



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Governance & Audit Committee

**At:** Remotely via Microsoft Teams

**On:** Tuesday, 12 October 2021

**Time:** 2.00 pm

**Chair:** Paula O'Connor

#### Membership:

Councillors: C Anderson, P M Black, D W Helliwell, T J Hennegan, P R Hood-Williams, O G James, J W Jones, M B Lewis, C E Lloyd, S Pritchard, J A Raynor, L V Walton and T M White

Lay Member: Julie Davies

**Watch Online:** <https://bit.ly/3kqvbVx>

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**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 9 November 2021 at 2.00 pm

*Huw Evans*

**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Tuesday, 5 October 2021**

**Contact: Democratic Services: - 636923**

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# Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the Special Governance & Audit Committee

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 24 August 2021 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Paula O'Connor (Chair) presided

### Councillor(s)

C Anderson  
T J Hennegan  
C E Lloyd  
L V Walton

### Councillor(s)

P M Black  
P R Hood-Williams  
S Pritchard  
T M White

### Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell  
J W Jones  
J A Raynor

### Lay Member

Julie Davies

### Also Present

Councillor R C Stewart – Leader of the Council

### Officer(s)

Simon Cockings  
Adam Hill  
Jeremy Parkhouse  
Ben Smith  
Debbie Smith

Chief Auditor  
Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources  
Democratic Services Officer  
Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer  
Deputy Chief Legal Officer

### Also Present

Jason Garcia                      Wales Audit Office

**Apologies for Absence:** None.

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## 20 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

## 21 Statement of Accounts 2020/21.

Ben Smith, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer presented the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 'for information' and review.

The Leader of the Council Paid tribute to the Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer and the financial staff for their work throughout the Covid 19 Pandemic and highlighted the budget surplus achieved during the 2020/21 financial year. The

Chair also echoed the comments of the Leader and stated that she had been kept very well informed of financial progress throughout the year.

It was outlined that the Draft Accounts for 2020/21 had been prepared and were signed by the Section 151 Officer on 27 May 2021. A copy was appended at Appendix 'A' to the report.

The Accounts had been formally presented to the Council's auditors, Audit Wales, who had completed the audit of the Accounts. As part of the audit process the Accounts were made available for inspection by the public for a four week period from 12 July to 6 August 2021.

The qualified audit opinion was noted and the technical reasons surrounding the decision were highlighted as follows: -

- The Authority had incorrectly recorded in its accounting records historical cost depreciation adjustments between its revaluation reserve (Note 22) and its capital adjustment account (Note 22) since at least 2011-2012 resulting in both being potentially materially misstated. The Council was currently analysing its accounting records to correct for this matter but to date, had been unable to quantify the full value of the misstatement.

Jason Garcia, Audit Wales added that the issue had first been reported 5 years ago and Audit Wales felt that the threshold level of £9m had been breached. Audit Wales had to assess that the accounts were materially correct but it was felt that the error was more than materiality and commented upon the current asset register system used by the Council, which had resulted in the asset management aspect not being effective. The system used was also very labour intensive.

As a result, Audit Wales were unable to determine the level of adjustment necessary to correct for the matter.

The Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer commented that it would be very difficult to overcome the issue with complete certainty and could possibly take up to 6 months to finalise matters with a mutually agreed estimate of the adjustment needed.

The Committee asked questions of the Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer, which were responded to accordingly.

It was noted that the Statement of Accounts were scheduled to be presented to Council on 2 September 2021.

## **22 Audit Wales - ISA 260 Report - City And County of Swansea.**

Jason Garcia, presented the draft Audit Wales Audit of Accounts Report – City and County of Swansea.

The significant effect of the COVID-19 pandemic upon the process was underlined and the considerable effort of the Council's accounts team who succeeded in doing so this year in the face of the challenges posed, was highlighted. The Council were able to produce the draft statement of accounts by 27 May 2021, which was well ahead of the statutory deadline. Audit Wales were extremely grateful to the professionalism of the team in supporting them to complete their audit in such difficult circumstances.

It was added that the pandemic had once again unsurprisingly affected the audit and Exhibit 1 outlined the main impacts and was provided for information. Audit Wales intended issuing a qualified audit opinion on this year's accounts once the Authority had provided the Letter of Representation based on Appendix 1. Audit Wales had material concerns about aspects of the accounts and outlined that the financial statements included unusable reserves and the background relating to the decision was provided.

The proposed Audit Report was provided at Appendix 2.

One misstatement was identified in the accounts that was above the trivial level which had been discussed with management but remained uncorrected. After discussions with Council officers, Audit Wales agreed that the value of the misstatement was not material and therefore the Council had not amended the financial statements. The misstatement related to donated personal protective equipment (PPE) received during 2020-21 that had not been accounted for and recognised in the financial statements. The value of PPE received totalled £2.018 million, of which some had been retained and used by the Council and some had been issued to third parties. The accounting requirements for these transactions were set out in the Code but the Council had omitted them from the financial statements. It should be noted that the impact of these transactions had a net nil effect on both the balance sheet and the comprehensive income and expenditure statement.

Appendix 3 provided the corrected misstatements, other significant issues were presented at Exhibit 2 and the recommendations arising from the audit were at Appendix 4.

It was noted that the report would be presented to Council on Thursday, 2 September 2021.

**23 Audit Wales - Financial Sustainability Assessment - City and County of Swansea Council.**

Jason Garcia, presented the Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Assessment – City & County of Swansea.

The report outlined what Audit Wales looked at and why. It was outlined that the Council was well placed to maintain its financial sustainability and planned to strengthen some aspects of its financial management.

It was added that the immediate impact of COVID-19 on the Council's financial sustainability had been mitigated by additional Welsh Government funding and Exhibit 1 provided the cost to the Council of COVID-19 over 2020-21.

The Council had revised both its transformation strategy document and medium-term financial plan which were supported by new governance arrangements and it Exhibit 2 noted that the Council had a total projected funding gap for the period 2022-23 to 2025-26 of £20.8 million.

The significant improvement in the level of useable reserves was highlighted and Exhibit 4 outlined the amount of overspend / underspend relative to total net revenue budget.

The report further stated that the Council had not monitored its savings during 2020-21, but planned to reintroduce revised monitoring processes in 2021-22 to help meet its future funding gap. The Council's liquidity position was sound, enabling it to meet its financial obligations when they fall due.

Exhibit 5 provided the savings delivered during the period 2016-17 to 2019-20 as a percentage of planned savings and Exhibit 6 provided the working capital ratio 2015-16 to 2019-20.

The Chair thanked the Audit Wales representative for the report and thanked Officers for keeping the Committee well informed throughout the financial year.

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm

**Chair**



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Governance & Audit Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 14 September 2021 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Paula O'Connor (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

P M Black  
J W Jones  
J A Raynor

**Councillor(s)**

D W Helliwell  
M B Lewis  
L V Walton

**Councillor(s)**

O G James  
S Pritchard  
T M White

**Lay Member**

Julie Davies

**Also Present**

Councillor R C Stewart – Leader of the Council

**Officer(s)**

Adrian Chard	Strategic Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager
Simon Cockings	Chief Auditor
Adam Hill	Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources
Tracey Meredith	Chief Legal Officer / Monitoring Officer
Helen Morgan-Rees	Director of Education
Martin Nicholls	Director of Place
Jeremy Parkhouse	Democratic Services Officer
Brian Roles	Head of Education Planning and Resources
Richard Rowlands	Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Ben Smith	Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Sian Williams	Head of Service Centre

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillors C Anderson and C E Lloyd.  
Jason Garcia (Audit Wales)

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**24 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: -

Councillors M B Lewis and T M White declared personal interests in Minute No.32 – Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22 – Monitoring Report for the Period 1 April to 30 June 2021 – as members of the Port Health Authority.

Councillors P M Black, J A Raynor and T M White declared personal interests in Minute No.27 – Education Directorate Internal Control Environment 2021/2022 – as schools governors.

Julie Davies declared a personal interest in Minute No.29 – Absence Management Audit Report 20/21 – as a former employee of the Authority.

## 25 Minutes.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 13 July 2021 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment: -

Minute No.12 – amend ‘2021-21’ to ‘2020-21’ in paragraphs two and three.

## 26 Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 1. (Richard Rowlands)

Richard Rowlands, Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager presented ‘for information’ the Quarter 1 2021/22 report which provided an overview of the status of Corporate Risk in the Council to provide assurance to the Committee that key risks were being managed in accordance with the Council’s risk management policy and framework.

The following summarised the status of risks recorded in the Corporate Risk Register as at Quarter 1 2021/22:

- There were 3 Red status risks in the Corporate Risk Register as at the end of Q1 2021/22:
  - Risk ID 153 – Safeguarding.
  - Risk ID 159 - Financial Control: MTFP aspects of Sustainable Swansea.
  - Risk ID 269 – Local economy and infrastructure.
- All of the Corporate risks were recorded as having been reviewed at least once during Quarter 1.
- No Corporate risks were deactivated.
- No risks were escalated to the Corporate Risk register.

The report at Appendix A includes the risks as at 01/09/21 recorded within the Council’s Corporate Risk Register. The reports for each risk included general explanatory information relating to their classification.

It was added that training specifically on Control Measures took place at Leadership Team (Directors, Heads of Service and some other senior managers) as planned on 25 May 2021. A video based on this had been created, uploaded and was directly accessible through the risk register along with all other videos provided on risk management and on using the risk register.

It was highlighted that the Chair had requested that Directors attend each quarter on a rotational basis and provide the Governance and Audit Committee with reports



regarding the internal control environment, including risk management and these will coincide with the quarterly risk reports going forward.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Last update dates on the Risk Register and the need for these dates to be updated quarterly to provide greater clarity / ensure they are being regularly checked.
- The Risk Register shows when the control measure was last updated and the proposed completion date. Risk owners are asked to check the risk on a monthly basis.
- Closed control measures – reasons for closing control measures / risk were recorded in the system.

**27 Education Directorate: Internal Control Environment 2021/2022. (Helen Morgan-Rees / Brian Roles)**

Helen Morgan-Rees, Director of Education and Brian Roles, Head of Education Planning & Resources, provided a 'for information' report which presented the Education Directorate control environment, including risk management, in place to ensure: functions were exercised effectively; there was economic, efficient and effective use of resources, and; effective governance to secure these arrangements.

A broad break down of the Education Portfolio Budget, key points to note, key elements of the assurance framework, key aspects of the Authority's oversight of schools financial arrangements, details of schools audit arrangements and key aspects of the Education Directorate's arrangements were outlined.

Details of risk management, business continuity, Performance management / KPI's, planning, decision making, budget and resources management were provided.

It was added that the assurance framework and robust internal controls set out in the report provided a solid foundation for the continuing promotion of an anti-fraud culture within the Education Directorate and for any matters of concern to be identified and confidently raised by staff. It also provided a solid foundation for ensuring compliance with policies, rules and regulatory requirements within the Directorate.

Programme and project level governance and risks associated with the Quality in Education (QEd) /21st Century Schools Programme were managed via mature programme and project risk management processes in line with corporate requirements and Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme grant conditions and gateway review recommendations. The governance arrangements were provided in Annex 3.

The report also highlighted key elements of internal controls, data security and partnership / collaboration governance.

Appendix A provided (Directorate) Corporate and Directorate Risks and Appendix B provided the updated (Directorate) Assurance Map.

The Committee asked a number of questions of the Officers, who responded accordingly. Discussions included the following: -

- Relevance of Grant / Capitol Bids 2010/11, how the process had remained unchanged since 2010/11 and the need to redact the years from the guidance notes.
- Schools opting out of the procurement Service Level Agreement (SLA), how schools are still provided with procurement advice and how the SLA was a trial based upon targeted enhanced advice.
- The move to thematic reviews of schools by Internal Audit.
- The improved position of school reserves.
- Schools planning ahead for more than one financial year.
- Closed schools cloud Oracle access and alternative options being actively pursued.
- The risks associated with school governors, particularly considering the enormous autonomy of schools and the continued need for an effective training programme / corresponding with school governors.
- Pupil attainment and achievement risk, how the Authority was achieving above expected levels, the continued need to maintain teaching and learning standards, ensuring that poor practice was being directly addressed and the requirement for the Education Directorate to explain the actions relating to this risk in more detail.
- The importance of schools adhering to procurement advice, future procurement support, how the procurement guide for schools was currently being updated and the provision of refresher training surrounding the updated guidance.
- The importance of schools obtaining best value with regards to procurement.
- New Regional Partnership arrangements and governance / risk management and the move to regional model / footprint for September 2021.
- The potential three tier audit arrangements of the new Regional Partnership.

The Chair thanked the Officers for providing a detailed Education Directorate review.

## **28 Update Report South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee. (Martin Nicholls)**

Martin Nicholls, Director of Place presented a 'for information' report which provided the Governance & Audit Committee with an update on the current status and progress in relation to the new South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC).

The background to how Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 established corporate joint committees was outlined. Appendix A provided the Cabinet report approved on 20 May 2021 which outlined the requirements for composition, membership, and meetings.

The Governance of the CJC, particularly the co-option of members and the organisation of sub-committees was provided. In addition details of key activities / milestones, legal activities, delivery mechanism, priorities, financial milestones, CJC meetings, governance and audit requirements were outlined.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Governance & Audit and Scrutiny arrangements.
- Funding arrangements, Welsh Government funding support for transitional areas, agreeing a draft budget / levy.
- How the four authorities within the region were working well together, on an equal basis.
- Purdah rules surrounding CJC's.

Councillor R C Stewart, Leader of the Council added that the four authorities involved had established good working relationships working on the City Deal and he emphasised the requirement for strong leadership with regards to each of the CJC work streams. He also highlighted the need for additional Welsh Government funding, to prevent the additional financial burden being placed upon the authorities involved.

**29 Absence Management Audit Report 20/21. (Sian Williams / Adrian Chard)**

Sian Williams, Head of Service Centre and Adrian Chard, Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager provided a 'for information' update report on progress made following the Internal Audit assurance level of moderate given in 2020 in respect of Absence Management.

The update report addressed the 1 High Risk (HR) and 4 Medium Risks (MR) and additional work and progress made. Appendix A provided the Sickness Management Compliance Trend Analysis.

It was highlighted that progress had been made in respect of 4 risks and an alternative solution put forward regarding the risk surrounding the Interflex system.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- The effect of the Covid 19 Pandemic upon figures, particularly return to work interviews.
- Support and guidance provided by Human Resources staff to provide transparency.
- The involvement of Trade Unions in staff matters.

The Chief Auditor stated that a follow-up review would take place at the end of September 2021 and would be include in his Quarter 2 report.

The Chair commented that the report showed that progress was being made and the number of absence days was 5.9% which was not a cause for concern. She requested that a further progress report be made in February 2022.

**30 Service Centre – Accounts Receivable Update. (Sian Williams / Michelle Davies)**

Sian Williams, Head of Service Centre and Michelle Davies, Cash Management & Accounts Receivable Manager provided an update report for the Service Centre, Accounts Receivable Function.

Progress made since the Committee meeting in June 2021 was outlined and summarised in detail.

The introduction of new staff members was highlighted and the progress made by the team since they commenced.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Targeted debt recovery actions in the period June to August 2021 and how the figures were a snapshot of results on the day the report was prepared.
- Obtaining route cause analysis of debts to understand the reasons for the debts and the checking process undertaken prior to debts being referred to Legal.
- The improvement of Departments in the process and the positive feedback being received and how using Microsoft Teams had assisted with the improvements.

The Chair thanked the Officers for providing the update report. She added that the Service were scheduled to provide quarterly reports to Scrutiny and Corporate Management Team (CMT) and proposed that the next update be provided after the report to CMT.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) the Governance and Audit Committee notes that officers will continue to report to CMT on a quarterly basis as a further update on the debt position across the authority.
- 2) the Committee be provided with an update report following the quarterly report to CMT.

**31 Lay Members on the Governance & Audit Committee. (Huw Evans)**

Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer present a report on behalf of the Head of Democratic Services which sought to comply with Part 6 Chapter 2 “Governance & Audit Committees: Membership and Proceedings” of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 by ensuring that the membership of the Governance & Audit Committee shall consist of one third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) Lay Members.

It was outlined that the Governance & Audit Committee currently comprised 15 Members (13 Councillors & 2 Lay Members). The Committee needed to consider its new size and the implication that  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Committee would be Lay Members.

A table provided outlined the Political & Lay Member representation on the Committee based on differing Committee sizes. The Committee were asked to review the table and to recommend their preferred Committee size to Council.

The Chief Legal Officer noted that Audit Wales had suggested that smaller Committee sizes were beneficial. It was also noted that the more lay members required, the more difficult it may be to recruit.

The Committee queried the effectiveness of the process to appoint the current lay members onto the Committee. The Chair highlighted that the Council had followed sound and robust processes when appointing the two current Lay Members. She stressed that both positions had been widely advertised, the Authority had circulated appropriate packs to candidates, who had to undertake a robust appointment procedure at interview.

The Committee discussed and considered the options available and three separate proposals were made that the membership consists of 15, 12 and 9.

**Resolved** that the preferred Committee membership of 15 (10 Councillors and 5 lay members) be recommended to Council for approval.

**32 Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22 Monitoring Report for the Period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021. (Simon Cockings)**

Simon Cockings, Chief Auditor presented a detailed report which showed the audits finalised and any other work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section during the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021.

A total of 21 audits were finalised during the quarter. 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. Appendix 2 provided a summary of the scope of the reviews finalised during the period.

An analysis of the assurance levels of the audits finalised was given and a total of 109 audit recommendations were made and management agreed to implement all of the recommendations. An analysis of the recommendations agreed during the quarter was also provided.

