by the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2018, the PDC’s have met and have started to plan and populate their Work Plans 2018-2019. The PDC Work Plans have been reported to the Scrutiny Programme Committee. These are attached as **Appendix D**.

4.2 These Work Plans will continue to develop as the municipal year progresses.

5. Equality and Engagement Implications

5.1 There are no equality or engagement implications associated with this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A	Policy Development Committees (PDCs) Terms of Reference
Appendix B	Principle D “Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes” of the Annual Governance Statement 2017-2018”
Appendix C	Policy Development & Delivery Committees Annual Report 2017-2018
Appendix D	Policy Development Committees - Work Plans

1.1.1 Policy Development Committees (PDCs) Terms of Reference

There are 5 Committees:

- i) Economy & Infrastructure;
- ii) Education & Skills;
- iii) People;
- iv) Poverty Reduction;
- v) Transformation & Future Council.

Purpose:

The PDCs are committees of Council with the purpose of development of the Council's Corporate Policies for consideration and adoption by Cabinet and / or Council as appropriate.

Membership & Frequency of Meetings:

- 1) Non-Executive Members are eligible to be members of the PDCs;
- 2) Executive (Cabinet) Members are **not** eligible to be members of the PDC's;
- 3) Frequency of meetings is a matter for the Chair depending on workload; however, it is anticipated that formal Committee meetings shall be held monthly or as dictated by the work plan. In addition to formal Committee meetings, Informal Working Groups may be undertaken, if the work plan dictates;
- 4) Chairs of the PDCs will meet to co-ordinate agendas and work plans to ensure consistency and that there is no duplication in work.

Role and Framework:

The role of the PDC is to:

- 1) Have a work plan shared with the relevant Cabinet Member;
- 2) Focus on policy development & delivery by in depth analysis of policy issues and consider future policy development with reference to the Corporate Plan;
- 3) Make a report and/or recommendation to the Cabinet Member / Cabinet / Council in connection with work undertaken;
- 4) Consider mechanisms to encourage and enhance public participation in development of policy and policy options;
- 5) Work with Senior Officers in a Team Swansea approach to deliver key corporate priorities; and
- 6) Consider and where appropriate to invite relevant organisations / individuals to contribute to policy development discussions.

Relationship with Scrutiny:

- 1) The role of the PDC is distinct from the Council's scrutiny function of holding to account, questioning and challenging proposed decisions, monitoring the performance of services, and tackling issues of concern through inquiries or one-off meetings (which may relate to a broad range of policy / service areas).
- 2) PDCs may refer any issues arising out of their role to the Scrutiny Programme Committee for further consideration / investigation and vice-versa.
- 3) The PDC Chair will also consider whether any matter under consideration should be referred to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.
- 4) PDCs and the Scrutiny Programme Committee should ensure awareness of each other's work programmes and consider whether there is any issue of duplication. The Scrutiny Programme Committee should consider relevant advice but has autonomy on decisions about the scrutiny work programme.

Support:

- 1) The Democratic Services Team shall provide the relevant support to the Policy Development Committees.
- 2) The Director, Head of Service, or nominated relevant Officer will provide work plan support and research and produce reports as appropriate.

Extract from the Annual Governance Statement 2017-2018

Principle D – Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory and practical interventions. Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource input while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised		
Sub-Principles	Behaviours and Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance in Practice	City and County of Swansea - Evidence
Determining interventions	Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development by Policy Development and Delivery Committees • Scrutiny function • Finance, Legal and Access to Services implications in all Council, Cabinet and Committee reports • Results of consultation exercises • Annual Internal Audit consultation exercise • Annual Service Planning • Annual Review of Well-Being Objectives • Annual Review of Performance Indicators and targets
	Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts	



Joint Report of the Deputy Leader of the Council & PD&DC Chairs

Annual Meeting of Council - 24 May 2018

Policy Development & Delivery Committees Annual Report 2017/2018

Purpose:	To report on the work undertaken by the Policy Development & Delivery Committees during the Municipal Year 2017/18 and to make recommendations to ensure that the arrangements remain suitable for their intended purpose.	
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan 2017/22 <i>Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea</i> . Policy Commitments 2017/22.	
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.	
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:	
1)	PDC Work Plans are established at the beginning of the Municipal Year through a meeting of Chairs of Policy Development Committees, Cabinet Members and Directors;	
2)	PDC Work Plans are concise and deliverable, are aligned to the Council's budget and Corporate priorities, do not duplicate the work of Scrutiny and are properly resourced;	
3)	Items in PDC Work Plans are clearly scoped and clear timescales and intended outputs are established at the beginning;	
4)	A standard (but flexible) approach to working and developing policy across the PDCs is established, giving consideration to the five ways of working set out by the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015;	
Report Author:	Richard Rowlands	
Finance Officer:	Paul Roach	
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith	
Access to Services Officer:	Sherill Hopkins	

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Annual Meeting of Council on 25 May 2017 established the five Policy Development & Delivery Committees (PD&DCs). All meetings must be subject to access to information legislation, open to public etc.
- 1.2 The Corporate Directors, Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services undertook a review of the PD&DCs after they had been in place for six months in order to ensure that they are operating effectively.
- 1.3 Concerns were raised at Council prior to the review taking place about the respective roles of the PD&DC's and Scrutiny. The amended Terms of Reference contained specific reference to the role of Scrutiny and the PD&DCs.
- 1.4 Work through informal working Groups comprising PD&DC Councillors and Officers takes place and is fed into the formal Committee work at a later stage. The PD&DCs meet formally on a quarterly basis.
- 1.5 Each PD&DC contains twelve Councillors. This is broken down under Proportionality Rules as eight Labour, two Liberal Democrat / Independent Coalition and two Conservatives.
- 1.6 The PD&DCs were established as part of the move towards a 'Member led' Council and to increase the participation of all elected Members in policy development. The purpose of the PD&DCs is to provide a forum in which Members can work with officers in a co-productive way to develop policy and shape delivery.
- 1.7 Members from all political parties have participated within the PD&DCs and now the next stage of development is to add further structure and support to the committees.
- 1.8 This report summarises and reports on the work that has been undertaken by the PD&DCs during the Municipal Year 2017/18
- 1.9 This report also makes some recommendations to ensure that the arrangements for PD&DCs remains suitable going forward.

2.0 Summary - work undertaken by PD&DCs during 2017/18

2.1 *Safeguarding PD&DC*

- 2.1.2 *Ethical Care Charter* - The Committee were briefed surrounding the requirements within Unison's Ethical Charter and how compliant Swansea was at this stage.

- 2.1.3 The proposed approach to build the components into the specification for domiciliary care going forward and use this a component of the scoring matrix for the procurement exercise was discussed and views sought from the Committee.
- 2.1.4 The Committee agreed that the proposed way forward was a sound approach and advised the Cabinet Member that they would have confidence that in this way Swansea was delivering its commitments under the Ethical Care Charter.
- 2.1.5 *Adult Services Model* - The Committee were given an overview of the model agreed in 2016 and how this fit with the various commissioning reviews. The Committee tested their understanding of the model and how Adult Services needed to change to deliver in line with the model. This understanding has proved a solid foundation for future advice to the Cabinet Member on the emerging commissioning reviews.
- 2.1.6 *Local Area Co-ordination* - The Local Area Coordination team presented at the Safeguarding PDDC in March and gave an overview of the growth of the team in 2017/18. There are now 10 Local Area Coordinators in post and external partner funding has been received for a new post in Blaenymaes.
- 2.1.7 There was discussion with Councillors around the outcomes of Local Area Coordination involvement in people's lives which led to residents feeling more confident, more involved in their communities and the reduced demand on services as a result.
- 2.1.8 The Committee was very supportive of Local Area Coordination and several of the Councillors had experienced a Local Area Coordinator working with one of their constituents which they described in very positive terms.
- 2.1.9 *Review of Corporate Safeguarding Policy* - Local authorities have a statutory duty to have in place safeguarding arrangements, which must include training, support, guidance, and compliance for all providers of relevant services. In 2014, the Wales Audit Office, as part of a national review, completed an audit of Swansea Council's corporate safeguarding procedures and assurance arrangements and reviewed two service areas to ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures were effective and being adhered to.
- 2.1.10 The WAO audit exposed some challenges in respect of the corporate safeguarding responsibility being exercised in a coherent fashion (e.g., safe recruitment arrangements in place, safeguarding responsibilities towards young people being fulfilled by both Members and Officers within the Council and the presence of a performance management framework).

- 2.1.11 WAO has announced their intention for a follow up review early next year. Swansea's Safeguarding PD&DC undertook to review the current corporate safeguarding policy, ahead of this national inspection, and on behalf of the Cabinet Member – Health and Wellbeing. The PD&DC noted that the existing Corporate Safeguarding Policy does reflect UNCRC and Council's Policy. The policy was expected to reflect the Council's ambition to actively promote safety and wellbeing amongst the population. In that way the new policy is more consistent with the ambition of the Council, as safeguarding vulnerable people is the number one corporate priority.
- 2.1.12 Following this PD&DC review of current policy and workshop to determine future requirements, a new Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been developed, and this new policy will be presented to the next meeting of the Corporate Safeguarding Group to be agreed as the basis for a new work programme of improvements leading up to next year.
- 2.1.13 *Joined-up around children* - The Committee sought to address the challenge of how 'joined up around children' the Council is. It had a number of discussions about: Corporate Parenting arrangements, arrangements for engagement with young people and hearing their voice, the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership plans and the plans for developing the Family Support Continuum. The summary of these discussions and the Committee's views about the current services was taken to Cabinet in May 2018.

2.2 *Education & Skills PD&DC*

- 2.2.1 The Education & Skills PD&DC determined that its work programme should focus on the implications and opportunities represented by the City Deal for Swansea.
- 2.2.2 *City Deal and the implications for Swansea* - Members have particularly been concerned about issues of pace and scale, as well as ensuring that disadvantaged people are able to benefit from the jobs and growth that the initiative represents.
- 2.2.3 The Committee invited speakers and held discussions on a series of items in order to develop further their understanding of what work is already being delivered and where potential gaps and challenges might be:
- overview of the local authority role, regional bodies' roles, curriculum changes, Learning City initiatives and also the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP);
 - pioneer schools update, views of children and young people on STEM subjects and teacher training implications;
 - aligning 14-19 provision, Principal Gower College, plan to establish Partneriaeth Sgiliau Abertawe (PSA) / Swansea Skills Partnership (SSP) Board.

2.2.4 Following the work of the PD&DC, the final report will outline the way forward and increase the pace of change in this area to ensure that:

- the education system in Swansea has appropriate arrangements in place to meet the skills needed to effectively deliver the City Deal;
- local young people are given every opportunity to be a part of those changes.

2.2.5 As a result, this work will contribute to our well-being objective to improve education and skills and also to make Swansea a great place to live well and age well.

2.3 *Economy & Infrastructure PD&DC*

2.3.1 The Economy & Infrastructure PD&DC dealt with some substantial items during 2017/18, including the City Deal, future Transportation Strategy, an analysis of the wider economy and City River Corridor Strategy. In addition, it had the opportunity to look at more specific areas, including pedestrianisation of Wind Street, Citizens Card, Homes as Power stations and Co-operative housing.

2.3.2 *City Deal* - As well as receiving an overview of the City Deal, the Committee focussed on a breakdown of City Deal finances, public transport infrastructure, and evidence of sustainability from a well-being and environmental view and ways to address the GVA gap.

2.3.3 *Citizens Card* - The Citizen's Card would be available to individuals of voting age and could be used on a smart phone 'app' or be a physical card. The PD&DC discussed how the Card would allow individuals to undertake a whole range of functions (e.g. reporting fly tipping, paying Council Tax, applying for vacancies) and also enable users to access discounts on Council and partner facilities.

2.3.4 *Pedestrianisation of Wind Street* – An evaluation undertaken by City Centre Management highlighted that both businesses and residents felt pedestrianisation would help improve the prosperity of the City. The PD&DC discussed consideration being given to making the street one way and narrowing the traffic lanes and removing the current loading bays, whilst highlighting the need to maintain some access for deliveries etc.. A more detailed scheme will now be developed and reported back to the PD&DC.

2.3.5 *River Corridor* - The PD&DC discussed the need to incorporate foot / cycling routes on any future development proposals. The Committee raised the need for consideration to be given to enhancing wildlife in the areas. Approval / consultation with National Resources Wales for the proposed luge was discussed along with the need for consultation with users of the riverbank (e.g. anglers, etc.).

