

## Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the **Council of the City and County of Swansea** to be held in the Remotely via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 7 October 2021 at 5.00 pm.

**Watch Online:** <https://bit.ly/2XGCmAw>

The following business is proposed to be transacted:

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**  
[www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests)
3. **Minutes.** **1 - 6**  
To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.
4. **Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council.** **7 - 8**
5. **Announcements of the Presiding Member.**
6. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council.**
7. **Public Questions.**  
Questions must be submitted in writing, no later than noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must relate to items on the agenda. Questions will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.
8. **Annual Report 2020/21 Director of Social Services.** **9 - 96**
9. **Review of Revenue Reserves.** **97 - 123**
10. **Amendments to the Council Constitution.** **124 - 154**
11. **Lay Members on the Governance & Audit Committee.** **155 - 157**
12. **Democratic Services Committee Annual Reports 2019-2020 & 2020-2021.** **158 - 175**
13. **Scrutiny Dispatches – Impact Report.** **176 - 185**
14. **Councillors' Questions.** **186 - 194**

**Webcasting:** This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to be filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and / or training purposes.

**You are welcome to speak Welsh in the meeting.**

Please inform us by noon, two working days before the meeting.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, 4 November 2021 at 5.00 pm



**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Guildhall,**  
**Swansea.**

**Wednesday, 29 September 2021**

**To: All Members of the Council**

# Agenda Item 3.



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the Council

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Thursday, 2 September 2021 at 5.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor D W W Thomas (Chair) Presided

### Councillor(s)

C Anderson  
P M Black  
J E Burtonshaw  
M C Child  
J P Curtice  
N J Davies  
A M Day  
P Downing  
C R Doyle  
M Durke  
C R Evans  
V M Evans  
E W Fitzgerald  
R Francis-Davies  
S J Gallagher  
L S Gibbard  
F M Gordon  
K M Griffiths  
J A Hale  
D W Helliwell  
T J Hennegan

### Councillor(s)

C A Holley  
B Hopkins  
D H Hopkins  
L James  
O G James  
Y V Jardine  
J W Jones  
L R Jones  
M H Jones  
M Jones  
P K Jones  
S M Jones  
E J King  
E T Kirchner  
H Lawson  
A S Lewis  
M B Lewis  
R D Lewis  
W G Lewis  
P Lloyd  
I E Mann

### Councillor(s)

P M Matthews  
H M Morris  
D Phillips  
C L Philpott  
S Pritchard  
A Pugh  
C Richards  
K M Roberts  
B J Rowlands  
M Sherwood  
R V Smith  
A H Stevens  
R C Stewart  
D G Sullivan  
G J Tanner  
L G Thomas  
G D Walker  
L V Walton  
T M White

### Officer(s)

Huw Evans	Head of Democratic Services
Adam Hill	Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources
Tracey Meredith	Chief Legal Officer / Monitoring Officer
Phil Roberts	Chief Executive
Ben Smith	Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Jason Garcia	Audit Manager (Financial Manager)

### Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P R Hood-Williams, M A Langstone, C E Lloyd, J A Raynor, W G Thomas, M Thomas and L J Tyler-Lloyd

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**34. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

The Chief Legal Officer gave advice regarding the potential personal and prejudicial interests that Councillors and / Officers may have on the agenda.

The Head of Democratic Services reminded Councillors and Officers that the "Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests" sheet should be completed if the Councillor / Officer actually had an interest to declare. Nil returns were not required. Councillors and Officers were also informed that any declarable interest must be made orally and in writing on the sheet.

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

- 1) Councillor T J Hennegan declared a Personal Interest in Minute 40 "Report of Audit Wales – Audit of Accounts Report – City & County of Swansea.
- 2) Councillors C Anderson, M C Child, J P Curtice, R Francis-Davies, C Evans, F M Gordon, J A Hale, T J Hennegan, C A Holley, E T Kirchner, M B Lewis, P Lloyd, H M Morris, B J Rowlands, R V Smith, D W W Thomas and T M White declared a Personal Interest in Minute 41 "Statement of Accounts 2020/21".
- 3) Councillor M C Child declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest in Minute 43 "Councillors' Questions – Question 3" and withdrew from the meeting prior to its discussion.

**35. Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the following Minutes be approved and signed as a correct record:

- 1) Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 29 July 2021.

**36. Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council - None.**

The Chief Legal Officer submitted an information report setting out the written responses to questions asked at the last Ordinary Meeting of Council.

**37. Announcements of the Presiding Member.**

**a) APSE "Association for Public Service Excellence" - 2021 Awards**

The APSE Awards recognise the very best in Local Government frontline services across the UK. The winners will be announced at the APSE Annual Charity Awards Dinner, in aid of Parkinson's UK, on 9 September 2021. The Presiding Member stated that Swansea Council has been shortlisted as Overall Council of the Year and also in a further 3 categories in the APSE Awards 2021.

- i) Best Service Team Housing & Construction Initiative. More Homes Delivery Team. Building Services & Housing.
- ii) Best Housing, Regeneration or New Build Initiative. More Homes Swansea Standard / HAPS (Homes as Power Stations) Developments. Housing & Building Services.
- iii) Best Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship Initiative. Commercial Development Focus. Commercial Services.

**b) Welsh Housing Awards 2021**

The Welsh Housing Awards recognise and celebrate the creativity, passion, and innovation of housing organisations and individuals across the sector in Wales. The winners will be announced on 30 September 2021. The Presiding Member stated that Swansea Council has been shortlisted in 2 categories in the Welsh Housing Awards 2021.

- i) Partnership Working Category. Tŷ Tom Jones.
- ii) Innovation in Housing Category. Swansea Council in partnership with Welsh School of Architecture.

The Council also nominated Organisations for awards but the Council was not leading the projects:

- i) Supporting Communities Category. Swansea Together Food Project.
- ii) Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Category. Swansea's Specialist Homelessness Nurse.

**c) Paralympics – Para Table Tennis – Paul Karabardak**

The Presiding Member congratulated Paul Karabardak of Waunarlwydd on his recent Bronze Medal at the Paralympics 2021 in Para Table Tennis. Paul has previously won a number of European Medals following hard work and perseverance.

**d) Pinc List 2021 - Wales' most influential LGBT+ People**

The Pinc List recognises Wales' most influential LGBT+ People. The Presiding Member stated that Councillor Elliott King, Cabinet Member for Children Services, Chair of Swansea's LGBT+ Forum and lead on Swansea Pride is on that list.

**38. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.**

**1) Kabul, Afghanistan & Swansea City of Sanctuary**

The Leader of the Council referred to the awful scenes at Kabul, Afghanistan recently. He reassured the Council that Swansea was a City of Sanctuary and it was helping those refugees fleeing persecution to re-settle in Swansea.

**2) Covid-19 Update**

The Leader of the Council provided an update on the Covid-19 pandemic.

**3) Free Bus Travel within City & County of Swansea**

The Leader of the Council stated that the Authority had recently funded free bus travel within the City & County of Swansea for the duration of the summer holidays. This scheme was aimed as a boost for families, tourism and business. It had been an outstanding success.

The Leader of the Council stated that the Authority hoped to run the promotion again during half term and also during the Christmas holidays.

**39. Public Questions.**

There were no public questions.

**40. Report of Audit Wales - Audit of Accounts Report - City & County of Swansea.**

Jason Garcia, Audit Wales presented the "Audit Wales, Audit of Accounts Report 2020-2021 for the City and County of Swansea".

Jason Garcia (Audit Wales) responded to questions of a technical nature whilst Ben Smith (Section 151 Officer) responded to questions relating to the position of the City and County of Swansea.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The Final Letter of Representation be approved and signed.

**41. Statement of Accounts 2020/21.**

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report that sought approval of the Statement of Accounts 2020-2021 on or before 15 September 2020.

**Resolved** that the 2020-2021 Statement of Accounts attached at Appendix A of the report be approved.

**42. Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-2021.**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee submitted an information report, which outlined the Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-2021 setting out the work of Scrutiny over that period.

**43. Councillors' Questions.**

**1) Part A 'Supplementary Questions'**

Four (4) Part A 'Supplementary Questions' were submitted. The relevant Cabinet Member(s) responded by way of written answers contained in the Council Summons.

Those supplementary questions required a written response are outlined below:

**Question 1**

Councillor C A Holley stated that following the closure of the Felindre Works the former Welsh Development Agency and former Lliw Valley Borough Council owned the brown field and green field site totalling approximately 750 acres. This land was earmarked for a 750-acre Business Park.

The Business Park now only equates to approximately 150 acres with the remaining land allocated as land for housing under the Local Development Plan (LDP).

When was the decision made to remove the land from Business Park use and why?

The Investment, Regeneration & Tourism Cabinet Member stated that a written response would be provided.

**2) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions'**

Three (3) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions' were submitted.

**44. Notice of Motion - MND Charter.**

Proposed by Councillor S Pritchard and Seconded by Councillor R C Stewart.

***The Council Notes***

- 1. That Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a rapidly progressing disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. It can leave people locked in a failing body, unable to move, talk and eventually breathe.*

2. *A person's lifetime risk of developing MND is up to 1 in 300. It can affect people from all communities and backgrounds.*
3. *This disease kills around 30% of people within 12 months of diagnosis, more than 50% within two years. It affects people from all communities*
4. *Currently there is no cure to Motor Neurone Disease.*

**The Council Believes**

1. *People with MND have the right to an early diagnoses and information.*
2. *People with MND have the right to access quality care and treatments.*
3. *People with MND have the right to be treated as individuals and with dignity and respect.*
4. *People with MND have the right to maximise their quality of life.*
5. *Carers of people with MND have the right to be valued, respected, listened to and well-supported.*

**The Council Resolves**

*For the Council to sign up to the MND charter.*

<https://www.mndassociation.org/app/uploads/2016/02/champion-the-mnd-charter-full.pdf>

**Resolved** that the Notice of Motion outlined above be adopted.

The meeting ended at 6.35 pm

**Chair**



# Agenda Item 4.



## Report of the Chief Legal Officer

Council – 7 October 2021

### Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council

The report provides an update on the responses to Questions asked during the Meeting of Council held on 2 September 2021.

#### For Information

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 It was agreed at Council on 8 April 2010 that a standing item be added to the Council Summons entitled “Written Responses to Questions Asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council”.
- 1.2 A “For Information” report will be compiled by the Democratic Services Team collating all written responses from the last Ordinary Meeting of Council and placed in the Agenda Pack;
- 1.3 Any consequential amendments be made to the Council Constitution.

#### 2. Responses

- 2.1 Responses to questions asked during the last ordinary meeting of Council are included as Appendix A.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** Appendix A (Questions & Responses)

**Providing Council with Written Responses to Questions asked at Council  
2 September 2021**

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Councillor C A Holley</b></p> <p><b>In relation to Minute - Councillors Questions - Question 1</b></p> <p>Councillor C A Holley stated that following the closure of the Felindre Works the former Welsh Development Agency and former Lliw Valley Borough Council owned the brown field and green field site totalling approximately 750 acres. This land was earmarked for a 750-acre Business Park.</p> <p>The Business Park now only equates to approximately 150 acres with the remaining land allocated as land for housing under the Local Development Plan (LDP).</p> <p>When was the decision made to remove the land from Business Park use and why.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement &amp; Infrastructure Management</b></p> <p>The information required to respond to this question has been requested from our Joint Venture partners in Welsh Government. Unfortunately we are still awaiting a response and will advise further in due course.</p>
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# Agenda Item 8.



## Report of the Director of Social Services

Council – 7 October 2021

### Annual Report 2020/21 Director of Social Services

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report is the Director of Social Services' account of the Council's improvement journey to 2022/21, and how well the Council is meeting statutory requirements under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The report looks back at last year's areas for improvement, the challenges we face and sets new priorities for 2021/22. It highlights changes that have taken place within social services to achieve progress towards national well-being outcomes.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	The Annual Report of the Director of Social Services is a requirement under Part 8 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, and the report is required to give the Director's own account of how well Swansea Council are responding to the main challenges,. In particular, in meeting the Act's statutory requirements and progress towards achieving outcomes set by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal, Social Services
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that Council:  1) Receive and approve the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, 2020/21
<b>Report Authors:</b>	David Howes & Simon Jones
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Chris Davies
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services is to evaluate the local authority's improvement journey to 2020/21, improving services to people in Swansea, those who access information, advice and assistance, and to those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. This report also sets out to demonstrate how well Swansea's Social Services has implemented requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act) and how well we have promoted and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards to the citizens of Swansea.
- 1.2 This Annual Report is a statutory requirement under the Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of Director of Social Services (Social Services functions) under the SSWB Act, which prescribes a format and template for the report to follow. Part 8 of the SSWB Act also states that the annual report should be published "as soon as reasonably practicable" after the year to which it relates. The report is required to be presented to Council by the Director, then copied to the Welsh Minister, as well as Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), and finally published on the Council's public website.
- 1.3 The main background paper to this report is the Director of Social Service's Annual report 2020/21.

## 2. Annual Report

- 2.1 The main report, as appended, has been written with a close eye on Reg. 3 of the *Local Authority Social Services Annual Reports (Prescribed Form) (Wales) Regulations 2017*, which came into force on the 4th September 2017.
- 2.2 This statutory regulation sets out in detail the information which is required to be included in the Director of Social Services' annual report, although this is likely to change in the next year or two alongside the introduction of a new national performance framework. As things stand, the Director of Social Services' Annual report is still set out using the following headings:

### **Part One:**

- Introduction
- Director's summary of performance
- How are people shaping our services?

### **Part Two:**

- Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help,

### **Part Three:**

- How we do what we do
- Accessing further information and key documents

- 2.3 The information in Section 4, National Quality Standards has to be set out in six parts, highlighting progress in meeting the national Local Authority

quality standards under the following headings. The six national quality standards are:

NQS 1: Working with people to define & co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

NQS 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

NQS 3: Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

NQS 4: Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

NQS 5: Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

NQS 6: Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

Each of the 6 parts in Section 4 covers the outcomes expected, what we are doing how well we are doing and the priorities for the year ahead

2.4 Director of Social Services' Annual Report 2020/21 is an opportunity to show how Swansea is meeting the new statutory requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and how we are applying the five ways of working within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.5 A revised Code of Practice for measuring social services performance, including a new set of quality standards, and the national Performance and Improvement framework for Social Services, has recently been published: <https://gov.wales/measuring-social-services-performance-code-practice> Changes to the Directors annual report template and guidance are expected to be published later in the year to be in use next year.

2.6 Current guidance suggests that the annual report is produced and presented to Council, and that this report together with last year's is made available to Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) and Welsh Government by October 2021.. An important consideration as always is the availability of performance and activity data.

2.7 There is some impact on the continuity of data in this report, due to a number of factors

- Changes in Welsh Government reporting requirements (statutory returns) under the New Performance and Improvement Framework for Social Services
- Going live with the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) at the year end to replace PARIS
- Preparation needed for the CiW Assurance visits to Adult and Child and Family Services held in June 2021.
- Covid-19 challenges and the impact this has had on staff working in social services with a reduced capacity in business support.

### **3. Other Issues**

- 3.1 Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) is expected to hold an annual performance review meetings later in the year, as with each local authority social services. Senior management, cabinet members and scrutiny chairs are invited to the meeting to share in feedback from their recent inspection activity and to discuss progress against the statutory requirements, improvement priorities and against performance measures.
- 3.2 The purpose of the five-day assurance checks held in June 2021 was to review how well local authority Social Services continue to help adults, children, and carers at this difficult time, and to consider future plans for sustainability of services. The main scope of these checks is around:
- How well are local authorities discharging their statutory functions to keep people who need care and support and carers who need support, safe and promote their well-being during the pandemic.
  - How well local authorities prevent the need for children to come in to care; and are children returning home to their families quickly enough, where safe to do so.
- 3.3 This year the annual performance review is expected to incorporate feedback from the assurance visits, in particular on improvement and transformation plans, and the data submitted for the first time to meet the requirements of the new Performance & Improvement framework.
- 3.4 The final version of Care Inspectorate Wales letter to the Director of Social Services summarising their findings during their assurance check on Swansea Council, as carried out in June 2021, is now attached to this report (Appendix C)

### **4. Integrated Impact Assessments 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 An Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed, with the agreed outcomes as follows:
- **Summary of Impacts (Q2)** Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.
  - **Summary of involvement (Q3) Social Services work closely with other** Swansea Council services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards and works co-productively on services development and commissioning plans. This development work and the involvement of others has been involved in his report.
  - **WFG considerations (Q4)** Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the transformation and improvement programmes within social services, which are working towards a sustainable model of social care. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified social care workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for Swansea citizens. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support social care workers in their professional development, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with vulnerable people and their carers.
  - **Any risks identified (Q5)** The improvements and transformation programmes set out within this plan are risk managed closely. Any risks identified, and agreed, are mitigated as routine within social services at service, directorate and corporate levels through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting sand escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.
  - **Cumulative impact (Q7)** There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens though the continuous improvement of social services, and the benefits this brings to the social care economy and wider social care workforce.

The screening exercise concluded it is not necessary to complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment on this report.