It was explained that due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, access to the majority of Council sites had been restricted. This had a significant impact on the Audit Team's ability to complete on-site testing and would continue to do so until restrictions were lifted. It was also explained that the Team were unable to undertake some audit visits due to staff being unable to access some sites, e.g. schools.

The Committee were updated regarding the grant and additional work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section during the period. Information was also provided in relation to staff sickness and other work undertaken by team members outside of their planned duties.

An analysis of the details in Appendix 3 showed that at 30/06/21, 19 audit activities from the 2021/22 audit plan had been completed to at least draft report stage (15%), with an additional 30 audits in progress (23%). As a result, approximately 42% of the

Audit Plan had either been completed or was in progress. No moderate audit reports were issued in the quarter.

It was explained that no follow-ups were completed during the period. It was highlighted that the follow-up of the Management of Absence audit had been scheduled to be completed in quarter two. The follow up of the Grand Theatre audit was also scheduled to be completed later in the financial year once the Theatre reopened. However, it was suggested that the Committee invited the Head of Cultural Services to provide an update on the progress made towards the end of quarter three or early in quarter four.

A Corporate Fraud Function update was also provided.

The Committee discussed the following: -

- Extending / amending the timescales within the Corporate Fraud Action Plan Update due to several being missed and the challenging workload of the Corporate Fraud Team and the update report which would be provided during the next quarter.
- Concern regarding the details provided on the Vulnerable Learner Service, the reassurance provided and the need for appropriate action to be taken.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) the Governance & Audit Committee Members notes the information contained in this report.
- 2) the Head of Cultural Services provides the Committee with an update report at the meeting scheduled for 12 January 2022.

### **33 Internal Audit Recommendation Follow-Up Report - Quarter 1 2021/22. (Simon Cockings)**

The Chief Auditor presented a 'for information' report which provided the Committee with the status of the recommendations made in those audits where the follow-up's has been undertaken in Quarter 1 2021/22, which allowed the Audit Committee to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by Internal Audit. Appendix 1 provided a summary of the recommendations accepted and implemented. Appendix 2 provided details of recommendations not implemented.

It was highlighted that from the 122 recommendations made, 120 had been implemented, providing a 98.4% implementation rate. It was added that the 2 outstanding recommendations were low risk.

### **34 Audit Committee Action Tracker Report. (For Information) (Jeremy Parkhouse)**

The Governance & Audit Committee Action Tracker was reported 'for information'.

The Committee discussed the following items: -

- Minute No.41 – 19/02/21 - Overview of the Overall Status of Risk - Quarter 3 2020/21 – Ongoing Training.

The Chair requested that the status of the item be changed from closed to open following the discussions at Committee.

Status – Ongoing.

- Minute No.9 – 09/06/2021 – Tracking Audit Wales Recommendations

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that other local authorities had been contacted regarding the systems they utilised. A new system was planned which would allow accurate monitoring in the future and the Committee would be updated regarding progress in due course.

Status – Ongoing.

- Minute No.111 – 30/06/2020 – Local Transport Plan

Following the update regarding Corporate Joint Committee's (CJC), the work surrounding the Local Transport Plan would be completed / monitored by the South West Wales CJC.

Status – Closed.

- Reports of the Chief Auditor on future agendas

Councillor L V Walton highlighted that the reports of the Chief Auditor had slipped down recent agendas. The Committee discussed the issue and requested that the reports of the Chief Auditor are listed early on future agendas.

Status – Ongoing.

### **35 Audit Committee Work Plan. (For Information) (Jeremy Parkhouse)**

The Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan was reported 'for information'.

The Chair stated that the new areas of work identified in the new terms of reference needed to be built into the Work Plan.

The meeting ended at 12.04 pm

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 4



## Report of the Director of Resources

Governance and Audit Committee – 12 October 2021

### Employment of Agency Staff Audit Report 2019/20 - 2021 Update

<b>Purpose:</b>	To report on actions arising from the Employment of Agency Staff Audit report.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Adrian Chard, Strategic HR&OD Manager
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Janet Morgan
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar
<b>For Information</b>	

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a result of an internal audit on the Employment of Agency Staff carried out in 2019/20, an assurance level of “Moderate” was given.
- 1.2 Actions have been taken to address the issues identified and appropriate implementation steps put in place.
- 1.3 At the June 2021 Governance and Audit Committee Meeting it was “resolved that the Strategic Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager provide an update report to the Committee meeting scheduled for 12 October 2021 which addresses the issues raised by the Committee as follows;
  - *The increase in the number of agency workers being used and how the figures provided were a snapshot in time;*
  - *The overall aim being to reduce agency worker costs through offering traineeships;*
  - *Reduction in contract spend with companies providing agency workers;*
  - *Providing details of full-time equivalent posts in order to establish the total spend / average hourly rates which will highlight the number of full-time equivalent staff required;*



- *Frontline services offering full-time positions as opposed to hiring agency workers and providing a breakdown of costs involving agency workers;*
- *Why permanent cover was being provided in the Central Transport Unit by agency workers, not employed staff and how similar pockets had been identified across the Council which were being addressed;*
- *The Agency Worker Policy being a strategic policy, whereby any operational matters would have to be addressed by specific service areas / departments;*
- *The fact that school workers were not included in the figures provided and in future including those details in figures provided;*
- *Internal Audit undertaking detailed work around service areas who have a high usage of agency workers and to focus upon sickness / absence rates in those areas;*
- *The possibility of Scrutiny investigating the topic further, particularly the Workforce Working Group in order to provide additional assurance;*
- *The Agency Workers Policy being robustly complied with throughout the Authority in order to drive down sickness absence, costs and to provide assurance.*

## **2. Recent Actions Undertaken Since June 2020**

- 2.1 An email was issued in Spring 2021 to members of the Corporate Management Team reminding Managers to ensure that they comply with the Agency Worker Policy.
- 2.2 Following due consultation, a revised Agency Worker Policy has now been agreed at JCC and will act as a platform for further engagement with Managers on the engagement of Agency Workers in their respective areas.
- 2.3 HR&OD continue to send regular reminders to Managers to review the engagement of agency workers who have been engaged for over 12 months and Managers are required to confirm that it is still appropriate for the Council to engage an agency worker rather than employ someone in the post.
- 2.4 In relation to “*contract spend with companies providing agency workers*”, a competitive re-tender exercise for the provision of Agency Services is underway and has been advertised openly on Sell2Wales. This is currently at evaluation stage. Value for money considerations such as rates offered forms part of the assessment criteria in tender evaluation and award. Officers are progressing with the evaluation and are working towards a new contract award and commencement by 1st April 2022.

### 3. Agency Worker Numbers

Total number of Agency Workers engaged through the corporate contracted agencies (Staffline and RSD Social Care), and reflecting the Governance and Audit Committee request are now detailed monthly as follows;

		Mar -20	Mar -21	Apr -21	May -21	Jun -21	Jul -21	Aug -21
<b>Place</b>	Corporate Building Services	0	1	7	6	6	6	0
	Cultural Services	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Highways & Transportation	18	10	10	11	11	11	10
	Housing & Public Health	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Planning and City Regen	0	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Property Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Waste, Parks & Cleansing	138	149	154	159	159	165	168
	<b>Place Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>Social Services</b>	Adult Services	4	2	2	2	2	13	15
	Child & Family Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Resources</b>	Digital and Transformation	0	1	1	2	2	1	1
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>198</b>

### 3.2 Agency Worker Cost

Total spend/cost of Agency Workers for 2020/21 was £4,300,381.

The monthly spend for 2021/22 so far, is as follows;

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Grand Total
Ace Social Work Ltd		£ 840.00		£ 6,925.00		£ 7,765.00
Aled Simons				£ 960.00		£ 960.00
Beverly Goold	£ 2,766.73	£ 1,314.13	£ 1,357.93	£ 1,357.93	£ 1,314.13	£ 8,110.85
Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd	£ 15,085.70	£ 17,387.28	£ 7,698.65	£ 9,466.54	£ 7,129.46	£ 56,767.63
Manpower UK Ltd	£ 1,898.37	£ 2,524.05	£ 1,791.72	£ 1,997.91	£ 2,630.70	£ 10,842.75
Prospero Group Ltd		£ 6,051.22				£ 6,051.22
RSD Technology Ltd	£ 5,590.16	£ 4,132.56	£ 6,780.01	£ 72,521.25	£ 8,837.36	£ 97,861.34
Staffline Group Plc T/A Select Appointments Ltd	£ 292,499.06	£ 303,722.22	£ 375,886.10	£ 299,779.26	£ 299,077.44	£ 1,570,964.08
Steddy Ltd				£ 801.35	£ 4,331.46	£ 5,132.81
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£ 317,840.02</b>	<b>£ 335,971.46</b>	<b>£ 393,514.41</b>	<b>£ 393,809.24</b>	<b>£ 323,320.55</b>	<b>£ 1,764,455.68</b>

The largest total spend this year is with Staffline (c£1.57 million) and RSD (c£98 thousand). The above figures also include provision for consultancy work,

primarily in Social Services and the provision of the Welsh Government Social Care Bonus.

Further analysis of these costs have identified small numbers of agency workers engaged via non- corporate contracted agencies. There is 1 FTE in the Baling Plant (via Manpower UK Ltd), where consideration will be given to an alternative employment model. In addition, in Social Services, there was less than 1 FTE (via Prospero Group) that was used for support staff cover for emergency placements in Rhossili in May, and less than 1 FTE for provision of cover in Domiciliary Services to ensure continuity of service in those key areas during July and August.

#### **4. Compliance**

Heads of Service were contacted to feedback on the compliance measures indicated in the Audit Report as follows:

- Confirmation of budget provision should be obtained and retained for all agency staff appointments.
- HoS approval should be obtained and retained for all appointments of agency workers by line managers.
- Confirmation of appropriate pre-employment checks should be obtained from the Agency and retained by the line manager.
- Confirmation of further budgetary provision should be obtained and retained when agency workers contracts are extended
- Written requests should be submitted to HoS for re-approval when agency workers contracts are extended. This should be in advance of the contract being extended.
- Agency workers engaged by the Council for more than 12 weeks should be made aware that they are entitled to equal treatment on basic working and employment conditions.

#### **5. Social Services Directorate Feedback:**

The Directorate is compliant in all areas. A Senior Manager has also been identified to lead on all workforce planning activities including the engagement of Agency Workers.

There has been an increase in Agency Worker numbers engaged via RSD in July and August, twelve of which have been engaged to cover for sickness due to Covid in key areas that required continuity of care. However, this only equates to 81.75 hrs during the month of August.

A Sickness Absence Officer has now been appointed on a permanent basis to support the management of sickness in the Directorate, including the areas identified above where sickness has been an issue in the engagement of Agency workers.

## 6. Place Directorate Feedback;

### 6.1 Waste, Parks and Cleansing:

Confirmation has been received that this Service area continues to remain compliant in all areas.

The reasons for use of Agency Workers in this service area are as detailed in the following table;

Reason for use of Agency Resource	Average daily agency FTE (August 2021)	Average Daily agency FTE (May 2021)
Additional garden waste collections where use of seasonal contracts has proved unsuccessful – runs until Oct/Nov	9 (Collections)	9
Additional temporary cleansing operatives employed at short notice through additional temporary funding	4 (cover for Seasonal Beach Cleaner pull outs)	4
Cover for sickness and holiday absences where full complement of staff is essential	30.5 (Collections, Baling Plant, Cleansing)	24
Working on temporary sorting line – due to end Nov	9 (Baling Plant)	9
Working on other temporary roles where temporary contracts are not suitable eg unknown duration of funding	6 (Hedgerow Team, Ward Operatives, TU cover)	6
Covering positions considered temporary until service reviews determine otherwise eg recovery of recyclables	8 (Baling Plant, KRO)	8
Covering permanent positions yet to be filled	31 (Collections, Baling Plant, Cleansing)	31
Covering temporary positions due to Covid	3 (Collections, Baling Plant)	20
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>100.5</b>	<b>111</b>

From the above information, there are 31 current permanent vacancies in Waste, Parks, & Cleansing being covered by agency staff. This will reduce to circa 11 by this time next year, and then to virtually zero through the 2023 Traineeship.

To address areas where Agency workers have previously been engaged to cover permanent roles, 64 new permanent roles have been recruited into since 2017, including 41 through traineeships.

An additional 10 Trainees have recently been recruited, and it is intended that a further 10 trainees will be recruited early in 2022.

Confirmation of budget provision is obtained and retained for fixed term placements. There is an allocated budget in Waste Management to cover an agency requirement to maintain the staffing structures required to provide the service every day. Budget allocation is gradually moving from the Agency line into the Staffing line year on year as we reduce reliance on agency through traineeships.

HoS approval is obtained and retained for fixed term placements. There is ongoing approval to request agency resources on a daily basis to ensure that the staffing levels meet the requirements to deliver the service on a daily basis. Some of these requirements are not known until 6am on the day, due to last minute 'no shows'. The new draft of the Agency Policy reflects this.

Confirmation of appropriate pre-employment checks is obtained from the Agency and retained by the line manager for fixed term placements. This is not achievable where there is an agency requirement to maintain the staffing structures required to provide the service every day. The new draft of the Agency Policy reflects this.

Confirmation of further budgetary provision is obtained and retained when agency workers contracts are extended for fixed term placements. Agency worker placements are not fixed term where there is an agency requirement to maintain the staffing structures required to provide the service every day.

Written requests are submitted to HoS for re-approval when fixed term placement contracts are extended. Agency worker placements are not fixed term where there is an agency requirement to maintain the staffing structures required to provide the service every day.

Agency workers engaged by the Council for more than 12 weeks are made aware by their Agency that they are entitled to equal treatment on basic working and employment conditions.

## **6.2 Highways & Transportation**

Confirmation has been received that this Service area is compliant in all areas. None of the agency worker roles are related to sickness Cover in this service area.

The Head of Service has advised that there is currently a full-time agency worker for a nine month period in the Highway Maintenance team. Consideration will be given to consider whether a different employment model would be appropriate in this case.

There are two full-time agency workers currently in the Integrated Transport Unit. These posts are being advertised to replace current agency staff and one other vacant.

There are two full-time agency workers in Traffic/Car Parking. One post has now been identified as a Council position and is out to advertisement. Approval is also now being sought to convert another agency worker role as a Council position.

In traffic and car parking, there are two full-time agency workers, and further consideration will be given to the appropriate employment model for these roles. There are also an additional two Quantity Surveyors equivalent to 1 FTE. These are employed as Agency Workers due to market conditions. Attempts have been made previously to appoint into a Council position and further consideration will be given to recruiting into this role.

### **6.3 Management of Absence in Place Directorate**

A Management of Absence post has recently been appointed into to make further inroads to reduce sickness absence levels in the Directorate and this will include supporting in areas where Agency workers have been engaged to cover for sickness absence.

Monthly meetings are held with relevant SMTs/Senior Managers. Advice and guidance is given on each case including application of policy, Fit Notes, welfare/keeping in touch meetings, referrals to OH/SMAC, OH reports, return to work, phased returns/adjusted duties and referral to Final Absence Review Meetings if appropriate.

## **7. Education Directorate; Agency / Supply Workers in Schools**

### **7.1 Background**

The use of agency workers is very limited within the Education Directorate outside of schools, as would be expected in view of the high proportion of the Directorate budget that is directly delegated (more than 81% currently). The most significant area of cost by far (more than 84%) is in relation to Maes Derw (Pupil Referral Unit) which is effectively a school, albeit without a delegated budget. Other areas of cost are very small as apparent from the following table:

Where the short term exceptional use of agency workers is required, the compliance measures indicated in the Audit Report are followed in respect of ensuring appropriate budget provision and approvals as well as confirmation of appropriate pre-employment checks. Such measures are of course part of a wider robust assurance and internal control framework within the Directorate.

A Management of Absence post has recently been appointed to address the scale of pressures facing the catering and cleaning services and further mitigate sickness absence levels in the Directorate. Early signs are encouraging and it is hoped that it will be possible to extend this support.

## 7.2 Agency and Supply Workers in Schools

The Governance and Audit Committee requested further information on the governance of Agency and Supply Workers in Schools, specifically:

- Numbers and cost of agency/ supply workers across schools for 2020/21 and 2021/22 to date.
- Areas of compliance/ non-compliance against the WG Framework for Agency Workers
- Any other information that you believe would be relevant to present to the Governance and Audit Committee.

Arrangements in Schools:

As recognised in the WG Framework, schools are free to engage qualified supply teachers from wherever they feel appropriate to meet the needs of their school (under local management of schools framework as outlined in the Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2006).

This might be through direct employment; LA supply lists; employing a supernumerary/floating teacher (as an individual school or collaborating with other schools); or using a commercial supply agency.

The Supply Agency Framework came into effect on 1 August 2019 and there are 19 local providers for Swansea. Under the framework, there is no need for schools to undertake procurement checks and there is a minimum pay of the bottom of the teacher pay scale for workers.

Schools have, and continue to be advised about the advantages of using a framework agency, including (as recognised in the WG Framework):

- Assurances that all qualification, suitability and DBS checks have been undertaken.
- All framework agencies must be a member of a relevant professional recruitment body.
- The Code of Practice for Ethical Employment in Supply Chains and Welsh Government Fair Work principles are supported.
- A minimum daily pay rate for supply teachers; in line with the current School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and the role being undertaken.
- Agency daily fees made available to schools and local authorities providing schools with clarity in terms of how much goes to the teacher and how much to the agency supporting delegated budget decisions.
- Temporary to permanent fees are transparent and are on a sliding scale depending on how long the teacher has been placed at the school.
- Agency supply teachers will receive free and relevant professional learning and all newly qualified teachers will have the relevant support to meet induction.