- 2.3.6 *Future Transportation Strategy* – After receiving an overview of the challenges driving a future Transportation Strategy, the PD&DC were informed of a commissioning study being undertaken to look at city centre master planning and the parking needs. The Committee asked that the results of the feasibility study be scheduled into the work plan for 2018/19.
- 2.3.7 *Housing in the City Centre* – The PD&DC discussed the role of housing in the regeneration of the City Centre. The discussions covered city living, car parking, the potential of new technology to ease traffic congestion and the city centre attracting more people through a mix of residential, retail and leisure uses. The PD&DC will undertake more work on this once detailed briefs become clear.
- 2.3.8 *Swansea Bay City Deal: Homes as Power Stations* – The PD&DC received an overview of the Swansea Bay City Deal Homes as Power Stations Project and the proposed next steps. The Committee discussed the pace of technological developments, new homes and retrofitting technology to existing homes. Further work is planned as part of the 2018/19 work programme once the business cases are finalised.
- 2.3.8 *Swansea and the City Region “An Economic Perspective”* – A wide range of issues were discussed at the PD&DC. These included: productivity, GVA and comparisons with other authorities within the region; transport links, connectivity, potential Swansea Bay Metro; the Tidal Lagoon project; improving the Fabian Way; involving communities outside the city centre in the changes; the City Deal and impact on employment, skills and training; the impact from the work of Universities; the potential of the Felindre site, and; confidence in the Planning process. The PD&DC asked that the key issues identified are integrated into other work streams as required.
- 2.3.9 *Co-operative Housing* – The PD&DC received a summary of information and discussed the opportunities afforded by co-operative housing. The PD&DC discussed why people live in co-operative housing, whom it is for and how schemes are developed. The Committee heard how the Welsh Government has a co-operative housing programme in place and discussed how co-operative housing could be part of the mix in Swansea. The next stage would be to gain internal opinion on a pilot approach and to consider the registered social landlord partner and location; thought could then be given to developing a Council Policy on co-operative housing. The Committee decide to review progress during 2018/19.

2.4 *Poverty Reduction PD&DC*

- 2.4.1 *Free Childcare Offer* - The PDDC considered the Childcare Offer specifically from a poverty perspective. As a result of its recent exploration of the Offer, it was recommended that eligibility should be broadened to include parents/carers on an employment pathway and that local employment programmes be more effectively aligned with the Offer to maximise the benefit to as many families as possible. A letter to Welsh Government was sent to request consideration of a change to national policy in relation to broadening the eligibility of the Childcare Offer.
- 2.4.2 *Safer Swansea Partnership Strategy* - A presentation was made to the Poverty Reduction PD&DC in January 2018. The presentation outlined the current position and the draft Community Safety Strategy which was going out to consultation. All members had the opportunity to shape the strategy. One point that came out of the meeting was that newly elected Members used to have six monthly/annual meetings with the Sector Police Inspector to discuss local issues – Members felt this was really useful and noted these had ceased over recent years. In response to the Members' comments further work has taken place to engage Ward Members in policing issues.
- 2.4.3 *Tackling Poverty Strategy* - The revised Tackling Poverty Strategy was reviewed by the PD&DC in August to look at whether they felt the Strategy was fit for purpose and would have a positive impact on revising poverty. Discussions also included the review of the original Strategy by Scrutiny. The conversation thread was positive, though somewhat limited by the very recent production of the Strategy and the level of external evaluation conducted by Scrutiny, the recommendations from which have been incorporated into the revised Strategy.
- 2.4.4 *Employability* - The Committee examined the Swansea Working proposals to assure themselves that they were fit for purpose and would support the outcomes of the Tackling Poverty Strategy. The discussions were positive and provided a full explanation of the type of provision on offer along with eligibility. Officers also stressed the importance of providing support in meeting the aims of Swansea's Economic Development Strategy, providing access to job and training opportunities to local people. The Committee asked to be kept informed of progress on outcomes and the programme develops.
- 2.4.5 *Homelessness Strategy and Housing First* - On 28th March 2018 the Committee had a presentation from Housing staff on the emerging themes of the Homelessness Strategy, which is progressing well with a draft strategy on target to be completed by October 2018. One of the emerging themes to come out from this meeting was the Housing First Model; at a subsequent meeting on 25th April 2018 the Committee discussed this model in greater detail. The next steps will be for Housing to complete the draft action plan and this will be further discussed with the Committee in 2018.

2.5 *Transformation & Future Council PD&DC*

- 2.5.1 *Zero hour contracts* –Whilst the Council does not have any employees on zero hours contracts, it is looking at its approach to flexible working in light of changes to work styles i.e. Agile working. Similarly, the Council is reviewing the types of contracts used by its suppliers. The project team provided an update to the March PD&DC to discuss its current progress. It was the view of the Committee that the current policy should be reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Data is being gathered and will provide further evidence to target as part of the implementation plan. The Committee will review progress during 2018/19 and will have further involvement in the development of the flexible working policy. This will be carried out in consultation with Trade Unions.
- 2.5.2 *Local supplier access to Council contracts* – This was the substantive work produced by the Committee. The Committee were concerned that local suppliers were finding it difficult to win bids due to various Welsh Government and EU rules when the Council procures services.
- 2.5.3 The Committee worked to understand fully the barriers facing local suppliers when bidding for work and the limitations imposed by regulations. The Committee sought to identify a definition for a ‘local Supplier’ and also considered whether a policy change was the best approach or whether there was an alternative way forward.
- 2.5.4 The Committee worked jointly with procurement officers through a series of workshops to address these questions. The committee considered the best approach to ensure equality, fairness and flexibility whilst meeting our legal obligations.
- 2.5.5 The Committee came up with options that will be developed into an action plan to develop and enhance advertising and marketing, provide support to bidders and suppliers and develop a new legal clause within the Council’s Contract Procedure Rule (revised CPR process); the clause will require approval by the Constitution Working Group.
- 2.5.6 The Action plan was appraised and also assessed against the Sustainable Development principles established by the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, which underpins the work of the PD&DC.
- 2.5.7 Consultation with internal officers, a supplier exercise and engagement with the Constitution Working group will also be undertaken to help inform the final document prior publishing; a paper will be reported to Cabinet in May 2018.

2.5.8 *Sustainable Swansea* – The PD&DC has contributed to the new cross cutting commissioning projects, such as Services in the Community. The Committee will support the development of the Co-production Strategy during 2018/19 and training and workshops will be arranged. The Committee will also support the work around terms and conditions, including zero hours, flexible working and sickness projects.

3.0 Improving the work of PD&DCs

3.1 The work plans for each PD&DC comprised a selection of the Council's adopted Policy Commitments.

3.2 The potential to deliver Policy Commitments during the first year of operation determined their inclusion within each PD&DC work plan.

3.3 The work plans for each PD&DC vary in size and scope. Some items are about policy development or revision and others are about delivery. Some work plans are rather lengthy and the PD&DC will not deliver them over a single municipal year; nor is there sufficient officer capacity to resource them.

3.4 An improvement would be to ensure that the work plans for each PDC are short and focussed (perhaps even just two or three items), seek to produce work that addresses a question that needs to be answered and are closely aligned with the Council's budget and corporate priorities.

3.5 It would also be beneficial if the PDC work plans are set out and agreed at the start of the Municipal Year. The work plan should be discussed between the Chairs of the Policy Development Committees, Cabinet Members and Directors to ensure that the work plans align to budgets and to corporate priorities, that there is no duplication with Scrutiny and that there are sufficient resources in place.

3.6 The Constitutional Matters 2018-2019 report recommends that PD&DC's be re-established as PDC's 'Policy Development Committees' in order to help further clarify their purpose.

4.0 Approach

4.1 Sometimes, the committees play an active and leading role in developing policy and shaping delivery working in a co-productive way. A monitoring role is undertaken by the committees at other times, reviewing the work already underway by officers and departments.

4.2 PDCs have used informal workshops and formal committee meetings to deliver work plans but there is no consistent approach to developing policy or shaping delivery across the PDCs.

4.3 A positive move forward would be for the PDCs to adopt a standard (but flexible) approach to working and developing policy and shaping delivery, informed by the five ways of working set out by the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

4.4 There needs to be clarity on the scope of each work plan item, on the problem that needs to be addressed and the expected timescales and outputs, all delivered by a disciplined approach to deliver an agreed 'product', such as a new or revised policy (or confirmation that the existing policy is appropriate).

5.0 Support and Membership

5.1 Directors and officers from departments provide the Chair of each PDC and the committee with support to deliver work plans. Democratic Services provide committee support to each of the PDCs.

5.2 Committee Members and the Chair for each PDC should continue to be selected based on their interests, knowledge and ability to contribute to the item or items contained within the work plan.

6.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

6.1 There are no direct equality and engagement implications. However, all policies, proposals or initiatives developed by the PDCs will need to be screened for an Equality Impact Assessment at the earliest possible opportunity.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Policy Development Committees - Work Plans

Economy & Infrastructure PDC - Work Plan 2018-2019

Meeting Date	Agenda items and Format
21/06/2018	1. Work Plan Discussion.
19/07/2018	1. River Corridor – work shop terms of reference. (Director of Place) 2. Wind Street Pedestrianisation. (City Centre Manager)
16/08/2018	1. Green Fleet. 2. Transportation Strategy
20/09/2018	1. Wind Street Pedestrianisation – Feedback from Consultation on 14/09/2018. 2. Feedback from site visit to River Corridor. 3. Green Fleet.
18/10/2018	1. Green Fleet. 2. Co-operative Housing
15/11/2018	1. Homes as Power Stations (Homes & Energy Cabinet Member to attend).
13/12/2018	
17/01/2019	
21/02/2019	
21/03/2019	
18/04/2019	End of Year Report.
To be scheduled	1. Transportation Strategy Workshop - date to be agreed. 2. Site Visit to Wind Street.

Education & Skills PDC - Work Plan 2018-2019

Meeting Date	Agenda items and Format
13/06/2018	• Workplan Discussion.
11/07/2018	• Data Trends in relation to Free School Meals. • Background Information on Estyn Inspections, Welsh Government Guidance, and difference between Pupil Development Grant and Pupil Premium.(Deferred)
08/08/2018	Meeting Cancelled
12/09/2018	• ERW & Local Authority Overview. • Education Endowment Trust. • Background Information on Estyn Inspections, Welsh Government Guidance, and difference between Pupil Development Grant and Pupil Premium.
10/10/2018	
14/11/2018	
12/12/2018	
09/01/2019	
13/02/2019	
13/03/2019	
10/04/2019	

People PDC - Work Plan 2018-2019

Meeting Date	Agenda items and Format
20/06/2018	Work Plan Discussion
25/07/2018	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) – Understanding the implications of ACE's for citizens.
15/08/2018	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) – Understanding the implications of ACE's for citizens.
19/09/2018	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) – To what extent is the Council already ACE informed?
17/10/2018	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)?
07/11/2018	Transition – How does transition currently work across the Health, Social Care and Education system, particularly focussing on citizen experience.
12/12/2018	Transition – Current plans to improve transition.
16/01/2019	Transition – Proposals to improve particularly focussing on voice and choice of citizens.
20/02/2019	Supported Living – What is Supported Living and how are new arrangements developed.
29/03/2019	Supported Living – Current arrangements to engage community including Ward Members.
17/04/2019	Supported Living – Current proposals to improve community engagement and Ward Members.

Poverty Reduction PDC Work Plan 2018-2019

Date of meeting	Agenda items and Format
25/07/18	<p>Poverty Truth Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Poverty Truth Commissions in other areas. – Proposal for Swansea. – Agree approach for Swansea Poverty Truth Commission with recommendation to Cabinet.
22/08/18	<p>Poverty Truth Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Feedback on investigations on progress in other areas. <p>Draft Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan Work Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentation / Feedback / Information on Homelessness Action Plan before Cabinet consideration.
26/09/18	<p>High Interest Lending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentations - <i>Rachel Moxey – Head of Poverty and Prevention Services and Julie Mallinson – Celtic Credit Union</i> <p>Human Rights City (HRC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduction – <i>Jane Whitmore - Partnership & Commissioning Manager</i> <p>Letter of the Chair to Cabinet Members - Homelessness Strategy 2018 - 2022. (For Information)</p>

24/10/18	High Interest Lending Human Rights City (HRC)
28/11/18	High Interest Lending Human Rights City (HRC)
19/12/18	TBC
23/01/19	TBC
27/02/19	TBC
27/03/19	TBC
24/04/19	TBC

	Additional Topics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Poverty

Transformation & Future Council PDC - Work Plan 2018-2019

Meeting Date	Agenda items and Format
26/06/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Plan 2018-2019
24/07/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule of Business – July 18
28/08/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Cancelled
25/09/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee HR Contract Definitions • Organisational Development Strategy and Plan • Flexible Working Hrs plan and scope
23/10/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-production • Procurement Action Plan - Develop and enhance Advertising and Marketing
27/11/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible Working Hrs – Pilot Areas – Progress • Procurement Action Plan - Council to provide a service to assist suppliers to bid
18/12/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC
22/01/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Communication
26/02/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC
26/03/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen App - Scope
23/04/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC
To be scheduled	

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Chief Auditor

Audit Committee – 9 October 2018

Annual Report of School Audits 2017/18

Purpose:	This report provides a summary of the school audits undertaken by the Internal Audit Section during 2017/18 and identifies some common issues found during the audits.
Policy Framework:	None
Consultation:	Legal, Finance and Access to Services
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that Committee review and discuss the school audits undertaken during 2017/18.
Report Author:	Nick Davies
Finance Officer:	Simon Cockings
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An audit of each primary, secondary and special school in Swansea is undertaken every 3 years. A standard audit programme exists for each school sector.
- 1.2 For a number of years, a report summarising the school audits undertaken each year has been prepared for the Chief Education Officer. The report also identifies the common themes which have been found during the audits.