- 4.3 The Director of Social Services' annual report also sets out progress towards the Council's objective on Well-being and corporate priority of Safeguarding people from harm, as described in the Corporate Plan 2020-22, and as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and associated statutory guidance.
- 4.4 The Director's Annual Report takes into account the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by outlining (p36) how Swansea Council is committed to taking forward these rights through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board, and action plan.
- 4.5 The Annual Report also summarises Swansea Council's progress on mainstreaming Welsh language standards, and "Mwy Na Geriau / More than Just Words" framework for Health and Social Care. In particular, whether there has been progress on delivering the 'active offer' in social services whereby staff initiate a response to the public by offering to provide services in Welsh language. Also progress is expected by the Council on implementing the Welsh Language standards in other business as usual areas; by mainstreaming the Welsh language into service delivery, commissioning and workforce planning.
- 4.6 The Director's Annual Report has to be comply with Welsh Language Standards. The full report will be translated in a Welsh Language version, then published on the Council's public website, following its presentation at the Full Council meeting in October 2021.

## **5. Financial Implications**

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

## **6. Legal Implications**

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

### **Background Papers:**

- Director's Annual report 2020/21, including appendices.
- Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form: Directors Annual Report.
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) letter to Director of Social Services on the Assurance Check 2021: Swansea Council carried out in June 2021

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A - Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020/21.

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment screening form, relating to Annual Report.

Appendix C - Letter to Director of Social Services received from CiW summarising findings out of the Assurance Check 2021 carried out in Swansea Council in June 2021.





# **Annual Report of Statutory Director of Social Services 2020-2021**

**(July 2021)**

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# 1. Introduction by David Howes, Director of Social Services

Welcome to my fifth annual report as Swansea Council's Director of Social Services, which covers our improvement journey during 2020-21. This report is a statutory requirement, as set out in Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

We have faced some major challenges this year, none more so than the Covid-19 pandemic, and we can expect further impact in the year ahead. The pandemic has dramatically changed the way we all live, work and spend our time; requiring us to adapt and behave in a different ways to how we lived before.

Again, I want to start this report with my sincere thanks to our remarkable social work and the wider social care workforce in Swansea. All workers, whether employed by the Council, in the independent and third sectors, all the unpaid carers, volunteers and other members of the community who have shown astonishing resilience, commitment and humanity to support our most vulnerable citizens during these extraordinarily difficult of times.

Many social services have carried on through this difficult period some in a different form, some meeting additional demand, and we are now looking to the future in how best to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. To do this, the Council has set out a recovery programme – "Achieving Better Together", which will support our own transformation programmes, in readiness for a new Corporate Plan in place from 2022.

We will be building on what has worked well in our response to recent changes, to continue to test out new ways of working. Swansea Council respects the rights of adults and children, and takes listening to and working with people who have support needs seriously when making decisions that affect them. Whilst we have to recognise that people want to enjoy their right to take part in decisions that affect them at different times, and in different ways. I am particularly proud of the participation work with young people and young carers taking place to reshape our services for the future.

Safeguarding remains as our top corporate priority, at the heart of how Council services are prioritised. We recognise that in relation to the safe delivery of health and social care arrangements, the Council needed to work even more closely and effectively with statutory and third sector partners, and this has been achieved through the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership.

Thanks to Social Services Senior Management Team, and to my colleagues in the Corporate Management Team for you tireless support and understanding.

I am also conscious that the role of Swansea Council's Director of Social Services would quickly move from challenging to impossible without the constructive support and challenge from both Corporate colleagues and Elected Members.

I'd like to formally thank Cllr Elliot King for his leadership of both children services and the Youth Offending Service. The impact of the pandemic on children, families and the childrens workforce cannot be underestimated.

In similar vein, the pandemic has further highlighted the importance of the Council's role in working with and in communities. Again the leadership of Cllrs Alyson Pugh and Louise Gibbard has been invaluable in helping us navigate such a difficult period.

A particular mention has to go to Cllr Clive Lloyd. I cannot think of a more challenging period in which to take up the portfolio for adult social care, health and well being. He once commented that he spent more time with me than he did with his own family. I suspect that wasn't far from the truth and speaks to his commitment to make sure that our workforce were as well supported as possible and that the Council's services were the best that they could be for the most vulnerable cohorts of our population. He can pass back the baton to Cllr Mark Child feeling very proud.

The Council has always acknowledged the important role played by the two dedicated scrutiny performance panels in ensuring the Council maintains high quality social services. This year the panels have had to strike a balance between maintaining that critical challenge function whilst being sufficiently flexible to avoid creating unnecessary demands on a service working under incredible pressure. Again my sincere thanks to Cllrs Paxton Hood Williams and Susan Jones for managing that difficult balancing act so effectively.

## **2. Analysis of Current Performance**

### **2a. Overall Summary**

In this section, I give my view, as Director of Social Services, on how effective we have been in supporting Swansea's most vulnerable citizens to achieve their wellbeing outcomes. How we are delivering on the full range of statutory requirements set for us; progress towards our improvement priorities and in achieving our performance targets.

I am truly proud to represent a small part of the exceptional work undertaken by my social services colleagues during this year. Through the many challenges we faced down in 2020/21, I am confident that Council resources have been managed not only effectively and efficiently, but with real impact on people's lives. Throughout the pandemic, our service activity levels have been consistently high, and performance standards have been maintained.

There have been ministerial changes within Welsh Government, but the overall policy direction remains the same to work together with other organisations, particularly health to improve people's wellbeing. At the same time we can expect further difficult times ahead as funding for public services is expected to get tighter and tighter as central government tackles the costs of borrowing.

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board continues to oversee our regional response to Covid-19, how it impacts on, and is mitigated by social care and primary and community health provision. If anything the pandemic has strengthened partnership working between the statutory agencies, third sector and other stakeholders. That strengthened partnership working will now increasingly focus on the stabilisation and reconstruction of health and care services locally and across the region.

Many of the stories and achievements showcased in this report reflect the hard work of colleagues regionally and locally both within the Council and in partnerships.

We have managed to achieve changes such as going live with the national Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS) when working at home or in new ways.

There is always work still to do, and we always welcome constructive feedback whether from our regulators Care Inspectorate Wales or from the people we serve. We have a strong track record of scrutiny in Swansea, in particular the scrutiny performance panels serving both Adult Services and Child and Families have contributed massively to our staying on the right road to improvement.

Given the impact of the pandemic on our population, the severe disruption to the routine delivery of services and the impacts on our workforce, we would quite reasonably have expected a severe impact on performance. However quite remarkably our performance has held up well.

This is testament to the resilience, commitment and hard work of managers and staff across the social services directorate, the wider Council and our partners - statutory, third and independent sector.

In children services, we were concerned that the absence of the usual societal support and safeguarding provided by schools and the usual community support infrastructure during extended periods of lockdown could lead to a significant increase in child protection concerns and the risk of family breakdown.

Children services worked hard with colleagues in education, schools and from other partners to mitigate that risk as best we could.

This year's report reflects how integral our Tackling Poverty range of services has become to the preventative and wellbeing approaches within Child and Family, and Adult Services. For the first time we have a section that summarises their excellent performance and achievements, see section 2d. How we are performing – Tackling Poverty

It cannot be stated often enough, the performance that has been achieved this year in circumstances that none of us could have imagined is nothing short of miraculous. Our workforce, our frontline managers, our Heads of service and their senior management teams have achieved extraordinary things and should all be extremely proud

I am particularly pleased with how changes in senior management team have brought both continuity and exciting innovation.

Julie Davies came into post as Head of Child and Family Services in September 2020 following the retirement of her predecessor, Julie Thomas after an era of outstanding public service for the Council.

Amy Hawkins as Interim Head of Adult Services and Helen St John as Interim Head of Integrated Services have brought tremendous energy and leadership to their new roles building on foundations put in place by their predecessor, Alex Williams, who moved on in May 2020.

## **2b. How we are performing –Child and Family Services**

### **i) Vision /strategy**

Child & Family Services are responsible for the provision of services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

#### **Vision statement:**

"Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people and families"

This updated vision for Child and Family services was recently voted on by staff across the service.

These are challenging times for children, young people and families, and the whole service has responded magnificently to the new and existing challenges, and we continue to deliver core business effectively and with innovation.

How our service has adapted to the pandemic demonstrates the resilience of staff, their continued hard work and professionalism. Of course, a major issue remains the high numbers of looked after children and whilst the focus of the work has been around children and young people in residential care, with a high level of success, we are working to achieve permanence through placements in supportive families when possible.

#### **Regional Transformation Plan for Health and Social Care**

The key priorities to provide better services for children, young people and families in the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board (RPB) transformation plan are transforming mental health services and transforming complex care.

Mapping of safer accommodation support is currently underway within the region, under the Transforming Complex Care programme. This planning work is taking into account multi-agency approaches to filling gaps across services including working with Health and Education colleagues to ensure the right support is made available to children and young people.

Child and Family Services Improvement Programme underpins the Council's Recovery Plan and our Safe LAC reduction strategy.

#### **Child and Family Improvement programme**

Within the overarching Improvement Programme – Child and Family Services are taking forward the Systems Thinking Approach.

Building on the successful use of systems thinking methodology in areas such as Early Help, Prevention and Family Support over a number of years, the method is being scaled-up across the service to support more sustainable, whole system change.

This will allow the whole service to be better set up to achieve the overarching purpose, values and principles for the service.

By identifying individual purpose, values steps and principles for each team, managers will be able to develop a clear understanding of the role of each Team in achieving 'what matters' for those they support. This will ensure that the system continues to support staff to work in a way that allows them to undertake their roles effectively, without unnecessary waste and system conditions. Ultimately, supporting staff with a system to work within which is as committed to achieving positive outcomes.

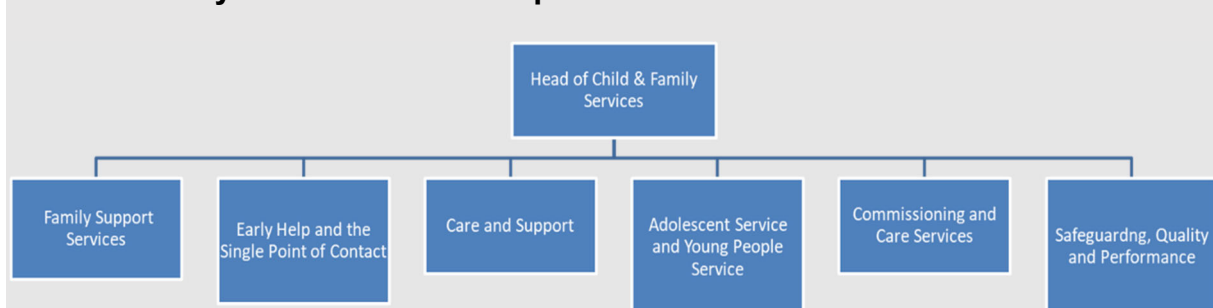
The wellbeing of staff and their professional development has been brought more and more into focus during covid, and our improvement programme reflects this.

### **Service Planning/ Appraisals**

Child and Family Services are taking a new approach to Service Planning and Appraisals this year. This will see managers working closely with their staff to decide the purpose of their team, understand what work is valuable to reach the purpose, and design what the principles the team want to work to achieve the purpose and valuable work.

Child and Family Services continues to strive for high standards of service delivery. Our new Quality Assurance framework focuses on understanding the lived experience of our children, young people and families to inform service improvement.

### **Child & Family Services Leadership**



Child & Family Services –new Leadership Structure high level v2

We are expanding the qualitative and quantitative data capture in how we work. We are identifying what good practice looks like through child protection, panels and crisis work. In all our work with children, young people and families, we are building in assurances that they have the right to expect the right service at the right time. Our leadership team changes are aiming at developing a culture committed to continual learning and development of our staff.



## ii) What we do (Activity in 2020/21)

**Table 1. Child and Family Services activity in 2020-21 (Front Door/ Assessment)**

**Population estimate:** there are approximately **46,988** (47,189) children and young people aged 0-17, who are living in Swansea,

**NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)**

CH/001 No. of contacts for children received by statutory Social Services during the year = **9,309**

Of those identified (CH/001), no. where advice and assistance was provided = **4,789**

CH/003 The number of contacts received by statutory children's social services during the year where a decision was made by the end of the next working day = **9,079**

CH/006 The total number of new assessments completed for children during the year= **4306**

CH/006b. No. of new comprehensive assessments completed for children during the year = **818**

CH/007 Total number of new assessments completed for children during the year= **4306**

Of those new assessments identified (CH/007):

CH/007a, needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan = **487**

CH/07b needs were able to be met by other means = **3,693**

CH/07c there were no eligible needs to meet = **126**

CH/008 Total number of more comprehensive assessments for children completed during the year for children born at time assessment concluded = **747**

Of those (CH/008), where evidence that child has been seen = **701**

CH/012 No. of new assessments completed for children within statutory timescales = **4,054**

CH/013 The number of new assessments that were requested by the child or family during the year where a previous assessment had been completed in the previous 12 months -246

CH/015 The total number of children with a care and support plan at 31st March = **1,271**

CH/016 The total number of children with a care and support plan where needs a met through a Direct Payment at 31st March = **105**

There remains a high level of activity at the front door, but the percentage of repeat referrals coming through for formal assessment is moving in the right direction.

Child and Family Services is aware that we must consistently ensure the voice of the child is reflected in all assessment and care planning work, so we can demonstrate high levels of participation and co-production in the broader range of social work activities such as mappings, danger statements, statutory visits, safety plans and reviews.

Being able to ‘see’ children regularly, undertake direct work, provide intensive support to those most vulnerable children, young people and families and promote contact between care experienced children and their families, given the social restrictions has been a real challenge

This has been addressed through the effective use of virtual platforms, undertaking face-to-face contact using a risk based approach and having in place clear guidance on essential visits. All cases within Child and Family Services are given a rag status and weekly meetings were set up with partners in Police, education and health to monitor progress, ensure children were being seen, the visits/virtual contacts co-ordinated and rag status reviewed.

Overall demand at the front door (IIAA) is reduced as demand is re-directed to Early Help Hubs, though there is increase in time spent at front door as requests are more complex to work through to ‘what matters’ most and respond accordingly.

We continue to look at ways to improve our preventative offer to support a reduction in the casework entering statutory services and de-escalation of need.

**Table 2. Child and Family Services activity in 2020-21 (Child Protection)**

**NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)**

CH/020 Total number of Initial Strategy Meetings held during the year = 812

CH/021 Total number of Strategy Discussions held during the year that progressed to Section 47 Enquiries = 531

CH/022 Total number of Section 47 Enquiries completed during the year that progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference =303

CH/023 Number of children placed on the child protection register = **295**

CH/024 Of those children who were placed on the child protection register during the year, the number that has been previously registered under any category, at any time during the previous 12 months

CH/025 Number of initial child protection conferences held within statutory timescales = **293**

CH/026 Number of children on the child protection register at 31st March = **253**

CH/027 Total number of initial core group meetings held during the year = **294**

CH/028 Number of initial core group meetings held during the year that were held within statutory timescales = **280**

CH/029 Total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year = **6,125**

CH/030	The total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year that were completed within approved timescales = <b>6,270</b>
CH/031	Total number of reports of children who go missing during the year = <b>369</b>
CH/032	Total number of children who go missing during the year = <b>82</b>
CH/034	Total number of children reported during the year where child exploitation was a factor = <b>354</b>
CH/035	The total number of days on the child protection register for children who were removed from the register during the year = <b>85,719 days</b>
CH/036	The total number of children removed (de-registered) from the child protection register during the year = <b>309</b>
CA3/002	Number of pre-birth child protection conferences convened during the year = <b>33</b>

There has been a consistent, and significant downward, trend in the number of Children In Need of Care & Support cases now open to our statutory services. Although Child protection cases and the number of children looked after have remained more consistent as would be expected at this time. We are particularly pleased that we are achieving 100% of review conferences held on time, and 100% of initial core group meetings also held on time at the year end.

**Table 3. Child and Family Services activity in 2020-21 (Looked After Children)**

**NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)**

CH/038	Number of part 6 care and support plans that were completed within 10 working days from the start of becoming looked after = <b>98</b>
CH/049	Total number of initial Pathway Plans due to be completed during the year = <b>48</b>
CH/050	Number of initial Pathway Plans due during the year that were completed = <b>15</b>
CH/051	Total number of young people during the year where a personal adviser was allocated as required = <b>42</b>
CH/053	Total number of care experienced young people in all categories at the 31st March = <b>464</b>

Swansea is working hard to reduce the number of children becoming looked after in Swansea, and to use the profile of this population group to inform better practice. Over recent years, Swansea has been successful in increasing the proportion of children placed with in-house foster carers, and closer to home. We work hard to maintain children with their families, where this is in their best interests.

We are making better use of direct payments to support parents-carers of children with disabilities and complex needs.

### iii) Performance against targets

**Table 4 Child and Family Services Key Performance Results in 2020-21**

As reported in Corporate Annual Performance Report v4.1 (Last Year 2019-20 in Brackets)

Targets not set this year.