Scale and Compliance:

Schools in Swansea have their own bank accounts and powers for appointment. Supply staff can either be appointed via an agency, who will be paid on receipt of an invoice or schools can appoint cover directly where the member of staff is then paid via our payroll system. The schools use a separate financial system (FMS) to

the remainder of the authority who use Oracle. Schools financial information is interfaced monthly into Oracle and it is not possible to determine the number of staff employed for cover either through supply agencies or those paid on our payroll system. The inclusion of schools in any future developments in relation to corporate Oracle systems would clearly assist in this, besides improving resilience and enhancing the efficiency of financial processes.

As explained above, it is not practical nor meaningful to provide staff numbers (this would need to come directly from each school by collating the detail from each invoice) as schools are seeking to cover specific sessions and days when required rather than on a full time or consistent basis.

The work involved in obtaining and collating the cost information from each school is significant but it has been possible, with the support of officers within Finance, to capture the details that are set out in the table below:

Most agencies used by schools (and costs incurred) are under the Framework and as such, should be compliant. A small number of agencies have been engaged that are not on the Framework. We cannot direct schools to only use particular agencies although the schools concerned would not then benefit from the advantages of using an agency on the Framework. Nevertheless, the fact that 93.3% of payments have been made to agencies on the Framework should provide significant assurance. In respect of the remaining 6.3% of payments to agencies not on the supply framework, the schools may well have performed all relevant checks themselves.

Schools will also be bringing in supply that they pay via payroll, or increasing the hours of their part time staff to cover absences. We have no way of identifying these costs without going to individual schools to request the information.

Consideration will be given to resurrecting the central supply register. This has not previously been considered appropriate but the issue has been raised again recently by head teachers.

## **8. Other Service areas**

Compliant in all areas.

## **9. Role of Staffline**

Staffline provide the following support to work in partnership with the Council to ensure compliance;

- Provision of a policy booklet to all Agency Workers which provides details on Agency Workers Regulations and their rights.
- Maintaining a record of all start dates of all Agency Workers.
- After 12 weeks, move workers to the enhanced pay rate and enhanced rights.



## **10. Integrated Assessment Implications**

10.1 There are no direct implications associated with this report.

## **11 Financial Implications**

11.1 There are no financial implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

## **12. Legal Implications**

12.1 The Agency Workers Regulations Act 2010 provide important rights for agency workers, concerning their basic working and employment conditions, from day one and after a 12-week qualifying period. These rights are reflected in our Policy.

12.2 There are no other legal implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Appendices:** None.

# Agenda Item 5



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Governance & Audit Committee – 12 October 2021

### Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21 & Scrutiny Work Programme (For Information)

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report supports the development of a strong relationship between Scrutiny and the Governance & Audit Committee by providing the recently published Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21 and information about the current Scrutiny Work Programme.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Council Constitution
<b>Consultation:</b>	Legal, Finance and Access to Services
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Cridland
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Catherine Window

#### 1. Scrutiny Work Programme

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's scrutiny work programme, and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- 1.2 The broad aim of the scrutiny function is to engage non-executive councillors in activities:
  - provide an effective challenge to the executive
  - help improve services, policies and performance
  - engage the public in its work

- 1.3 The Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of scrutiny time and resources. It also needs to be:
- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
  - relevant to Council priorities
  - adding value and having maximum impact
  - coordinated and avoids duplication
- 1.4 A range of scrutiny activity is carried out, either by the Committee or informal Panels (for in-depth scrutiny) or Working Groups (one-off meetings) established by the Committee. The Scrutiny Programme Committee maintains an overview of agreed scrutiny activities to ensure that the work programme is delivered effectively, and co-ordinate work as necessary.
- 1.5 Scrutiny communicates findings, views and recommendations for improvement from its activities through chair's letters to Cabinet Members, and where appropriate by producing reports for Cabinet, for response as necessary.
- 1.6 All Scrutiny meetings are accessible to the public. Agendas, reports, letters relating to all scrutiny activities will be published on the Council's modern.gov online platform:  
<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

## **2. Developing the Relationship between Scrutiny and the Governance & Audit Committee.**

- 2.1 The Council has long recognised the relationship between Scrutiny and Audit and need for:
- mutual awareness and understanding of the each other's work
  - respective work plans to be coordinated and avoid duplication / gaps
  - clear mechanism for referral of issues, if necessary
- 2.2 It is important that there is:
- clarity between the core roles of both functions
  - regular conversations about Committees' work programmes, and responsibilities
  - a way to ensure that issues can be passed between Committees, avoiding duplication

- 2.3 Action already taken as part of this process:
- i) Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee / Convener of Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel copied into Governance & Audit Committee agendas and vice versa, for information.
  - ii) Work Programme / Work Plans published, at least annually, in each other's agenda for information.
  - iii) Respective Chairs speaking, at least annually, at each other's Committee meeting on their work and the relationship between Scrutiny and Audit.
  - iv) Governance & Audit Committee chair invited to participate in the Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference.
  - v) Chairs raise any issues re. coordination / duplication on ongoing basis
  - vi) Where matters to be referred from Governance & Audit Committee chair writes letter to chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee, and vice versa.
- 2.4 The relationship benefits from a number of councillors sitting on both Committees, including the current Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee which is advantageous.
- 2.5 To facilitate the discussion the following papers are provided to the Governance & Audit Committee:
- Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21 (**Appendix 1**)
  - Current Scrutiny Work Programme, showing work being carried out through various Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups (**Appendix 2**)
  - the work plan of the Scrutiny Programme Committee itself (**Appendix 3**)
  - the work plans of Scrutiny Performance Panels, which provide in-depth monitoring and challenge for clearly defined service areas (**Appendix 4**)
- 2.6 The Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee has been invited to attend the Scrutiny Programme Committee meeting on 19 October.
- 3. Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21**
- 3.1 Every year Council requires that an annual report is produced for the work of scrutiny for the previous municipal year.
- 3.2 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
- 3.3 The Annual Report looking back at 2020-21 was presented to Council on 2 September.

## **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

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

4.2 There are no impact assessment implications associated with this report.

## **5. Financial Implications**

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

## **6. Legal Implications**

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

**Background papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21

Appendix 2: Current Scrutiny Work Programme

Appendix 3: The Scrutiny Programme Committee Work Plan

Appendix 4: Scrutiny Performance Panel Work Plans



# Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21



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### **Appendices:**

1 - Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report



## 1. Chair's Foreword

*Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee*



I am proud to present the fourth annual report of this Council term, as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. This report covers the work of scrutiny between October 2020 and May 2021.

It has been another challenging year for the Council and has included living with the COVID pandemic. I am pleased to say that scrutiny activity has continued to be responsive and flexible taking into account pressures on the organisation. As a consequence of the pandemic the 2020/21 Council year was a short one, therefore the amount of scrutiny activity is not that of a typical council year, making comparison with other years less meaningful.

Scrutiny remains a vital part of local democracy and good governance. The work covered by this report ensures the Council remains accountable and transparent, effective and efficient. Questioning and providing challenge to decision-makers also helps the Council to achieve its objectives and drive improvement.

We have continued to conduct all scrutiny meetings on-line via Microsoft Teams, which has proved to be no less effective in carrying out our work.

Our report focuses on how scrutiny has made a difference in Swansea, and our efforts to support continuous improvement and good practice.

Measuring the performance of scrutiny in a meaningful way is not particularly easy, however we have taken a 'results based' approach to tell you about:

- How much scrutiny we carried out
- How well we did it
- How scrutiny impacted on the business of the Council
- What the outcomes of scrutiny were

We hope that this report provides you with assurance and confidence that councillors involved in scrutiny are contributing to better services, policies and decision making in Swansea.

Finally, I would like to give my thanks to all of the councillors who have led or participated in scrutiny over the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Black', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Councillor Peter Black

## 2. Swansea Scrutiny Results Scorecard 2020/21

Scrutiny Practice	<b>A. How much scrutiny did we carry out?</b>	<b>B. How well did we do?</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of Committee meetings = 7 ↓ (18)</li> <li>2. Number of Panel &amp; Working Group meetings = 31 ↓ (54)</li> <li>3. Number of in-depth inquiries completed = 0 ↓ (1)</li> <li>4. Number of Working Group topics completed = 2 ↑ (1)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings = 86% ↑ (73%)</li> <li>6. Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 66% ↑ (62%)</li> <li>7. Meetings with public observers = 24% ↓ (50%)</li> <li>8. Meetings with public input = 13% ↓ (21%)</li> <li>9. Meetings attracting media coverage = 32% ↓ (33%)</li> </ol>
Scrutiny Outcomes	<b>C. How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?</b>	<b>D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Number of Chairs' Letters sent to Cabinet Members = 46 ↓ (77)</li> <li>11. Average time for Cabinet Member response letter = 24 days ↑ (22)</li> <li>12. Letters responded to within 21 day target = 52% ↓ (69%)</li> <li>13. Number of scrutiny reports to Cabinet = 0 ↓ (2)</li> <li>14. Cabinet action plans agreed = 0 ↓ (3)</li> <li>15. Follow ups undertaken = 1 ↓ (3)</li> <li>16. Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre decision scrutiny = 3 ↓ (5)</li> <li>17. Number of Cabinet reports subject to Call-in = 0 ↔ (0)</li> <li>18. Cabinet Members who attended at least one Scrutiny meeting = 100% (n/a)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. Scrutiny recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet = n/a (90%)</li> <li>20. Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = n/a (48%)</li> </ol>

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

### **3. About the Indicators**

#### **A. How much scrutiny did we carry out?**

##### **3.1 Number of Committee meetings = 7**

The Council has a single overarching Scrutiny Committee, called the Scrutiny Programme Committee, which is scheduled to meet every 4 weeks, with extra meetings added as necessary. During 2020/21 the Committee met 7 times (not including the meeting following Council AGM to elect the Committee chair/vice-chair).

The Committee is responsible for developing and managing the overall Scrutiny Work Programme. Overarching priorities were shaped by a work planning conference, which took place in October 2020 (open to all non-executive councillors), that heard a range of perspectives on what should be included. All councillors can suggest particular topics of concern for possible scrutiny.

The councillor-led 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.

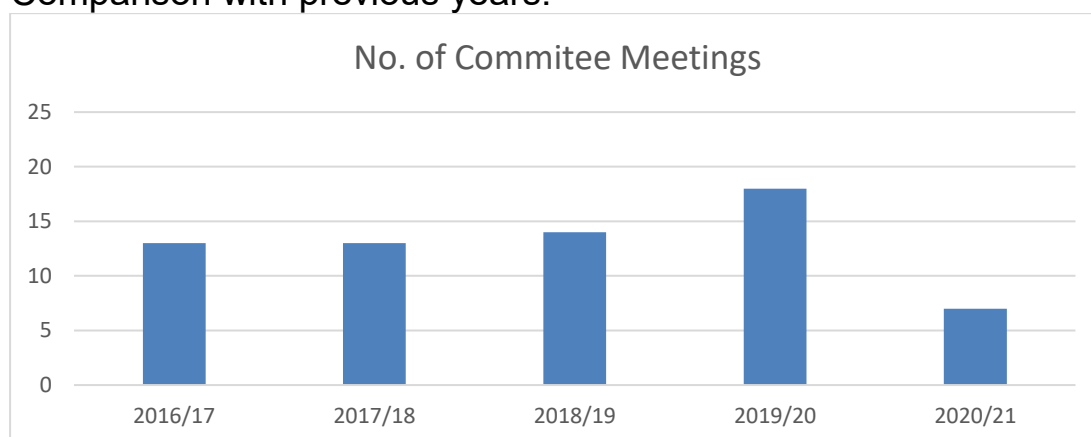
The Committee agreed a work programme that would cover the period until the end of the current Council term, in May 2022. Specific scrutiny activities included in the work programme are carried out either by the Committee or by establishing informal Panels and Working Groups. All meetings are held in public.

Formal Committee meetings gave councillors the opportunity to hold cabinet members to account and provide challenge on a range of policy and service issues. Except for a standing questioning session with the Leader of the Council, for 2020/21 the Committee moved away from routine monthly Cabinet Member Q & A sessions to a more targeted approach, creating space within its own work plan to focus on specific issues of concern, and address any gaps in the scrutiny work programme. The Committee is also the Council's designated Committee for statutory scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board, and Crime & Disorder Scrutiny of the Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership.

The following topics were also examined by the Committee:

- COVID-19 - Update on Impact and Response
- Council's Recovery & Transformation Plan
- Active Travel Consultation Process
- Children & Young People's Rights Scheme
- Delivery of Homelessness Strategy

Comparison with previous years:



### 3.2 Number of Panel & Working Group meetings = 31

It is important that the Scrutiny Work Programme strikes a balance between community concerns and strategic issues. The Committee considers what specific topics should feature in the programme so that it is focussed on the right things.

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, usually around six months, 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.

<b>Topics examined</b>	<b>Convener</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Procurement</b> Key Question: What is the Council doing to ensure it procures locally, ethically, and greenly while being cost effective and transparent in its practices?</li> </ul>	Cllr. Chris Holley	Pre-inquiry planning meeting held 24 Oct 2019 to agree focus of inquiry. Work was placed on hold in later 2019 due to resources and then delayed due to the pandemic. The Inquiry was re-started in June 2021.

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

The following key changes were agreed at the start of the municipal year:

- Changing the frequency of the Adult Services & Child & Family Services Performance Panels, aligning them both to a 6-weekly cycle, reflecting their equal importance.
- Increasing the frequency of the Natural Environment Performance Panel from quarterly to every two months, reflecting the growing seriousness of issues around biodiversity and climate change and their importance.
- Removing the Public Services Board Performance Panel – this work now carried out by the Committee.

<b>Performance Panels</b>	<b>Convener</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Improvement &amp; Finance (monthly)</li> <li>• Education (monthly)</li> <li>• Adult Services (6-weekly)</li> <li>• Child &amp; Family Services (6-weekly)</li> <li>• Development &amp; Regeneration (every two months)</li> <li>• Natural Environment (every two months)</li> </ul>	Cllr. Chris Holley Cllr. Lyndon Jones Cllr. Sue Jones Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams Cllr. Jeff Jones  Cllr. Peter Jones

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. Performance Panels will hold relevant Cabinet Members to account with clear opportunities for questioning, to explore their work, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. Performance Panel conveners provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact.

**Working Groups** are one-off meetings established to enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern, to consider a specific report or information, resulting in a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member(s) or report to Cabinet with views and recommendations.

Four one-off Working Groups were included in the work programme, to be completed as time and resources allow. The following Working Group meetings were held during 2020/21:

<b>Working Groups</b>	<b>Convener</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce</li> <li>• Digital Inclusion</li> </ul>	Cllr Cyril Anderson Cllr Lesley Walton

### **3.3 Number of in-depth inquiries completed = 0**

The planned re-start of the previously identified inquiry on Procurement was delayed during 2020/21 due to the pandemic and its impact on the scrutiny work programme. The inquiry was re-convened at the start of the 2021/22 municipal year, in June 2021.

### **3.4 Number of Working Group topics completed = 2**

Work on the following topic(s) was completed through meetings of Working Groups:

- Workforce
- Digital Inclusion

NOTE: There are also regional scrutiny arrangements that Swansea is involved in, which enabled scrutiny councillors to look at the work of the Education Through Regional Working (ERW) School Improvement Consortia, and progress / delivery of the Swansea Bay City Region City Deal programme.

## **B. How well did we do?**

### **3.5 Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings = 86%**

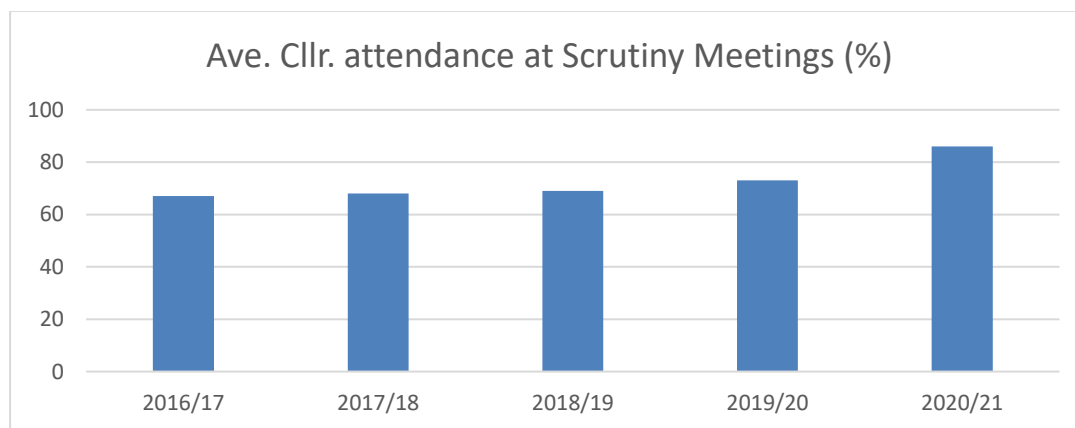
The rate of councillor attendance measures an important aspect of effectiveness as it reflects the engagement of councillors in the scrutiny process.

Council determines the membership of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. 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. Our figure is an overall attendance figure that includes the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Panel meetings and Working Groups. Attendance at the Committee meetings was 90%.

It is good to see a healthy increase on previous years, possibly helped by the ability for councillors to join meetings remotely.