2. School Audits Annual Report 2017/18

- 2.1 The School Audits Annual Report 2017/18 is attached in Appendix A.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 3.1 There are no equality and engagement implications associated with this report

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: Internal Audit Plan 2017/18

Appendices: Appendix A - Annual Report of Schools Audits 2017/18

**CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA
FINAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
EDUCATION: ANNUAL REPORT OF SCHOOL AUDITS 2017/18**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Each year a significant amount of audit resource is spent on School audits. This service is paid for by schools from their delegated budget under the current Service Level Agreement in place. The Internal Audit Section reviews all Primary, Special and Secondary Schools within the City and County of Swansea.
- 1.2 For routine audits, a risk assessment is carried out at individual School level and based on this a rolling programme of School audits is undertaken. Primary Schools and Secondary Schools are currently audited every three years.
- 1.3 The scope for School audits during the 2017/18 financial year included the following areas:
- Governance
 - Health and Safety / Fire / Premises Security Assessments
 - Management of Delegated Resources
 - Collection and Recording of Income and Banking's
 - Authorisation of Free School Meals
 - Petty Cash
 - Lettings
 - Budget Preparation and Monitoring
 - Purchasing of Goods and Services (inc. Multi-pay Cards)
 - Payment of Creditors
 - School Inventory
 - Verification of PLASC to Budget Share
 - Verification of Employees
 - School Fund (audit and presentation to Governing Body)
 - Computer Security and Data Protection
- 1.4 There are slight variations between the work undertaken at Primary Schools and Secondary Schools. However, the scope of the audit remains more or less the same for both sectors.
- 1.5 In addition to the Internal Audit review, Schools are also subject to audit inspection by Estyn. From September 2016, the period of inspection has changed from a six to a seven-year cycle. Inspections are based on the common inspection framework that was revised in September 2017.
- 1.6 At the routine audit, a formal level of assurance is provided for the overall financial management and other areas within the School as defined above. The assurance levels vary across four categories, namely High, Substantial, Moderate and Limited assurance.
- 1.7 Recommendations are contained within a Management Action Plan and are prioritised according to perceived risk. Therefore, the Headteacher has an indication of Internal Audit's view of the level of risk that the School could be exposed to if the recommendation is not implemented.

- 1.8 Once the Action Plan has been finalised with the Headteacher, a copy of the final Audit Report and Action Plan is forwarded to the Chair of the School's Governing Body and the Chief Education Officer for information. Agreed actions are followed up in accordance with the Management Action Plan timetable to ensure that they have been satisfactorily implemented. On distribution of the report, it is requested that the Chair of the Governing Body ensures that the final report is presented at the next full Governing Body meeting. We also ask that the Chair ensures that all actions have been implemented within the timescales stipulated in the Management Action Plan.
- 1.9 As part of their monitoring procedures, the School Support Unit request minutes of the Governing Body meetings in order to confirm that the audit report has been presented and discussed. Of the 34 Primary Schools, 6 Comprehensive Schools and 1 Special School that were audited and finalised in 2017/18, the School Support Unit had received minutes confirming that the audit report had been presented for 23 Primary Schools and 4 Comprehensive Schools. The Unit has requested minutes from those Schools that have not forwarded them to date and this continues to be followed up on an ongoing basis.
- 1.10 As the operation of local bank accounts remains a key area for examination during audits, Primary cheque book School audits last three days. The budgeted time for Secondary School audits is ten days.
- 1.11 The remainder of this Annual Report provides information on the various developments that have occurred during the year and provides further details of the results of the School audits undertaken and finalised during 2017/18.

2.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 Of the 34 Primary Schools audited and finalised in year, 29 achieved a substantial level of assurance, 5 achieved a high level of assurance and no schools were awarded a moderate or limited level of assurance which is a positive result. This is generally comparable to the level of assurance awarded to those Schools audited in 2016/17.
- 2.2 Of the 6 Comprehensive Schools audited and finalised in year, 5 received a high level of assurance and 1 received a substantial level of assurance. This is a much-improved picture when compared to the levels of assurance awarded in 2016/17.
- 2.3 One Special School was audited in 2017/18, which achieved a substantial level of assurance. The only Special School audited in 2016/17, also achieved a substantial level of assurance.
- 2.4 It is pleasing to note that this year, all of the Schools audited and finalised achieved a substantial or high level of assurance. This continues to illustrate the fact that the Schools in question were being managed appropriately and were operating effectively.
- 2.5 As has historically been the case, procurement was the main source of the recommendations made across all Schools in 2017/18. As seen in tables 3.6, 4.4 & 5.4 later in the report, 31% of all recommendations made for Primary, Secondary and Special Schools were in relation to procurement. It should be noted that due to the delegated nature of School budgets, there would inevitably always be some issues in this area. However, considerable efforts have been made by the Authority in an attempt to improve Schools awareness of their responsibilities in this area.

- 2.6 Periodic financial training is provided to all Primary School Headteachers by the School Funding & Information Unit, which clearly communicates the procedures that should be followed by Schools in relation to ordering and procurement. In addition to this, the unit now also offers newly appointed Headteachers a bespoke finance session and monitors attendance reminding them to attend refresher sessions every three years. However, it should be noted that attendance at such training is not compulsory.
- 2.7 It was noted in previous Annual Reports that the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules were amended in April 2014. The amendments resulted in changes to the required process for obtaining quotations and the retention of evidence, primarily for 'Band A' purchases (below £5k) and also for the 'Single Tender Application' process. It was envisaged that these amendments would simplify the procurement and record keeping process. Despite this, as reported in previous years some Schools are still failing to seek the relevant number of quotations even though the threshold has been increased to a level that remains lower than considered appropriate in discussions with Headteacher representatives.
- 2.8 Since April 2015, there has been a considerable change in the Schools Procurement Service Level Agreement (SLA) at the request of the Schools through the Joint Finance Group. Schools have opted for a basic SLA, which no longer funds a dedicated Schools Procurement Officer. Understandably, because of the ongoing budgetary pressures and consideration of value for money, a number of Schools have chosen to opt out of the Procurement SLA.
- 2.9 For 2017/18, 7 Primary Schools had opted out of the Procurement SLA compared to 16 Schools in 2016/17. All Comprehensive and Special Schools have opted into the SLA. The areas covered by the current SLA are detailed in Appendix 5. From April 2016, Procurement also introduced a new facility whereby those Schools that have opted out of the SLA may take advantage of Procurement's services for an hourly rate.
- 2.10 It was noted in the previous two reports that Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) were in the process of being reviewed and updated. This process is still ongoing and Procurement have indicated that the updated CPR's are due to be finalised shortly. Once this process has been completed, it is proposed that School specific CPR's and associated guidance notes will be produced detailing how the amended CPR's should be interpreted specifically for Schools.
- 2.11 The sections that follow provide a more detailed examination in relation to the findings of our audits across the Schools in Swansea for 2017/18.

3.0 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

3.1 Thirty Four Primary School audits were finalised by Internal Audit during 2017/18, all of which operated their own bank account. The assurance rating that was awarded to each of the Schools is shown in Appendix 1.

3.2 The table below shows the total number of Primary Schools audited within the last two financial years and the assurance levels that had been awarded.

Level of Assurance	Schools 2016/17	Schools 2017/18
High	4	5
Substantial	13	29
Moderate	1	0
Limited	0	0
Total	18	34

3.3 The level of assurance awarded confirms the view that Primary Schools in Swansea are generally well run with sound internal controls and financial management in the majority of cases. It is pleasing to note that all of the Primary Schools audited in year were rated as providing either a High or Substantial level of assurance.

3.4 A total of 352 recommendations were made as a result of the audit process, representing an average of 10 recommendations per School. All of the audit reports have been finalised at the date of this report, with agreement reached with Headteachers to implement all but one of the recommendations made.

3.5 It should be noted that a direct correlation between the number of recommendations identified at each School and the overall level of assurance cannot always be made. This is due to differences in the rating of the individual recommendations i.e. High/Medium/Low Risk or Good Practice. Therefore, the number of recommendations made for each School has not been reported.

3.6 An analysis of the areas where recommendations have been made is summarised in the table below. As can be seen, the main area where issues were identified are in relation to Procurement, as has been the case in previous years. Please also see Appendix 3, which details the main areas reported on within each category below.

Primary Schools				
Audit Area	Total Rec's 2016/17 based on 18 Schools	2016/17 %	Total Rec's 2017/18 based on 34 Schools	2017/18 %
Governance	8	5%	10	3%
Health & Safety / Premises Security	7	4%	14	4%
Procurement	55	34%	107	30%
Multi-Pay Cards	N/A	N/A	14	4%
School Funds	10	6%	46	13%
Management of Delegated Resources	1	1%	16	5%
School Meals (including banking)	19	12%	21	6%
Inventory	20	13%	35	10%
Income (including Lettings)	20	13%	52	15%
IT	16	10%	29	8%
Other	4	2%	7	2%
TOTAL	160	100%	351	100%

- 3.7 Procurement was again identified as the main issue in a number of Schools, although it must be noted that the percentage of recommendations has dropped from 34% in 16/17 to 30% last year. Headteachers are continually reminded of the requirement to comply with the Scheme for the Financing of Schools, Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's), Financial Regulations and Accounting Instructions. Also, the Procurement Section and their Procurement Guide are available to assist Schools with any procurement issues.
- 3.8 The main areas where problems have arisen regarding procurement are highlighted below:-
- Not obtaining the relevant number of quotations where expected. This was mainly noted where goods or services were procured or accumulated annual spend for a particular 'item' exceeded £5k per year.
 - Not raising authorised purchase orders at the point of commitment or at all. This is also important as it allows for effective budget monitoring and proper certification procedures. It is also a record of what has been ordered, helps to minimise disputes and to facilitate matching to the invoice both in terms of price and quantity.
 - Not obtaining the relevant dispensation, waiver etc where CPR's were not followed. (For procurement of unique items available from a single supplier for example).
 - The use of suppliers that do not have a corporate contract with the Authority without undertaking any form of tendering exercise. Note that due to delegation, the use of contracted suppliers by Schools is not compulsory. However, should they opt to use alternative suppliers, Schools must undertake their own tendering exercise to ensure best value is obtained.
- 3.9 The average number of recommendations made per School has increased in year from 9 to 10. Whilst generally, the percentage of recommendations made across the various areas has remained fairly static year on year, some additional detail in relation to some of the more notable changes may be seen below:
- Schools Funds – As stated in last year's report, we have increased our testing in this area and the issues encountered were in relation to the following. Accounts not properly being audited and reconciled regularly, bank mandates for the accounts not being up to date, the lack of any fund constitutions (or terms of reference) or evidence of management committees in place.
 - Management of Delegated Resources – Primarily in relation to approved Headteachers delegated limits being higher than the recommended limit, copies of governing body of minutes not being forwarded to audit for inspection and no evidence of annual budgets being formally approved by the governing body.
- 3.10 Whilst we report on non-compliance in these areas, what the above summary figures do not reflect is the number of instances of non-compliance per School. i.e. we would include a recommendation regardless of the number of instances of non-compliance, with the extent and significance of the issue being highlighted in the body of the report.

4.0 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.1 Six Secondary Schools were visited by Internal Audit during 2017/18. The level of assurance awarded for each of the Schools can be seen in Appendix 2.

4.2 The table that follows, shows the total number of Secondary Schools audited within the last two financial years, together with the assurance levels that have been awarded.

<i>Level of Assurance</i>	<i>Schools 2016/17</i>	<i>Schools 2017/18</i>
High	1	5
Substantial	3	1
Moderate	0	0
Limited	0	0
Total	4	6

4.3 A total of 47 recommendations were made, which represents an average of 8 recommendations per School. All of the audit reports have been finalised at the date of this report, with agreements reached with Headteachers to implement all of the recommendations made.

4.4 An analysis of findings to identify areas for improvement is shown below:-

Secondary Schools				
<i>Audit Area</i>	<i>Total Rec's 2016/17 (based on 4 Schools)</i>	<i>2016/17 %</i>	<i>Total Rec's 2017/18 (based on 6 Schools)</i>	<i>2017/18 %</i>
Governance	0	0%	0	0%
Health & Safety / Premises Security	0	0%	4	9%
Procurement	14	33%	17	37%
Multi-Pay Cards	N/A	N/A	2	4%
School Funds	4	10%	1	2%
Management of Delegated Resources	0	0%	2	4%
School Meals (including banking)	0	0%	0	0%
Inventory	8	19%	4	9%
Income (including Lettings)	10	24%	11	24%
IT	5	12%	5	11%
Other	1	2%	0	0%
TOTAL	42	100%	46	100%

4.5 As with Primary Schools, procurement has been identified as the main area where issues have arisen. The same comments as noted in 3.7 and 3.8 apply here.