CFS14 Percentage of decisions about a referral for care and support received by Child and Family Services which are taken within 24 hrs from receipt of referral = **98.48%** (99.91%)

CFS16 Percentage of initial core group meetings held within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference = **91.28%** (95%)

CFS2/ CFS18 Number/rate of children looked after per 10,000 of the 0-17 Swansea population = **550 /117.5** (566/ 119.94)

CFS11/ CFS19 Number/ rate of children on the Local Authority's Child Protection Register per 10,000 of the 0-17 Swansea population = **264 / 56.18** (258/ 55)

CFS19a Percentage of visits to children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) which were not overdue = **88.19%** (93.85%)

CFS20 The rate of children in need of care and support per 10,000 of the 0-17 Swansea population = **108.75** (158.51) down by 31%

CFS20a Number of Children in Need (CiN) with a care and support plan at end of the period = **511** (748) down by 31%

CFS23a Percentage of contacts to the Child & Family IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) Hub that are subsequently passed on for formal assessment = **8.11%** (10.79%) down by 25%

CFS23b Number of contacts to the Child & Family IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) Hub that are subsequently passed on for formal assessment = **858** (1157) down by 25%

CFS23c Percentage of referrals to Child & Family Services that were received with 12 months of the previous referral = **8.86%** (9.68%) down by 8.5%

CFS24 Total number of children with a care and support plan at the end of the period = **1303** (1550) down by 16%

PAM028/Measure 24 Percentage of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales = **67.84%** (75.61%) down by 10%

Measure 27 Percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR) at end of the period. = **3.51%** (6.89%) down by 50%

Measure 28 The average length of time for all children who were on the child protection register during the year = **278.89 days** (264 days)

PAM029/Measure 33 Percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) at end of the period who have had three or more placements during the year = **6.55%** (10.07%) down by 35%

**Table 4 continued**

SCC013ai The percentage of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) at the end of the period allocated to a social worker = **99.62%** (100%)

SCC013aii The percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) at the end of the period allocated to a social worker = **100%** (100%)

- Percentage of our 10-day assessments carried out where there is evidence that the child was seen by a qualified worker = **91.12%** (87.85%)
- Percentage of our 42-day assessments carried out where there is evidence that the child was seen by a qualified worker = **91.41%** (94.83%)

CFS41a - Percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have a pathway plan as required = **100%** (100%)

☒CFS25 -The percentage of children supported to remain living with their family = 60.08% (64.17%)

CFS26 The percentage of looked after children who returned home from care during the year = 42.42% (46.05%)

It is very pleasing to see that despite the challenges presented by Covid affecting the work of staff and the way support and interventions are able to be delivered, this report reflects the high level of activity and strong performance overall.

**iv) Service Improvement Priorities (As set out in Child & Family Service Plan 2021-22)**

**To achieve our vision, “Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people, and families” by**

- Helping children to remain living safely at home with their families and be the best that they can be.
- Providing the right services at the right time.
- Working together to achieve what matters and supporting our service users to be safe and well.
- Focusing on practice to design appropriate processes that help us do the value work.
- Embedding our quality assurance framework that articulates our agreed measures.
- Developing our performance framework.
- Integrating our pathways and processes with partners at a local and regional level.
- To recruit, support, develop and nurture a talented and passionate workforce
- To maintain a focus on staff wellbeing.
- To only spend what we have, ensuring we maintain tight fiscal discipline
- Strengthen opportunities to work regionally.
- Work within effective procurement frameworks.

**Additional Child and Family Services priorities, noted as areas for Focus and Development, taken from recent presentation, given as part of CiW Assurance visit (June 2021):**

- Purposeful recordings that are written in the voice of our children, young people and families
- Reduce system waste the gets in the way of our practice
- Develop a culture based on trust, empowerment and accountability across the workforce and with our children, young people and families
- Increasing our preventative offer to support a reduction in the casework entering statutory services and de-escalation of need
- Understanding the needs of adolescents and developing our response across the whole service
- Supporting children to remain safely at home
- Keeping children, young people and families at the centre of what we do and remaining focused on what matters

## 2c. How we are performing - Adult Services

### i) Vision /strategy

Adults Services are responsible for the provision of services to the most vulnerable adults in Swansea.

#### **Adult Services vision**

“People in Swansea will have access to modern health and social care services which enable them to lead fulfilled lives with a sense of wellbeing within supportive families and resilient communities”

#### **Our mission**

We will help people to keep safe and protected from harm and give opportunities to exercise voice, choice and control in all aspects of their lives.

Our services will focus on prevention, early intervention and enablement and we will deliver better support for people making best use of the resources available supported by our highly skilled and valued workforce.

Covid-19 has highlighted the increased risks for individuals of being cared for in closed care settings such as care homes. Our approach is about supporting more people to remain safe and well at home, within supportive communities.

By working preventatively, we are making progress toward the safe and sustainable service model within Adult Services.

#### **Adult Services Service model**

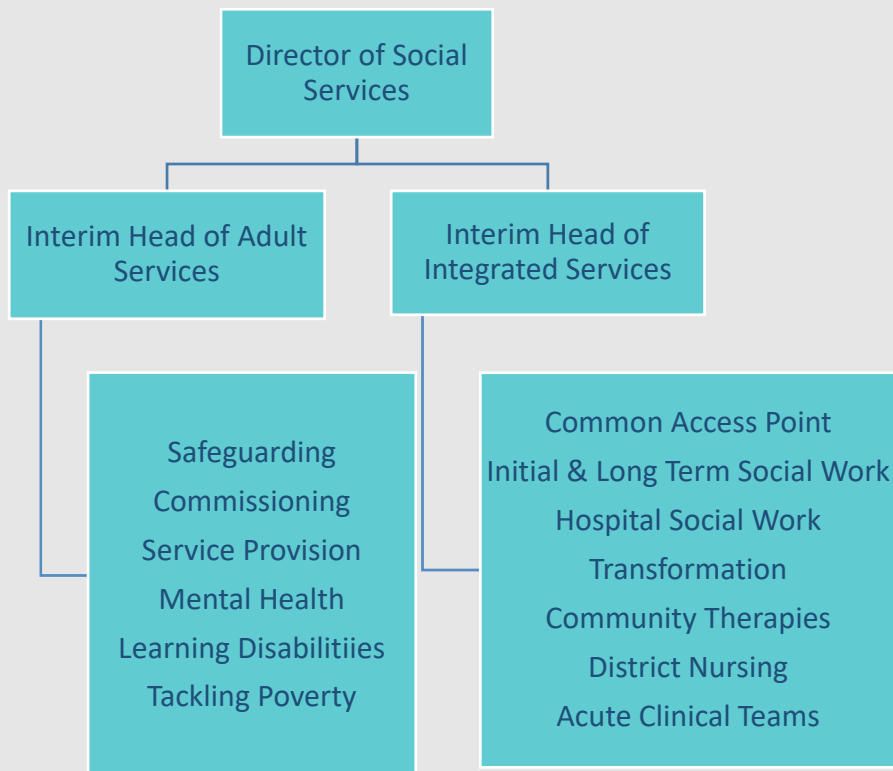
The Adult Services Service model continues to focus upon wellbeing and building resilient communities through a commitment to early intervention, prevention and enablement

We will deliver better support for people making best use of the resources available supported by our highly skilled and valued workforce.

The pandemic has also further heightened the need to improve safe hospital discharge processes. Work within the region to enhance and expand our approach to the hospital to home service has continued to be a particular priority as part of our response to Covid-19.

We have to be careful with the limited resources, so we have to focus on efficient and effective approaches through regional integration with health and by improving local partnerships.

## Adult Services Senior Management Team



**1630 staff across Adult Services employed by the Local Authority**

We are working towards a whole-system, integrated approach with Health and regional to support better outcomes for individuals.

### Adult Services Transformation and Recovery Plan 2021-2022

Our transformational ambition for Adult Services is based on our vision, our objectives and service priorities as we move forwards.

We have to carefully balance service level objectives with a financial context, therefore our recovery plan is firmly based on a sustainable model for adult social care.

There is a full programme of work are aligned to these aims- full detail in Appendix 1

It is too early to make a judgement about whether our ambition of transformation towards a more preventative, integrated model is having the intended impact, particularly in the context of Covid-19.

By ensuring co-production underpins our planning and commissioning we are delivering services with people, rather than for them.



## ii) What we do (Activity in 2020/21)

**Table 5. Adult Services activity in 2020-21 (Front Door & Assessment)**

**Estimated population** -number of Adults aged 18 and over living in Swansea = **200,005** (199,277)

Of this population, No. of Adults in Swansea who received support from Adult Services during this year = **6951** (6463).

**NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)**

AD1/001	Number of contacts received by statutory social services during the year = <b>3,753</b>
AD/002	Number of contacts received by statutory social services during the year = <b>3,203</b>
AD/004	Number of assessments completed for Adults during the year = <b>5444</b>
AD/007	Number of new assessments completed for adults in secure estate = <b>1</b>
AD/008	Total number of packages of reablement in year= <b>738, of which Home Care = 600, RCAS = 138</b>
AD/012	Number of Adults with a care and support plan at 31 March = <b>4,654</b>
CA/001	Total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers or professionals on their behalf received during the year = <b>50</b>
CA/002	Of this number (CA/001), where advice or assistance was provided = <b>50</b>
CA/004	Total number of carers assessments for adults undertaken in year = <b>209</b>
CA/006	Number of carers assessments refusing during the year = <b>1,384</b>
Other:	Percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescale: enquiries completed within 7 days = <b>94.34%</b> (85.82%)
AS9:	% of DOLS assessments completed within accepted national standard for completion (21 days or less) = <b>75.68%</b> (64.2%)

Adult Services continues to be very busy with high levels of, and increasing demand for information, advice and assistance through our front door, Common Access Point (CAP).

There are a large number of social care assessments completed by frontline social work teams, with people receiving ongoing care and support, including support to carers as a result.

We are challenging historic ways of working through a new practice model, 'Collaborative Communication', which focuses on working with the rights, strengths, outcomes, voice, choice and control of individuals.

The number of adults the Council is supporting has increased as the Council has remodelled more of its service delivery to focus on reablement, respite and complex care.

It remains a concern that the number of carers receiving an assessment has decreased, and we are working within the region to develop a fit for purpose carer's strategy and to remodel approaches to supporting carers.

We recognised that our approach to carers assessment had to improve. Our work this year has been on extending offer of a what matters conversation to carers in their 'own right'. We aim to increase the number of carers assessment, and to support carers on their own wellbeing journey. This offer to carers is embedded in our 'Collaborative Communication' approach, within training sessions and in the development of our new care management system/ recording tools in WCCIS (Welsh Community Care Information System).

We are working on a pathway based on improved awareness of the needs of carers in Swansea, with targeted action to improve partnership working, updating information on the support available, building knowledge and expertise and clarifying responsibility and expectations. We are exploring how when social workers are having carers 'what matters' conversations, how we capture this information and follow up, making best use of the new WCCIS system.

**Table 6. Adult Services activity in 2020-21 (Care & Support)**

AD/013	Number of Adults with a care and support plan whose needs are met through a direct payment = <b>494</b>
AD/015	Total Number of services for Adult started during the year = <b>1,423, of which</b> AD/015a Residential Care = <b>335</b> AD/015b Domiciliary Care = <b>907</b> Day Care = <b>13</b> Short Breaks (including respite) = <b>168</b>
AD/016	Number of Care and Support plans due to be reviewed during the year = <b>5,295</b>
AD/017	Number of Care and Support plans due to be reviewed that were completed within statutory timescales = <b>3,387</b>
AD/020	Total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the year = <b>1,150</b>
AD/029	Number of adults who paid the maximum weekly charge towards the cost of care or support during the year = <b>813</b>
CA/001	Total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers or professionals on their behalf received during the year = <b>50</b>
CA/002	Of this number (CA/001), where advice or assistance was provided = <b>50</b>
CA/004	Total number of carers assessments for adults undertaken in year = <b>209</b>
CA/006	Number of carers assessments refusing during the year = <b>1,384</b>

By February this year, we started to see the beginnings of improved stability across Health and Social care regionally. Whilst these are encouraging, the position remains vulnerable to change, particularly the care home and both internal and external domiciliary care services.

Looking forward, we can expect increasing demand linked to demographic changes, such as those associated with an aging population, and more people living with greater complexity of need. We have a good understanding of our day to day performance and activities with a strong culture of using data and management information to improve decisions.

### iii) Performance against targets

**Table 6. Key Performance Results In Adult Services In 2020-21**

As reported in Corporate Annual Performance Report v4.1 (Last Year 2019-20 in Brackets)

**Targets not set this year**

AS9	Percentage of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS) Assessments completed in 21 days or less = <b>75.68%</b> (64.2%) up by 17.8%
AS10	Percentage of annual reviews of care and support plans completed in adult services = <b>67.08%</b> (70.6%) down by 5%
AS11	Rate of adults aged 65+ receiving care and support to meet their well-being needs per 1,000 population = <b>113.73</b> (106.47) up by 6.8%
AS12	Rate of adults aged 18-64 receiving care and support to meet their well-being needs per 1,000 population = <b>9.32</b> (8.91) up by 4.6%
AS13a	Number of carers (aged 18+) who received a carer's assessment in their own right during the year = <b>209</b> (588) down by 60%
AS14	Percentage of people who have completed reablement receiving less care or no care 6 months after the end of reablement = <b>98.95%</b> (97.05%) up by 2%
Measure 18	Percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within 7 days = <b>94.34%</b> (85.82%) up by 10%

Adult Services is delivering a more sustainable model of health and social care. The service is on a much more secure financial footing, working within our allocated resources, albeit impacted by additional demand and costs associated with the pandemic.

#### **We have reduced the number of planned reviews undertaken in order to prioritise urgent support but are making progress in catching up the backlog**

Adult Services has improved its overall performance during 2020/21. However direct comparison to last year is not possible as the service offer very different. Due to Covid-19, many services are being provided in a different way, and this is likely to continue into next year. Work will continue on the what matters conversation at our front door to ensure that we are giving the right level of response, to the right person at the right time.

#### iv) **Adult Services Improvement Priorities** (set out in Service Plan 2021-22)

- Our Workforce
- Better Prevention & Better Early Help
- Promoting Independence / Keeping People Safe
- Integrated Services
- Quality Assurance
- Financial Efficacy

**Additional improvement priorities for Adult Services, as noted within recent presentation, given as part of CiW Assurance visit (June 2021):**

- Workforce –recruitment, retention and succession
- Embed consistent processes and practice to supervision, training and development
- Expansion of our communication channels with staff
- Continue to invest in preventative models with partners and communities
- Drive forward our carers strategy
- Embed Quality Assurance across all areas
- Expand our co-productive practice across service design and review
- Continue to expand our Regional work programme incl. Home First and Complex Care
- Embed consistent review practice and processes across the service
- Review our service provision model & resource arrangements
- Develop and build WCCIS to support our practice aims
- Establishment of permanent Adult Services structure which is fit for purpose

## 2d. How we are performing –Tackling Poverty

### i) Vision /strategy

The Tackling Poverty Service aims to reduce the impact and prevent the causes of poverty and increase the well-being and opportunities for residents.



We work with residents through a strengths-based approach to increase their well-being, skills and qualifications and to gain sustainable and fulfilling employment and maximise household income.

We contribute to the reduction of crisis intervention and demand on services, contributing positively to resident’s resilience, health and well-being.

#### **Example: Tackling Poverty strategy**

We have recently updated our comprehensive Tackling Poverty Strategy to ensure it is meeting its aims, and the overarching themes are:

- Empowering local people through involvement and participation
- Changing cultures to reflect that tackling poverty is everyone’s business
- Targeting resources to maximise access to opportunity and prosperity.

We will be adopting the following principles to this work:

- A whole Public Services Board and whole Council approach.
- Building resilience, social capital and social networks.
- Involvement and participation of service users.
- Implementing ‘what works’ in future delivery.

The Tackling Poverty Service continue to provide the whole Council and citizens of Swansea with a vital service to mitigate the worst impacts of poverty and to maximise opportunities to break the cycle.

#### **Example: Welfare Rights**

The Welfare Rights Team provides a second-tier service specialising in welfare benefit and tax credits law and supports those who are providing a front tier service and working with claimants with their benefit issues.

Our Team have been representing clients at appeal hearings by using alternative methods are making a huge positive impact on these families and allowing them to maximise their income.

Last year, the amount of welfare benefits raised, securing rights and entitlements is reported as **£1,366,815** (£1,057,912: POV05)

In addition to the advice line and casework/ representation system, the team provides a diverse benefits training programme which is updated each year.

The Council recognises the importance of Welfare Rights in tackling poverty and the support of Members, with funding for an additional post.

Raising income levels in the poorest families has a significant impact on improving the outcomes for children and young people.