Comparison with previous years:



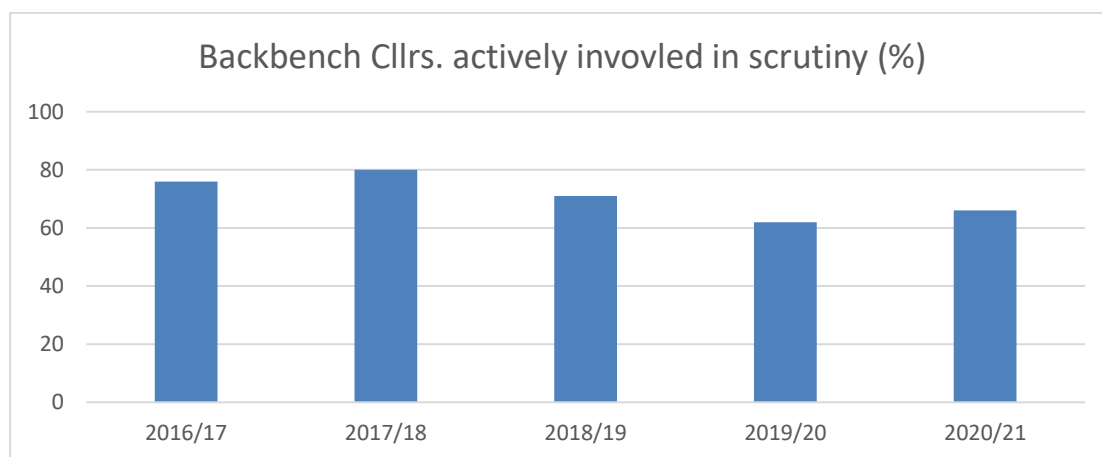
### **3.6 Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 66%**

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 majority of backbench councillors were involved in scrutiny, through either the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Panels or Working Groups.

Comparison with previous years:

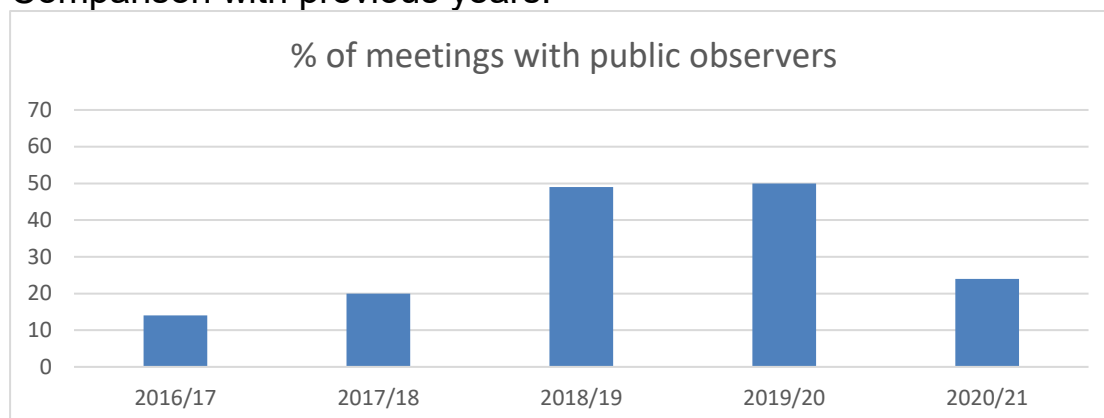


### **3.7 Meetings with public observers = 24%**

Scrutiny is important as a mechanism for community engagement. The extent to which the public observes meetings may indicate whether there is a significant focus of scrutiny on matters of public interest. All scrutiny meetings, whether the Committee or Panels and Working Group, are conducted in public, subject to specific items of business that on rare occasions may contain exempt information. On average, almost a quarter of the 38 scrutiny meetings held were observed by members of the public who joined the remote meeting on request or in order to ask a question.

Committee meetings were live-streamed, however Panel / Working Group meetings were not. However all meetings were recorded, with video subsequently published on the Council's website / YouTube account for viewing. The move to remote meetings during the pandemic has affected our ability to report accurately on the number of public observers, other than those we know to have been specifically invited into meetings. A scan of YouTube views, however, shows Committee meetings seem to attract up to 50 viewers, significantly more people than who would have watched meetings pre-COVID from the public gallery. There are similarly good figures across other scrutiny meetings.

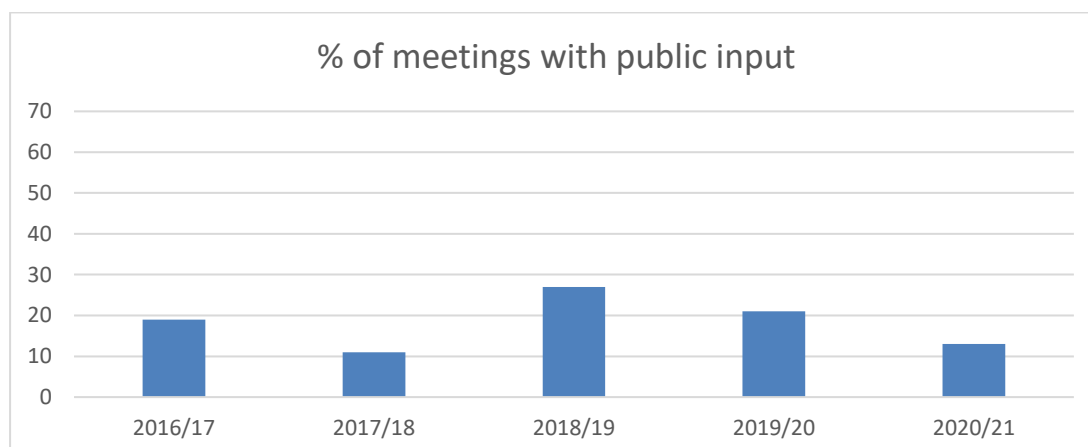
Comparison with previous years:



### 3.8 Meetings with public input = 13%

As well as attracting interest and observers to listen to what is being discussed, councillors are keen to increase active public involvement in the work of scrutiny. 13% of all scrutiny meetings had some form of such engagement and public input. This input can take various forms, including submission of questions for scrutiny sessions with cabinet members, making suggestions for the scrutiny work programme, contributing evidence to specific items under scrutiny - whether in person or reflected in the meeting agenda.

Comparison with previous years:

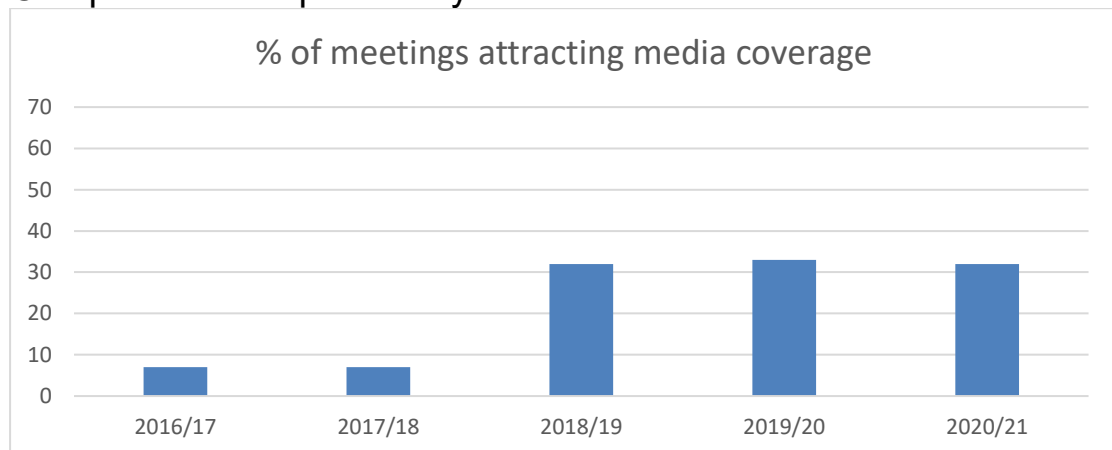


### 3.9 Meetings attracting media coverage = 32%

As well as attracting interest from individuals and getting members of the public to engage directly, a measure of whether scrutiny is focussed on the right things and is making an impact is the amount of media coverage that scrutiny is attracting. We found that 32% of scrutiny meetings made the news, e.g. in print in the South Wales Evening Post or Western Mail, and/or on websites including WalesOnline, BBC etc. Across all activities there were at least 13 scrutiny discussions reported in the local press (print and on-line).

Issues which generated coverage included scrutiny discussion on: COVID-19 impacts, and particularly the impact on social care services, Mental Health Services, Domestic Abuse, Active Travel, Welsh Housing Quality Standards, Council Budget, Crime & Disorder, and School Buildings.

Comparison with previous years:

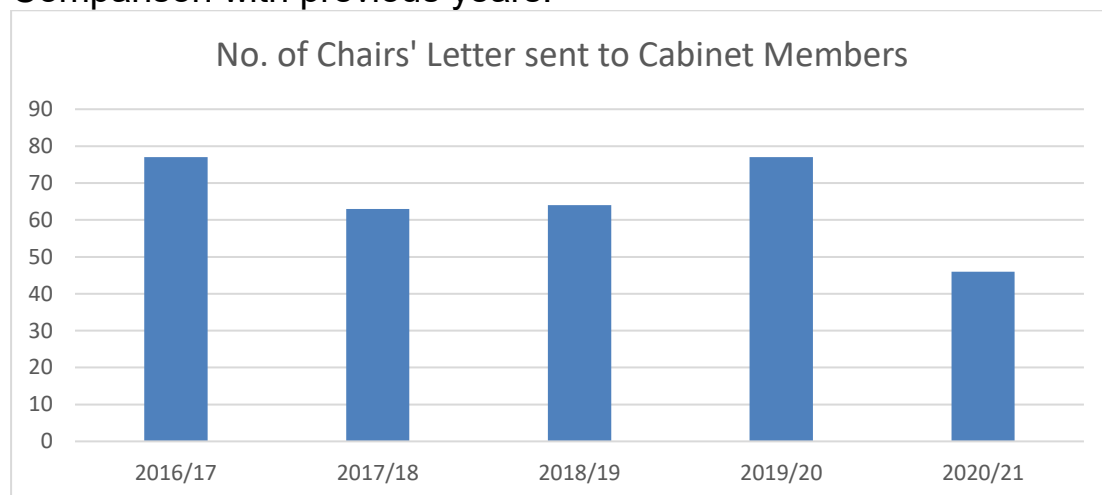


## C. How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?

### 3.10 Number of Chairs' Letters sent to Cabinet Members = 46

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 the discussion at Committee / Panel / Working Group meetings. Letters are effectively 'mini-reports' with conclusions and proposals from scrutiny – and where necessary require a response. 46 letters were sent to Cabinet Members.

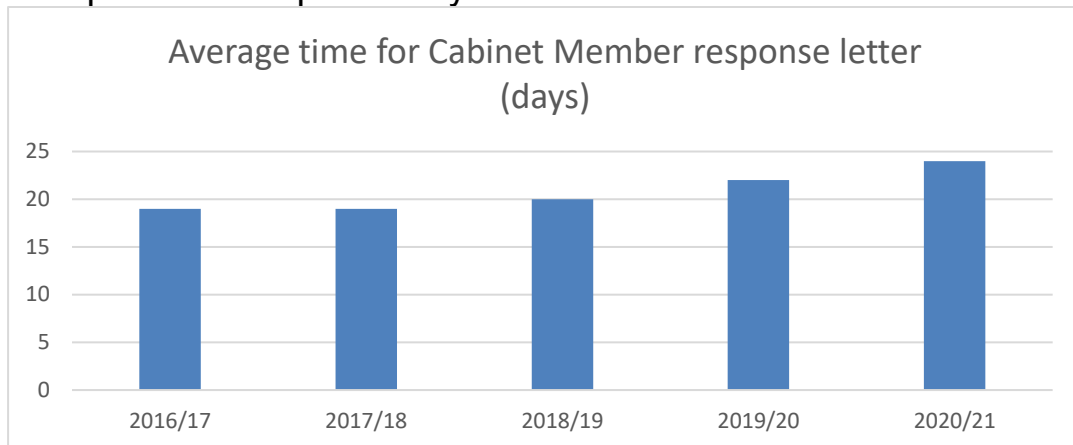
Comparison with previous years:



### 3.11 Average time for Cabinet Member response letter = 24 days

When scrutiny letters are sent to Cabinet Members and require a response, Cabinet Members are required to respond within 21 calendar days. The average response time for letters sent was 24 days, which indicates that scrutiny is generally getting a timely response to views, concerns, and any suggested action for Cabinet Members.

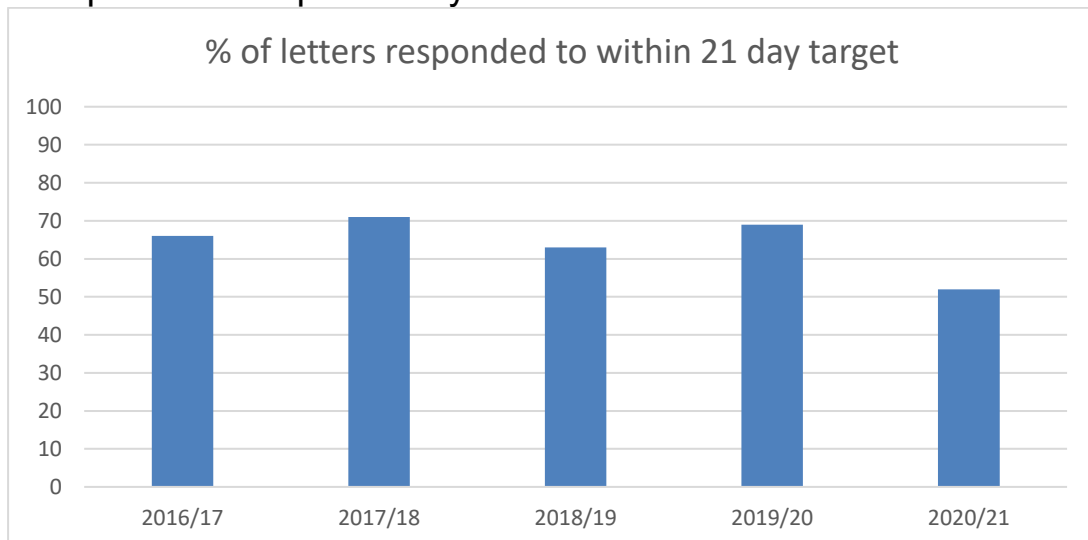
Comparison with previous years:



### 3.12 Letters responded to within 21 day target = 52%

Whilst the response to scrutiny letters was on average 24 days, some letters did take longer. The number of letters responded to within the 21 day target was 52% (12 out of 23 letters).

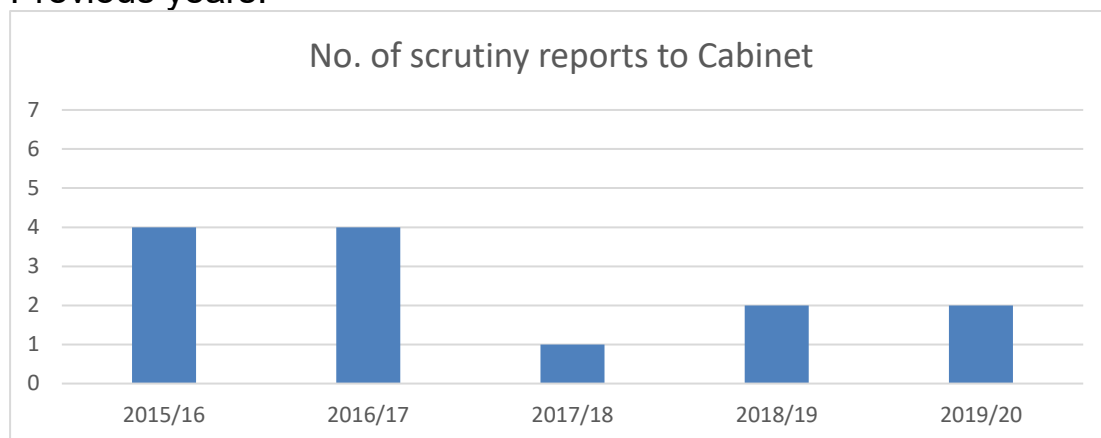
Comparison with previous years:



### 3.13 Number of Scrutiny reports to Cabinet = 0

In-depth inquiries are reported to Cabinet for a response to the recommendations agreed by scrutiny and its action plan on how the recommendations will be implemented. Scrutiny Working Groups also have the option of either writing a letter to relevant Cabinet Member(s) or report to Cabinet, depending on outcomes from discussion. There were no reports presented to Cabinet during 2020/21.

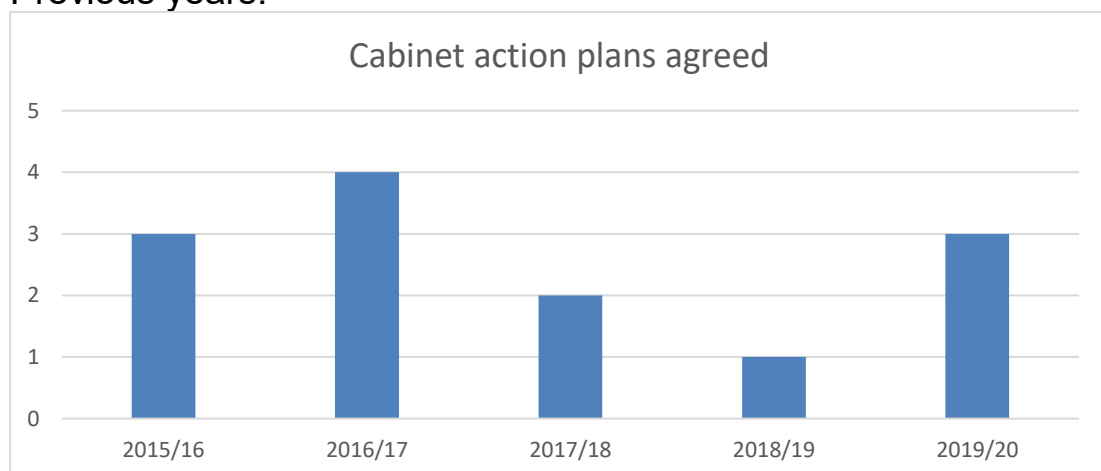
Previous years:



### 3.14 Cabinet action plans agreed = 0

Once recommendations and an action plan have been agreed by Cabinet, scrutiny will follow up on progress with implementation and impact. 2020/21 did not feature any action plans being published and agreed by Cabinet, as there were no reports from scrutiny requiring response.