4.6 It is also noted that the average number of recommendations made per School has decreased in relation to 2016/17 figures. Please see below for further details:

- Inventory – Has decreased from 19% to 9% highlighting that records in general were up to date and in good order.
- School Funds – Falling from 10% in 16/17 to 2% in 17/18. The only recommendation relating to governing body minutes not being forwarded to audit for review.

- Health & Safety – This area did increase in risk slightly as there were four recommendations reported compared to none the previous year, i.e. safe keys being held on site, fire risk assessments not being completed along with PAT tests.

5.0 SPECIAL SCHOOLS

5.1 One Special School was visited by Internal Audit during 2017/18. The level of assurance awarded can be seen in Appendix 2.

5.2 The table that follows shows the total number of Special Schools audited within the last two years, together with the assurance levels that have been awarded.

<i>Level of Assurance</i>	<i>Schools 2016/17</i>	<i>Schools 2017/18</i>
High	0	0
Substantial	1	1
Moderate	0	0
Limited	0	0
Total	1	1

5.3 A total of 5 recommendations were made and the audit report has been finalised at the date of this report, with agreement reached with Headteacher to implement all of the recommendations made.

5.4 An analysis of findings to identify areas for improvement is shown below:-

Special Schools				
<i>Audit Area</i>	<i>Total Rec's 2016/17 (based on 1 School)</i>	<i>2016/17 %</i>	<i>Total Rec's 2017/18 (based on 1 School)</i>	<i>2017/18 %</i>
Governance	0	0%	0	0%
Health & Safety / Premises Security	0	0%	0	0%
Procurement	1	10%	2	40%
Multi-Pay Cards	N/A	N/A	0	0%
School Funds	1	10%	0	0%
Management of Delegated Resources	0	0%	0	0%
School Meals (including banking)	1	10%	0	0%
Inventory	2	20%	1	20%
Income (including Lettings)	2	20%	0	0%
IT	2	20%	1	20%
Other	1	10%	1	20%
TOTAL	10	100%	5	100%

5.5 For this particular School, generally there were some issues surrounding procurement, inventory records and IT.

6.0 DEVELOPMENTS / OTHER WORK UNDERTAKEN DURING THE YEAR

- 6.1 During the year, in addition to the School audits covered as part of our cyclical review, other work was also undertaken as noted below.
- 6.2 Ad-hoc work covering a range of areas as and when they arise, at the request of Schools or the Education Department.
- 6.3 Internal Audit have attended a number of admin forums giving training to school office staff and Headteachers on the main reported areas highlighted during routine audits. Training to staff will continue via this forum.
- 6.4 There is a corporate project underway seeking to identify if there are benefits from schools using the central Oracle system instead of their separate SIMS/cheque book system, with the initial view being that this may improve procurement controls.
- 6.5 No follow up visits were required to be undertaken during the year as all reported ratings were either substantial or high levels of assurance. Please note that these schools are still subject to the standard follow up process, however would not have been revisited for detailed testing.
- 6.6 School programme updates to contain further areas of testing in relation to the introduction of sQuid, an online payment system for parents to pay for dinner money and school trips.

7.0 SCHOOL SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRES

- 7.1 One of the key targets over the last few years was to introduce a self-assessment questionnaire for schools. As reported previously, it was decided that this approach should be adopted for Primary and Special Schools in an attempt to more effectively utilise reduced resources and to balance the annual audit plan. The questionnaire was finalised and the new audit approach was rolled out to schools in 2016/17.
- 7.2 Each year since the introduction, we review the questionnaire to ensure resources are being focused on key areas that are relevant in the modern School environment.
- 7.3 At the time of writing this report, the next phase of questionnaires have been issued to those Schools that are due to be audited in 2018/19.
- 7.4 The overall reaction to the questionnaire continues to be very good, with encouraging feedback being received from all of the Schools that have contacted the Audit Team. Consultation with the Primary Support Officers has also indicated that the Schools have reacted positively to this audit approach.

8. QUALITY MEASURES

- 8.1 At the end of each audit, Headteachers are provided with a Quality Control Questionnaire (QCQ) that allows them to comment on the quality of the audit service provided. A copy of the Questionnaire is attached, see Appendix 4.
- 8.2 Each completed questionnaire is reviewed and comments are taken into account when planning future audits, where appropriate.
- 8.3 QCQ results are fed into a Performance Indicator which shows the percentage of clients expressing 'at least satisfaction' with the conduct of audit assignments undertaken by Internal Audit. For this exercise, this relates to the QCQ's issued for audits finalised in 2017/18 as at the time of writing this report.
- 8.4 The Performance Target for Schools, at least satisfied with the quality of audit service for 2017/18 was 98%.
- 8.5 The response rate to our QCQ surveys over the last two years are as follows:

	2016-17			2017-18		
	QCQ's issued	No. of Responses	Response %	QCQ's issued	No. of Responses	Response %
Primary	18	3	17%	34	32	94%
Secondary	4	2	50%	6	5	83%
Special	1	0	0%	1	1	100%
Overall	23	5	22%	41	38	93%

- 8.6 Historically, return rates on Quality Control Questionnaires (QCQ's) issued have been low – See above table for 2016/17 results. Since the previous schools report, we have been making a concerted effort to ensure that where possible, comments from our Headteachers in relation to the service provided are returned, by following up those Schools that have not submitted their questionnaire returns. As you can see from the results in 2017/18, we have had a 93% return rate, which is a significant improvement on recent years.
- 8.7 It should be noted, that for those QCQ's received for both Primary, Secondary and Special Schools, 98% were at least satisfied with the overall usefulness of the audit which is in line with our internal performance target of 98%.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This annual report provides information on School audits undertaken and finalised during 2017/18, and identifies the main areas for improvement in relation to the financial management and procurement of goods and services for schools..
- 9.2 A good working relationship continues to exist between Schools and the Internal Audit Section, with Headteachers generally responding positively to audit recommendations. However, as highlighted in previous years the raising of orders and compliance with Contract Procedure Rules does remain an issue and in many instances these have been repeatedly re-reported.
- 9.3 As noted in previous reports, procurement is still the biggest issue arising from School audits. However, the issues highlighted should be considered in the context of the overall School budget. The significant majority of any School's delegated budget is spent on staff salaries (85%) which, given the ever increasing budgetary pressures being felt by Schools, leaves a relatively small amount of money for the School's other procurement activities.
- 9.4 It is again the opinion of the Internal Audit Section that financial management systems established in Schools continue to provide a generally high level of assurance, subject to the procurement compliance issues as noted above.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS AUDITED AND FINALISED 2017/18

School	Date Report Finalised	Level of Assurance
Bishopston Primary	28/04/2017	High Assurance
Pengelli Primary	10/05/2017	High Assurance
Birchgrove Primary	08/09/2017	High Assurance
Glais Primary	18/12/2017	High Assurance
Craigcefnparc Primary	19/12/2017	High Assurance
St. Thomas' Primary	10/04/2017	Substantial Assurance
Casllwchwr Primary	30/05/2017	Substantial Assurance
Wauanarwydd Primary	30/05/2017	Substantial Assurance
St. Joseph's Cathedral Primary	14/06/2017	Substantial Assurance
Y.G.G. Gellionnen	19/06/2017	Substantial Assurance
Gendros Primary	17/10/2017	Substantial Assurance
Llangyfelach Primary	17/10/2017	Substantial Assurance
Brynmill Primary	24/10/2017	Substantial Assurance
Clase Primary	27/10/2017	Substantial Assurance
Plasmarl Primary	20/11/2017	Substantial Assurance
Parkland Primary	23/11/2017	Substantial Assurance
Craigfelen Primary	04/12/2017	Substantial Assurance
Gorseinon Primary	07/12/2017	Substantial Assurance
Penllergaer Primary	11/12/2017	Substantial Assurance
Y.G.G. Tan-y-Lan Primary	14/12/2017	Substantial Assurance
Ynystawe Primary	19/12/2017	Substantial Assurance
St. Illtyd's R.C. Primary	24/01/2018	Substantial Assurance
Llanrhidian Primary	29/01/2018	Substantial Assurance
Pentre'r Graig Primary	29/01/2018	Substantial Assurance
Oystermouth Primary	30/01/2018	Substantial Assurance
Whitestone Primary	09/02/2018	Substantial Assurance
Tre Uchaf Primary	09/02/2018	Substantial Assurance
Y.G.G. Lon Las Primary	16/02/2018	Substantial Assurance
Clydach Primary	19/02/2018	Substantial Assurance
Blaenymaes Primary	06/03/2018	Substantial Assurance
Ysgol Gymraeg y Cwm Primary	12/03/2018	Substantial Assurance
Pontybrenin Primary	13/03/2018	Substantial Assurance
Y.G.G. Tirdeunaw	20/03/2018	Substantial Assurance
Cwmrhydyceirw Primary	23/03/2018	Substantial Assurance

SECONDARY SCHOOLS AUDITED AND FINALISED 2017/18

School	Date Report Finalised	Level of Assurance
Pentrehafod Comprehensive	03/07/2017	High Assurance
Pontarddulais Comprehensive	01/02/2018	High Assurance
YGG Bryn Tawe Comprehensive	14/03/2018	High Assurance
Cefn Hengoed Comprehensive	15/03/2018	High Assurance
Penyrheol Comprehensive	21/03/2018	High Assurance
Bishopston Comprehensive	21/09/2017	Substantial Assurance

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AUDITED AND FINALISED 2017/18

School	Date Report Finalised	Level of Assurance
Ysgol Crug Glas	24/01/18	Substantial

**AREAS REVIEWED AT PRIMARY / SECONDARY / SPECIAL SCHOOLS DURING
2017/18**

AUDIT AREA	MAIN CATEGORIES REVIEWED IN EACH AUDIT AREA
Governance	Role and responsibilities of Governors, Committees and staff Policies and Committees Governors involvement in setting the School Development Plan Finance, Administration and CRB
Health & Safety/ Fire/ Premises	Health and safety inspections Fire Risk assessments and Portable Appliance Testing Self-review of security issues
Procurement	Ordering procedures (Non orders) Payment procedures Authorisation of orders / invoices Governing Body approval of payments more than £5k Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules Insurance arrangements for Non-Authority 'approved' suppliers. Cheque stock records
Multi-pay Cards	Card Security Segregation of duties Reconciliations
School Funds	School fund signatories Audit and presentation of the School fund Distribution of School savings Fund Constitutions & Management Committees
Management of the School	Budget setting, approval and monitoring Authorised signatories Register of Business Interests Delegated powers
Inventory	Format and security of the School inventory Keeping the inventory up-to-date inc disposal procedures Physical checks
School Meals	Dinner money arrears Certification of CS3's by Headteachers CS3 meals served to sQuid records Weekly banking of Dinner monies (if applicable) Entitlement to Free School Meals The implementation and management of sQuid
Bank	Cheque signatories Bank reconciliations

Income	Banking and security of income held on site.
	C&D Senior Management review
	Letting applications
	Other income
	Raising and monitoring of invoices
IT	Computer-based records to be password-protected/ backed up/passwords to be changed regularly
	Users no longer employed to be deleted by the system manager
	Data Protection
Other	Self-employment status
	Verification of employees and payment of travel expenses
	Leases
PLASC	Verification PLASC return to Budget share

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

QUALITY CONTROL QUESTIONNAIRE - INTERNAL AUDIT SECTION

We are keen to monitor and, where possible, improve the quality of our work. We have adopted a number of performance indicators that we report on monthly, quarterly & annually. One of these is your view of the overall quality etc. of our work.

For this reason please complete the questions below indicating your level of satisfaction with various aspects of our audit. Any additional comments you may have should also be included.

AUDIT: _____ DATE OF ISSUE: _____

AUDIT FILE REF. NO: _____ AUDITOR(S): _____

ASPECT OF AUDIT	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DIS-SATISFIED	VERY DIS SATISFIED
AUDIT PLANNING				
Appropriateness of scope and objectives of audit				
Usefulness of initial discussions with auditor(s)				
Timing of audit				
CONDUCT OF AUDIT				
Duration of audit				
General helpfulness of auditors				
Consultation on findings				
AUDIT REPORT				
Fair presentation of findings				
Importance of findings				
Usefulness of recommendations				
Consultation on findings and recommendations				
OVERALL				
How would you rate the overall usefulness of the audit?				

OTHER COMMENTS:

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

DESIGNATION/POST TITLE: _____

Please return to the Chief Internal Auditor, Room 102, The Guildhall or by email.

The SLA no longer funds a specific Schools Procurement Officer, but covers the following:-

- Access to the Council's corporate, regional and national contracts and framework agreements held for an extensive range of goods and services that can be fully utilised by Schools throughout the City and County of Swansea. Contracts including but not limited to:-
 - (i) Electricity, Gas and Oil.
 - (ii) Window cleaning
 - (iii) Stationery
 - (iv) Washroom equipment & sanitary disposal
 - (v) MFDs
 - (vi) Catering and Cleaning materials
- Monitor corporate contracted suppliers with regard to adherence to contract specifications and prices.
- Provide a dedicated telephone helpline between 9am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays offering :-
 - (i) Procurement advice and guidance on all procurement matters, including product specifications, supplier sourcing and procedures.
 - (ii) Provide advice on the relevant documentation and for Schools to conduct background checks on potential suppliers when procuring individual School contracts (e.g. Health & Safety, Insurances, DBS)
- Updating and reviewing Contracting Procedure Rules for Schools when required by changes to Legislation, policy or procedures.