## ii) What we do (Activity in 2020/21)

**Table 5. Tackling Poverty Services activity in 2020-21**

**Most recent estimate (2019)** of the population of the City and County of Swansea= **247,000** (246,500)

Examples of strategic service developments this year:

- Supporting the third sector during 2020/21
- 41x Food Poverty Grants totalling £156k,
- 19x Period Dignity in Community Grants totalling £17k,
- 9x Men's Sheds Grants totalling £32k.
- Covid-19 pandemic response – coordination of the Food Help Administration Team including the coordination of the Shielding Cohort Food Parcels, support for the network of food banks in Swansea.
- Swansea Poverty Truth Commission – Facilitation Team recruited, commissioner recruitment underway, additional funding secured.
- Poverty Reduction PDC –updates including Benefit Take-Up, Swansea Food Poverty Network, Draft Promoting Affordable Credit Policy, and Draft Corporate Debt Policy.
- Swansea Food Poverty Network established.
- Community Calling – project established redistributing smart phones to improve digital access and skills, partnering with Hubbub, O2, SCVS, and Lifelong Learning. Scoping development of Swansea Council Volunteering Strategy.
- Facilitation of Swansea Poverty Partnership Forum (Quarterly),
- Financial Inclusion Steering Group (Quarterly),
- Swansea Council Poverty Forum (Monthly),

Tackling Poverty Service has been working closely with partners to address the Covid-19 impact on poverty, through our established networks. To ensure that appropriate support is available at the right time to the public, including some of the most vulnerable people and families.

### iii) Performance in year

**Table 6. Key Performance results In Tackling Poverty Services In 2020-21**

As reported in Corporate Annual Performance Report v4.1 (Last Year 2019-20 in Brackets)

POV05	Value of welfare benefits raised, securing rights and entitlements through Welfare Rights = <b>£1,418,850</b> (£1416282) up by 0.2%
POV06	Average number of days all homeless families with children spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation = <b>1.75</b> ( 4.57)
POV10	Number of people gaining employment through Employability Support = <b>453</b> (354)
POV11	Number of accredited qualifications achieved by adults with local Authority support = <b>450</b> (1000)
Local	Level of debt addressed during year= £167,143

There is a wide range of preventative services working within Tackling Poverty from benefits work to lifelong learning, which are working hard within established partnerships to help reduce demands on statutory services and to improve the wellbeing of Swansea citizens.

### iv) Service Improvement priorities

- Taking forward the Council's Tackling Poverty strategy, as reflected in a Tackling Poverty Service 2021/22 Service Improvement, Transformation And Recovery Plan



## **2e. What did we plan to do last year? Progress made**

This annual report allows me the opportunity to assess our progress, as we have moved into a year dominated by Covid-19.

What we planned to do (Last Year's annual report):

- To implement the Council's corporate priorities, recovery plan and financial targets
- Continue to improve how we safeguard our most vulnerable people
- Implementation plan for regional carers strategy
- Retain and maintain our workforce and support their wellbeing and professional development
- Taking forward change, as set out in our local and regional Improvement programmes
- Working within citizens and partners to align all services towards our vision of sustainable social care and support, including housing, supporting people and other services that can contribute to our wellbeing
- Improving the quality and timeliness of our response to changes in need

Progress is being made against all of our improvement priorities above, and there was a huge amount of additional work we still have to do to keep people safe and protected. Updates on progress are set out in the relevant sections of this report.

This organisational flexibility and staff commitment demonstrates to me the strength in our service corporate and political leadership, the solidity of our partnerships and most of all the professionalism of our brilliant workforce.

## **2f. Improvement Priorities for next year 2021/22**

Our overall priorities remain as follows, with a focus on implementing the Council's recovery programme – "Achieving Better Together", in particular Transforming Council Services relating to social care

I anticipate progress through our existing improvement programmes, in the following areas:

- Implementing the optimum model for adult services
- Child and family services improvement programme / Safe Looked After Children (LAC) reduction strategy
- Implementation of integrated early help, early years and family support arrangements
- Cross cutting commissioning reviews in Social Services (employability etc.)

### 3. How People Are Shaping Services

Everyone, adult or child, should be given a voice, an opportunity, their right to be heard as an individual and a citizen, to shape the decisions that affect them, to have control over their day to day lives and to be firmly at the centre of their own wellbeing journey.

In this section, I will give some examples of how we are working differently with Swansea's citizens, how as a Council we are listening and working in new ways, and how we are using this to promote change in how we work.

#### **Example: Covid Response**

West Glamorgan Regional Community Silver Command Group has overseen a coordinated, regional response to the Covid-19 crisis over the past 18 months.

Many staff regionally and locally within the Council have volunteered for new roles and key tasks to meet the range of challenges, often working in partnership with colleagues from the Local Authorities, Swansea Bay University Health Board and the third sector.

Colleagues from building services have supported Social Services to ensure provision of the PPE required for health and social care staff in providing direct care to people living in their own homes, or in care homes.

Corporate colleagues have worked with social services to ensure routine testing of care and support staff, and huge numbers of staff from across the Council have been involved in providing direct support to our most vulnerable citizens on a local basis, within communities.

A weekly briefing by the Director of Social Services has provided our workforce with a full update on developments, showcasing many staff achievements, positive outcomes and compliments received.

#### **West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Programme**

The Regional Co-production Group has recently developed a new Co-production Pack for use across the partnership, including framework, toolkit and charter for regional co-production, approved by the Recovery Board in January 2021.

This provides a platform for embedding the principles of co-production across transformation programmes, services and organisations, and to explore the best approaches to apply these principles with children and young people.

The new Co-production Charter is a strong signal of a commitment to this approach and the RPB will be encouraging partner organisations to sign the charter so partners can all work together more effectively.

## **Corporate Parenting Board – Best life project**

Since December 2020, members of the Corporate Parenting Board and Care Experienced Children and Young People (CYP) have developed what the key areas of a best life are, the main areas for development for each area, and who is going to take accountability for improving services around those themes. The next stage will be sub-groups unpicking the “hows” and reporting back to our care experienced population what we have done, what difference they should see and what we haven’t been able to do.

## **Example: Commissioning Reviews**

Swansea citizens are supported within and by communities in which they can contribute to and enjoy safe and healthy relationships. People are also helped to recognise unsafe relationships and to protect themselves from abuse and neglect.

The Council’s focus has been on implementing new approaches to commissioning to get better value for money, to improve the stability and capacity of the social care market by tendering for new organisations and to focus more on outcomes.

Commissioning review was the original method we introduced to find out how we could deliver the council services our citizens need in a sustainable and coproduced way.

Reviews take a consistent approach, asking key questions such as:

- What services do we run?
- Why do we run them?
- What outcomes do we achieve?
- What is the best way to deliver the service?
- How can we make them sustainable for the future?

This work has helped improve services such as Domiciliary Care and Supported Living and future work is considering our options within our range of day services and supported employment.

## **Strategy for Young Carers**

The Regional Carers Partnership Board, with support locally from the People Policy Development Committee, has recently developed the first Regional Carers Strategy, with a clear vision, mission, values and targets for how to support unpaid carers in

West Glamorgan over the next five years. Though co-production of this strategy has been made difficult by the current pandemic situation, a new Carers Liaison Forum in West Glamorgan has been established and one of the first challenges for this new forum will be working with Young Carers to refresh this strategy with their voices and insight.

**Swansea YMCA Young Carers Service-** offers a range of support services:

- Young Carers & Family support (56 open case in Jan 2021)
- Group sessions (Trips and Activities)
- School Programme – to help identify young carers
- Young Carers I.D Card Scheme- Swansea are early adopters of national scheme
- Cwmtawe Cluster- ensuring GP Practice has up to date information on young carers and services available and training GPs practice staff
- Agored Qualification – entry level to Level 2 understanding needs young carers
- Young Carers Rights- by working co-productively, promoting active citizenship

### **Example: Our Neighbourhood approach**

A successful development of the regional Our Neighbourhood Approach model and utilisation of associated funding in support of community based initiatives and focus on community based care and review.

Key outcome objectives include increased uptake in community-based services, increased community engagement/volunteering/citizen led schemes and services, and a reduction in traditional long term managed care routes. It has also facilitated the establishment of necessary resource to ensure ‘flow’ through the system so that people receive timely interventions, review checkpoints, access to services such as Direct Payments and where necessary access to long term commissioned care.

Swansea’s approach is mainly taken forward by Local Area Coordination service. Whilst the majority of the Local Area Coordination posts are funded by the Council, there has been a significant investment from external partners including; Coastal Housing Association, Family Housing Association, Pobl Housing Group, Swansea University GP clusters and the Welsh Government Transformation Fund.

### **Example: Local Area Coordination**

‘All people live in welcoming communities that provide friendship, mutual support, equality and opportunities for everyone’. LAC vision statement. In response to the pandemic Local Area Coordination coverage was expanded across the whole of Swansea and working with other partners was at the heart of the Council’s response to mitigating the impact of lockdown on our residents and communities.

There are now **19** Local Area Coordinators in post with coverage over most of Swansea. For more information: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/localareacoordination>

An evaluation of the work of Local Area Coordination is being carried out during 2021, building on the initial evaluation from 2016 to critically examine the evidence-base of characteristics, activities and outcomes of Area Coordination in Swansea and measure its effectiveness.

The team has also compiled a range of stories which are reflections on outcomes achieved with individuals involving work with a range of other organisations.

### **Example: Cooperatives Pilot**

Under the Foundational Economy Challenge Fund, initially a response to Brexit, aimed to test new ways of nurturing and growing the everyday parts of Wales' economy, and was part of the Welsh Government's work to reach out to those communities across Wales who felt disengaged and left behind.

Swansea Council applied for funding to test out two new approaches to the design and procurement of services and to the delivery of services in rural areas of Swansea to:

- Support people with low level care and support needs to come together to design and procure their own service, making use of direct payments and cooperative approaches;
- Work in communities alongside our Local Area Coordinators to find individuals to enter the social care workforce through the development of micro enterprise, social enterprise or cooperative arrangements to deliver low-level care and support.
- 

### **Example Local Area Coordination (2) Street Champions**

Local Area Coordination has responded to many of the COVID related challenges faced by communities and engaged in solution-focus collaboration and forged new ways of working. The team have supported residents including those shielding and isolating with practical community support including access to food parcels and prescription deliveries. The team also mobilised hundreds of 'Street Champions', street level volunteers providing practical and social support in their communities.

### **Example: Voice & Control - Adults**

During 2020/21, the temporary realignment of adult social work teams into functions has allowed us to meet the demands of the pandemic and address the most urgent needs of our citizens. We have improved access to information advice and assistance for both existing and new clients, as well as other professionals.

Collaborative Communications approach has come to the fore in our initial work with Individuals, to help them explore alternatives to managed care. This approach also ensures there is an ongoing person centred, strengths-based assessment taken by social workers and within case reviews.

The new Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) now live in Swansea is a single information system that will support the delivery of innovative, person-centred and integrated community health and social care.

### **Example: Voice & Control –Children and Young People**

Covid-19 has meant new policy guidance and the challenges posed by the lockdown period have created opportunities to adapt and improve ways of working. These themes are reflected within the Big Conversation.

Moving to digital platforms presented challenges for county-wide, and cross-county working with large numbers of children and young people. This period has enabled dialogue to review how this is facilitated in the future, e.g. how operations for listening to children and young people, and to ensure the policies refined to ensure they are fit for purpose and encompass new ways of working, e.g. Children's Rights Scheme.

Work is ongoing to formally review the Children's Rights Scheme in Swansea and to co-produce new and improved models of participation, that more effectively co-ordinate the voices of children and young people, ensuring what they have to say reaches the right ears, and that feedback on change is consistently presented.

The review of the Scheme will complement the principles of Co-production Strategy, ensuring the values of involving and listening to children and young people, regarded as fundamental in Swansea, form the building blocks of our work moving forward.

### **Example: Other Covid**

Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown requirements resulted in Child and Family Services implementing a number of emergency measures in line with local corporate and national guidance. The Early Help Hubs are working closely with schools and a range of professionals since their launch in April 2020 to ensure children in need of care and support and their families get the right support at the right time.

### **Example: Other- regional;**

A regional carers strategy has been agreed, which informs local actions and sets out targets for improving the support offered to carers, under the following four areas:

1. Ensure work continues to promote early recognition of Carers and Young Carers so that they are signposted to information and support in a timely manner.
2. Develop and continue to provide information, advice, assistance and support to Carers and Young Carers enabling them to make informed choices and maintain their own health and well-being.
3. Work co-productively with the Carers on an individual and strategic basis so that their contribution is acknowledged and voice is heard.

4. There is improved partnership working between funders and service providers (for Carers). This will result in Carers moving easily between partner organisations, Carers being able to access sustainable 3rd sector services which are funded on evidence of need and outcomes.
5. Assistive Technology is also essential to our preventative, early intervention model, and in support of carers

Most of the examples presented here are a reflection of Swansea's approach to safeguarding vulnerable people, to how we commission and provide social care, and in how we view co-production as central to a sustainable model that meet increasing demand and levels of need.

**Our priority remains** to ensure co-production remains central to how we plan, design, commission and deliver our services. Covid-19 has reinforced the importance of taking such an approach albeit that we have had to respond at pace to emergency situations, as they arise.

## Examples of Feedback received this year

The West Long Term Complex Team have been highly praised by the husband of a lady whom they had been caring for.  
He said: "For more than a month we were visited by your carers. Without exception, they provided the highest quality of care. They blended human qualities of compassion and sympathy with excellent skills, a commentary on your selection and training. They were always, punctual, smart in appearance, well-organised, calm and reassuring. I would be grateful if you could kindly send this message to them all."

An Early Help Lead Worker has been praised by a mum who said:  
"This time last year I was ready to give up ... I had literally no control whatsoever and had lost all confidence as a mum. Now with the advice & support you've give me the younger three now have rules and routine back in place which has made a huge improvement on their behaviour, but most importantly I've been able to rebuild my relationships with the older girls (which I never thought would happen). I now have the confidence to be consistent & follow through with decisions I make as a  
"

A client who was helped back into the workplace has praised a worker in the Communities for Work Plus programme:  
"Without Jackie's support and insight, it would have been so easy to have become despondent and given up. Our weekly sessions felt like a catch-up chat with a friend, and afterwards I felt affirmed and buoyed to tackle the next round of applications. Her mentoring skills and professionalism have had a positive impact on my well-being as a job  
seeker



## 4. Reports on the Six Quality Standards

This next section of my annual report provides an overview of social services quality and performance, using the National Standards Framework: Code of Practice: measuring performance addressing the **six national quality standards** (under review).

It also reflects the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales by helping to create a place where we all want to live, now, and in the future.

The six national quality standards are:

1. **Prevention** -working with people to define and co-produce personal wellbeing outcomes that people wish to achieve **NQS 1**
2. **Well-being - What Matters conversations- help received via Early Help & Front Door** - working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing **NQS 2**
3. **Safeguarding** - taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm **NQS 3:**
4. **Wellbeing outcomes achieved by managed Care and Support and good Social Work Practice**-By encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society **NQS 4**
5. **Quality Of Services** -supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships **NQS 5**
6. **Working in Partnership and Integration** - working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs **NQS 6**

Each of the 6 parts in Section 4 covers the outcomes expected, what we are doing how well we are doing and the priorities for the year ahead

## **4a. Prevention**

Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people.

Our expectation is that Swansea citizens are well informed, understand what care, support and opportunities are available and they can access support themselves to help achieve their own wellbeing outcomes.

The strategic aims of Swansea Council's Recovery Plan – Achieving Better Together is to focus on:

- The core purpose of the Council
- Transforming services to be effective and efficient
- Greater collaboration with other Councils, organisations, community groups and residents, with a focus on regionalisation
- Greater and more meaningful engagements with our residents and community
- Balancing the budget for current and future years
- To meet the aspirations and targets within the Medium Term Financial Plan

A key aspect of the Transformation programme to support these aims will be to target the range of preventative approaches, as set out in the Council's prevention strategy 2018-21, and supported by Swansea's Wellbeing plan, due to be updated this year, local population assessment.

### **What we planned to do**

Covid-19 has further evidenced the importance of this approach to working with and in communities alongside third sector and other partners and the importance of providing clear and easily and accessible information for the public.

We set out to achieve this by:

- Continuing to incorporate poverty and preventive resources into Social Services, enhancing our early help offer to adults, children and families.
- Strengthen our links with and use of third sector and partners to make better use of resources available to improve wellbeing
- To expand and update our public information resources to improve wellbeing made accessible via the Council's public website and DEWIS Cymru.

### **How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?**

Swansea citizens can access information on the Council's public website to help them better understand and choose from the wide range of care, support and opportunities which are available, and use these to help achieve their wellbeing outcomes. Swansea continues to develop our range of public web resources available to help people make informed choices.

There is help available on a daily basis to ensure people access the full range of Council services to achieve their own wellbeing outcomes.

### **Example 1: Dewis Cymru: <https://www.dewis.wales/>**

Dewis Cymru is a national wellbeing directory providing an online library of community assets with contact information and organisational information, maintained by organisations themselves, as and when changes to provision occur.

To ensure we are maximising this information available to the public, DEWIS Cymru is now linked to other national systems such as Info-engine, used by Swansea Council Voluntary Service; also the Family Information Services utilised by many third sector. As the national policy drive is to have a single directory of care and support, we are encouraging organisations to share information across databases.

There are currently 578 different organisations and groups listed across these platforms. Swansea has increased the number of local resources available to **833** (556).

### **Example 2: Public Information: covid response**

Public information available to all citizens has always been available online via Swansea's public website, which also links to SCVS website with individual contacts and to resources detailed at ward level within Swansea.