Previous years:



### 3.15 Follow ups undertaken = 1

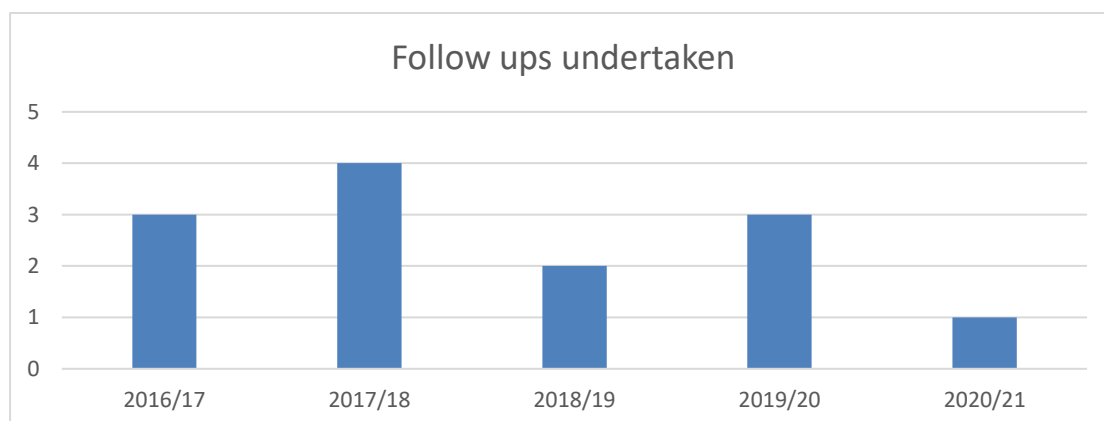
Inquiry Panels reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and Cabinet action plans, and assess the impact of their work. A meeting will usually be held 6-12 months following Cabinet decision, with a further follow up arranged if required.

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. Previous scrutiny inquiries that required a follow up were followed up:

Inquiry	Convener	Cabinet Action Plan agreed	Monitoring Status
Equalities	Cllr. Lyndon Jones	November 2019	In progress - follow up meeting held 28 Jan 2021; further follow up tba Nov 2021

The Scrutiny Programme Committee will follow up any Working Group reports to Cabinet.

Comparison with previous years:

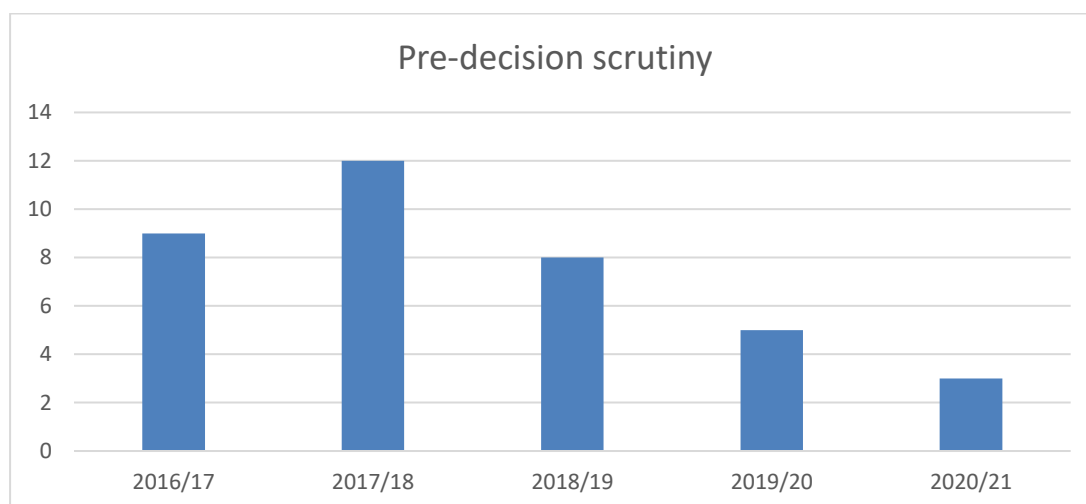


### 3.16 Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre-decision scrutiny = 3

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 three 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:

Report	Cabinet Member	Cabinet Meeting	Undertaken by
Proposed Lease to Mumbles Community Council under the Community Asset Transfer Policy	Delivery & Operations Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	21 Jan 2021	Committee
Annual Budget	Economy & Strategy (Leader)	18 Feb 2021	Service Improvement & Finance Panel (with contribution from other Panels)
Development of 71/72 The Kingsway & 69/70 The Kingsway – Business Case (FPR7)	Economy & Strategy (Leader)	20 May 2021	Service Improvement & Finance Panel

Comparison with previous years:



### 3.17 Number of Cabinet reports subject to Call-in = 0

During 2018-19, the Council agreed new call-in arrangements with scrutiny at the centre of the process. Any valid call-in of Cabinet decisions leads to the calling of a special meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. A call-in can be made by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee or by any four councillors by giving notice in writing to the Head of Democratic Services within a specific call-in period. With the increase in pre-decision scrutiny seen over the last few years a large number of call-ins are not anticipated. There were no Cabinet decisions 'called in' over the past year.



### **3.18 Cabinet Members who attended at least one Scrutiny meeting – 100%**

Cabinet Members attend scrutiny meetings to answer questions and provide information to assist scrutiny and account for their work. Cabinet attendance at scrutiny meetings is a good indicator that the 'holding to account' role of scrutiny is functioning well. It ensures that scrutiny provides regular challenge to decision-makers.

We have previously reported on the structured Cabinet Member Q & A Sessions organised by the Scrutiny Programme Committee, which enabled the Committee to explore the work of Cabinet Members, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. There is now a more targeted approach calling in Cabinet Members as and when required to report on specific portfolio responsibilities and issues, with emphasis on Performance Panels to hold relevant Cabinet Members to account with clear opportunities for questioning. So we are now reporting on whether all Cabinet Members have been engaged with scrutiny, whether with the Committee, Panel or Working Group, over the last year. The range of issues discussed within the Committee alone involved six Cabinet Members.

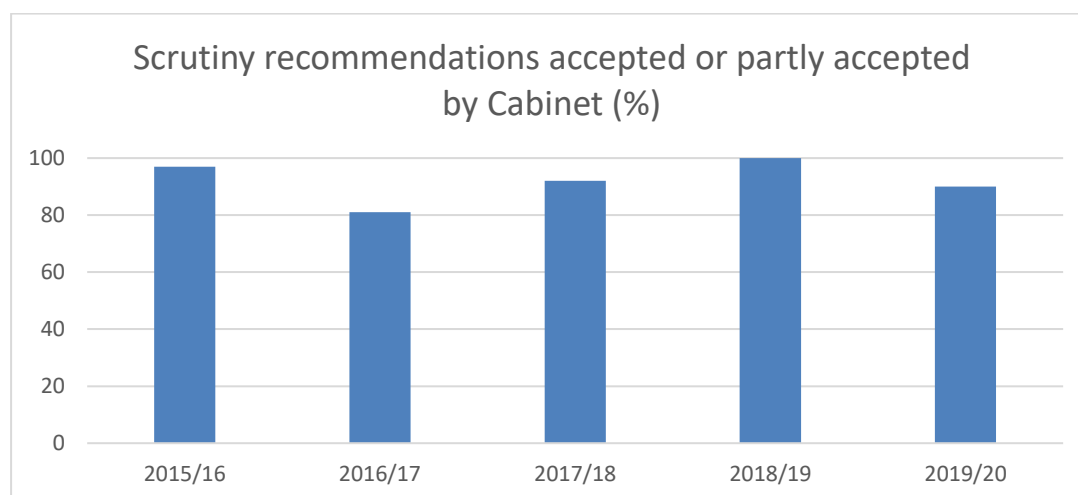
Although there are 10 Cabinet Portfolios, during 2020/21 there were 11 councillors in cabinet positions. The Supporting Communities portfolio operating under a job share system between two councillors sharing the responsibilities. Our target is always 100%.

## D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?

### 3.19 Scrutiny recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet = n/a

The rate that Cabinet accept scrutiny recommendations is a good indicator of whether scrutiny is making strong recommendations based on robust evidence. We cannot report on this for 2020/21 as there were no outstanding scrutiny reports to Cabinet requiring a formal response.

Previous years:



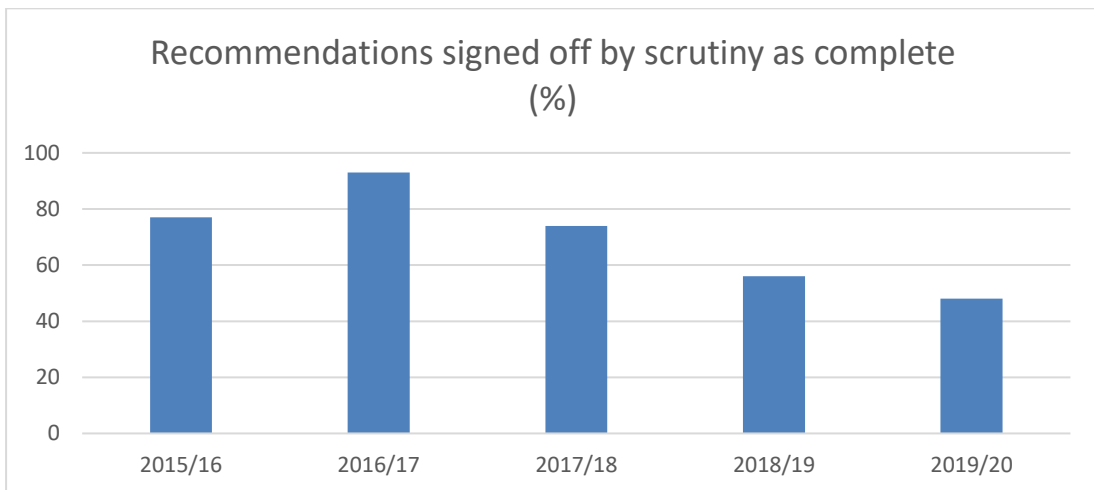
### 3.20 Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = n/a

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 (or other scrutiny report) have been completed in line with the agreed cabinet member's action plan and which have not. In the case of in-depth inquiries scrutiny councillors consider whether they agree with the assessment about implementation of recommendations, taking into account the evidence they are presented with about the changes that have happened following scrutiny and its impact. This indicator would represent the percentage of recommendations accepted by scrutiny as being completed for the year.

The Equalities Inquiry, which made 18 recommendations, was formally responded to by Cabinet in November 2019 and was followed up by the Panel in January 2021. Although some notable progress was reported, such as the creation of the new Strategic Equality and Future Generations Board, which will take forward actions and recommendations within the Council's Strategic

Equality Plan and the Scrutiny Inquiry, and associated support to drive improvement, the pandemic had impacted on the Council's ability to focus on this work. The Panel agreed that there has been positive progress with the recommendations and work done so far should provide a good foundation for moving forward in the medium and longer term. The Panel agreed to meet again in November 2021 to look in more detail at the progress made and impact of the inquiry, when a full assessment of the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and agreed Cabinet action plan will be made, before formal monitoring is concluded. It should be noted that in many cases implementation of scrutiny recommendations continues beyond the process of formal monitoring.

Previous years:



## **4. Impact**

### **4.1 How Scrutiny Councillors have made a difference**

#### 4.1.1 Scrutiny Councillors make 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, and other scrutiny activities, 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 and call-in
- Communicating concerns and proposals for improvement through regular publication of scrutiny letters and reports

4.1.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee produces a summary of the headlines from the work of scrutiny for Council and the public, which focuses on impact and how scrutiny is making a difference. The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee reports the summary, known as Scrutiny Dispatches, to Council.

4.1.3 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.

4.1.4 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.

4.1.5 A selection of stories from the past year of scrutiny from Scrutiny Dispatches, which demonstrate the impact made, are **appended**.

This includes reference to:

- **Continuing to play a role in Regional Scrutiny** (*reference to Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee and Education Through Regional Working Scrutiny Councillor Group*)
- **Continuing to monitor issues of public concern** (*reference to Child & Family Services Performance Panel*)
- **Picking up on public concerns about the Council's Active Travel plans and consultation processes** (*reference to Scrutiny Programme Committee*)
- **Investigating the impact of the pandemic on health & wellbeing of staff** (*reference to Workforce Working Group*)
- **Ensuring the Council's budget and corporate arrangements are effective and efficient** (*reference to Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel*)
- **Considering work done to increase digital inclusion in Swansea** (*reference to Digital Inclusion Working Group*)
- **Adapting the work of scrutiny** (*Committee and Performance Panels*)
- **Questioning Cabinet Members** (*through the Committee, Panels, and Working Groups*)
- **Following up on scrutiny of Equalities** (*Equalities Inquiry Panel*)

## **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. Annual review discussions are usually held within the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Scrutiny Performance Panels towards the end of each municipal year.

5.1.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee carried out an Annual Work Programme Review in May 2021, reflecting on the past year, the work of the Committee and work programme, to identify any improvement and development issues. As well as reviewing previously agreed improvement objectives, councillors were encouraged to identify areas of improvement in relation to the work programme and scrutiny practice, so that it is even more effective. No specific new improvement issues were identified for 2021/22.

5.1.3 Looking back, as a result of discussion and feedback at the beginning of 2020/21, we have seen:

- A more flexible Committee work plan, focussing on the most pressing issues and addressing any gaps in the scrutiny work programme.
- Better co-ordination between the Committee and work of Performance Panels.
- Changes to the work programme, which have strengthened the ability of all Performance Panels to manage their workload and make more impact.
- Scrutiny being flexible during the pandemic, ensuring that activity was proportionate and focused on the major issues, e.g. adjusting meeting schedules and frequency. This included the two 'Social Services' Panels temporarily holding joint meetings instead, focusing purely on the COVID-19 situation and impact, to reduce burden on a department under significant pressure during the second wave.

## 5.2 Scrutiny Improvement Objectives

5.2.1 A number of scrutiny improvement objectives and action plan were agreed by the Committee in January 2019. This included actions to address the three proposals for improvement made by the Wales Audit Office following its review of the Council's scrutiny arrangements in 2018. This was a co-ordinated and comprehensive single improvement plan for scrutiny, for the issues that matter most.

### **WAO Proposals for Improvement**

- 1) 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.
- 2) The Council should strengthen its evaluation of the impact and outcomes of its scrutiny activity.
- 3) The Council should further clarify the distinction between scrutiny and Policy Development Committee activity in relation to policy development.

### **Councillor Improvement Issues**

- 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.

5.2.2 The Committee has regularly reviewed and considered progress against the action plan, last in May 2021. The review of the current improvement plan showed only a small number of outstanding actions:

- Development and delivery of a scrutiny training and development programme (as suggested by Wales Audit Office) – this will be arranged post-May 2022 for the new Council. It is anticipated this would include areas such as: the Scrutiny Process, Chairing Skills; Questioning Skills, Public Participation, as well as improving understanding around the Well-being of Future Generations Act and how scrutiny can support its impact on local services, policies and decision-making. Any planned programme

will be refined subject to further feedback / indications from scrutiny councillors.

- Developing a method of direct post-meeting evaluation from those attending scrutiny meetings (Cabinet Members, officers, external persons etc.) that will help strengthen our evaluation of the impact and outcomes of scrutiny activity – this would be developed during 2021/22.
- Developing a specific Facebook page for scrutiny that should improve visibility of the work of scrutiny and sharing of stories, and active public engagement – this would be progressed during 2021/22.

5.2.3 The Committee was content with progress against scrutiny improvement objectives and thought would be given to other improvement objectives for the future and/or new actions that will help deliver already identified objectives.



## 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.

### **Connect with Scrutiny:**

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Email: [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk)

Twitter: [@swanseascrutiny](#)

Web: [www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny)

Blog: [www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk](http://www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk)

# Scrutiny Dispatches

City & County of Swansea – 2020/2021

‘How scrutiny councillors are making a difference’

## Continuing to play a role in Regional Scrutiny

Decisions taken at a regional level have important implications for local citizens in Swansea and therefore scrutiny is vital to ensure any new decisions made through regional bodies and public service collaborations are held to account.

### Swansea Bay City Deal

*(Lead: Councillors Jan Curtice, Phil Downing, & Jeff Jones)*

The Swansea Bay City Region covers the four local authority areas of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea. The Swansea Bay City Deal sets out an integrated, transformational approach to delivering the scale and nature of investment needed to support plans for growth in the Region.

The Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee (SBCRJC) has been established to deliver the Swansea Bay City Deal.

Three members from each of the four local authorities form the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee which is in place to hold to account all decisions made by the SBCRJC, and monitor of the City Deal Programme

This Joint Scrutiny Committee meets every two months. At its last meeting held on 2 February 2021 the committee received verbal updates from Swansea University’s Pro-Vice Chancellor for Planning and Resources, Professor Steve Wilks on the Life Science & Well-being Campuses and from officers on the Swansea Bay City Deal Funding.

Members expressed disappointment that no written documentation had been received to accompany the Pentre Awel Project update which was also on the agenda for this meeting. Members deferred this item to a future meeting with a written update to accompany it.

The Chair of the Committee addressed overall concern about the lack of written updates being provided to the committee and stated that the Committee’s expectations going forward are that written information must accompany all agenda items so that the Committee can fully carry out its scrutiny function appropriately.