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Annual Improvement Report: 2017-18

City and County of Swansea Council

Issued: September 2018
Document reference: 741A2018-19



This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by Katherine Simmons and Sara-Jane Byrne under the direction of Huw Rees.

**Adrian Crompton
Auditor General for Wales
Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ**

The Auditor General is independent of government, and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. The Auditor General undertakes his work using staff and other resources provided by the Wales Audit Office Board, which is a statutory board established for that purpose and to monitor and advise the Auditor General. The Wales Audit Office is held to account by the National Assembly.

The Auditor General audits local government bodies in Wales, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. He also conducts local government value for money studies and assesses compliance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

Beyond local government, the Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales.

The Auditor General and staff of the Wales Audit Office aim to provide public-focused and proportionate reporting on the stewardship of public resources and in the process provide insight and promote improvement.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Front cover photo: © Swansea Council 2018

Contents

Summary report	4
2017-18 performance audit work	4
The Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement	4
Recommendations and proposals for improvement	4
Audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2017-18	6
Appendices	9
Appendix 1 – Status of this report	9
Appendix 2 – Annual Audit Letter	10
Appendix 3 – National report recommendations 2017-18	14

Summary report

2017-18 performance audit work

- 1 In determining the breadth of work undertaken during the year, we considered the extent of accumulated audit and inspection knowledge as well as other available sources of information including the City and County of Swansea Council's (the Council) own mechanisms for review and evaluation. For 2017-18, we undertook improvement assessment work at all councils. We also undertook work at all councils in relation to the Well-being of Future Generations Act, a service-user-perspective themed review and a review of overview and scrutiny arrangements. At some councils, we supplemented this work with local risk-based audits, identified in the Audit Plan for 2017-18.
- 2 The work carried out since the last Annual Improvement Report (AIR), including that of the relevant regulators, is set out in [Exhibit 1](#).

The Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement

- 3 Based on, and limited to, the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2018-19.

Recommendations and proposals for improvement

- 4 Given the wide range of services provided by the Council and the challenges it is facing, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
 - make proposals for improvement – if proposals are made to the Council, we would expect it to do something about them and we will follow up what happens;
 - make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made, the Council must prepare a response to that recommendation within 30 working days;
 - conduct a special inspection, and publish a report and make recommendations; and
 - recommend to ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way.

- 5 During the course of the year, the Auditor General did not make any formal recommendations. However, we have made a number of proposals for improvement and these are repeated in this report. We will monitor progress against them and relevant recommendations made in our national reports ([Appendix 3](#)) as part of our improvement assessment work.

Audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2017-18

Exhibit 1: audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2017-18

Description of the work carried out since the last AIR, including that of the relevant regulators, where relevant.

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
July 2018	<p>‘Scrutiny: Fit for the Future?’ Review</p> <p>Review of how well placed councils’ overview and scrutiny functions are to respond to current and future challenges.</p>	<p>The Council’s scrutiny function is well placed to respond to future challenges, but could improve arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny and strengthen its evaluation of the impact of scrutiny activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Council has an active scrutiny function that benefits from a flexible approach, but there remains potential for confusion and overlap between the role of Policy Development Committees and Scrutiny; the scrutiny function regularly challenges decision makers, but it could improve the timeliness of pre-decision scrutiny; and the scrutiny function has arrangements to review its own effectiveness, but could strengthen its evaluation of the impact of its scrutiny activity on citizens and other stakeholders. 	<p>P1 The Council should consider the skills and training that scrutiny members may need to better prepare them for current and future challenges, and develop and deliver an appropriate training and development programme, including providing additional training on the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.</p> <p>P2 The Council should strengthen its evaluation of the impact and outcomes of its scrutiny activity.</p> <p>P3 The Council should further clarify the distinction between scrutiny and Policy Development Committee activity in relation to policy development.</p>

Dyddiad cyhoeddi	Disgrifiad byr	Casgliadau	Cynigion ar gyfer gwella
November 2017	<p>Annual Audit Letter 2016-17 Letter summarising the key messages arising from the Auditor General's statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and his reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice. The Annual Audit Letter is in Appendix 2 of this report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources. • I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources but the financial outlook is very challenging. • My work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2016-17 financial statements or key financial systems. 	

Dyddiad cyhoeddi	Disgrifiad byr	Casgliadau	Cynigion ar gyfer gwella
Improvement planning and reporting			
September 2017	Wales Audit Office annual improvement plan audit Review of the Council's published plans for delivering on improvement objectives.	The Council has complied with its statutory improvement planning duties.	None.
November 2017	Wales Audit Office annual assessment of performance audit Review of the Council's published performance assessment.	The Council has complied with its statutory improvement reporting duties.	None.
Reviews by inspection and regulation bodies			
No reviews by inspection and regulation bodies have taken place during the time period covered in this report.			

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Status of this report

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake a forward-looking annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. Improvement authorities (defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities) have a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'.

The annual improvement assessment considers the likelihood that an authority will comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. The assessment is also the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. Staff of the Wales Audit Office, on behalf of the Auditor General, produce the annual improvement report. The report discharges the Auditor General's duties under section 24 of the Measure, by summarising his audit and assessment work in a published annual improvement report for each authority. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether (as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17) he believes that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

The Auditor General may also, in some circumstances, carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the authority and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). An important ancillary activity for the Auditor General is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

Appendix 2 – Annual Audit Letter

Councillor Rob Stewart
Leader
City and County of Swansea
Guildhall
Swansea
SA1 4PE

Reference: 509A2017

Date issued: 30 November 2017

Dear Councillor Stewart

Annual Audit Letter – City and County of Swansea and Pension Fund 2016-17

This letter summarises the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources

It is the Council's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare Financial Statements in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the financial statements;
- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the Financial Statements.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards. On 29 September 2017 I issued an unqualified audit opinion on the Financial Statements confirming that they present a true and fair view of the Council's and Pension Fund's financial position and transactions. My report is contained within the financial statements. The key matters arising from the audit of the financial statements were reported to Members at the Council Meeting on 28 September 2017, in my Audit of Financial Statements reports. I issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the financial statements has been completed on 29 September 2017.

Overall the financial statements and associated working papers provided for audit were of a good standard. Your officers were helpful and supplied us with all the information we requested. I reported to you the more significant issues arising from our audit, which are summarised below:

- **C&CS financial statements** – during 2016-17, the Council has continued to make progress in improving its arrangements for capital accounting. However, there are a number of areas where further work is required in 2017-18.
- **C&CS Pension Fund financial statement** – our audit identified a number of amendments to the draft financial statements. These amendments had no impact on the Fund Account but the value of investments in the Net Assets Statement was increased by £2.3 million. We also identified that controls over year-end reconciliations between payroll and the pensions systems need to be improved.

The Council has made good progress in bringing forward the production of the financial statements. This year the financial statements were available for audit in mid-June. The Council is therefore making good progress towards achieving the 31 May deadline in 2020-21.

Since completion of the audit we have held a joint post project learning exercise with your Finance officers. We have identified areas where we can both learn from this year, and make improvements for the future. We have set up regular meetings to take these issues forward and to start preparations for the challenges that will be brought about by future requirements to bring forward the financial statements preparation and audit.

I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources but the financial outlook is very challenging

My consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The Auditor General will highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made when he publishes his Annual Improvement Report.

In 2016-17, the Council underspent by some £2 million after the planned use of £3 million of reserves. Current forecasts for 2017-18 suggest that the Council will overspend by some £7 million at the year-end – mainly due to overspends in Social Services. The overspend is not helped by the fact that the Council does not generally have a good track record in identifying and delivering against financial savings plans.

The likely year-end overspend will therefore have an impact on the level of the Council's reserves. The Council held some £99 million in useable reserves at the end of 2016-17 (£110 million in 2015-16) with the majority of this being set aside to meet future spending commitments. The unallocated general fund balance is some £12 million.

The Council needs to ensure that it has a clear medium term financial plan including robust financial plans to deliver the financial savings in both current and future years. This plan needs to include the capital budget as the anticipated capital programme requires a significant level of borrowing which will increase long-term liabilities and have an impact on revenue expenditure. During 2017-18, and beyond, the Council will need to make some difficult decisions as the financial outlook is very challenging.

My work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2016-17 financial statements or key financial systems

My ongoing work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the financial statements or key financial systems. A more detailed report on my grant certification work will follow early in 2018 once this year's programme of certification work is complete.

The financial audit fees for 2016-17 are currently expected to be slightly less than those set out in the Annual Audit Plans and we will consider this as part of our planning for 2017-18 and will report the out-turn to you in the Audit Plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Herniman', written in a cursive style.