Our public information social care and wellbeing pages were updated and scaled up considerably to manage the demand during Covid and to reflect the range of community led support: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcare>

### **Example 3: Welfare Rights**

Our Welfare Rights Team provides a second-tier service specialising in welfare benefit and tax credits law and supports those who are providing a front tier service and working with claimants with their benefit issues.

We also have a front facing service to those who people engaged with the Employability Teams, Lifelong Learning and CAMNESA. Officers have been representing clients at appeal hearings using alternative methods during the pandemic; making a huge positive impact on these people, their families and allowing them to maximise their income.

### **Example 4: Assistive Technology**

Assistive Technology both type and process of provision is also essential to our preventative and early intervention model. Cutting across enabling independence the

provision of technology to facilitate people to remain within their own homes for longer presents a wealth of opportunity.

Depending on the person's assessed needs, a wide range of equipment may be made available (charges apply), purchased directly or locally, for example:

- Sensors which can tell when someone has fallen
- Sensors which can tell if someone has left a chair or bed and not returned within a preset time, has left the house or has left the main door open
- Devices which turn on lights when movement is sensed.
- Alarms which provide an early warning of taps or gas being left on
- Devices which remind people of regular tasks such as taking medicine

A telecare system known as Just Checking, is used by social care staff to assess someone's level of needs during an initial period of assessment and reablement

### **Example 5: Outreach Youth Work Project**

This is a major piece of work that will hopefully have an impact on rehabilitation and prevent/reduce homelessness for this group.

This important development is aimed at reaching out to young people who are hard to engage with. This has involved re-modelling our level one youth offer from an indoor centre based support to an outreach street based approach to ensure continued supportive engagement with young people in their own spaces and places.

We are trying to better understand the experiences and needs of young people relating to social exclusion, discrimination and redefinition of safety nets as a result of the pandemic.

This work supports a contextual approach to safeguarding, and uses different approaches to improve communications, with a mixture of digital, online youth sessions, and a detached youth work offer- as restrictions allowed.

### **Example 6: Welfare Right team**

The Welfare Rights Team have forged links with Magistrates of the West Glamorgan Bench to raise awareness of the impact of benefits when sentencing. The intention is to enable Magistrates to have an awareness of benefits, how they are affected, the different ways of recovering fines and the impacts that they can have on individuals.

## **Stories of Outcomes**

### **Story 1: Local Area Coordination**

We now have an established Local Area Coordination (LAC) team which has been expanded further in the last 12 months to a total of 22 members of staff.

The Local Area Coordinators endorse our preventative approach which recognises and cultivates the many strengths in communities and individuals. People are supported both before and at our front door with the offer of early help which can delay or prevent the need for statutory services.

The team have continued to work closely with third sector colleagues and as mentioned in response to recommendation 1 the joint working across LAC and Neighbourhood Development officers (SCVS) as well as access to the wider resources across the Third Sector have increased during the pandemic period.

This approach has also been supported by both the Regional Rapid Discharge model and the Transformation programme – Our Neighbourhood Approach (ONA). Funding available through both programmes from Welsh Government has enabled the expansion of resources and further development of the model.

### **Story 2: Outreach Youth work (Case Study 1)**

Youth Homeless Development Officers (YHDO) advocated for the needs of young people on the beach front, they were worried that the strategy of dispersing young people from the beach front when intoxicated was risky due to them moving towards the town centre where they were less visible and more at risk. These views were fed into a strategic meeting where there was a plan developed which considered the views of young people and ensured they had a safe space to spend time. At a later date the YHDO's were able to undertake harm reduction work with peers groups on the beach front ensuring they were safe and had safe routes home therefore reducing the risk of harm.

### **Story 3: Outreach Youth work (Case Study )**

YHDO's came into contact with a 22 year old male sleeping homeless on the streets who informed he was at risk of violence from other people that were street homeless. The YHDO's were able to contact on call emergency housing support to get the young man an appointment the following day. They visited McDonalds who offered the young man free food and the YHDO's spent some time taking to him about support services that could help. They also raised awareness of the young man to street link for support for him on the street.

Work around development of preventative services has progressed well, and have been expanded in response to the Covid pandemic. This has presented further opportunities for change and improvement particularly in respect of citizen and carer's access to information, and support with regard to their own wellbeing.

**During 2021/22, our priorities are to:**

- Continue to work with partners and communities in promoting prevention and early help
- Improving prevention and early help within our social services transformation programmes, as part of Council's Recovery plan, and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership work programme.

## 4b. Wellbeing – What Matters

Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

Our expectation is that each citizens' voice is heard by our service, and listened to; people can speak for themselves and that they have control over any decisions that are made. That our most vulnerable people who need help to do the things that matter most to them, to promote their independence, and that carers can access support they need for their wellbeing.

Children have the right to reliable information under the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It is important, as early as possible in our processes to provide as much up to date information about services and resource as we can to adults, children and young people. This can help people decide what to access, have an improved understanding of how services have changed, as a result of Covid-19, and to see details of how to access services, if they are needed either directly or via Information, autonomy and access to services.

Additional information included public health information, resources to support being at home, e.g. learning, play, and a specific section on access to services that specifically supported children and young people to have their voices heard in Swansea.

Our multi agency approach to Information, Advice and Assistance whether accessed directly, via Early Help or at the social services front door is set out for citizen's on the Council's public website: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/contactsocialservices>

### What we planned to do

During 2020/21, our priorities were to continue to meet the impact of Covid-19 on the most vulnerable adults, children and their carers:

- Continue to support in new innovative ways children, families and more people in their own homes and within supportive communities
- Implement Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS) and to improve information about quality, timeliness and cost of our work with citizens

Across the whole services we are working together to achieve what matters and supporting our service users to be safe and well. By providing the right services, at the right level of care and support, at the right time.

By our targeted approach, fewer children, young people and families require a statutory intervention from Social Services by receiving the right help when they most need it. Helping children to remain living safely at home with their families and be the best that they can be.

Within Adult Services, there is a collaborative communications approach, building on an integrated services model to support outcomes for individuals

## How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

We now have the multi-agency response available at the Social Services front door. By this we mean that there is a wider range of professionals who are available on a daily basis to support our information, advice and assistance (IAA) offer.

Across all services, we are offering 'What matter to you' assessments, which help us to focus our assessment on what is important to people, and their own view of wellbeing outcomes they wish to achieve.

Our front door IAA services are using the practice models such as 'Signs of Safety' and 'Collaborative Communication' (refer to section 4d) to strengthen links to our frontline social work teams, which focuses on strengths, outcomes, voice, choice and control.

### Example 1: Covid Response

West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board adopted the emotional and mental health of children and young people as a regional priority in 2018, and this has involved working on a multiagency basis to implement a revised pattern of services based around a single point of access, integration of services across education / social services and health and addressing the "No Wrong Door" issues over the past 3 years. There has been a significant reconfiguration of services already, improved access for children and young people and a wider range of services available to them including the roll out of Emotional Health workers in primary schools in 2021-22

### Example 1: Family Support

The Covid-19 crisis impacted on demand for family support services in Swansea and we now find ourselves in a position where we need to implement some urgent, additional support for families due to the high demand at the Front Door of Social Services.

### Early Help Hubs launched in April 2020

Early Help Hubs were implemented in an interim format from 1st April 2020. We should emphasise that this is an initial format to enable us to strengthen capacity. There are **five** co-located, multi-agency hubs, making use of the Signs of Wellbeing framework.

The offer involves a multi-agency 'what matters' conversations at the front-door.

Also incorporates:

- Integrated Safeguarding Hub
- Access to YOS Services that help improve behaviours and prevent family breakdown
- Use of multi-agency panels to support preventative approach to contextual risks



There are partnership links to support joined up working and better step-down arrangements.

The services is trialling the use and development of electronic 'auto-bot' responses to support queries around domestic abuse.

Overall demand at social services front door (IIAA) is reduced as demand is re-directed to Early Help Hubs.

### **Example 2: Child and Family IIAA**

The remodelled Integrated Information, Advice and Assistance (IIAA) team was formally implemented last year following a successful review of the pilot, arising out of the vanguard whole system work.

The service, which forms part of our Single Point of Contact, now includes staff from Child and Family Services, Early Help, Bays+ and the Child Disability Team as well as external agencies including Health and Education. The new service is set up to understand what matters to families following a referral or contact for help meaning that the right service provides the right support in a timely way.

Professionals from other support agencies can make requests to IIAA team to better understand a child's needs and to reconsider their own interventions, before asking for direct help from statutory Social Services.

The number of re-referral to Child and Family Services has dropped further this year, remaining at **below 10%**.

Our expectation is that overall demand at the front door (IIAA) will reduce as demand is re-directed to Early Help Hubs. However we may expect to see an increase in time spent at front-door in an effort to fully understand 'what matters' and to respond accordingly.

### **Example 3: Adult Services CAP**

The Common Access Point (CAP) in Adult Services has been at the forefront of the whole system change to strength-based, outcomes focused work, using Collaborative Communication and a what matter conversation. This front door team has a highly skilled approach that promotes positive discussions with citizens and carers at often difficult times.

The CAP team has been bolstered with additional resource to meet considerably increased demand during the pandemic, and their work has been helped by close connections with third sector colleagues, Neighbourhood Development Officers, alongside the Local Area Co-ordination Team. Through this work we have been able to expand and improve processes of referral to community based resources.

In addition to CAP, the public's access to information on and referral routes to community-based resources has been successfully extended to those people who come to our attention via Swansea's Hospital discharge pathway.

Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS) working alongside Swansea Integrated teams have established a direct referral route for a range of services ranging from food delivery to befriending and financial advice support which is often volunteer led and community specific.

#### **Example 4: Improvement in supporting Carers**

In the last Director's annual report was an acknowledgment that there is a need to improve our front door arrangements for carers.

The improvements above taking place within the Adult Services Common Access Point have been extended to all enquiries received at both the front door and community teams, in respect of carer's information.

Alongside this improvement work, a West Glamorgan Regional Carers Strategy has been developed with carers, regional partners across both Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Local Authorities, Swansea Bay University Health Board and Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils for Voluntary Services/Third Sector over the last 12 months.

A West Glamorgan Regional Carers Strategy and the supporting Quick Reference Guide document have been developed by the Regional Carers Partnership Board.

The Regional Carers Strategy defines a five-year strategy for carers in West Glamorgan and establishes a clear, concise vision statement and mission statement which will guide local plans and actions over the next five years. The regional strategy was been endorsed by all partners, and is due to be considered by Cabinet in early 2021.

#### **Example 5: InfoNation / BAYS 16+**

As a result of a service review in September 2020, Bays+ have developed a clear vision statement, principles and values. The service has worked hard to develop a new model of service design which will be in line with what matters to young people. This work includes:

- The refurbishment of the Info-Nation building to make it young person friendly and create space for group work to take place with young people post the pandemic
- Development of the 16+ Panel which looks at improving transitions of young people at the age of 16 into adulthood. This includes a number of multi-agency partners as well as Adult Services looking at young people's plans to ensure they are getting the right support early on. Staff report that the panel works well.

- Reviewing the 'When I'm Ready' service for children. This has resulted in a number of positive recommendations to help improve the quality of the service. The work involved focus groups with carers and young people and staff which helped inform how the service needs to be designed going forward

### **Example 5: Hospital to Home**

West Glamorgan optimum model of delivery for integrated services and the Swansea approach to Reablement/Hospital to Home pathway have been revised during 2020 to amalgamate into the national Discharge to Recover and Assess model.

The model supports the shared priorities of minimising extended stays in hospital and the eradication wherever possible of assessment of long term care needs from a hospital setting.

Since July 2020 integrated teams in Swansea including nursing, therapies, social work and homecare have managed all hospital discharges via a newly developed single point of access to ensure the community support is there to enable people to safely return to their own homes or an appropriate residential reablement setting for completion of their recovery and evaluation of any long term care needs.

## **Stories of Outcomes**

### **Story 1: C&FS – Vanguard work**

The scale up of the Vanguard model of 'check' across all of the systems within Child and Family services, will allow the service to be better set up to achieve the overarching purpose, values and principles for the service.

We are trying to achieve:

- A shift in leadership thinking across the whole service
- A greater sense of shared purpose and identity across the service at all levels
- A workforce that can identify, at an individual, team and service level, with their contribution and value in achieving our shared purpose
- A workforce who are empowered and trusted within their roles lead by strong and confident leadership
- Measures that demonstrate how and where we are achieving purpose that are acted on within the work to improve outcomes
- That the voice of the child and what matters is loud and clear in everything that we do – from operational work to strategic change

### **Story 2 : Advocacy Offer**

An Advocacy offer is promoted under the Social Services & Wellbeing Act 2014 to be made available when a person/carers can only overcome the barrier(s) to participate

fully in the assessment, care & support planning, review & safeguarding processes with assistance from an appropriate individual, but there is no appropriate individual available.

Independent Professional Advocacy Services were successfully commissioned by Swansea via Mental Health Matters Wales in 2019. The new service is accessible to all eligible clients including unpaid carers.

This service ensures an Independent Professional Advocacy Service is available to those entering into or already engaged with Social Services.

### **Story 3: Carers Assessments**

The pandemic led to improved visibility, awareness and public appreciation of what we do in social care, that must also extend to unpaid carers - without their support, the pressure on our services and communities would be too much to bear. 72% of carers in Wales have not had any breaks from their caring role during the pandemic. Of those who got a break, almost a third (30%) used the time to complete practical tasks or housework, and a quarter (25%) to spend time with friends and family.

We have implemented Phase 1 carers awareness training planned based on a national programme provided by Carers Wales and Phase2 is aimed at social work teams completing carers wellbeing needs assessments, to support focused understanding on roles and responsibilities of the Local Authority.

It has given over 60 staff already a clearer understanding of who and what a carer is and what their role is, and what Adult Staff can do in their day to day work to help identify carers and provide them with the information they may need.

Many workers have commented that it has enhanced their learning on carers' rights across the service and that the carers awareness training has been vital and essential.

#### **During 2021/22, our priorities are to:**

- Working together to achieve what matters, building on their strengths and by supporting service users to achieve safety and their own well-being outcomes, and carers in their own wellbeing
- Further embedding new approaches to ensure we are providing the right service to the right people at the right time

## 4c. Safeguarding

Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm.

Our expectation is that the most vulnerable people in Swansea are safe, and protected from abuse and neglect. There are strong and effective arrangements in place to make any concerns known.

Again the Covid-19 pandemic further emphasised the importance of ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements and complicated arrangements to intervene with vulnerable individuals, children and families. Our workforce and partners have demonstrated considerable dedication, skill and innovation in making sure that we continue to support safety and safeguarding planning.

Our approach to Safeguarding and keeping people safe is reflected in that Safeguarding our most vulnerable people is the council's number one priority, and we have strong leadership in place to drive forward both a regional and corporate approach. Safe practice underpins the professional frameworks guiding our social work models in Child & Family and Adult Services.

A Corporate Safeguarding policy and work programme ensures the 'Everybody's business' approach is extending the expectation to partners and providers, as well as Council staff.

### What we planned to do

We wanted to continue to improve the adult safeguarding process, supported by work on a quality assurance framework whilst recognising adjustments required by Covid-19.

We wanted to support participation and effectiveness in end of placement reviews for looked after children in planning their future.

We wanted to better show how we are better at listening to / working with voice of child and vulnerable adult in all aspects of our safeguarding work.

### How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

#### **Example 1: Emergency Measures during Covid**

Safeguarding remains as our top corporate priority, at the heart of how Council services are prioritised. Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown requirements resulted in Adult Services and Child and Family Services successfully implementing a number of emergency measures in line with local corporate, regional direction, national guidance and statutory requirements; to meet the care and support needs of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

### **Example 2 : Corporate Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is seen as 'everyone's business' within Swansea Council, and each member of our entire workforce has a duty to report any concerns they may come across affecting vulnerable adults or children.

Swansea's Corporate Safeguarding policy and approach addresses a wider range of issues and potential safety concerns. Such concerns include domestic violence, financial abuse, street homelessness, bullying in schools, hate crimes, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, County Lines, and radicalisation.

By applying the updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy, we are ensuring that the Council continues to strengthen all areas of safeguarding. There is a new work programme, overseen by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group, jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services and Cabinet Member, to drive further improvements.

### **Example 3: Child and Family Quality Assurance Framework**

Child and Family Services are implementing a quality assurance framework that articulates the high standards of service delivery we expect in all work with children and young people to build in assurance relating to providing the right service at the right time. We still expect to achieve our ambition to prevent escalation of needs.

Our approach focuses on understanding the lived experience of our children, young people and families. We are expanding how we get information both qualitative and quantitative to improve this. Also by identifying good practice through our child protection and crisis work, for example using appreciative enquiries with children and families. This framework is designed to ensure that all our safeguarding action is proportionate and timely, and that we built a culture committed to continual learning and professional development.

### **Example 4: Adult Safeguarding Teams**

Last year we undertook a full review of safeguarding arrangements; setting out proposals for a new dedicated safeguarding team, which were to be incorporated into the restructure of Adult Services.

This work resulted in the creation of a standalone Safeguarding team, and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) teams.