#### **Update on the Life Science & Well-being Campuses:**

The committee heard about this project which has a City Deal value of £15m, is projected to create 1100 jobs and add £150m to the GVA by 2031 and it encompasses two phases. Phase one is concerned with improving treatments and recovery so that people are able to return to their home environments at a much faster pace.

Phase 1 is fundamentally the City Deal funding which will provide support to invest at the Morriston Hospital site: refurbishment of the management centre, essentially linking clinical innovation and unlocking access to the Morriston Hospital site and the Sketty Lane site: this will include the development of a Sports Science & Well-being Technology Centre, the University is currently looking to identify potential partners to work in collaboration. Phase 1 will essentially unlock phase two.

Members queried the effect of COVID-19 on the University's financial position and heard from Professor Wilks that the University are in a '*fair and strong*' position from a financial perspective. He added that the University are still fully committed and are able to deliver the projects they have committed to and there has been no change or impact on the University's commitment to the deal, in light of the pandemic.

Members queried the current relevance of the nine projects within the City Deal and members specifically referred to the Digital Infrastructure project and if there would be a requirement for future funding requirements to amplify the project. Members queried if the project would still be relevant considering the digital age currently moving at a rapid pace due to the pressures posed by the pandemic. Professor Wilks was confident the project would respond and meet its relevant aims.

The Committee asked that a written update on the University's involvement with City Deal projects be provided.

## Education Through Regional Working (ERW)

*(Lead: Councillors Lyndon Jones & Peter Black)*

ERW has been one of Wales' four consortia who work with schools to raise standards and provide a range of support, which includes professional development and intervention programmes. Swansea Council has been one of the six local authorities who signed up to this regional improvement service. Swansea was the host authority for the joint ERW Scrutiny Group meeting in March which then included Scrutiny Councillors from the five local authorities Swansea, Powys, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. The aim of this Joint Scrutiny Group has been to help ensure the best educational outcomes for children in the ERW region by supporting effective scrutiny to:

- Support consistent scrutiny across each council
- 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

Swansea had given notice to leave this consortium arrangement on 31 March 2020 by 1 April 2021, but the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel heard that a report has gone to Cabinet asking it to defer removal of Swansea from ERW to allow more time for the region to set up the arrangements for a new regional body that will commence from 1 September 2021. Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Powys and Pembrokeshire Councils have agreed to remain within the interim partnership until 31 August 2021. Discussions are continuing into which Councils will be included in the new arrangements post September 2021.

The Scrutiny Councillor Group asked what the governance arrangements of the new partnership will be and how scrutiny will fit into this new model, what its key objectives will be and how will success be measured. The Group was informed that new arrangements will be taken to each local authority's Cabinet for agreement and that these plans and the governance model will also be shared with scrutiny locally.

## Continuing to monitor issues of public concern

Since the start of the pandemic there have been reports in the media and growing public concern over increases in domestic abuse cases across the UK, Wales included.

*(Lead: Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams)*

The Child & Family Services Scrutiny Panel focussed on the Wales Audit Office's (WAO) report: Tackling Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV).

The Panel heard from senior officers that at the start of the pandemic there was a discrepancy found between the media reporting of increases in domestic abuse cases and the reporting on the ground. The Service found a decrease in the number of referrals reported to the police and in referrals to the specialist sector. Officers explained that this suggested people were either not able to reach out and access support or felt that they could not for whatever reason.

The Panel heard that the Service focussed on a multi-media communications campaign and also took into account the effects of digital poverty. Funding was secured to distribute tablets, mobile phones and WI-FI dongles to ensure families affected by domestic abuse had the means to seek help.

The Panel expressed their gratitude to officers and staff across the Authority for their hard work in continuing to tackle VAWDASV during these difficult times.

The Panel heard that the Council has made good progress and met all five generic recommendations that came out the WAO report. The Panel was pleased to hear that Swansea's work around the Domestic Abuse Hub had a mention in the WAO report and was found to be an innovative way of working.

The Panel noted from the report, a funding gap for prevention work and queried if there is currently enough funding for the work that needs to be done. Officers explained that there has been additional funding but there is still a gap. The Panel noted that this funding is positive, however, it comes at a risk as the work is funded by grants that are uncertain going forward. Officers explained that this issue is often discussed with Welsh Government as it needs to be mainstreamed.

The Panel is eager to assist regarding mainstreaming of funding and have asked officers to provide further information on how this could be achieved.

The Panel has also asked if training can be put in place for all councillors, as school governors, to raise awareness.

## Active Travel

*(Lead: Councillor Peter Black)*

Following a public request for scrutiny, with concerns about the implementation of Active Travel schemes and questions about the extent of public consultation carried out, the Scrutiny Programme Committee discussed this matter with the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, along with input from lead officers. The scrutiny session helped to shed light on and understand what consultation processes the Council utilises and why; and the Committee considered whether, in light of experience, that could be improved, and any wider learning points for the future.

As a result of this scrutiny the Cabinet Member has given his commitment to maintaining a public dialogue on all future Active Travel schemes, including local residents and community groups, as well as local councillors. He is making improvements to the information publically reported to Cabinet, including maps of routes proposed to be constructed in 2021/22. This will be supported by communications to raise awareness and provide opportunities for engagement on schemes under development.

## Investigating the impact of the pandemic on health & wellbeing of staff

The Covid-19 pandemic has had great impacts on how we all work and live. The Workforce Scrutiny Working Group looked at the impact of the pandemic on the health & wellbeing of staff; how the Council is supporting this; issues around home working; staff sickness; staff turnover; use of agency staff and pressures.

*(Lead: Councillor Cyril Anderson)*

The Working Group (WG) received an update on the position the Authority was in before the pandemic regarding agile working and heard that overall it was 'good'.

The WG noted that the Health and Safety Team were able to put in place a large amount of support for the wellbeing of the workforce.

Staff stress and anxiety was discussed and the WG queried whether the Authority employs psychologists in the Wellbeing Team and if more could be employed. Officers confirmed 'Talking Therapists' are employed and that front line staff have found this service invaluable. The WG has requested clarification from Cabinet Members on the qualification of these 'Talking Therapists', if they are employed by the Authority and what their role is.

The WG has since heard back that they are BACP (British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy) accredited and qualified in Counselling and Stress management and there are also two EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing) specialists to treat PTSD (Posttraumatic stress disorder).

Regarding mental health help the WG requested clarification of the correct procedure for staff to follow, the services they can access for help and what happens after the initial contact has been made.

Response from Cabinet Members explained that Staff can self-refer or through a manager. They are triaged based on risk and then contacted by a counsellor. During Covid, front line staff have been prioritised for contact within 24hours. There is also support for managers and a range of on-line resources available to staff over the intranet. The WG was also informed that significant feedback from staff has been received and many have stated that they would not have remained in work without the support – over 90% of staff under the care of the service remain in work and do not go off sick.

The WG queried Trade Union (TU) engagement and insight and heard that meetings with Unions were held weekly during the height of the pandemic and are now held two-weekly. Issues raised were addressed at these meetings. The WG were pleased with this extensive engagement with the TUs and expressed that they wish to see this continue in the future. The WG was reassured in the response received from Cabinet Members that *'Trade Union engagement continues on a fortnightly basis to discuss emerging HR and health and safety points.'*

The WG expressed the wish to meet again in six months once the results of the second staff survey have been analysed and when there is a better understanding of what the future holds for the Authority and its workforce.

## Ensuring the Council's budget and corporate arrangements are effective and efficient

*(Lead: Councillor Chris Holley)*

The Service Improvement & Finance Panel discussed the Quarter 3 (Q3) Budget Monitoring report 2020-21, the Mid-Year Budget Statement 2020-21 and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement. The Panel heard that Capital financial requirements will go up by hundreds of millions of pounds, measured as a percentage of the revenue budget. Officers explained that in every scenario, they see budgets going up, although subject to complex interplays.

The Panel queried the general fund capital expenditure; why there is a huge difference in the original estimate / outturn. Officers explained that this is due to a direct consequence of building the Arena, fuelled by the field hospital expenditure. The Chief Finance Officer commented that this demonstrates the sheer amount of capital spend that is underway.

The Panel has since written to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy and asked for detailed information about the expected increase in repayments relating to the general fund capital expenditure due to the increase in the borrowing requirements.

## Considering work done to increase digital inclusion in Swansea

The Digital Inclusion Scrutiny Working group looked at the work done by the Authority to increase digital inclusion before and during the pandemic, the work already planned for 2021/22 and what the Authority has planned for the future, post COVID-19.

*(Lead: Councillor Lesley Walton)*

The Working Group (WG) discussed the Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy/Framework. The WG felt that it is important to look at how people are accessing council services now as opposed to pre-pandemic as they recognise the landscape has changed rapidly since the start of the COVID19 Pandemic.

The WG felt that since many more people are now online in some form, the strategy should be more focussed on equality and the title of digital 'equality' framework should be used rather than the term digital 'inclusion' as this would better reflect the strategy moving forward.

The WG agreed that the Digital Inclusion Strategic Framework (DISF) needs to be reviewed in light of new data emerging post pandemic and to reflect the natural demographic shift over the coming years. The WG was informed that a draft DISF had been developed pre Covid and will now be reviewed. The WG has requested to be contacted at the appropriate time to contribute to this piece of work.

The WG heard that a variety of methods of communication are used to reach Swansea residents, whether digitally included or excluded. The WG was particularly pleased to hear about the 'Chatbot' that went live during the pandemic to assist people when looking for information and signposting in relation to domestic violence. The WG felt this was a good example of how we can use our website to assist those who are most in need.

The WG heard that a new and improved council wide website is being developed. Proposed improvements include: good practice in accessibility and the use of plain English and Welsh language. The Web Manager is working with the Access to Services officer so views from different equality groups are sought. The new website is due to be delivered in the late summer, the WG have requested to be contacted at an appropriate time to provide feedback and thoughts on the new website's design.

The WG congratulated officers for the good work done so far and especially throughout the difficult times during the pandemic. Overall the WG agreed that the Council is on the right track with its Digital Inclusion Strategy and do recognise that the Council is keen to make the right improvements moving forward.

The WG expressed wishes to revisit this issue on an annual basis given its importance and the work that is continuing to be done by the Authority to improve in this area.



## Chair's Round up

This is my roundup of the work of scrutiny for 2020/21, as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

### Chairing Scrutiny

I was delighted to be elected Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee in June 2020 to lead the work of scrutiny in Swansea. Thanks, however, must go to the outgoing chair, Cllr. Mary Jones, who provided leadership since 2014 and achieved so much, overseeing numerous improvements to scrutiny process and practice here, with arrangements receiving regular praise from auditors and inspectors, helping to make Swansea Scrutiny well regarded by others.

### Work planning

With the delayed start to the 2020/21 council year we decided to plan for the next 18 months, taking things up to May 2022. For the first time we held a remote Work Planning Conference, which took place in October, and it worked very well enabling more scrutiny councillors to participate than we have seen previously. Taking into account work already committed and feedback from the Conference, a work programme was agreed by the Committee. Always looking to improve the way we do things, we agreed to make some key changes:

- The Committee work plan moving away from routine monthly Cabinet Member Q & A sessions to a more targeted approach, creating space to examine specific issues of concern, and any gaps in the overall programme, for focussed discussion at Committee meetings.
- Incorporating scrutiny of the Public Services Board into the work of the Committee, removing the need for a standalone Performance Panel to carry out this work.
- Ensuring the Committee incorporates into its work plan specific follow up on any recommendations made to cabinet members by Scrutiny Working Groups.
- Changing the frequency of the Adult Services & Child & Family Services Performance Panels, aligning them both to a 6-weekly cycle, reflecting their equal importance.
- Increasing the frequency of the Natural Environment Performance Panel from quarterly to every two months, reflecting the growing seriousness of issues around biodiversity and climate change and their importance.

Aside from the work of the Committee and six Performance Panels, which meet on an ongoing basis, we included space in the Programme to look at Procurement, and Anti-Social Behaviour for in-depth inquiry, and Workforce, Digital Inclusion, Bus Services and Health City as one-off Working Groups.

### Adapting the work of Scrutiny

Since the end of March 2020 meetings have been conducted on-line via Microsoft Teams. We were happy to learn we were the first Council in Wales to hold a remote scrutiny meeting!

The pandemic has of course caused some disruption to the delivery of the work programme, and work of scrutiny. Our activity has had to be flexible and responsive to organisational pressures as the Council has needed to focus its efforts on tackling the pandemic and dealing with the impact locally. We have, however, ensured focus on monitoring and challenging Council action in relation to the COVID-19 response and recovery. Within the Committee, there was continued discussion with the Leader of the Council and members of the Corporate Management Team on the local impact of the pandemic, dealing with the immediate issues / challenges, as well as short, medium and long term planning.

All Performance Panels have drilled down on the service specific experience and issues. The two Social Services Panel met jointly for a period to reduce the burden on work on the department. The work of other Panels had to adjust and re-focus accordingly, with meeting frequency also affected.

### **Questioning Cabinet Members**

Although moving away from routine Q & A sessions at Committee, Cabinet Members have been held to account on an ongoing basis through meetings of the Committee, our six Performance Panels, and Working Groups, whether to discuss specific topics of concern, a range of service / policy issues, or whole service improvement. Acting as a 'critical friend', we have questioned and challenged them on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact. The Committee has continued to call in the Leader of the Council for questioning and at a meeting in January 2021, he was asked about COVID-19 Response & Recovery, Brexit implications and response, the Council Budget, Partnership / Regional Working, and City Centre Regeneration. We invite the public and all scrutiny councillors to contribute ideas to ensure the Committee asks the right questions. We have published a summary of each scrutiny session and views of scrutiny in a letter to relevant Cabinet Members, ensuring an ongoing conversation between scrutiny and the executive to advise and exert influence.

### **Following up on scrutiny of Equalities**

The Equalities Inquiry Panel followed up on progress with implementation of scrutiny recommendations and impact of the inquiry that was published in 2019. The Panel had come up with ways in which the Council could embed requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Duty for Wales). Although some good progress was acknowledged by the Panel, it was felt necessary to arrange a further follow up meeting, which will take place around November 2021, and will allow the Panel to better consider and assess progress made and the impact of the inquiry, before formal monitoring is concluded.

### **Leading scrutiny activities**

Thanks to all those councillors who have played a part in carrying out scrutiny, and particularly to those who have taken a lead over the past year:

Adult Services Performance Panel (Cllr Sue Jones); Child & Family Services Performance Panel (Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams); Development & Regeneration Performance Panel (Cllr. Jeff Jones); Education Performance Panel & Equalities Inquiry Panel (Cllr. Lyndon Jones); Natural Environment Performance Panel (Cllr. Peter Jones); Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel (Cllr. Chris Holley); Digital Inclusion Working Group (Cllr. Lesley Walton); and the Workforce Working Group (Cllr. Cyril Anderson)

### **Annual Report published**

We presented our Annual Report for 2019/20 to Council in March 2021. It reflected on the range of different activities carried out by scrutiny councillors during that year, to make sure the work of the Council is accountable and transparent, effective and efficient, and helps the Council to achieve its objectives and drive improvement, by questioning and providing challenge to decision makers. With the impact of the pandemic, last year and this year have been anything but business as usual but we have continued to work hard in both supporting and challenging the organisation, contributing to better services, policies, decisions, and a better Swansea.