John Herniman

For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales

cc. Phil Roberts, Chief Executive

Appendix 3 – National report recommendations 2017-18

Exhibit 2: national report recommendations 2017-18

Summary of proposals for improvement relevant to local government, included in national reports published by the Wales Audit Office, since publication of the last AIR.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
June 2017	<u>Savings Planning in Councils in Wales</u>	The report did not include any recommendations or proposals for improvement, although proposals for improvement were included in local reports issued to each Council.
October 2017	<u>Public Procurement in Wales</u>	The report contained seven recommendations. Six of the recommendations were for the Welsh Government, one of the recommendations was for public bodies: R3 It was clear from our sampling that some procurement strategies are out of date and there has also been a mixed response to new policy and legislation, such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We recommend that public bodies review their procurement strategies and policies during 2017-18 and on an annual basis thereafter to ensure that they reflect wider policy and legislative changes and support continuous improvement.
October 2017	<u>Good governance when determining significant service changes – National Summary</u>	The report did not include any recommendations or proposals for improvement, although proposals for improvement were included in local reports issued to each Council. The report was designed primarily to provide insight, share existing practice and prompt further conversations and discussions between councils and other organisations.
December 2017	<u>Local Government Financial Reporting 2016-17</u>	The report did not include any recommendations or proposals for improvement.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
January 2018	How Local Government manages demand – Homelessness	<p>R1 Implementing the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires local authorities to develop services which are focussed on preventing homelessness and reducing demand. These are very different to traditional casework led homelessness services, and prevention work requires new skills and early interaction with users and potential users. We found local authorities' progress in revising and strengthening services is variable (paragraphs 1.12 to 1.20). We recommend that local authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their staff are sufficiently skilled to deal with the new demands of mediating, problem solving, negotiating and influencing with homeless people; and • review and reconfigure their services to engage more effectively with homeless and potentially homeless people to prevent homelessness. <p>R2 The Welsh Government provided funding to support local authorities to implement the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and this funding has been critical in enabling new preventative services to be developed. The funding is in place until 2019-20 but authorities need to ensure they use headspace provided by these resources to revise their services to deliver their responsibilities in the future (paragraphs 1.21 to 1.28). We recommend that local authorities review their funding of homelessness services to ensure that they can continue to provide the widest possible preventative approach needed. Reviews should consider use of Supporting People as well as General Council fund monies to support delivery of the authority's homelessness duties.</p> <p>R3 How services are configured and managed at the first point of contact can significantly influence how effective local authorities are in managing and reducing demand. Easy to access services which maximise usage, avoid gate keeping and focus on early solutions can significantly improve the prospects for successful homelessness prevention. We found that some authority point of entry systems are poorly designed which reduces the authority's prospects for early intervention to prevent homelessness from occurring (paragraphs 2.4 to 2.11). We recommend that local authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design services to ensure there is early contact with service users; • use 'triage' approaches to identify and filter individuals seeking help to determine the most appropriate response to address their needs; and • test the effectiveness of first point of contact services to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
January 2018	How Local Government manages demand – Homelessness	<p>R4 Establishing clear standards of service that set out what the authority provides and is responsible for is critical to ensuring people know what they are entitled to receive and what they need to resolve themselves. We found that authorities are not always providing clear, concise and good quality information to help guide people to find the right advice quickly and efficiently (paragraphs 2.12 to 2.17). We recommend that local authorities publish service standards that clearly set out what their responsibilities are and how they will provide services to ensure people know what they are entitled to receive and what they must do for themselves. Service standards should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be written in plain accessible language. • be precise about what applicants can and cannot expect, and when they can expect resolution. • clearly set out the applicant’s role in the process and how they can help the process go more smoothly and quickly. • be produced collaboratively with subject experts and include the involvement of people who use the service(s). • effectively integrate with the single assessment process. • offer viable alternatives to the authority’s services. • set out the appeals and complaints processes. These should be based on fairness and equity for all involved and available to all. <p>R5 Local authorities need to design services to engage with service users effectively and efficiently, but current standards are too variable to ensure service users are getting access to the advice they need (paragraphs 2.18 to 2.24). To improve current performance we recommend that local authorities make better use of their websites to help manage demand by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • testing the usability and effectiveness of current website information using our lines of enquiry set out in Appendix 5; • increasing and improving the range, quality and coverage of web based information; making better use of online applications; and • linking more effectively to information from specialist providers and advice specialists, such as Citizens Advice. <p>R6 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 introduces a new duty on social services and housing associations to collaborate with local authority homelessness services in preventing homelessness. We found that these arrangements are not operating effectively and service responses to prevent homelessness and assist homeless people are not always being provided, nor are they consistently effective (paragraphs 3.13 to 3.25). We recommend that local authorities set out and agree their expectations of partners identifying how they will work together to alleviate homelessness. The agreement should be reviewed regularly and all partners’ performance reviewed to identify areas for improvement.</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
January 2018	How Local Government manages demand – Homelessness	<p>R7 Local authorities monitoring systems and evaluation approaches to ensure compliance with their responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty are not working as well as they should (paragraph 3.35 to 3.39). We recommend that local authorities address weaknesses in their equalities monitoring, and ensure that their homelessness service accurately records and evaluates appropriate data to demonstrate equality of access for all service users that the local authority has a duty towards.</p> <p>R8 Managing demand can be challenging for local authorities. There are some clear lessons to be learnt with regard to the implementation of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and homelessness prevention duties that can be applied to managing demand in other services (paragraphs 4.24 to 4.27). We recommend that local authorities use the checklist set out in Appendix 10 to undertake a self-assessment on services, to help identify options to improve how they can help manage demand.</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
February 2018	Housing Adaptations	<p>The report contained nine recommendations. One of the recommendations was for the Welsh Government, eight of the recommendations were for local authorities and/or delivery organisations:</p> <p>R1 There are many sources of funding and policies for adaptations, which results in disabled and older people receiving very different standards of service (paragraphs 1.5 to 1.9). To address these discrepancies we recommend that the Welsh Government set standards for all adaptations to ensure disabled and older people receive the same standard of service irrespective of where they live, who their landlord is and whether they own their own home.</p> <p>R2 Most public bodies are clear on how their work on adaptations can positively impact on disabled and older people, and have set suitable aims that provide focus for action. For adaptations, having the right strategic goals also establishes a clear basis for decision-making on who should be prioritised for services and how and where to use resources. However, we found that current policy arrangements have a number of deficiencies and public bodies are not maximising the benefit of their investment (paragraphs 3.8 to 3.15). We recommend that local authorities work with partner agencies (health bodies, housing associations and Care and Repair) to strengthen their strategic focus for the provision of adaptations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting appropriate strategic objectives for adaptations that focus on wellbeing and independence; • improving the quality of information on the demand for adaptations by using a wide range of data to assess need including drawing on and using information from partners who work in the local-authority area; and • linking the system for managing and delivering adaptations with adapted housing policies and registers to make best use of already adapted homes. <p>R3 Ensuring that all those who might need an adaptation have all the information they need in order to apply for and receive an adaptation is important. Good-quality and accessible information is therefore essential for delivery organisations to demonstrate fair access and transparency. However, we identified weaknesses in the quality and coverage of public information relating to housing adaptations (paragraphs 2.6 to 2.15). We recommend that delivery organisations provide information on housing adaptations in both Welsh and English, and accessible formats including braille, large fonts, audio versions and other languages. Information should be promoted widely via a range of media including social media, websites and published information, and also through key partners. Preferably, information should be produced jointly and policies aligned between delivery bodies to improve coverage and usage.</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
February 2018	Housing Adaptations	<p>R4 Given the wide number of routes into services, delivery organisations need to ensure they have robust systems to deal effectively and quickly with applications. However, we found that the processes used by delivery organisations vary widely and often create difficulties for disabled and older people seeking assistance (paragraphs 2.16 to 2.19). We recommend that delivery organisations streamline applications by creating single comprehensive application forms covering all organisations within a local-authority area that are available via partners and online.</p> <p>R5 Delivery of adaptations can be delayed by a variety of factors (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.33). To improve timeliness in delivery we recommend that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Welsh Government reviews whether local authorities should continue to use the means test for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs); • local authorities provide or use home improvement agency services to support disabled and older people to progress their DFG applications efficiently; • delivery organisations work with planning authorities to fast track and streamline adaptations that require approvals; • delivery organisations use Trusted Assessors to undertake less complex adaptation assessments; and • the Welsh Government streamlines its approval processes for Physical Adaptation Grants (PAGs).

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
February 2018	Housing Adaptations	<p>R6 Most local authorities, housing associations and Care and Repair agencies have established processes to appoint, oversee and manage builder and/or contractor performance. However, we found wide variations in how delivery organisations arrange, contract and deliver building works (paragraphs 2.37 to 2.44). We recommend that delivery organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce formal systems for accrediting contractors to undertake adaptations. These should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – standards of customer care such as keeping to appointments, keeping the site tidy, controlling noise etc; – vetting of financial standing, tax and VAT status; – promoting good health and safety practices; – requiring the use of warranty schemes; – ensuring that adequate insurance is held; and – requiring references. • use framework agreements and partnered contracts to deliver adaptations; • address weaknesses in the contracting of adaptations, updating Schedule of Rates used to tender work and undertaking competitive tendering to support value for money in contracting; • develop effective systems to manage and evaluate contractor performance by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – setting an appropriate range of information to judge performance and delivery of works covering timeliness of work; quality of work; applicant/tenant feedback; cost of work (including variations); health and safety record; and customer feedback; – regularly reporting and evaluating performance to identify opportunities to improve services; and – providing formal feedback to contractors on their performance covering key issues such as client satisfaction, level and acceptability of variations, right first-time work, post-inspection assessment and completion within budget and on time.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
February 2018	Housing Adaptations	<p>R7 Maximising impact and value for money in provision of adaptations requires effective joint working between housing organisations and health and social care services to ensure the needs of often very vulnerable people can be met, and their quality of life improved. However, our findings highlight that delivery organisations continue to have a limited strategic focus on adaptations, concentrating on organisational specific responses rather than how best collectively to meet the needs of disabled or older people (paragraphs 3.16 to 3.21). We recommend that local authorities work with partner agencies (health bodies, housing associations and Care and Repair) to develop and improve joint working to maximise both take-up and the benefits of adaptations in supporting independence by pooling of resources, co-locating staff and creating integrated delivery teams</p> <p>R8 Most public bodies recognise the value of adaptations in reducing the risk of falls, preventing hospital admissions and speeding up discharge from hospital. However, the importance of adaptations is not always reflected in local partnership arrangements and outside of Occupational Therapists, health professionals noted that the different local-authority and housing-association systems for administering, approving and delivering adaptations are difficult to navigate (paragraphs 3.22 to 3.24). To enhance take-up and usage of adaptations with health bodies we recommend that delivery organisations jointly agree and publish joint service standards for delivery of adaptations within each local-authority area. The service standards should clearly set out how each agency approaches delivery of adaptations and how they will provide services to ensure people know what they are entitled to receive. Service Standards should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be written in plain accessible language; • be precise about what people can and cannot expect to receive; • be produced collaboratively to cover all adaptations services within an area; • set out the eligibility for the different funding streams, application and assessment processes, timescales and review processes; and • offer the viable options and alternatives for adaptations including linking with adapted housing registers to maximise use of already adapted homes.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
February 2018	Housing Adaptations	<p>R9 Having the right performance indicators and regularly reporting performance against these are important for public bodies to manage operational performance, identify areas of improvement and evaluating the positive impact of services. We found that the current range of performance indicator data is extremely limited and not sufficient to enable a full evaluation of performance (paragraphs 4.5 to 4.20). To effectively manage performance and be able to judge the impact of adaptations, we recommend that the Welsh Government and delivery organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set appropriate measures to judge both the effectiveness and efficiency of the different systems for delivering adaptations and the impact on wellbeing and independence of those who receive adaptations; • ensure delivery organisations report against their responsibilities in respect of the Equalities Act 2010; • ensure performance information captures the work of all delivery organisations – local authorities, housing associations and Care and Repair agencies; and • annually publish performance for all delivery organisations to enable a whole systems view of delivery and impact to support improvement to be taken.
April 2018	Speak my language: Overcoming language and communication barriers in public services	<p>Ensuring that people who face language and communication barriers can access public services</p> <p>R1 Public bodies are required to ensure that people can access the services they need. To take account of the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and other legislation, we recommend that public bodies regularly review the accessibility of their services to people who do not speak English or Welsh as a main language including Deaf people who use sign language. This assessment can include using our checklist.</p> <p>Developing interpretation and translation services in Wales</p> <p>R2 Our work with public bodies, interpretation and translation service providers and service users has identified some challenges for interpretation and translation services. We recommend that the Welsh Government work with public bodies, representative groups and other interested parties to make sure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the supply of interpreters is sufficient especially for languages in high demand such as BSL and Arabic; • interpreters with specialist training are available to work in mental health services and with people who have experienced trauma or violence; and • quality assurance and safeguarding procedures are in place.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
May 2018	<u>Reflecting on Year One: How Have Public Bodies Responded to the Well-being of Future Generations</u>	The report did not include any recommendations or proposals for improvement.
May 2018	<u>Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities</u>	<p>R1 People with a learning disability have a right to live independently. The last 50 years have seen significant changes in the provision of accommodation and support. Service provision has moved to a model that enables people to live in the community in ordinary houses throughout Wales (paragraphs 1.3 to 1.10). We recommend that local authorities continue to focus on preventing people becoming dependent on more expensive placements in care homes by providing effective support at home and a range of step up accommodation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the evaluation of prevention activity so local authorities understand what works well and why. • utilising the mapping of prevention services under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 that covers other agencies and service providers. • improving the signposting of additional help so carers and support networks can be more resilient and self-reliant. This should include encouraging carers to make long-term plans for care to maintain and protect their dependants' wellbeing. • sharing risk analysis and long-term planning data with other local authorities, service providers, and partners to agree a shared understanding of the range of options. <p>R2 Population projections show that the number of people with a learning disability will increase in the future, and those aged over 65 and those with a moderate or severe learning disability will rise significantly (paragraphs 1.3 to 1.10). We recommend that local authorities improve their approach to planning services for people with learning disabilities by building on the Regional Partnership Boards' population assessments for people with learning disabilities and agreeing future priorities.</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
May 2018	Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities	<p>R3 The Welsh Government produced guidance to local authorities, entitled 'developing a commissioning strategy for people with a learning disability' to support authorities in producing strategic plans for the commissioning of learning disability services. In conjunction with codes of practice developed following the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Welsh Government requires local authorities to develop integrated commissioning options with Local Health Board services. The aim is to provide a joined-up and cost-effective approach to the commissioning of services but our review highlighted weaknesses in current arrangements (paragraph 2.4 to 2.12). We recommend that local authorities do more to integrate commissioning arrangements with partners and providers and take account of the work of the National Commissioning Board by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding the barriers that exist in stopping or hindering further integration; • improving the quality of joint strategic plans for learning disability services (see also paragraphs 3.11 to 3.14); • establishing investment models and sustainable financial structures, joint workforce planning and multi-year budgeting; and • developing appropriate governance and data sharing frameworks with key local partners that include a clear process for managing risk and failure. <p>R4 Local authorities' engagement with people with learning disabilities and their carers is variable. Whilst many authority services have positive relationships with advocacy groups, some are less successful in involving these groups and carers in evaluating the quality of services (paragraph 2.18 to 2.20). We recommend that local authorities do more to involve people with learning disabilities and their carers in care planning and agreeing pathways to further independence by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently including people with learning disabilities and their carers in the writing, monitoring and development of care plans; • systematically involving carers and advocacy groups in evaluating the quality of services; • involving people with learning disabilities in procurement processes; and • ensuring communications are written in accessible and appropriate language to improve the understanding and impact of guidance and information.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
May 2018	<u>Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities</u>	<p>R5 Local Authorities could do more to involve service providers in commissioning and make the tendering process more effective by making it easier to navigate and more outcome focused. However, providers are not as effectively engaged as they should be (paragraphs 2.28 to 2.38). We recommend that local authorities collaborate with providers, the third sector and suppliers in understanding challenges, sharing data, and pooling expertise by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the quality, range, and accessibility of tendering information; and • working with providers to shape local markets by coming to a common understanding of the opportunities, risks, and future priorities in providing learning disabilities services. <p>R6 Most local authorities do not have effective arrangements to monitor and evaluate their commissioning of learning disability services (paragraphs 3.3 to 3.15). We recommend that local authorities develop a more appropriate set of performance indicators and measures of success that make it easier to monitor and demonstrate the impact of service activity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-designing measures, service and contract performance indicators with service providers, people with learning disabilities and their carers; • ensure commissioners have sufficient cost and qualitative information on the full range of placement and care options available; • equipping commissioners with data to demonstrate the long-term financial benefits of commissioning choices, this includes having the right systems and technology; • integrating the outcomes and learning from reviews of care plans into performance measures; • evaluating and then learning from different types of interventions and placements; and • including learning disability services in local authority scrutiny reviews to challenge performance and identify improvements.

Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: info@audit.wales

Website: www.audit.wales

Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru

24 Heol y Gadeirlan

Caerdydd CF11 9LJ

Ffôn: 029 2032 0500

Ffacs: 029 2032 0600

Ffôn Testun: 029 2032 0660

E-bost: post@archwilio.cymru

Gwefan: www.archwilio.cymru

City & County of Swansea Audit Committee Update – October 2018

Financial audit work 2017-18 – City & County of Swansea Pension Fund

Activity	Scope	Status
Audit Plan	Plan of financial audit work for 2017-18.	Audit Committee March 2018.
Financial Statements/Annual Audit Letter	Audit of the Pension Fund's 2016-17 financial statements and Annual Audit Letter.	Audit Committee September 2018.

Financial audit work 2017-18 – City & County of Swansea

Activity	Scope	Status
Audit Plan	Plan of financial audit work for 2017-18.	Audit Committee March 2018.
Financial Statements 2017-18	Audit of the Council's 2017-18 financial statements.	Audit Committee and Council September 2018.
Certification of Grants and Returns 2017-18	Summary of grants and returns certification work 2017-18.	Planned Audit Committee January 2019.
Annual Audit Letter	Report summarising our 2017-18 financial audit work.	Planned Audit Committee January 2019.

Performance Audit work - City & County of Swansea

2017-18 Improvement Assessment	Scope	Status
Annual Improvement Report (AIR)	Annual report summarising the audit work undertaken in the last year which also includes a summary of the key findings from reports issued by 'relevant regulators'.	Reported, Audit Committee October 2018.
Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future	This review will examine the impact of the WFG Act on the work of scrutiny committees including PSB scrutiny, facilitating improvement and sharing of good practice.	Reported.
Service User Review	To gather evidence and insight into the extent to which services respond to the needs and expectations of service users both in their design and delivery.	Reporting. This work focused on the Council's housing tenants and supplemented the WHQS review below.
Housing/WHQS Local Project	To determine whether the Council has effective arrangements in place to enable it to engage with residents in meeting the WHQS by 2022.	Reporting.
Digital Risk	Diagnostic.	Reported.

2018-19 Improvement Assessment	Scope	Status
Corporate Improvement Plan Audit	Checks Council compliance with Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 requirement to set improvement objectives.	Certificate issued September 2018.
Corporate Reporting/Assessment of Performance Audit	Checks Council compliance with Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 requirement to publish a self-assessment of performance in the previous year by 31 October.	Not yet published by the Council
Annual Improvement Report (AIR)	Annual report summarising the audit work undertaken in the last year which also includes a summary of the key findings from reports issued by 'relevant regulators'.	Reporting in June 2019
Sustainable Swansea	Ongoing review and monitoring of the Council's change programme, providing real time challenge during the year.	Awaiting information from Council
WFG Examinations	<p>Examination of the extent to which the Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when taking steps to meet the following wellbeing objective:</p> <p>Tackling Poverty - Support individuals into employment via person centred projects eg. LIFT & Communities for Work & launch a new employability programme with a social recruitment model</p>	Fieldwork in progress
Assurance and Risk Assessment Review	Project to identify the level of audit assurance and/or where further audit work may be required in future years in relation to risks to the Council putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources.	Fieldwork in progress
Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements	Review of the effectiveness of corporate safeguarding arrangements building on the study previously undertaken by the Auditor General in this area.	TBA with Council

Leisure Services	Review of the arrangements the council has put in place to deliver leisure services building on the study previously undertaken by the Auditor General as part of the 'delivering with less' themed studies.	TBA with Council
2017-18 Local Government Studies	Scope	Status
Services to rural communities	The study will focus on whether local government uses its resources to deliver services that meet the needs of rural communities today and in the longer term.	Report to be published in November 2018.
Using data effectively	This study will seek to identify whether councils' corporate management arrangements for managing and using data are leading to better decision making in the use of resources. The study will collect information from all councils in Wales.	Drafting report, publication due in January 2019

2018-19 Local Government Studies	Scope	Status
<p>First point of contact assessments under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014</p>	<p>The Welsh Government introduced the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) which focuses on reforming and simplifying the law relating to social services. The 2014 Act introduced new duties for local authorities, local health boards and other public bodies and covers adults, children and their carers, and came into force on 6 April 2016. The study will review first point of contact and assessments for adult social care.</p> <p>Detailed fieldwork in five local authorities. We are planning to undertake fieldwork in Cardiff City Council, Denbighshire County Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Carmarthenshire County Council.</p>	<p>In progress, no detailed fieldwork taking place at City & County of Swansea</p>
<p>Tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence</p>	<p>In 2015 the Welsh Government passed the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act (the 2015 Act). The overarching objective of the 2015 Act is to improve the Public Sector response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence; provide a strategic focus on these issues; and ensure consistent consideration of preventative, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services. The review will focus on determining whether local authorities and their partners are effectively working together to prevent gender-based violence and domestic abuse, and protecting all of the people involved.</p> <p>Our fieldwork sites are the City & County of Swansea, Conwy County Borough Council, Flintshire County Council, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council, South Wales Police and South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>	<p>Fieldwork in progress at City & County of Swansea</p>

2018-19 Local Government Studies (continued)	Scope	Status
<p>Planning Services: Improving the wellbeing of Wales</p>	<p>Planning services are an important part of the democratic jigsaw that allows the detailed consideration of proposals to improve the economic prospects of the nation. Good planning decisions can have a positive impact on the wellbeing of people and places. Poor planning decisions can have a detrimental impact on people’s wellbeing and can stifle economic development. This study will provide independent assurance that planning authorities are supporting sustainable development and delivering for the future long-term wellbeing of their communities and for Wales.</p> <p>We are planning to undertake fieldwork in Bridgend County Borough Council, Gwynedd County Council, Newport City Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Ceredigion County Council.</p>	<p>Project set up and fieldwork progressing. No detailed fieldwork taking place at City & County of Swansea</p>

National Studies	Update and link to report
Waste management	Recycling module (clearance); waste prevention and waste treatment infrastructure modules (drafting).
Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities	Published in May 2018. Strategji Commissioning of Accommodation Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Primary Care Out of Hours Services	Published July 2018. Primary Care Out of Hours Services
Early intervention and public behaviour change	Drafting.
Welsh Government business finance	Published July 2018 Guide to Welsh Public Finances
Youth services	Drafting
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020	Drafting.
European Structural Funds Programme 2014-2020	Published August 2018 Managing the Impact of EU Structural Funds
Integrated Care Fund	Drafting
Care experienced children and young people – audit work to support ongoing Public Accounts Committee inquiry	Scoping.

Agenda Item 9



Report of the Chief Auditor

Audit Committee – 9 October 2018

Audit Committee – Action Tracker

Purpose:	This report details the actions recorded by the Audit Committee and response to the actions.
Report Author:	Simon Cockings
Finance Officer:	Simon Cockings
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

For Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 During the course of Audit Committee meetings various actions may be decided which are recorded on the minutes of the meetings.
- 1.2 As agreed in 2016/17 an Action Tracker process was put in place to ensure transparency over the outcomes of actions agreed by Committee.
- 1.3 The Action Tracker records the actions agreed by the Audit Committee and provides an outcome for each action.
- 1.4 The Action Tracker for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 municipal years are attached in Appendix 1 and 2.
- 1.5 The Action Tracker is regularly updated and any completed actions will be marked 'CLOSED' and coloured in grey.
- 1.6 The Action Tracker is reported to each Audit Committee meeting for information.

2. Equality and Engagement Implications

2.1 There are no equality and engagement implications associated with this report.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report

Background Papers: None

Appendix 1 – Action Tracker 2018/19

Appendix 2 – Action Tracker 2017/18

Appendix 1

AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION TRACKER 2018/19	
Action	Outcome
14/08/18 Min 31 – Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2017/18	
The Annual Report, with the suggested amendments in relation to the narrative in paragraph 9.4 (Risk Registers) be approved and presented to a future meeting of the Council	Suggested amendments were made to the Draft report, with the revised version being circulated to Members. The final version will be presented to Council later in the year. Date to be confirmed.
14/08/18 Min 32 – Audit Committee Performance Review 2017/18 Action Plan	
The approved action plan should be appended to the Audit Committee Workplan for the September and December meetings.	The approved Action Plan will be appended to the workplan at these meetings as requested to track implementation of the agreed actions.
14/08/18 Min 33 – Internal Audit Annual Report 2017/18	
The Chief Auditor to raise the need for a refresh of the PI's through the Welsh Chief Auditors Group. Chair requested that future year's Internal Audit Plans include reference to the Council's corporate priorities.	Next Welsh Chief Auditors Group meeting is due to take place at the end of October – PI's will be raised as an agenda item. Consideration will be given to reference the Council's corporate priorities in the 2019/20 Audit Plan.
17/07/18 Min 20 – Draft Annual Governance Statement 2017/18	
The Chair and Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence discuss amendments to the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2017/18. An amended version it to be circulated to Audit Committee. A special meeting should be called to approve the amended version if necessary.	Amended version of the AGS was distributed to Members on the 13/08/18. A special meeting was held on the 23/08/18 to review and discuss the amendments and to approve the AGS. - CLOSED
The Chair is to discuss the term 'sustainable savings' in the AGS with the Head of Financial Services & Service Centre.	The term 'Sustainable Savings' remains unchanged in the final version of the AGS. - CLOSED
17/07/18 Min 20 – Draft Statement of Accounts 2017/18	
A briefing note is to be provided to the Committee on the position of Charitable Trust Funds to provide clarity on why they are not included in the Statement of Accounts.	Chief Treasury & Technical Officer has been informed of this request and is due to discuss with the Chair.
26/06/18 Min 17 – Audit Committee Review of Performance 2017/18	
The Chair meets the Chief Executive to discuss the impact of the 31 high level risks identified and how the Authority is managing those risks.	The Chair is due to meet with the Chief Executive and The Chief Finance Officer on the 28/09/18.
The Committee resolved to attend an Audit Committee of another public body. Mid and West Wales Fire Authority was proposed and agreed. It was also proposed that the Chair and Vice Chair visit an Audit Committee of another Local Authority, with RCT CBC being proposed.	Arrangements are being made for the Chair and Vice Chair to attend a committee meeting at Cardiff Council. Visit due to take place 13 th November.
12/06/18 Min 5 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2017/18	
Deferred audits relating to governance and risk to be undertaken in Q1 or Q2 2018/19.	Committee have already been made aware that these two audits have been prioritised in Q1 & Q2. Both audits were started in Q1 and are underway. Results will be reported back to Committee via the Quarterly Report in due course. Audits are ongoing.

GDPR should be added to the 2018/19 audit programme and the Committee should be advised if the Council is GDPR compliant.	GDPR was already included on the 2018/19 audit programme following the consultation exercise and review of risk registers to inform the planning of the 18/19 audit plan. This has also been prioritised in Q1. Results of the audit will be reported back to Committee via the Quarterly Report in due course. Audit is ongoing.
12/06/18 Min 6 – Social Care Contracts Audit	
An update on the progress made in addressing the issues identified should be provided to Audit Committee at a later date.	Following meeting on the 14/08/18 at Committee's request, a representative from department is due to attend the December committee meeting to provide an update. Further update has been scheduled for April 2019.
12/06/18 Min 9 – 2016/17 Performance Review Update Report	
The Performance Review 2016/17 update report is to be discussed at the Special Audit Committee scheduled to take place on 26/06/18.	Issues identified were discussed and covered as part of the Performance Review on 26/06/18. CLOSED
12/06/18 Min 12 – Overall Status of Risk Report Q4 2017/18	
The Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager provides the Chair with access to the Risk Register.	Work is underway with ICT to facilitate this.