As part of our recovery planning, this functional model of support, which mirrors the client pathway, will continue to be reviewed and longer-term structure defined for implementation based on learning from regular reviews.

### **Example 5: DoLS**

Swansea significantly improved performance in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) through implementing dedicated team arrangements.

Feedback suggests this has not only improved professional knowledge but is driving up standards and response times. Subsequently and at least in the short term Covid-19 has had an inevitable impact on timescales. Though the best interests and supervisory body work has continued though the difficult times in support of residents placed in care homes.

### **Stories of Outcomes**

#### **Story: Contextual Safeguarding**

The lives of hundreds of young people are being made safer, thanks to the Contextual Safeguarding pilot led by our service, but involving a whole range of partners. Swansea Council are working with Bedford University on Contextual Safeguarding Risk to improve our child exploitation work and practice, in the area of risks to children outside of the family (such as criminal or sexual exploitation).

The Covid-19 lockdown has not stopped the project from pressing ahead with preventing exploitation and disrupting criminal networks and behaviour within the context in which the harm occurs.

A contextual approach to safeguarding requires us to look beyond the family to assess neighbourhood and peer group factors in considering risks to children and young people. Swansea's Contextual Missing Exploitation Trafficking multi-agency forum (CMET) tackles referrals, which can potentially impact on hundreds of young people. Youth workers have been doing vital outreach harnessing their skills to identify contextual risks and potential solutions.

We are also working with other statutory services to evaluate the impact of this approach within early help and non-statutory services, in preventing the escalation or involvement of young people in non-familial harm

#### **During 2021/22, our priorities are to:**

- To continue to improving our safeguarding practice in all service areas, whilst recognising adjustments required by Covid-19, supported quality assurance frameworks

## **4d. Wellbeing outcomes by managed care and support**

Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in Society.

Our expectation is that Swansea citizens can learn, develop to their full potential, and to do the things that matter most to them. People accessing managed care and carers can engage, contribute to communities and feel valued in society. People are supported by care and support plans, which promote their independence, choice and wellbeing

Our approach to social work practice development in helping people to achieve their own personal wellbeing outcomes is set out in practice handbooks and through our overarching practice models of Signs of Safety (Child and Family Services) and Collaborative Communication (Adult Services)

### **What we planned to do**

Swansea citizens can learn, develop to their full potential, and to do the things that matter most to them.

We set out to continue to improve the quality and timeliness of our response to changes in need for care and support within our communities particularly recognising the impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable individuals, children and families.

### **How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?**

We continue to demonstrate we are being the best we can be in all our work with adults, children, young people and families is no matter the challenges faced.

Swansea is a leading authority in implementing positive way of working through established practice based on Sign of Safety and Collaborative Communication. This report highlights many examples of how we are listening to the people we serve and to the people in their lives in shaping future services

Our excellent staff managers and partners, are all contributing to the best outcomes for children, young people, families, and adults.

#### **Example 1: Covid Response**

**We have adapted our practice, been creative in our offers and continued to be responsive to need.**

Across both Adults and Childrens services we continue to prioritise contact/ visits with service users, by the use of a RAG rating system. Safeguarding, day to day support and respite are considered and provided to support people, families and their carers whilst social distancing restrictions continue (see also front door arrangements).



The RAG is updated weekly and there is regular audits of staff compliance. We continue to provide an emergency Mental Health support service via an Approved Mental Health Practitioner service operating daily from 9 – 5 despite a reduction in qualified AMHP. Mental Health and Learning Disabilities services continue to offer a duty system for referrals and assessments and where necessary these are face to face with the public but with the use of PPE and safe distancing. All core functions have been maintained throughout the pandemic along with assessment, care planning and review.

### **Example 2: WCCIS**

The introduction of the Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS) to Swansea Council is not just a system implementation, but an opportunity to improve and reshape our culture and practice to better meet the needs of the people we work with.

One of the major overhauls of business process has been around service provisions, the details of which were held across a number of different systems, with no easy means of collating what service people are receiving and when..

As well as a more outcomes focused social work assessment and case management review, WCCIS now includes information related how people are receiving a range of services, including:

- Internal Home Care
- Domiciliary Care
- Day Care
- Direct Payments
- Residential and Nursing Care

Swansea's WCCIS system went live in April 2021, supported by skilled business support to ensure that decisions are being made with the most accurate up to date information possible, and early signs are promising.

### **Example 3: Child & Family Services – working together**

Children and Young People are benefitting from the work of the Safe LAC Reduction Operational Group (SLOG) and the staff that support the group's work.

Everyone involved has been praised by the Head of Service, POs and Senior Management Team as it has achieved a month on month reduction in the LAC population since July 2020.

SLOG was set up last year to enable a whole service approach to getting children back with their families or otherwise achieving genuine permanence and security until at least they reach adulthood. It was in response to escalating LAC numbers. The

project has been involved in gathering information, monitoring, RAG rating cases, and trajectory planning

SLOG comprises of members from Permanence, SQU, SCP, FAFFT, Bays+ and has the facility to call in additional expertise as and when needed. It provides a unique forum of experts to support practitioners to address barriers and obstacles to support the development of care and support plans that can achieve permanence for children

#### **Example 4: C&FS Supported Care Planning**

Last year Child & Family Service restructures supported care planning teams, and reallocated additional support to staff in supported care planning to make sure relational social work practice even more embedded.

This year a redesign pilot team, part of the systems thinking review of Supported Care Planning (SCP), is continuing to experiment with ways to give staff the right system, time, tools and capacity to be better able to achieve what matters to service users. The new SCP purpose is "For you to work with me and those around me to make my life better."

Using the Vanguard method, the team are working in a controlled environment to test different ways of working and tools, so that what is eventually rolled in across the service in future will work to achieve the service's purpose and values. The pilot is looking at how information can best be captured, avoiding unnecessary duplication and creating more time to do direct social work with children and families. At each stage we carefully consider whether the work being undertaken is meaningful and valuable to the children, young people and their family whilst ensuring that risk is managed in a sensible way

As well the new single assessment process, a recent focus has also been looking at forms needed for Family Network meetings, Core Groups and Children in Need of Care and Support Reviews

#### **Example 5. Adult Services Temporary Social Work Restructure**

Last year Adult Services implemented a temporary restructure on 12th October 2020. A commitment made during the consultation process for Adult Services was that Senior Management would provide quarterly updates to staff and representatives. Quarterly update reports have been produced looking at capacity and demand across the whole system and feedback from staff.

The changes were aimed at meeting the current challenges whilst at the same time establishing the right environment for culture change and to implement the WCCIS system. The 'Collaborative Communication' practice model across Adult Services to focus on the quality of our social work, to become more outcomes focused, and to

change the conversation that we have with people about what matters to them in having a good life.

This requires a major shift in our work and our thinking to allow us to move from a service-led approach, focused on people's wellbeing and their own outcomes, at the same time putting people at the centre of their care and support planning.

## **Stories of Outcomes**

### **Story 1: Mr H. adult carer: social worker as the resource**

Mr H. not feeling valued by his family in caring for his poorly wife.

Mr H. given time by social worker to explore feeling, what matters and outcomes  
SW allowed Mr H to offload all of his worries and stresses.

SW was able to reassure the daughters from a neutral position, which enabled them to see his point of view and recognise the reasons why he was cancelling care and this helped to reduce his stress levels.

SW was able to speak with the daughters to identify what level of support they could offer and in doing so, reduce the amount of stress to Mr H.

Mr H. able to feel more at peace in caring for his wife Mrs H, and family acknowledging his efforts.

### **Story 2: Safeguarding a vulnerable adult - case sensitive approach (North Hub)**

A young person who was experiencing sexual exploitation in the community. The young person had recently turned 18 years of age. A 'duty to notify' provision for support for victims is set out in Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, and applies in Wales via National Referral Mechanism for potential victims. Case sensitivity was required with direct social work - being present, strength focused, listening, motivational interviewing and making the young person feel safe, comfortable and hopeful were key.

Due to on-going trauma, there was a need for continued social services support. Concerns about what support services or social work team the young person would be best suited to, from turning the age of 18 years.

Concerns about her continued levels of vulnerability, and how risks would be managed. The perpetrators finding her again was a real risk. Although there is increased knowledge of human trafficking, agencies (Adults) are still learning best practice and procedures, particularly within the framework of the new Act. Joint agency working with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector was successful; both agencies using a strengths based approach.

After intense social work input, the young person was supported through 3<sup>rd</sup> sector placement to move out of area, to a safe house in safe area.

**During 2021/22, our priorities are to:**

- Embed strengths based, outcomes focused practice within social work practice and processes, set within quality assurance framework reflecting right service at the right time

## 4e. Range of Services

Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

Our expectation is that Swansea citizens are supported within and by their communities, in which they can contribute and enjoy safe and healthy relationships. People are also helped to recognise unsafe relationships and to protect themselves from abuse and neglect. The views of families, carers and other personal relationships are taken into account when assessing and planning care and support needs.

Swansea's approach to commissioning for better social care outcomes is set out in the commissioning work being undertaken regionally, and locally through Swansea's commissioning cross cutting reviews.

This can be found regionally within the Western Bay Health and Social Care Programme Area Plan for Care and Support Needs 2018-23, and locally through the Council's Recovery Plan, delivered via the transformation and improvement programmes and the Council's corporate procurement methodology..

### **What we planned to do**

Development of commissioning arrangements and shaping markets, to anticipate future demand for services and help shape the social care market with particular reference to the impact of Covid-19.

We were also looking to further embed co-production with citizens into our commissioning approaches, taking forward proposals emerging from our regional and local approaches to achieve better outcomes

### **How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?**

Health and Social Care is currently challenged with a growing demand. Both Adult Services Transformation and Child and Family Services Improvement programmes, together with cross cutting commissioning reviews set out to improve our service offer, moving away from traditional models of service delivery.

We aim to make continuous service improvements, avoid service costs increasing and to ensure services are both high quality yet sustainable for the future.

In order to do this our change programme have to ensure coproduction and effective collaboration are featured, so that shared capacity and integrated approaches are used where possible, to be deployed in a more efficient and effective way, saving time, resources, sharing expertise and contributing to improved citizen wellbeing.

There are many examples of Swansea's approach to commissioning and service improvement within this report.

It is vital we are getting the most value from the money we have available to provide or commission social care. We are always looking to become more efficient, promote better outcomes and realise savings where we can.

### **Example 1: Covid response**

- Assessment of need and review of plans of care have continued throughout the pandemic within AMH, OPMH and LD services
- Face to face visits where necessary based on an organisational Risk Assessment
- Daily duty system has allowed the users and the public access to services and staff
- Regular and focussed welfare checks based on RAG rating of risk associated with care breaking down and the risk of requiring residential care or hospital admission.
- Allocation of resources via fortnightly challenge meetings, monthly joint meetings has allowed people to stay safe and protected.
- Within Learning Disability services, weekly meetings to consider allocation of in-house day support and respite support

### **Example 2: Commissioning / Range of C&FS**

Summary of some recent activities

- Maintaining placement stability with effective use of the edge of care team and the respite home.
- Placement finding through flexible use of resources, the capacity and skills within Foster Swansea and their carers, our 'in house' residential home, and positive relationships between commissioning and external providers.
- Full review of supported accommodation and support and floating support for 16-25 year olds involving young people.
- The development of an adolescent strategy.
- Review of Swansea Accommodation Pathway, looking at how to minimise the time staff spend in meetings and enable them to have more time to focus on young people

### **Example 3. Commissioning / Range of Adult Services**

Adult Services commissioning is mainly focused on integrated working with partners locally and across the region, which has been strengthened further during the last year. The last year has provided a clear focus of the capacity of these services needed and how services can be shaped to meet the future needs of our communities and service priorities.

Our close working on many regional programmes including the Hospital to Home/Rapid Discharge model, regional escalation tool, commissioned care monitoring and internal provision utilisation have provided focus on opportunities for change.

The regional programme will develop further in the year ahead with a revision to governance and re-alignment of regional delivery models. Adult Services will be helping to shape this work alongside partners. Externally commissioned services and

internal service provision will also be revisited in 2021/22, with the resulting strategies for residential, respite and day support a priority area of work

#### **Example 4: Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence VAWDASV**

Covid-19 and the impact of lockdown has definitely increased pressures on all of us, and for some this will have increased the risk of violence within households and families.

Swansea's Domestic Abuse Hub within the Single Point of Contact for Child and Family Services received record numbers of public protection notifications for domestic abuse related incidents where there may be children or young people involved.

A restructured early help offer in Swansea, was launched on 1st April 2020 including representation from South Wales Police as part of the Early Action Together programme.

This involves PCSOs placed in the five early help hub community teams and an officer from the Public Protection Unit being based in the Integrated Safeguarding Hub (ISH) within the Single Point of Contact. The ISH also has representation from health and education and this has enabled information required to be accessed to complete proportionate and timely assessments and ensure that children and young people are able to access the right support at the right time, from the right service to prevent escalation of need.

#### **Example 4: Commissioning- Day Services**

During the pandemic we recognised that without the support of day support services, there has been increased pressure on individuals, carers and extended family, both physically and mentally, which is increasingly Unsustainable.

As lockdown eases, we have been actively considering how we can open up day support in the safest way possible. A return to services as they were before the pandemic has not been possible due to the need to implement social distancing and other infection control measures. It is also because we are not yet back to our full complement of staff.

We have therefore taken steps to:

- Identify and prioritise individuals who are now struggling to remain at home without some form of day support
- Providing a day support service where no other support option is suitable.
- Plans to re-open services in a gradual, flexible and considered way, with safety always as the primary consideration.

Social workers have been available to discuss individual circumstance and what matters. Some alternative support options have been used during this time:

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- Direct Payments to purchase your own day support either by employing a Personal Assistant or through an external agency
- Domiciliary care –support in the person’s own home to help with personal care needs

## Stories of Outcomes

### Story 1: Edge of Care/ Accommodation

A New Edge of Care residential model has been implemented for families with children and young people at risk of becoming looked after receiving a total of 25 families accessing the support for a total of 91 nights.

Mapping of safer accommodation support for children looked after is currently underway within the region, under the Transforming Complex Care programme. This planning work is taking into account multi-agency approaches to filling gaps across services including working with Health and Education colleagues to ensure the right support is made available to children and young people in these positions.

### Story 2: Work Development

Swansea’s Employability Team continues to support a diverse range of clients across many age groups. through the Communities for Work/Communities for Work Plus programmes, CamNesa, and the Swansea Working Approach. The range of support offered includes

- Community outreach and engagement via hubs
- Intensive mentoring support
- Initial triage & assessment
- Develop personal action plan
- Support to overcome barriers e.g. confidence building
- Welfare support and advice
- Training and qualifications
- Volunteering placements
- Paid work opportunities
- Job search support
- Work trials

Recent changes to the national grant funding requires that the Council looks again at options for the future. This comes at a time when young people are facing the most hardship and challenge within the jobs market.

People Policy Development Committee are supporting officers to look at new ways of supporting young people, who are the most challenging to engage with.

### During 2021/22, our priorities are to:

- Work with corporate procurement and regional commissioning arrangements to promote financial efficacy
- To review commissioning of adult residential, respite and day support services



## **4f. Working in Partnerships and Integration (Exit Strategies)**

By working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

Our expectation is that our most vulnerable people are supported to participate as active citizens both economically through work and socially, and within suitable accommodation.

Our approach to working in partnership to maximise people's independence is set out in the corporate plan, wellbeing plan, service plans and improvement programmes.

### **What we planned to do**

We wanted to update and relaunch the Regional Partnership work programme.

We wanted to build better links between the regional programme and our local Child and Family Improvement programme and Safe LAC Reduction strategy.

Similarly, we wanted to link regional work to Swansea's Adult Services Transformation programme.

Within the Regional safeguarding programme there needed to be a greater multi agency focus on prevention.

### **How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?**

We are supporting people to participate as active citizens economically and socially.

We are supporting vulnerable people to access and sustain engagement with meaningful work.

We are also supporting people to access financial advice and help with benefits and grants.

Here are some examples of how regional work benefits people locally.

#### **Example 1: Regional Partnership work programme: Complex care**

Main aims of the Commissioning for Complex Needs Programme are:

- To effect a sustainable and efficient 'practice to commissioning' methodology across the region which commissions high quality health and social care services which are proportionate to need and are cost effective.
- To enable sharing and coordination of information, intelligence and planning together in service area of common interest.

- To help partners shift front line practice towards the requirement of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

This is achieved through work streams including:

- Outcomes Focused Assessment
- Mental Health & Learning Disability Brokerage (for placements)
- Regional Quality Framework for care homes

### **Example 2: Regional Partnership work programme: Carers**

West Glamorgan Carers Partnership Board was originally established in 2012, initially in response to the Carer Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010. Carers' views shape the work of the Board. This is achieved through the presentation of Carers feedback each quarter and comments from local Carer Centres/ Service and Young Carers Projects. In addition, views are gathered at regional events where Carers and Young Carers from the two local authority areas come together.

Board membership include representatives from Swansea Bay University Health Board, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea local authorities, Carers Services/ Centres, Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership.