## Appendix 2 – Current Scrutiny Work Programme

<b>New Inquiry Panel</b> (time-limited in-depth scrutiny – six months)	<b>New Working Groups</b> (light-touch scrutiny / one-off meetings)	<b>Performance Panels</b> (ongoing in-depth performance / financial monitoring & challenge)	<b>Issues for Scrutiny Programme Committee</b> (Overall work programme management; discussion of broad range of policy and service issues)
<p><b>1. Procurement</b> (previous Terms of Reference / Key Question to be reviewed / updated - What is the Council doing to ensure it procures locally, ethically, and greenly while being cost effective and transparent in its practices?)</p> <p><b>2. Anti-Social Behaviour</b> (Terms of Reference to be agreed by Panel but would focus on how we can reduce anti-social behaviour in our communities, look at factors behind rising anti-social behaviour; inter-agency working, the role of elected members, reporting, etc.)</p> <p>Follow Up of Previous Inquiries:</p> <p><b>1. Equalities</b></p>	<p><b>1. Workforce</b> (how the Council supports health &amp; well-being of staff; issues around home working; staff sickness; staff turnover; use of agency staff, pressures, etc.)</p> <p><b>2. Digital Inclusion</b> (follow up on previous discussion around digital transformation, the Council's digital inclusion strategy, and how well prepared both the Council and the public is to use and communicate / engage via digital technology to avoid exclusion / poor access, etc.)</p> <p><b>3. Bus Services</b> (discussion about bus network coverage and levels of service; community transport provision; integration with other forms of transport, etc.)</p> <p><b>4. Healthy City</b> (exploration of activities, promotion, particularly physical activities, including provision of outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.)</p>	<p><b>1. Service Improvement &amp; Finance</b> (monthly)</p> <p><b>2. Education</b> (monthly)</p> <p><b>3. Adult Services</b> (every 6 weeks)</p> <p><b>4. Child &amp; Family Services</b> (every 6 weeks)</p> <p><b>5. Development &amp; Regeneration</b> (every two months)</p> <p><b>6. Natural Environment</b> (every two months)</p> <p>Specific issues to cover within wider work plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Service Improvement &amp; Finance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Corporate Plan – Review / Progress</li> <li>- Council Byelaws</li> <li>- Budget Scrutiny</li> <li>- Performance Management</li> <li>- Waste Management &amp; Recycling – incl. questioning on fly-tipping experiences &amp; council activity</li> <li>- Welsh Housing Quality Standard</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Education:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools</li> <li>- Additional Learning Needs</li> <li>- Children Educated at Home</li> <li>- Delivery of Corporate Priorities</li> <li>- Remodelled Education Other Than at School Provision</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Adult Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- COVID-19 and Community Mental Health</li> <li>- Delivery of Corporate Priorities</li> <li>- Domestic Abuse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COVID-19 Council response and Recovery Plan / Transformation</b></li> <li>• <b>Brexit Preparedness</b></li> <li>• Specific reports:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Children &amp; Young People's Rights Scheme</b></li> <li>- <b>Corporate Safeguarding</b></li> <li>- <b>Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty Homelessness Strategy – progress</b> (incl. discussion on Young People's Supported Housing Provision)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leader Q &amp; A Session(s):                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Brexit</b></li> <li>- <b>Partnership Working</b></li> <li>- <b>Great Western Gateway</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other Cabinet Member Q &amp; As (issues to pick up):                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tbc</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Public Services Board</b></li> <li>• <b>Crime &amp; Disorder (Community Safety) Scrutiny:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incl. Community Cohesion / Hate Crime</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Wales Audit Office Reports</b></li> <li>• Follow Up on Previous Working Groups:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Tourism</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 – Current Scrutiny Work Programme

	<p>Reserve List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Road Safety</b> (hot spots; work to improve safety; preventative measures; speed controls; safety of cycling routes; partnership working, etc.)</li> <li>• <b>Active Travel</b> (are we meeting obligations of Welsh Government Active Travel Act; encouragement of cycling / walking; particular focus on cycling given experience during pandemic – are we making the most of opportunities to embed increased cycling, etc.)</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility for the Disabled / Elderly</b> (to look into concerns around mobility around city centre and access, e.g. and whether there is sufficient curb dropping to help mobility scooters, and other facilities to improve access and wellbeing, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Child &amp; Family Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of Corporate Priorities</li> <li>- Forced Marriages – Safeguarding issues</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Development &amp; Regeneration:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City Deal and effects of COVID-19</li> <li>- Delivery of Corporate Priorities</li> <li>- Economic Regeneration Strategy</li> <li>- Foreshore Developments</li> <li>- Historic / Listed Buildings</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Natural Environment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate Change</li> <li>- Delivery of Corporate Priorities</li> <li>- Environment Bill 2020 Implications</li> <li>- Nature Conservation – regular monitoring of activity and performance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Regional Scrutiny</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ERW</b> (Education through Regional Working) Specific issues to pick up: ERW Replacement organisation – post April 2021</li> <li>• <b>City Deal</b> (Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee)</li> </ul>			

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2021/22

ACTIVITY	15 Jun 2021	13 Jul 2021	17 Aug 2021	14 Sep 2021	19 Oct 2021	16 Nov 2021
<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>					Audit / Scrutiny Relationship – Discussion w/ Chair of Governance & Audit Committee	
<b>Cabinet Member Q &amp; A Sessions</b>						
<b>Specific Cabinet Member / Officer Reports</b>	Scrutiny of Public Services Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highways and Engineering</li> <li>Infrastructure Repairs and Maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing</li> <li>Business and City Promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy Policy (incl. Generation, Supply &amp; District Heating)</li> <li>Litter and Community Cleansing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recovery &amp; Transformation Plan Progress Update</li> <li>Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report</li> </ul>	Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty
<b>Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports</b>		Education	Service Improvement & Finance	Adult Services	Child & Family Services	Development & Regeneration
<b>Pre-decision Scrutiny</b>						
<b>Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.</b>			Follow Up on Tourism Working Group recommendations			
<b>Scrutiny Reports to Council</b>	Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report		Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21	Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report		

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>14 Dec 2021</b>	<b>18 Jan 2022</b>	<b>15 Feb 2022</b>	<b>15 Mar 2022</b>	<b>19 Apr 2022</b> (to be cancelled)	
<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>				Work Programme Review		
<b>Cabinet Member Q &amp; A Sessions</b>		Leader / Economy, Finance & Strategy (including focus on Brexit effects / response)				
<b>Specific Cabinet Member / Officer Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny of Public Services Board, incl. Annual Report</li> <li>Parking Policy, Control &amp; Enforcement</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COVID / Recovery &amp; Transformation Plan Progress Update</li> <li>Crime &amp; Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership</li> </ul>	Children & Young People's Rights Scheme Annual Progress Report		
<b>Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports</b>	Natural Environment	Education	Service Improvement & Finance			
<b>Pre-decision Scrutiny</b>						
<b>Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.</b>				Procurement Inquiry Final Report		
<b>Scrutiny Reports to Council</b>	Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report			Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report		

\* denotes extra meeting

To be scheduled:

- Pre-decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Report - Business Case for Relocation of Civic Centre
- Follow Up on Completed Working Group recommendations (Workforce; Digital Inclusion)

Work Plan remains flexible and subject to change to accommodate requests for pre-decision scrutiny and any urgent issues arising during the year to ensure each meeting is manageable.

## APPENDIX 4 – Scrutiny Performance Panel Work Plans

### Service Improvement and Finance

<b>Meeting 1</b> 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2.00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Overview: <i>Understanding Financial Reporting</i></b></li> <li>2. <b>Revenue Outturn, HRA Outturn and Capital Outturn and Financing 20-21</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 2</b> 23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2021 10.00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Welsh Language Standards Annual Report</b></li> <li>2. <b>Overview: Byelaws</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 4</b> Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2.00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Q1 Budget Monitoring Report – 2021/22</b></li> <li>2. <b>Peer Review &amp; Self-Assessment (Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021)</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 5</b> Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 9.30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Q1 2021/22 Performance Monitoring Report</b></li> <li>2. <b>Overview from Ben Smith: <i>Understanding Financial Reporting (Reserves)</i></b></li> <li>3. <b>Review of Reserves</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 6</b> Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 9.30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Mid-term Budget Statement</b></li> <li>2. <b>Q2 Budget Monitoring 2021-22</b></li> <li>3. <b>Planning Annual Performance Report</b></li> <li>4. <b>Swansea Airport (TBC)</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 7</b> Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2.00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring</b></li> <li>2. <b>Pre-decision scrutiny of Final Draft Budget (TBC)</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 8</b> Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2022 9.30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Q2 2021/22 Performance Monitoring Report</b></li> <li>2. <b>Sustainable Swansea Commissioning Reviews (Outcomes)</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 9</b> Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2022 9.30 TBC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Budget Scrutiny</b></li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 10</b> Tuesday 22 March 2022 9.30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan</b></li> <li>2. <b>Welsh Public Library Standards – Annual Performance Report</b></li> </ol>

#### TBC:

- **Annual Review of Well-being Objectives and Corporate Plan** *(The five year corporate plan was rolled over into 2021/22 as a result of the pandemic with only essential and unavoidable changes made; so no fundamental annual review made to the corporate plan during 2020/21 as a result of Covid).*
- **Recovery Plan (Post-Pandemic) TBC** following SPC Oct'21
- **End of Year 2020/21 Performance Monitoring Report TBC**
- **Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update**

## Education

Date	Items to be discussed
<b>Meeting 1</b> 24 Jun 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Harassment in School - deferred</li> <li>2. Covid Recovery and key issues affecting Education moving forward</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 2</b> 15 Jul 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Behaviour Strategy, how associated delegated spend to schools is being used – speaking to two secondary schools (<i>Pontarddulais &amp; Bishop Gore</i>)</li> <li>2. Feedback from ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group 28Jun21</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 3</b> 1 Sep 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The New Estyn Regime and thematic reviews</li> <li>2. Update – Education Covid Recovery moving into new school year</li> <li>3. Update – Regional Scrutiny moving forward</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 4</b> 30 Sep 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are we improving schools in Swansea? (How are School Improvement Advisers supporting, evaluating and monitoring schools in Swansea). To also include: Sharing good practice, supporting eFSM pupils and readiness for the City Deal.</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 5</b> 21 Oct 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (A new 10 year plan is being developed, an overview of requirements and the progress made so far)</li> <li>2. New Curriculum progress update</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 6</b> 18 Nov 21	School Scrutiny Session 1 – Morrison Comprehensive School (with Headteacher and Chair of Governors)
<b>Meeting 7</b> 9 Dec 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performance against identified education priorities (RAG) (Overview and then Cabinet Member Q&amp;A)</li> <li>2. Swansea Skills Partnership update</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting 8</b> 20 Jan 22	School Scrutiny Session 2 – Penyrheol Comprehensive School (with Headteacher and Chair of Governors) – TBC
<b>Meeting 9</b> Feb - tbc	Annual Budget as it relates to Educations matters ( <i>Annual item</i> )
<b>Meeting 10</b> 24 Mar 22	<p><i>Updates on watching brief items:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Additional Learning Needs Reform</li> <li>2. New Curriculum</li> </ol> <p>Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)</p>

1. To schedule in: a visit to new pupil referral unit Maes Derw (when possible)

## Adult Services

Meeting Date	Items to be discussed
<b>Meeting 1</b> Wednesday 2 June 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Update on Adult Services Transformation Programme</b></li> <li>• <b>Briefing on Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2020/21</b></li> <li>• <b>Actions from Wales Audit Office report 'Front door to Adult Social Care' – Recommendation: Impact of Preventative Services (specific action: to use feedback from the study and whether any additional improvement actions needed) (Agreed at March 2020 meeting)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 2</b> Wednesday 14 July 2021 3.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring</b></li> <li>• <b>Initial Feedback from CIW Assurance Visit</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 3</b> Wednesday 20 October 2021 3.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workforce Support Programme - Support for Health and Social Care Staff</b></li> <li>• <b>Update on Managing Covid-19 pandemic</b></li> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring</b> (shorter item with Covid focus).</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 4</b> Tuesday 30 November 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Update on Managing Covid-19 pandemic</b></li> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring</b> (shorter item with Covid focus)</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 5</b> Wednesday 12 January 2022 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Update on Managing Covid-19 pandemic</b></li> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring</b> (shorter item with Covid focus)</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Meeting Budget</b> Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Draft Budget Proposals for Adult Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Update on Managing Covid-19 pandemic</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 7</b> Wednesday 2 March 2022 3.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring TBC</b></li> <li>• <b>Update on West Glamorgan Transformation Programme TBC</b></li> </ul>

NOTE – Work Plan has been adjusted in light of current pressures within Adult Services, so meetings from October will focus only on how the service is managing those pressures and impact on performance.



#### Future Work Programme items:

- Update on how Council's policy commitments translate to Adult Services - moved from 12 January 2022 meeting
- Local Area Coordination Update - moved from 12 January 2022 meeting
- Options Appraisal for Assistive Technology and Community Alarms (Agreed pre March 2020) - moved from 30 November 2021 meeting
- Commissioning Reviews Progress Update - moved from 30 November 2021 meeting
- Social Services Budget Monitoring (including update on this year's budget, income streams and discussion about 'service descriptors' etc) - moved from 20 October 2021 meeting (Child & Family Services Panel Members to be invited for this item)
- CIW Assurance Visit Full Report - moved from 20 October 2021 meeting
- Swansea Bay Health Board plans for change (presentation by Health Board; presentation by Social Services on the impact of the plan) Date TBC
- Update on Support for Carers (including Assessments) Currently scheduled to go to Child & Family Services Panel on 13 December 2021. Adult Services Panel Members to be invited.
- Complaints Annual Report 2020/21 for Adult Services / Child and Family Services (Sarah Lackenby, Chief Transformation Officer) Currently scheduled to go to Child & Family Services Panel on 13 December 2021. Adult Services Panel Members to be invited.
- Welsh Government report: Rebalancing care and support - A consultation on improving social care arrangements and strengthening partnership working to better support people's well-being (Date TBC) (Child & Family Services Panel Members to be invited for this item)
- Progress update on Outcomes Budgeting TBC
- Audit Wales Reports (dates to be confirmed)

## Child & Family Services

<b>Meeting 1</b> Tuesday 25 May 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on progress with Child &amp; Adolescent Mental Health Services</li> <li>• Briefing on Youth Offending Service</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 2</b> Tuesday 22 June 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Regional Adoption Service</li> <li>• Initial feedback from Care Inspectorate Wales Assurance Visit</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 3</b> Wednesday 11 August 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Monitoring</li> <li>• CIW Assurance Visit Full Report</li> <li>• Outcome from Ty Nant CIW Inspection</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 4</b> Tuesday 21 September 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress on Child and Family Improvement Programme</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Update</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 5</b> Wednesday 3 November 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Monitoring</li> <li>• Adolescent Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Update on Child Disability Services</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 6</b> Monday 13 December 2021 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Support for Carers (including assessments)*</li> <li>• Complaints Annual Report 2020/21 for Adult Services / Child and Family Services*</li> <li>• Ty Nant – Update on progress with action plan</li> </ul> <p>* Adult Services Scrutiny Panel Members to be invited for this item</p>
<b>Meeting 7</b> Tuesday 25 January 2022 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of Corporate Priorities in relation to Child and Family Services</li> <li>• Performance Monitoring</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Meeting Budget</b>  Date TBC February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Budget Proposals for Child and Family Services</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 8</b> Wednesday 9 March 2022 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding Quality Unit Annual Report (item to include briefing on safeguarding issues in relation to forced marriages)</li> <li>• Update from Regional Safeguarding Board on how regional arrangements are working</li> </ul>

**Future work programme items:**

- Audit Wales Reports
- Why children become looked after
- Examples of tools and techniques employed by front line staff in family engagement
- Case Studies on Edge of Care

## Development and Regeneration

<p><b>Meeting 1</b> Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July</p>	<p><b>1. Dashboard Monitoring Report (overview of development &amp; regeneration activity)</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 2</b> Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September</p>	<p><b>1. Swansea University: Update on City Deal Investment</b> <b>2. Dashboard Report</b></p>
<p><b>Arena Site Visit</b> 4 - 11 October</p>	<p>Group tours of the Arena led by Lee Richards, City Centre Team Leader (Development &amp; Physical Regeneration)</p>
<p><b>Meeting 3</b> Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November</p>	<p><b>1. City Centre Travel Plan update</b> <b>2. Dashboard Report</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 4</b> Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January</p>	<p><b>1. The Swansea Business Improvement District (BID)</b> <b>2. Foreshore Developments (TBC)</b> <b>3. Dashboard Report</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 5</b> Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March</p>	<p><b>1. Impact of Brexit on Rural Development Programme and Funding Update (Post-2023)</b> <b>2. Economic Regeneration Strategy</b> <b>3. Dashboard Report</b></p>

### **To be scheduled**

- Destination Management Plan / Tourism & Leisure
- Tidal Lagoon / Dragon Island
- Relocation of Council depots
- Historic / Listed Buildings

## Natural Environment

<b>Meeting 1</b> 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature Conservation – Project updates</li> <li>• For information only - Climate Change Action Plan consultation</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 2</b> Wednesday May 19 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Change Action Plan consultation feedback</li> <li>• Climate Emergency Declaration – Council Action Plan Progress</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 3</b> Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Quality Management</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 2</b> 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ash Dieback</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 3</b> Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Flood Risk Management</li> <li>• Water Pollution</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 4</b> Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of Green Space / Weed &amp; Verge Management</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 5</b> Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBC</li> </ul>

Reference: LGS/TCR

Date issued: 15 September 2021

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[www.audit.wales](http://www.audit.wales) / [www.archwilio.cymru](http://www.archwilio.cymru)

Dear colleague

## Auditor General for Wales Review of Town Centre Regeneration

The Auditor General for Wales published his report on Town Centre Regeneration in Wales on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The report, data tool and self-evaluation proforma can be accessed on our website – [HERE](#).

The report makes a number of recommendations to local authorities and the Welsh Government. Following on from letters sent to each council by Audit Directors in June 2021 noting that we would expect that the councils' Governance and Audit Committee formally consider all reports of external review bodies – principally; Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) – our introductory text to the recommendations note the following:

*“We expect each local authority to consider the findings of this review and our recommendations, and that its governance and audit committee receives this report and monitors its response to our recommendations in a timely way”.*

In terms of the practicalities of how this will work, we would ask you to provide us with an electronic link to the Governance and Audit committee agenda (or the agenda of the committee the report is presented to), a link to the minutes for the meeting and any additional comments/actions that the council wish to notify us of.

These should be sent to [council.studies@audit.wales](mailto:council.studies@audit.wales).

I trust this is self-explanatory but please feel free to get in touch if you wish to discuss in more detail.

Best wishes

**Nick Selwyn - Audit Manager**

# Agenda Item 7



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Governance & Audit Committee – 12 October 2021

### Governance & Audit Committee Action Tracker Report

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report details the actions recorded by the Governance & Audit Committee and response to the actions.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jeremy Parkhouse
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	N/A
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	N/A
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	N/A

#### For Information

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 During the course of Governance & 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 Governance & Audit Committee and provides an outcome for each action.
- 1.4 The up to date Action Tracker 2021/22 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.5 The Action Tracker is regularly updated and any completed actions will be marked 'Completed' and coloured in grey.
- 1.6 The Action Tracker is reported to each Governance & Audit Committee meeting for information.



## **2. Equality and Engagement Implications**

2.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

2.2 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

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1 – Governance & Audit Committee Action Tracker 2021/22**  
(Closed actions removed).

### GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION TRACKER 2021/22

Date of Meeting	Minute Ref	Action	Nominated Officer(s)	Status
14/09/21	34	Audit Committee Action Tracker Report	Jeremy Parkhouse	<b>Closed</b> Reports of the Chief Auditor are listed early on future agendas until April 2022.
14/09/21	32	Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22 Monitoring Report for the Period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021	Tracey McNulty	<b>Ongoing</b> Head of Cultural Services provides the Committee with an update report on the Grand Theatre at the meeting scheduled for 12 January 2022.
14/09/21	31	Lay Members on the Governance & Audit Committee	Huw Evans	<b>Ongoing</b> The preferred Committee membership of 15 (10 Councillors and 5 lay members) be recommended for approval to Council on 07/10/21.
14/09/21	30	Service Centre – Accounts Receivable Update	Sian Williams / Michelle Davies	<b>Ongoing</b> Update report to be provided following quarterly report to CMT.
14/09/21	29	Absence Management Audit Report 20/21	Sian Williams / Adrian Chard	<b>Ongoing</b> Update report to be provided in February 2022.
13/07/21	17	Audit Wales - Follow Up Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements - Children in Swansea Council	Simon Jones / Adam Hill	<b>Ongoing</b> Report added to the Work Plan 2021-22 for 09/11/21.
		<p>An update report be provided to the Committee which gives assurances on the following: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that Action Plan dates are being met;</li> <li>• the potential risk with school procurement / monitoring contracts be addressed;</li> <li>• Future training provision for Councillor School Governors is provided;</li> <li>• Clarity is provided regarding the terms of reference /</li> </ul>		

		responsibilities of the various groups supporting the Corporate Safeguarding Board.		
<b>09/06/21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Governance &amp; Audit Committee - Workplan 2021/22</b>		
		Corporate Fraud provide a 6-month update report in addition to their annual report.	Simon Cockings / Jeff Fish / Jonathon Rogers / Jeremy Parkhouse	<b>Ongoing</b> Report added to the Work Plan for 09/11/21.
<b>09/06/21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Governance &amp; Audit Committee Action Tracker Report</b>		
		The action to track Audit Wales recommendations to remain in the Action Tracker Report.  Chair to make enquiries with the Chief Auditor, Cardiff Council regarding the software they use and to contact Audit Wales regarding any spreadsheets they utilise.	Chair / Adam Hill / Richard Rowlands	<b>Ongoing</b> Other local authorities had been contacted regarding the systems they utilised. A new system was planned which would allow accurate monitoring in the future and the Committee would be updated regarding progress in due course.
<b>09/06/21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Employment of Agency Staff Audit Report 2019/20 - 2021 Update</b>		
		The Strategic Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager provides an update report to the Committee meeting scheduled for 12 October 2021.	Adrian Chard / Jeremy Parkhouse	<b>Closed</b> Report included on agenda for 12/10/21 meeting.
<b>19/02/21</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>Overview of the Overall Status of Risk - Quarter 3 2020/21</b>		
		Corporate Directors be requested to attend the Committee on a rotational basis each quarter to outline their Corporate Risks and the governance and risk management controls within their departments.		<b>Ongoing</b> Reports added to the Audit Committee Work Plan 2021-22 as follows: -
			Dave Howes	• Director of Social Services – November 2021;
			Martin Nicholls	• Director of Place – February 2022;
			Adam Hill	• Director of Resources – April 2022.

		The provision of additional risk management training for Officers on Control Measures be highlighted to the Corporate Management Team.	Richard Rowlands	<b>Ongoing</b> Training specifically on Control Measures took place at Leadership Team (Directors, HoS and some other senior managers) as planned on 25 May 2021. A video based on this has been created and uploaded, which is now directly accessible through the risk register along with all other videos provided on risk management and on using the risk register. The video has also been signposted to all Directors, Heads of Service and responsible officers and reminders to review and revise control measures in line with the training and video have been issued each month since June; the need for responsible officers to review their Control Measures was discussed and reinforced again at CMT in August.
<b>09/02/21</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>Update on Swansea Achieving Better Together</b>		
		The Deputy Chief Executive provides a progress report to a future Audit Committee.	Adam Hill / Jeremy Parkhouse	<b>Ongoing</b> Report added to the Work Plan 2021-22 for 09/11/21 and 12/04/21
<b>19/01/21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Election of the Audit Committee Representative on the Annual Governance Group</b>		
		Councillor L V Walton be elected as the Audit Committee representative on the Governance Group and the appointment be until the end of the current Council term in May 2022 only	Jeremy Parkhouse / Chair	<b>Ongoing</b> Re-appointment to be added to the Audit Committee Work Plan for 2022-23.
<b>30/06/20</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>ERW Replacement</b>		
		An update be provided regarding future Scrutiny arrangements as a new regional Education model is introduced post April 2021.	Phil Roberts / Helen Morgan- Rees	<b>Ongoing</b> The termination of ERW and seal of a new legal agreement are on track, subject to ratification. Alternative arrangements for Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Councils to be ratified at each

				constituent Council between September and November 2021.
<b>30/06/20</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>Local Transport Plan</b>		
		An update report regarding the development of a new Local Transport Plan be added to the Audit Committee Work Plan.	Martin Nicholls / Stuart Davies	<b>Closed</b> Following the update regarding Corporate Joint Committee's (CJC), the work surrounding the Local Transport Plan would be completed / monitored by the South West Wales CJC.

# Agenda Item 8



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Governance & Audit Committee – 12 October 2021

### Governance & Audit Committee – Workplan 2021/22

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report details the Governance & Audit Committee Workplan to May 2022.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jeremy Parkhouse
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	N/A
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	N/A
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	N/A
<b>For Information</b>	

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Audit Committee's Work Plan to May 2022 is attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan to May 2022 in Terms of Reference Order is attached at Appendix 2.
- 1.3 The Governance & Audit Committee Statement of Purpose is attached for information at Appendix 3.
- 1.4 The dates included for the meetings in 2021/22 were approved at the Council's Annual Meeting on 20 May 2021.

#### 2. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 2.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage

2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'. Our Integrated Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

2.3 There are no impact assessment 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.

#### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** – Governance & Audit Committee Workplan 2021/22.

**Appendix 2** - Governance & Audit Committee Work Plan to May 2022  
in Terms of Reference Order.

**Appendix 3** – Governance & Audit Committee Statement of Purpose.

## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Date of Meeting
External Audit	<b>Auditor General for Wales Review of Town Centre Regeneration.</b>	The report makes a number of recommendations to local authorities and the Welsh Government.	Ben Smith	12 Oct 2021
Internal Audit	<b>Employment of Agency Staff / Staff Sickness Figures.</b>	To provide an update to Audit Committee on the employment and management of Agency Workers and associated sickness absence figures.	Adrian Chard	12 Oct 2021
Governance & Assurance	<b>Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21.</b>	To provide a report on the work of scrutiny for the municipal year 2020-21.	Brij Madahar	12 Oct 2021
External Audit	<b>Audit Wales - Follow Up Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements - Children in Swansea Council.</b>	<p>This report, previously considered by the Council's Child and Family Scrutiny Performance Panel, includes a summary of the background to this follow up review carried out last year, and the approach used by Audit Wales in producing their report published in Feb. 2020.</p> <p>This report sets out a summary of how Swansea is responding to the Audit Wales report's recommendations, and to highlight where progress is being made against the areas of improvement needed.</p>	Simon Jones	9 Nov 2021
Counter Fraud	<b>Corporate Fraud Function Mid-Year Update Report 2021/22.</b>	Mid-year update on the work undertaken by the Corporate Fraud Function in 2021/22.	Simon Cockings, Jonathon Rogers, Jeff Fish	9 Nov 2021

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## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Date of Meeting
Risk Management & Performance	<b>Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 2.</b>	To report an overview of the status of Corporate Risk in the Council to provide assurance to the Committee that key risks are being managed in accordance with the Council's risk management policy and framework.	Richard Rowlands	9 Nov 2021
Internal Audit	<b>Fundamental Audits 2020/21 Recommendation Tracker Report.</b>	This report provides a summary of the recommendations made following the fundamental audits in 2020/21 and identifies whether the agreed recommendations have been implemented.	Simon Cockings	9 Nov 2021
Financial Reporting	<b>Impact of the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020.</b>	Update regarding the impact of the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 on Accounts Receivable.	Michelle Davies	9 Nov 2021
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/21 – Quarter 2 Monitoring Report.</b>	This report summarises the audits finalised and work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section in Quarter 2 2021/22.	Simon Cockings	9 Nov 2021

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## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Date of Meeting
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation Tracking Report - Quarter 2 2021/22.</b>	This report provides committee with the status of the recommendations made in those audits where the follow-up has been undertaken in Q2 2021/22, to allow the Audit Committee to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by Internal Audit.	Simon Cockings	9 Nov 2021
Operational Matters / Key Risks	<b>Update on Internal Control Environment - Director of Social Services.</b>	Presentation - Update on Internal Control Environment (including a focus on Risk Management and the five highest Risks that Directors are managing).- Director of Social Services.	David Howes	9 Nov 2021

## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Date of Meeting
<p>Governance &amp; Assurance</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 89</p>	<p><b>Update on Swansea Achieving Better Together.</b></p>	<p>On 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Cabinet approved the new “From Recovery to Transformation” report detailing the 3 Phases from recover through to the “Swansea – Achieving Better Together, Transformation Strategy &amp; Programme Framework 2022 – 2026”. The Managing the Present and Shaping the Future, Swansea Council – From Recovery to Transformation Strategy replaces Sustainable Swansea - fit for the future.</p> <p>The report will set out the background and current position with regards to the work programme.</p>	<p>Adam Hill</p>	<p>9 Nov 2021</p>
<p>Governance &amp; Assurance</p>	<p><b>Update Report South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee.</b></p>	<p>To provide an update on the progress towards setting up the new corporate joint committee for the south west wales region.</p>	<p>Martin Nicholls</p>	<p>12 Jan 2022</p>
<p>Risk Management &amp; Performance</p>	<p><b>Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 3.</b></p>	<p>To report an overview of the status of Corporate Risk in the Council to provide assurance to the Committee that key risks are being managed in accordance with the Council’s risk management policy and framework.</p>	<p>Richard Rowlands</p>	<p>8 Feb 2022</p>

## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Date of Meeting
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Annual Plan 2021/22 – Quarter 3 Monitoring Report.</b>	This report summarises the audits finalised and work undertaken by the Internal Audit Section in Quarter 3 2021/22.	Simon Cockings	8 Feb 2022
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation Tracking Report - Quarter 3 2021/22.</b>	This report provides committee with the status of the recommendations made in those audits where the follow-up has been undertaken in Q3 2021/22, to allow the Audit Committee to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by Internal Audit.	Simon Cockings	8 Feb 2022
Operational Matters / Key Risks	<b>Update on Internal Control Environment – Director of Place.</b>	Presentation - Update on Internal Control Environment (including a focus on Risk Management and the five highest Risks that Directors are managing).) – Director of Place.	Martin Nicholls	8 Feb 2022
Internal Audit	<b>Draft Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022/23.</b>	This report presents the Draft Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022/23 to the Audit Committee for consideration prior to the final plan coming to committee in April for approval.	Simon Cockings	8 Mar 2022

## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Date of Meeting
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Annual Plan Methodology Report 2022/23.</b>	This report provides a briefing to the Audit Committee on the methodology used to prepare the Internal Audit Annual Plan in advance of the Annual Plan 2022/23 being reported to the Committee for approval on 12 April 2021.	Simon Cockings	8 Mar 2022
Risk Management & Performance	<b>Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 4.</b>	To report an overview of the status of Corporate Risk in the Council to provide assurance to the Committee that key risks are being managed in accordance with the Council's risk management policy and framework.	Richard Rowlands	12 Apr 2022
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Charter 2022/23.</b>	This report outlines the background to the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS) which were introduced with effect from 1st April 2013 and presents the Internal Audit Charter for final approval by Audit Committee following Corporate Management Team approval.	Simon Cockings	12 Apr 2022
Internal Audit	<b>Internal Audit Strategy &amp; Annual Plan 2022/23.</b>	This report presents the Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan for 2022/23 to the Audit Committee for approval.	Simon Cockings	12 Apr 2022
Operational Matters / Key Risks	<b>Swansea Achieving Better Together – Update Report</b>	Six-month update report on progress.	Adam Hill	12 Apr 2022

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## Governance & Audit Committee Plan

Appendix 1

<b>Terms of Reference</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Date of Meeting</b>
Operational Matters / Key Risks	<b>Update on Internal Control Environment – Director of Resources.</b>	Presentation - Update on Internal Control Environment (including a focus on Risk Management and the five highest Risks that Directors are managing).– Director of Resources.	Adam Hill	12 Apr 2022

Governance & Audit Committee Workplan 2021/22

Appendix 2

Terms of Reference	9 June 2021	13 July 2021	24 August 2021	14 September 2021	12 October 2021	9 November 2021	14 December 2021	12 January 2022	8 February 2022	8 March 2022	12 April 2022
<b>Training</b>		Draft Governance and Audit Committee Training Programme.									
<b>Governance &amp; Assurance</b>	Election of Chair & Vice Chair	Election of Vice-Chair		Update Report – South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee.  Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 - Change in Membership	Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21.			Update Report – South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee			
<b>Internal Audit</b>  Page 93	IA Quarter 4 Monitoring Report  Grand Theatre Audit Report 2020/21  Service Centre – Accounts Receivable Update  Employment of Agency Staff	Annual Report of School Audits 2020-21		IA Recommendation Tracking Report – Q1 21/22  IA Quarter 1 Monitoring Report  Management of Absence Update  Service Centre – Accounts Receivable Update.	Employment of Agency Staff.	Fundamental Audits 2020/21 – Recommendation Tracker Report  IA Recommendation Tracking Report – Q2 2021/22  IA Q 2 Monitoring Report		Update - Grand Theatre Audit Report 2020/21	IA Recommendation Tracking Report – Q3 2021/22  IA Q 3 Monitoring Report  Management of Absence Update	IA Annual Plan Methodology Report 2022/23  Draft IA Annual Plan 2022/23	IA Charter 2022/23  IA Strategy & Annual Plan 2022/23
<b>Risk Management &amp; Performance</b>				Q1 Risk Monitoring Report		Q2 Risk Monitoring Report			Q3 Risk Monitoring Report		Q4 Risk Monitoring Report
<b>Counter Fraud</b>		Corporate Fraud Annual Report				Corporate Fraud – Six Month Update					
<b>Operational matters / key risks</b>				Update on Internal Control Environment – Director of Education		Update on Internal Control Environment – Director of Social Services			Update on Internal Control Environment – Director of Place		Swansea Achieving Better Together – Update Report

Governance & Audit Committee Workplan 2021/22

Appendix 2

						Swansea Achieving Better Together – Update Report					Update on Internal Control Environment – Director of Resources
<b>External Audit</b>		Audit Wales - Follow Up Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements - Children in Swansea Council.	Audit Wales - ISA 260 Report - City And County of Swansea  Audit Wales - Financial Sustainability Assessment - City and County of Swansea Council.		Auditor General for Wales Review of Town Centre Regeneration.	Audit Wales - Follow Up Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements - Children in Swansea Council.					
<b>Financial Reporting</b>			Statement of Accounts			Impact of Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020					

*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.*

**Reports Carried Over to 2022-2023 Municipal Year**

Terms of Reference	Report Title
Governance & Assurance	Appointment of Committee Member on Annual Governance Group



## Governance & Audit Committee

### Statement of Purpose

The Governance and 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.

The purpose of the Governance and Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the performance assessment of the Council. It provides an independent review of the governance, performance assessment, 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.

### Membership

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 provides that at least one member of the Committee must be a lay member.

### Governance, Performance, Risk and Control

- a) To review the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework and consider annual governance reports and assurances.
- b) To review the Council's draft annual Self-Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes to the conclusions or actions the Council intends to make.
- c) To review the Council's draft response to the Panel Performance Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- d) To review the Council's draft response to any Auditor General's recommendations arising from a special inspection in respect of the Council's performance requirements and to make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- e) To review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively and to make any associated reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively.
- f) To review the Annual Governance Statement prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances.
- g) To consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- h) To consider the Council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.
- i) To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the Council.
- j) To monitor progress in addressing risk related issues reported to the Committee.
- k) To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- l) To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption.
- m) To monitor the counter fraud strategy, actions and resources.

- n) To review any proposals in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations.
- o) To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.

#### **Internal Audit**

- p) To approve the internal audit charter and resources.
- q) To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, containing internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurances and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.
- r) To approve significant interim changes to the risk based internal audit plan and resource requirements.
- s) To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the Chief Internal Auditor to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
- t) To consider the Chief Internal Auditor'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.
- u) To consider the Chief Internal Auditor's annual report including:
- v) To consider reports from the Chief Internal Auditor on Internal Audit's performance during the year including the performance of external providers of internal audit services. These will include:
- w) To consider a report on the effectiveness of internal audit to support the Annual Governance Statement, where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- x) To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the Chief Internal Auditor. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.
- y) To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- z) To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Chief Internal Auditor has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
- aa) To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of internal audit services.
- bb) To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
- cc) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
- dd) To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and in particular the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
- ee) To provide free and unfettered access to the Governance and Audit Committee Chair for the Chief Internal Auditor, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the Committee.

## **External Audit**

- ff) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and to those charged with governance.
- gg) To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- hh) To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
- ii) To commission work from external audit.
- jj) To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external audit and other inspector agencies or relevant bodies

## **Financial Reporting**

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

## **Accountability Arrangements**

- mm) 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 in meeting its purpose.
- nn) To report to Council on an annual basis and to publish an annual report on the Committee's work, its performance in relation to the Terms of Reference, and its effectiveness in meeting its purpose.
- oo) To raise the profile of probity generally within the Council and to report on matters of concern to the individual Cabinet Member, relevant Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or to Council as necessary and appropriate.
- pp) To work in synergy with the Scrutiny Committees of the Council and liaise with other Council Committees as and when appropriate to avoid duplication in work programmes.
- qq) To report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the Appendix 1 adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions
- rr) To publish an annual report on the work of the committee.

## **Training and Development**

- ss) To attend relevant training sessions including specialist training tailored for Members of the Governance and Audit Committee.

*Note: Governance & Audit Committee Statement of Purpose extracted from the Council Constitution (07.09.21).*