Appendix 2

AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION TRACKER 2017/18	
Action	Outcome
10/04/18 Min 73 – Work of Policy Development & Delivery Committees	
The Audit Committee be supplied with a written explanation of the roles of the Policy Development & Delivery Committees (PDC's) as well as their link with corporate objectives.	Chief Auditor sent e-mail to the Leader's PA on 18/06/18 requesting the information to be provided. An update report will be brought to committee at a future meeting. Email sent to Head of Democratic Services on 15/08/18 requesting update. Update report due to be presented to Committee on 09/10/18.
The Audit Committee be supplied with the end of year report for PDC's for the current Municipal year.	As above.
The Audit Committee be supplied with the structure/work plan for the next Municipal year for each PDC including expected outcomes and timelines.	As above.
10/04/18 Min 72 – Key Risks	
The Committee should have a flavour of the key risks of the Authority, particularly the impact of the 31 high risks identified. The Committee should be able to assess the significance of risks against the well-being objectives of the Council and the risks should be highlighted / made public.	
10/04/18 Min 77 – Internal Audit Plan 2018/19	
The Internal Audit Plan 2018/19 was approved subject to a few refinements to be discussed with the Chief Auditor and Chair. An amended Audit Plan to be provided at the next meeting of the Audit Committee.	Following discussions with the Chair it was agreed that the 2018/19 Audit Plan remain unchanged with any suggested revisions to be incorporated into future plans. CLOSED
10/04/18 Min 80 – Audit Committee Performance Review 16/17 Update	
An update is to be provided to Audit Committee on the actions arising from the 2016/17 Performance Review.	Update report provided at committee meeting 12/06/18. CLOSED
08/03/18 Min 67 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report – Moderate Reports	
The Chief Auditor is to write to all Heads of Service (HoS) and Directors to inform them of Committees decision to invite all HoS to attend the next Audit Committee Meeting to explain the action that will be taken to address any points arising in any moderate or limited assurance reports that have been presented to Committee as part of the Chief Auditor's Quarterly Monitoring Report. A summary e-mail outlining the new agreed process to be distributed to all Committee Members once the minutes of the meeting on the 08/03/18 have been published.	E-mail outlining the new process was sent to all HoS and Directors on 22/03/18 as requested. E-mail outlining the agreed new process was distributed to all Committee Members on 23/03/18. CLOSED

08/03/18 Min 67 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report – Moderate Reports	
On issuing a moderate or limited assurance audit report, the relevant Cabinet Member should also be included in the distribution list when the final report is issued.	The relevant Cabinet Member will be included in the distribution list for any moderate and limited assurance reports from 08/03/18. Principal Auditor has been instructed to ensure this is in place going forward. CLOSED
08/03/18 Min 68 – Amendments to Contract Procedure Rules	
Once the amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules have been finalised, a copy should be forwarded to all Schools' Governing Bodies to make them aware of the changes. Schools are also to be requested to ensure the amended CPRs are included as an agenda item on the next Finance Committee and Building/Property Committee Meeting.	Amended Contract Procedure Rules are currently going through a consultation process. Chief Auditor discussed proposed amendments with Head of Commercial Services on 30/07/18. Further e-mail sent to Head of Commercial Services on 20/08/18. Awaiting proposed amended version.
12/12/17 Min 53 – Good Governance When Determining Significant Service Changes	
The impact of the proposed cuts included in the 2018-19 budget and the potential impact upon the Internal Audit Section was discussed. It was resolved that the Chair, on behalf of the Audit Committee, writes to the Chief Executive highlighting concern regarding the potential impact of the proposed cuts on the Internal Audit Section.	Letter was sent to the Chief Executive on 20/12/17 as requested. Letter and response presented to Committee on 08/03/18 for information. – CLOSED
12/12/17 Min 56 – Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q2 17/18	
The appropriate Head(s) of Service are requested to attend the next scheduled meeting in order to update the Committee regarding the progress in respect of their moderate audit ratings.	As agreed at the meeting on the 08/03/18 those HoS that have received reports with moderate assurance ratings will be invited to attend the next committee meeting to explain how they are addressing the issues identified. Staggered invitations commenced from 10/04/18 meeting, and as they arise going forward. - CLOSED
26/09/17 – Procurement in Schools	
A meeting to be arranged with Procurement and Education representatives do discuss procurement issues at schools as identified in the Annual Report of School Audits. An update on Procurement is to be provided in the February meeting.	Meeting was held with representatives from Education, Procurement and Audit on 18/01/18. Feedback from the meeting provided to Audit Committee on 08/03/18. CLOSED
11/07/17 – Performance Review Development of the Audit Committee	
In relation to the Audit Committee Performance Review findings, the Chair of the Audit Committee is to investigate the possibility of reinstating regional working groups for Chairs/Audit Committee Members to consider joint training and benchmarking possibilities.	Due to the departure of the previous Chair, no action has been taken to date. This and other development actions will be picked up as part of the next Performance Review initially scheduled for June 2018 with the new Chair in post. - CLOSED
11/07/17 Min 16 – Draft Statement of Accounts	
The Section 151 Officer be requested to provide Committee with an update regarding the funding of reserves and overall good financial management.	Section 151 Officer is due to attend the December meeting to provide an update on the review of reserves and overall budget monitoring/control. - CLOSED
20/06/17 Min 5 – Work Programme	
A description to accompany items within the Work Programme be provided in future.	Standard agenda items have been highlighted in bold in the workplan. CLOSED

Agenda Item 10



Report of the Chief Auditor

Audit Committee – 9 October 2018

Audit Committee – Workplan 2018/19

Purpose:	This report details the Audit Committee Workplan to May 2019
Report Author:	Simon Cockings
Finance Officer:	Simon Cockings
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Audit Committee's Workplan to May 2019 is attached in Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The dates included for the meetings in 2018/19 are subject to approval by Council.

2. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 2.1 There are no equality and engagement implications associated with this report.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendix 1 – Audit Committee Workplan 2018/19

Appendix 2 – Performance Review 2017/18 Action Plan

Appendix 3 – Audit Committee Statement of Purpose

Audit Committee Workplan 2018/19

Terms of Reference	12 June 2018	26 June 2018 (Special)	17 July 2018	14 August 2018	11 September 2018	9 October 2018	11 December 2018	12 February 2019	9 April 2019
Training	Audit Committee Initial Training Risk Management		Financial Management & Accounting Governance	Internal Audit	External Audit	Counter Fraud			
Governance	Election of Chair & Vice Chair Audit Committee Training Programme 2018/19		*Draft Annual Governance Statement 2017/18	Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2017/18	AC Performance Review 17/18 Action Plan Update	Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee Update on work of PDC's	AC Performance Review 17/18 Action Plan Update	AC Performance Review 17/18 Action Plan Update	
Internal Audit	Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q4 2017/18 Performance Review 16/17 Action Plan Update Report			Internal Audit Annual Report 2017/18 Audit Committee Review of Performance 2017/18 Action Plan - Draft	Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q1 2018/19	Annual Report of School Audits 2017/18	Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q2 2018/19 Recommendation Tracker Report 2017/18 Social Care Contracts Update	Internal Audit Monitoring Report Q3 2018/19 Internal Audit Annual Plan Methodology Report 2019/20	Internal Audit Charter 2019/20 Internal Audit Annual Plan 2019/20 Social Care Contracts Update
Risk Management & Performance	WAO Proposals for Improvement Report – Six Month Update Overview of the Overall Status of Risk Report Q4 2017/18			Overview of the Overall Status of Risk Report Q1 2018/19			Overview of the Overall Status of Risk Report Q2 2018/19	WAO Proposals for Improvement Report – Six Month Update Overview of the Overall Status of Risk Report Q3 2018/19	Overview of the Overall Status of Risk Report Q4 2018/19
Counter Fraud					Corporate Fraud Annual Report 2017/18				Corporate Fraud Annual Plan 2019/20
External Audit		Audit Committee Review of Performance 2017/18			WAO ISA 260 Report 2017/18 – CCS WAO ISA 260 Report 2017/18 – Pension Fund	WAO Annual Improvement Report 2017/18 – CCS	WAO Annual Audit Letter 2017/18	WAO Grants Report 2017/18 WAO Annual Audit Plan 2018/19 CCS & Pension Fund	Audit Committee Review of Performance 2018/19
Financial Reporting			Draft Statement of Accounts 2017/18 - CCS Letters of Representation CCS & Pension Fund	Draft Statement of Accounts 2017/18 - Pension Fund		Trusts & Charities Update Report	Review of Reserves Report Treasury Management & Budgetary Control Update		

Note: Audit Committee Action Tracker Report and Audit Committee Workplan will be included as agenda items at each meeting. An update from WAO will also be on the agenda for each meeting

*Special Meeting held 23/08/18 to discuss and approve the amended Annual Governance Statement 2017/18

**KEY FINDINGS & PROPOSED ACTION PLAN
AUDIT COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2017/18**

Key Finding	Proposed Actions	Target Date	Progress Update 31/08/18
Assurance Framework – The Audit Committee needs clarity on the Council's Assurance Framework.	Audit Committee to be provided with a report that outlines the governance and assurance arrangements operating across the Council. Lead Office: Chief Executive	September 2018	Ongoing
Risk Register – The Audit Committee needs to see the detail behind the Corporate Risk Register.	Corporate Risk Register to be reported to Audit Committee at future meetings. Lead Officer: Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager	August 2018	Complete Committee received register details on 14/08/18.
Annual Governance Statement (AGS) – The Audit Committee would like to see the AGS separated from the Annual Accounts and a draft copy sent to them for comment prior to approval.	Annual Governance Statement received at the July 2018 meeting and comments made by members. The Chair also met with Officers after the meeting to highlight further queries. The Annual Governance Statement to be brought back to Audit Committee as a second draft. Lead Officer: Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence	September 2018	Complete AGS was presented to Committee separated from the Annual Accounts on 17/17/18. Amended version was distributed to Members on 13/08/18. Special Meeting was arranged to discuss and approve final amended version of the AGS on 23/08/18.
Benchmarking – The Chair has provided benchmarking detail to Internal Audit (from other Councils) but there are no plans to visit and meet with other Audit Committees: i) Consider how to best use this benchmarking information. ii) Consider visits to other audit committees to search for good practice.	The Corporate Management Team will consider this further and update the Audit Committee. The Chair has asked for arrangements to be made to visit Cardiff Audit Committee. Lead Officer: Head of Democratic Services	December 2018 September 2018	Ongoing Ongoing Cardiff Council has been approached and visit is being arranged.

Audit Committee Workplan 2018/19

Key Finding	Proposed Actions	Target Date	Progress Update 31/08/18
<p>Council Objectives – The Audit Committee would like to see the amount of over-run and deferred audits to be included in the AGS.</p>	<p>As noted above comments and queries will be progressed/actioned by the Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence and the Governance Group.</p> <p>Lead Officer: Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence</p>	September 2018	<p>Complete Amended version of the AGS included commentary to reflect this, as approved by Committee on 23/08/18.</p>
<p>Partnerships – Review the mechanisms for assessing and scrutinising the risk associated with partnerships.</p>	<p>Audit Committee to be provided with a report that outlines the mechanisms for assessing and scrutinising the risks associated with partnerships.</p> <p>Lead Officer: Chief Executive / Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence.</p>	December 2018	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Reporting – produce a programme of expected external reports for Audit Committee to receive.</p>	<p>Known expected external reports will be added to the Audit Committee Work Programme.</p> <p>Lead Officer: Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager.</p>	December 2018	<p>Ongoing Email sent to RR 16/08/18, expected by December.</p>
<p>Recommendations – produce a tracker for the recommendations that arise from the work of internal and external audit so that Audit Committee can effectively monitor progress.</p>	<p>Tracker for recommendations to be developed that will capture internal and external recommendations.</p> <p>To be discussed with Chief Auditor and Chief Finance Officer.</p> <p>Lead Officer: Chief Auditor, Chief Finance Officer</p>	December 2018	<p>Ongoing</p>

Audit Committee Workplan 2018/19

Key Finding	Proposed Actions	Target Date	Progress Update 31/08/18
<p>Wales Audit Office (WAO) escalation process – clarify the process the WAO uses to escalate actions when recommendations have not been completed.</p>	<p>WAO to explain the process at the next Audit Committee Meeting.</p> <p>Lead: Wales Audit Office</p>	<p>September 2018</p>	<p>WAO Response received 22/08/18 for discussion:</p> <p>There is no formal process as such. The process is to agree actions with service managers and directors. If we have any problems with agreement or progress we will escalate to the Chief Executive. If we still have issues we will then raise with the Audit Committee Chair Audit Committee.</p>
<p>Meeting with WAO – consider who should attend meetings with the WAO as external auditor (just the Chair or the whole committee).</p>	<p>To be discussed by Committee.</p> <p>Lead: Chair of the Audit Committee</p>	<p>September 2018</p>	<p>WAO Response received 22/08/18 for discussion:</p> <p>This is a decision for the Audit Committee although as a minimum we would expect at least an annual meeting with the Chair. We are happy to meet the Chair and the Committee or a combination of both during the year. As per comment above, if we feel it is necessary we will request an ad hoc meeting with the Chair or the full Audit Committee.</p>

Audit Committee Statement of Purpose

1. Our audit committee is a key component of the City and County of Swansea's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.
2. The purpose of our audit committee is to provide independent assurance to the members of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of the City and County of Swansea's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance, Risk and Control

3. To review the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework and consider annual governance reports and assurances.
4. To review the Annual Governance Statement prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances.
5. To consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
6. To consider the Council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.
7. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the Council.
8. To monitor progress in addressing risk related issues reported to the committee.
9. To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
10. To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption.
11. To monitor the counter fraud strategy, actions and resources.

Internal Audit and External Audit

12. To approve the internal audit charter and resources.
13. To consider the head of internal audit's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements.
14. To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
15. To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of internal audit services.
16. To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
17. To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
18. To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
19. To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.

20. To commission work from internal and external audit.

Financial Reporting

21. To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.

22. To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Accountability Arrangements

23. To report to full Council on a regular basis on the committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the committee is meeting its purpose.

Note: Audit Committee Statement of Purpose extracted from the Council Constitution (31.01.18).