We have established local partnership arrangements with carers groups [YMCA Young Carers, Swansea Parent Carer Forum, Swansea Carers Centre] to ensure fluid communication when discussing carers information, advice and/or issues. Developing such partnerships has provided us with a working relationship and a platform for future co-production

From our work in the Regional Partnership the agreed vision we are working to is that: "Carers are identified, recognised and supported to care. They have a life alongside caring and have a feeling of well-being throughout their caring journey".

We are working with regional partners to consider the role of Carers Champion – aiming to relaunch the Carers Champion role and for each team to identify a key link who will receive and update their team regarding carers information.

### **Example 3: Western Bay Regional Adoption Service**

2020-21 has been a very challenging year and saw this vital regional service having to adapt during the Global COVID pandemic, with staff working tirelessly to ensure it is business as normal. Staff ensured that all the necessary work needed to support children and families can now be completed remotely. Panel, Assessments, family finding and adoption support tasks have continued via virtual means, with risk assessments in place for limited face to face work when needed.

- No. of Children Matched for Adoption in 2020/21 -Swansea only = **37** (36)
- No. of Children placed for adoption in 2020/21- Swansea only = **32** (38)
- Of these no. of children placed in “Western Bay” region = **26** (18)

The regional service is continuing to attract a number of prospective adopters:

- Number of Adopter enquiries = **257** (166)
- Number of Adopter approvals = **53** (54)
- No. of placements generated = **64** (62)

#### **Example 4: Western Bay Integrated Autism Service**

Western Bay Integrated Autism Service provides direct support for autistic adults. We also provide advice, support and signposting for parent carers of autistic children, young people and adults.

The Integrated Autism Service offered telephone or email support to autistic adults, partners and parent carers of autistic people, who may be concerned about the impact of Coronavirus (covid-19), social distancing and self-isolation on them and their families. Also advice to other professionals about how best to support autistic individuals at this time.

The Regional Integrated Autism Service includes Service Manager, Clinical psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Specialist Autism Practitioner and four Well-being Support Workers.

#### **Example 5: Tackling Poverty in partnership**

11.5% of Swansea areas are in the top 10% of most deprived areas in Wales. There are two wards in Swansea in the top 10 with the highest numbers in child poverty. There are more jobs in Swansea below the poverty threshold than is the national average 27.6% in Swansea, compared to 25.6% in Wales and 22.7% UK wide.

City and County Swansea has established the first Poverty Truth Commission in Wales. We are also looking to establish foundational economy based on the city as a ‘Living Wage Place’.

Work on Tackling Poverty is vital to achieving better outcomes for citizens and is being taken forward by a Partnership forum with representatives from the Council, DWP and a wide range 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations and businesses attending.

### **Stories of Outcomes**

#### **Story 1: Youth Offending Service**

In April 2019, Swansea Youth Justice Service (SYJS) was formed as a result of the disaggregation of Western Bay Youth Justice Service(WBYJS).

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A Joint inspection in November 2018 highlighted many challenges that needed addressing from the old arrangements, and the new local service has been working hard on an Improvement and Action Plan: [-YOS Report to C&F Scrutiny](#)

Progress against the plan is continually reviewed every 6 months, to ensure the service continues to raise the standards and ensure compliance with the expectations. Swansea Youth Justice Service continues to focus on improving the quality of service to children and young people concentrating on developing robust assessments, quality assurance processes and reviewing interventions.

A part time CAMHS nurse is in post to provide children and young people with appropriate mental health services and a pathway for more help when required. The mobilisation of Speech and Language Service is expected this year.

## **Story 2: CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service)**

The pandemic has seen increasing demand for both emotional and mental health services for children and young people. We are still learning about the emerging impact of the pandemic on children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing.

Emotional Health & Wellbeing for Children and Young People (including CAMHS) is now agreed, as priority for West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board acceptance that response needs to be multiagency.

We are looking at ways to improve access to ensure children & young people get access to services at the right time, and in the right place. This is not just about specialist CAMHS but having a full range of services available to support children & young people's emotional and mental health needs.

What we have already achieved:

- Establishment of Single Point of Access to CAMHS ahead of schedule
- Investment by partners to increase support in all settings including school counselling

Plans being developed to provide full range of support for the emotional, health and wellbeing of children and young people, including the joint agency development early intervention and prevention options.

### **During 2021/22, our priorities are to:**

- Implement the West Glamorgan regional partnership work programme, with links to Swansea's programme – "Achieving Better Together".

## 5. How We Do What We Do

### 5a. Workforce

We have continued to support and develop our social care workforce and managers to be the best they can be, and to provide the highest quality services.

#### **Example: Workforce Wellbeing & Engagement (C&FS)**

**Our vision for wellbeing and engagement in the service is: ‘Supporting me to thrive so I can achieve my best for children young people and families’.**

Workforce Strategy was re-aligned in January 2021 around staff wellbeing, and a new programme of work has been established. A Workforce Wellbeing and Engagement group has been established to support this work, to carry out a progress review and look towards establishing meaningful measures that evidence wellbeing and engagement across the service.

As part of the review the annual well-being survey has been conducted and findings are being compared. Early indicators suggest that almost twice the number of staff completed the survey when compared to engagement last year. This is a positive indicator of an increase in general engagement across the service.

As part of the survey staff answered a number of scaling questions out of 6, with 6 being very positive and 1 being very negative. A summary of responses includes;

- Happiness inside of work: a slight improvement compared to last year
- Happiness outside of work: a slight improvement compared to last year
- Stress levels at work: an improvement compared to last year
- Mental health: an improvement compared to last year
- Sickness levels in the last 12 months: no real change

#### **Example: No-Core Hours Pilot (C&FS)**

A No-Core Hours pilot (is a key part of the Wellbeing and Engagement Strategy) took place in Child and Family Services. A review of how the trial has gone had over the last 12 months, is due to go back to Corporate Management Team this summer. Data has started to be collected as well as the feedback from staff who have trialled the tool has been very positive.

Despite being in lockdown for the whole pilot, the evidence suggests that this has been able to support staff with issues such as home schooling, bereavement and caring for ill family members. It is hoped that this will continue as the service begins to move back to a version of office based working.

### Example: Workforce Development in Adult Services

To support a number of these themes a revised approach to Workforce Development will be a priority for 21/22. Building upon regional and corporate programmes already in place, a revised governance structure and robust collaborative approach is now in place to improve how we support our staff and focusing on:

- Well-being & engagement
- Staff Development
- Recruitment & Retention
- Team structures

### Example: Staff Training & Development: Welcome to #TuesdayTraining!



Social Services Staff Development and Training Unit now provides weekly training bulletins (every Tuesday) to update all staff on the latest training opportunities. We hope that by putting things into one place, we will be able to promote our course information more effectively.

### Challenges ahead:

- Develop social care workforce strategy to plan for future recruitment, retention, succession planning and training/skills development
- Maximising on the wealth of knowledge and experience of our current workforce
- To support staff with long term effects of Covid – in relation to their wellbeing and also on demand for services/ within teams
- 

### Priorities 1:

We need to continue to support and develop our workforce through our Workforce Wellbeing Strategy, with a particular focus on mental health and emotional wellbeing.

## 5b. Finance

The Social Services Directorate achieved all of its existing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) target savings commitments by close of financial year 2020-21.

Future pressures on local authority funding in Wales are expected, alongside increasing demand and service costs, and there are challenges ahead for the Council to be more sustainable and to contribute a greater impact.

Our approach for the years ahead is set out within the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning 2022/23 - 2025/26.

### **STATEMENT OF BUDGET PRIORITIES: Social Services- Child & Families**

Whilst no significant policy changes are proposed in Child and Family Services, clearly COVID-19 has had a major impact on the delivery of children services.

We will maintain the current Safe LAC Reduction Strategy and our investment in preventative services to reduce the number of looked after children and achieve the planned savings and service improvements, taking into account changes necessary to mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has had on the well-being of vulnerable children, families and our staff

Our priority will be to embed these approaches as business as usual and promote further integration with both wider social services and other support available from across the Council.

### **STATEMENT OF BUDGET PRIORITIES: Social Services- Adults**

COVID-19 has had an even more significant impact on our population of adults requiring care and support and their families and carers.

The previously agreed optimum model for Adult Services Optimal Service model remains fundamentally sound, and based on:

- Better prevention
- Better early help
- A new approach to assessment
- Improved cost effectiveness
- Working together better
- Keeping people safe.

The focus for the coming year will be on prioritising improvements to services that best support individuals, families and carers in recovering from the huge impact that COVID-19 has had on all their lives including that care and support has been so significantly disrupted this year.

*Annual Report of Director of Social Services. First Draft*

## **STATEMENT OF BUDGET PRIORITIES: Social Services- Poverty & Prevention**

COVID-19 has highlighted to an even greater extent the crucial role our tackling poverty services play in supporting the most vulnerable members of our community to manage the most difficult of circumstances.

Out of necessity the service has become even more focussed on ensuring a joined up, strengths and assets based approach to working with and in communities with targeted support for the most vulnerable.

The next phase of recovery into 2021/22 will have a heavy focus upon financial efficacy; the transformation programmes will support the Medium Term Financial plan savings targets for Social Services. We will monitor progress as part of governance arrangements in monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meetings.

As with schools, the Welsh Government's overall Settlement for 2021/22 no longer includes a protection or prioritisation of funding for social care. Also, we have to mitigate against as yet unknown risks associated with the potential withdrawal of any grant funding received to manage Covid, as well as any changes to Welsh Government regional grant funding.

Corporate budget consultation takes place on a wide variety of specific proposals. This includes consultation with children and young people. Others are consulted on using service-specific groups and/or activities, and feedback is considered within the budget proposals and impact assessment.

### **Story 1: Social Services Charging Annual Review**

Swansea Council's Charging Policy (social services) was approved by Cabinet in April 2016. The policy and list of charges has been reviewed every year since. By reviewing our approach to charging for social care on an annual basis, Swansea Council is following Audit Wales model of good practice. Social Services Finance and Charging group has driven improvements in the Council's invoicing, debt management and debt recovery processes.

Although Swansea Council' has adopted the principle of full cost recovery to service delivery, within social care, charges can only recover some or all of the costs of services from citizens.

Any income generated by charges can reduce the costs of services to Council taxpayers, and can help safeguard our most vulnerable citizens. It is our belief that any proposals to charge for, or indeed to subsidise, the costs of services should be based on detailed analysis, thereby encouraging transparency, fair access, and the annual review helps to support this process.



In 2020-21, Swansea Council generated **£16.8m** related to social services. (£18.58m in 2019/20).

## **5c. Governance and Other Partnerships**

Social Services cannot be effective in meeting the wide range of statutory obligations, and facing such complex challenges, unless we have strong support from within our organisation and from each of our partners.

### **Political Leadership-**

Social Services has continued to benefit from strong support from Cabinet and elected members within the Council, and through the constructive support and challenge offered by scrutiny performance panels

### **Corporate Leadership**

The Directorate has always enjoyed strong corporate support from the Chief Executive and the wider Corporate Management. An independent senior management review is underway. The new structure will be equipped to guide the organisation through recovery, especially economic, education and social services as well as our transformation programme. And at the same time to give sufficient capacity to really push ahead with regionalisation.

### **West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board**

Over the course of the last year (2019/2020) the work of the Board focused on Exploitation, Engagement & Participation and Effective Management of the Safeguarding Board.

Up until March 2020 it was envisaged that some of these priorities would be taken forward into 2020/2021. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Board decided to park the aforementioned priorities and instead all safeguarding priorities have been set against the backdrop of Covid 19.

In setting the priority area/focus for the forthcoming year the Board has due regard to its statutory responsibility to meet the core functions:

- Raising awareness of the Board's objectives to protect and prevent adults and children from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect and other forms of harm, and to provide information about how this might be achieved.
- Reviewing the efficacy of measures taken by agencies to implement the objectives of the Board and to make and monitor recommendations.
- Undertaking child practice reviews, adult practice reviews, audits, investigations and other reviews as are required in pursuance of its objectives and to
- disseminate learning and information arising from these reviews. Reviewing the performance of the Board and its partners and bodies represented on the Board in carrying out its objectives.
- Neglect of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Review the training needs of practitioners working in the area of the Board in

- order to identify training to assist in the protection and prevention of abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm.

The West Glamorgan Safeguarding Boards 2021/2022 Joint Annual Plan will be available via their website.

### **Priorities 1:**

To continue the Council's transformation journey reflected in "Achieving Better Together" – and embrace new ways of working where they bring benefits to the public, prevent demand and reduce service costs.

## 6. ADDITIONAL

### 6a) Compliments, Complaints, and representations

#### Compliments

Many compliments received for Social Services staff have been included in the Director of Social Services weekly Covid-19 Briefings. These briefings have been emailed to staff and have also been uploaded to Staffnet.

#### Complaints

Annual Reports summarising the Compliments and Complaints received relating to Adult and Child and Family Services, are generally reported to Cabinet.

- Total number of complaints relating to Adult Services (all stages) received by Complaint Team in **2019/20 = 239** (204, in 2018/19)
- Total number of complaints relating to Child and Family Services (all stages) received by Complaint Team in 2019/20 = **166** (188 in 2018/19)

#### Representations

The number of complaints to the ombudsman doubled during this period, as more citizens are informed of their rights:

- Adults complaints proceeding to Public Ombudsman in 2019/20 = **14** (13)
- Child and Family complaints to Public Ombudsman in 2019/20 = **11** (10)

For more information: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/sscomplaints>

### 6b) Mwy Na Geiriau “More than Just Words”

The Welsh Language Standards Act has strengthened the provision of bilingual services in health and social care, and within the council as a whole.

Mwy Na Geiriau “More than Just Words – to implement Health and Social Care framework, Swansea remains committed to the Fforwm Mwy Na Geiriau and regional partnerships. Swansea contributed a number of examples of good practice to the recent Welsh Government commissioned national evaluation of the Mwy Na Geiriau strategy.

Swansea Council promotes best practice approaches in using the Welsh language to improve our service offer to citizens, and amongst staff involved in delivering health and social care.

#### Example1: Training & Support

Swansea Council have extended the offer to staff to learn Welsh through work. Courses now run to foundation level, and these opportunities are advertised widely on the staff intranet and through #TrainingTuesday.

In addition there is support for Welsh speakers new learners across the organisation. There is a corporate Welsh Language training group which meets to coordinate opportunities, to support each other and to share good practice.

*Annual Report of Director of Social Services. First Draft*

To support Welsh Learners in the council, this group is providing learners with the opportunity to be mentored by employees who can speak Welsh in the authority. This provides a great opportunity to speak, practice and network with the Welsh Language and discuss anything that you have learnt in the lessons or even link in with Welsh groups across the Swansea Area.

### **Example 3: Welsh language champions in Adult Service Provision**

Over the past year we have sought to improve practice and enhance the lives of those people whose preferred language is Welsh.

Here are some of the areas of development in Adult Service Provision:

- Identifying Welsh Language Champions within all services
- Also Welsh Dementia Friends Champions who make an 'active offer' in care homes/ day services
- Capturing magic moments poster and Welsh speaking individuals feedback through the medium of Welsh
- Inclusive communication board in Welsh – Alexandra road
- Reflecting Welsh culture within all our services
- Capturing information on how we promote Welsh culture in our services through our quarterly quality observations
- Delivering a bilingual Dementia Friends Awareness session at our staff event

### **Story 1: Intergenerational project**

We worked on a Project called “Hen Blant Bach” in partnership with “Menter Iaith Abertawe” who are a Welsh business that promotes Welsh in Swansea. The intergenerational work was delivered with primary children and people living with dementia through the medium of Welsh. This project was nominated for a social care accolade.

### **6c) Further information on Social Services**

This Annual Report provides detail about Swansea’s improvement journey within statutory social services in 2020/21.

The Full Report is available in other languages and formats upon request.

There is a wide range of information available through the Council’s website: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcarepublications>.

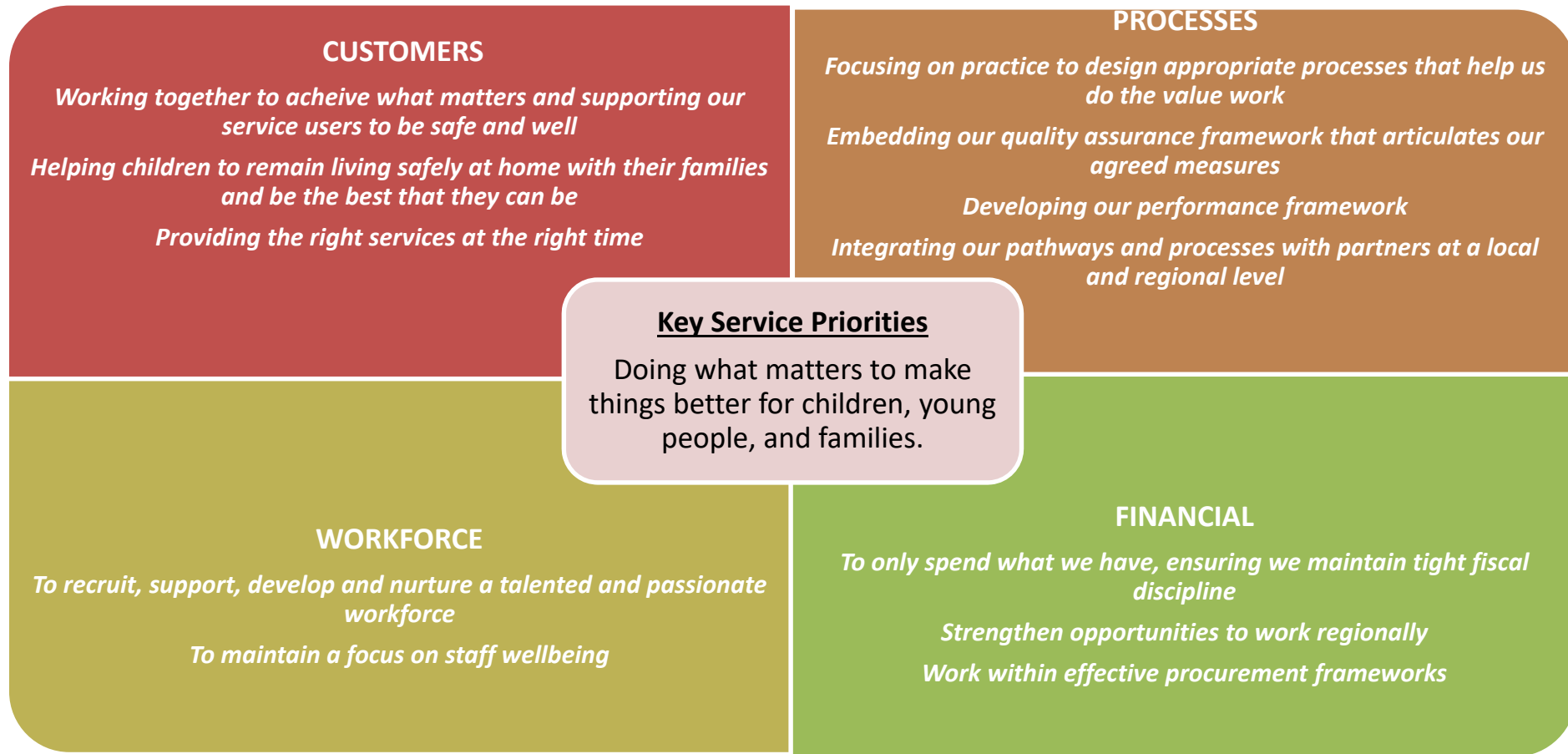
For further information on accessing Social Services, check out the Council’s public website at: <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/2929/How-Social-Services-can-help-with-your-care-and-support>.

## APPENDICES

### a) ADULT SERVICES - SERVICE PLAN KEY PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2021/22



**b) CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE PLAN KEY PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2021/22**



# Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form - Appendix B

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

## Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Social Services

Directorate: Social Services

### Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

### (b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2020-21

### Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form - Appendix B

- Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

The purpose of the Director of Social Services' Annual Report is to evaluate the local authority's improvement journey to 2020/21, in providing services to people in Swansea, those who access information, advice and assistance, and to those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. The report sets out the evidence –based view of the Director, at this point in time and the priorities for improvement in 2021/22.

- Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

- 
- Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

- 
- Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

- 
- Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**

*(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)*

Director of Social Services' Annual Report is a statutory requirement under Part 8 of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and this report is expected to be written by, or on behalf, of the person responsible for carrying out the full range of statutory roles and responsibilities.



## Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form - Appendix B

As a statutory annual report, this “Plan” reflects the views of the Director of Social Services in Swansea, to whom people are entitled to express their views of how effective the services are:

- In meeting wellbeing and needs of targeted populations
- In delivering on priorities set in past annual report
- Achieving a sustainable model of social care
- In providing assurances about the quality of services, against national standards

The report provides the public and stakeholders with the summary views of the statutory director of social services, and the priorities for future improvement. This report in containing the viewpoint of the statutory director does not need to change, whether during or following its document lifecycle, and through extended engagement with council elected members and/or partners. This report is informed by service user views, and the report sets out examples of how services now provided or commissioned are shaped by participation and coproduction.

The report also contains a summary of Swansea Council’s progress in implementing the changes expected by new legislative framework for social care in Wales, and a set of improvement priorities for 2020/21

- new statutory requirements under the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, through the many regulations and codes of practice:  
<http://gov.wales/topics/health/socialcare/act/assessments?lang=en>
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act <http://gov.wales/docs/equality-impact-assessments/150223-cymraig-en.pdf>
- Welsh Language standards (Regulatory Impact Assessment)  
<http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/sub-ld10587-em/sub-ld10587-em-e.pdf>
- Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015
- How Swansea’s social services function, particularly through its Child and Family Services, is supporting the Council’s commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the best interests of children (0-18 years) and families in Swansea.
- How well the Council’s Corporate Priorities are being met, and its own transformation programme “Sustainable Swansea” is supporting the improvement programmes in Adult Services and Child and Family Services.
- How Swansea is contributing to the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board to build collaboration and effective governance arrangements to support a regional approach to safeguarding, commissioning, workforce development and business as usual activities in order to make best use of resources..

### Outcome of Screening

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

• **Summary of Impacts (Q2)** Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.

• **Summary of involvement (Q3)** **Social Services work closely with other** Swansea Council services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards and works co-productively on services development and commissioning plans. This development work and the involvement of others has been involved in this report.

## Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form - Appendix B

• **WFG considerations (Q4)** Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the transformation and improvement programmes within social services, which are working towards a sustainable model of social care. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified social care workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for Swansea citizens. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support social care workers in their professional development, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with vulnerable people and their carers.

• **Any risks identified (Q5)** The improvements and transformation programmes set out within this plan are risk managed closely. Any risks identified and agreed, are mitigated as routine within social services at service, directorate and corporate levels through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting and escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.

• **Cumulative impact (Q7)** There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens through the continuous improvement of social services, and the benefits this brings to the social care economy and wider social care workforce.


(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Simon Jones</b>
<b>Job title: Social Service Strategic Performance &amp; Improvement Officer</b>
<b>Date: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021</b>

<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
 <b>Name:</b> David Howes
<b>Position:</b> Director of Social Services
<b>Date:</b> 12 August 2021

Please return the completed form to [accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)

David Howes  
Chief Social Services Officer  
Swansea Council  
Civic Centre  
Oystermouth Road  
Swansea  
SA1 3SN

Dyddiad/Date: 17 August 2021

Dear Director,

### **Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) – Assurance Check 2021: Swansea Council**

This letter summarises the findings of our assurance check on 7 June to 11 June 2021. The purpose of this assurance check was to review how well local authority social services continue to help and support adults and children with a focus on safety and well-being.

We focused our key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded our judgements and findings aligned to these People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Well-Being, Partnerships and Integration.

#### **Overview**

In March 2020, CIW suspended its routine programme in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to enable local authorities and providers to focus fully on responding to the challenging circumstances. A revised programme with local authorities recommenced in September to provide assurance about how people are being safeguarded and well-being promoted during the pandemic. We considered safety and well-being of people who use or may need to use services, the safety of services they access and the safety and well-being of people who work in services. We focused our key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded our judgements and findings aligned to these: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Partnerships and Integration, Well-being.

Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru (AGC)  
Swyddfa Llywodraeth Cymru  
Sarn Mynach  
Cyffordd Llandudno  
LL31 9RZ  
[www.arolygiaethgofal.cymru](http://www.arolygiaethgofal.cymru)

☎ 0300 790 0126  
✉ [CIW@gov.wales](mailto:CIW@gov.wales)

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)  
Welsh Government Office  
Sarn Mynach  
Llandudno Junction  
LL31 9RZ  
[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not result in a delay in responding.

## **Our focus was on:**

1. How well is the local authority discharging its statutory functions to keep people who need care and support and carers who need support, safe and promote their well-being during the pandemic?
2. What is the local authority doing to prevent the need for children to come into care; and are children returning home to their families quickly enough where safe to do so?

## **Summary of findings and priorities for improvement**

**People - voice and control - We asked:** How well is the local authority ensuring people, carers and practitioners are having their voices heard, making informed choices, and maintaining control over their lives? While also balancing the recommendations and requirements made by Public Health Wales and Welsh Government to limit the spread of COVID-19.

At the beginning of the pandemic, Swansea Council was able to build on its established agile working systems, developing proactive regional approaches to support front-line services and recovery planning. In adult services, capacity was expanded in relation to the intermediate care offer, reablement, hospital to home, and hospital avoidance services. Additional capacity was realised in direct service provision, particularly residential and domiciliary care, including the creation of an Additional Support Team. Increased support was also provided to external providers, in relation to financial input, commissioning services, and infection control. In children's services, a Children in Need of Care and Support (CINCS) team was created in November 2020 in order to increase capacity, amid concerns that some individuals in need of care and support were not receiving the necessary priority.

The Red Amber Green (RAG) rating tool for caseloads provided good oversight of required levels of individual support, with an underpinning rationale for decision-making. We saw the RAG status was utilised to inform decisions made about frequency and type of visits, both virtual and face-to-face, dependent on risk. Staff told us how they had used various means to maintain safe contact with people throughout the pandemic. Additional COVID-related funds were used to support vulnerable teenagers with mobile phone, tablets and extra top-ups. We learnt that older teenagers and care leavers had received enhanced emotional and well-being support, including speech and language therapist input. Whilst inevitably there were considerable challenges to established means of communication, Swansea Council was clearly committed to ensuring people were supported to have their voices heard, and receive the care and support they need.

From the number of files reviewed and interviews undertaken it was clear that matters relating to consent, advocacy, mental capacity and best interests were routinely considered at an early stage in the engagement process. We also found evidence that children were

offered access to advocacy services, although this had not always been taken up. We saw appropriate examples of family members and social workers advocating on people's behalf. We heard the offer of assessment in Welsh was made when people first contact Swansea Council and language preference was captured on the electronic system. We saw evidence of social workers being alert to and respectful of people's diverse cultural and communication needs and of interpreters, including family members, being used when required.

Whilst the recent transfer to the Welsh Community Care Information Service (WCCIS) database had undoubtedly been challenging in terms of recording practices, we found people's voices need to be strengthened in assessments and care planning. The best care plans demonstrated a thorough understanding and consideration of an individual's strengths, needs, and what matters to them. However, in other cases reviewed we found that whilst needs were often identified, analysed and considered in detail, there was little to capture the person's experiences of the support they were receiving. We also found limited evidence of consultation with people about the support they required to achieve their desired outcomes. Some records would also benefit from a clearer focus on strengths, including user voice. This is identified as an area for improvement in relation to both adult and children's services.

Carers' assessments reviewed reflected good analysis of the caring role, but significant wider aspects were not always explored. Some reviews of assessments were overdue. This meant that there is potential for people's changing needs not being appropriately considered and supported. We heard about carers being under significant pressure over the previous few months. Carers support groups also told us of improved communication and relationships with senior managers, but felt the overall situation in relation to carer's assessments and overall support had not improved. There is significant work to be done in minimising the gap between the experiences reported by carers' representatives, and the aims and ambitions set out in the recently launched regional carers' strategy and action plan.

The ongoing restructuring of elements of adult services, whilst inevitably disruptive during the pandemic, was broadly welcomed. We heard positive feedback from practitioners about the dedicated safeguarding team. A review team had also been set up in response to an identified need to bring about improvements in this area. It was too early for us to comment on the effectiveness of these new arrangements.

Most staff and managers interviewed were positive about the accessibility and support they received from managers. We also heard that staff appreciated the visibility of senior managers, their flexibility in terms of mobilising an agile workforce, core hours and interpretation of guidance. Regular briefings from the director were well received.

Strategic leaders and elected members maintained oversight of the impact of the pandemic on the ability of Swansea Council to continue to provide services, including regular reviews of performance and complaints data.

**Prevention - We asked:** To what extent is the local authority successful in promoting prevention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies?

Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) cases reviewed evidenced timely responses to requests for support, including a carer's assessment.

Swansea Council's approach to prevention is co-developed and delivered by a wide range of partners, including third-sector organisations. We heard that the first three of the co-located Early Help Hubs, launched in April 2020, had been well received by partners and others. These have multi-agency staffing and use the Signs of Wellbeing framework to inform 'what matters' conversations at the front-door.

There were promising indications that these, together with the integrated safeguarding hub, have been effective in redirecting people to where help is most needed, and where appropriate, preventing escalation to statutory services. Third sector partners commented on the high quality of safeguarding strategy meetings, emphasising that these were person-centred, and proactively explored means of preventing escalation.

Swansea Council has established multi-agency panels to support its preventative approach. The Diversion and Admissions Panel (DAAP) has a significant focus on preventing escalation to statutory services as and when appropriate. We saw evidence of significant preventative work, including direct work with children/young people as well as parenting support aimed at maintaining children at home. However, in some cases opportunities were missed to support people at an earlier stage. In one instance, preventative services were involved with the family over an extended period, but a lack of coordination and key decision making at crucial stages resulted in a failure to work sufficiently intensively with the family when they were approaching a point of crisis. We saw examples where opportunities to support adults with learning difficulties and their family at an earlier stage had been missed. Whilst managers were clearly aware of the potential implications and the need for proactive oversight, the significant ongoing delays to large numbers of reviews meant that other people might have escalating needs which were not being met.

In adults services we heard the Discharge to Assess/Re-able initiative produced timely outcomes for individuals, as well as impacting positively on hospital bed availability. Digital solutions were put in place for assessment and review, and for maintaining contact throughout with those identified as being most vulnerable and at risk. These included the provision of easy install smart hubs and other equipment enabling people to remain safe within their homes.

In light of increasing demand and complexity at the front door, we heard from some providers that the Central Access Point (CAP) could be difficult to access at times. However, community-based resources had been enhanced to support individuals and communities in meeting increased demand, including increased numbers of local area co-ordinators, third sector referral routes, and broader council-wide Tackling Poverty initiatives.

Swansea Council had clearly worked hard to respond to these unprecedented increases in demand, with only a few areas experiencing significant waiting lists.

Across children's and adults services it was recognised that despite best efforts, the inability to undertake and access the range of usual interventions including face-to-face contact with people had adversely impacted on preventative interventions and the delivery of care and support for many people. Senior managers recognised the importance of fully scoping and understanding these impacts, and were planning to ensure the best elements of adaptive practice are incorporated into future planning for anticipated post-pandemic demands. It is encouraging to note Swansea Council is actively exploring means of incorporating best practice into longer-term service provision.

A systems review approach has recently paid dividends in improving the Bays + service for those over the age of sixteen. This methodology is due to be implemented over coming months to help analyse the impact of the Early Help Hubs. The need to fully embed effective quality assurance systems across the service is also recognised as a requirement in informing future practice, as well as monitoring the quality of outcomes currently experienced by people.

Swansea Council's robust and proactive approach to reviewing, and where appropriate, reducing the number of children looked after has continued to pay dividends during the pandemic. The number of children placed outside Wales has also been recently reduced. Most of the care experienced young people we spoke with were positive about their overall experience and levels of support. Others told us they had experienced a number of placement moves over a short period of time.

**Partnership and Integration - We asked:** To what extent is the local authority able to assure itself opportunities for partnership working are positively exploited to maximise person centred planning and ensure integrated service delivery and service sustainability.

Partners appreciated the opportunities for closer working and learning together promoted by Swansea Council during the pandemic, together with its flexibility, for example in rolling-over home care contracts. We also heard positive feedback from partners about Swansea Council's willingness to innovate and test new ideas where there was an identified need, such as micro-enterprises in areas where home-care provision had proved difficult to maintain.

We heard that partnerships had been strengthened within Swansea Council during the pandemic. For instance, working more closely with education in relation to vulnerable children. The weekly quality assurance meetings held with safeguarding partners to review individual risk and identify emerging patterns and trends were cited as an example of this.

We were also told about the proactive involvement of children and young people in Corporate Parenting Board initiatives, and about co-productive approaches to their participation in recent staff recruitment and selection processes.

In adults services we learnt about the development and implementation alongside partner agencies of initiatives such as the Regional Integrated Escalation Framework aimed at enhancing responsive decision-making, and additional measures introduced to monitor activity, demand, and risk factors in priority areas. Likewise, enhanced 'keep me at home' and rapid discharge models, alongside the expansion of 'step up - step down' provision, enabled people to avoid hospital admission and expedited their earlier discharge from hospital.

On an individual level, we saw examples of good working relationships between professionals from a number of agencies, and people in receipt of well-coordinated care and support. In the best cases reviewed, practice was respectful and we saw genuine efforts made by staff to understand people's circumstances and explore how best to work together in supporting people to meet their own personal outcomes. However, opportunities for partnership working were not always utilised to best effect; in some of the cases reviewed, closer partnership working with police and health services would have been appropriate.

The signs of safety, and increasingly, the signs of well-being model has been embedded in children's services and staff described this as providing a shared vocabulary and support for staff and partners in promoting people's understanding of the presenting issues. We saw practitioners were confident in their use of this framework and the inclusive approach taken towards Family Network meetings and safety planning was particularly welcomed by families spoken with. Providers also reported Swansea Council has taken a lead in influencing partners to adopt a more strength based/appreciative enquiry approach to communicating with people.

A positive attitude towards risk and a willingness to experiment, innovate and be creative was evident. It was noteworthy that the contextual safeguarding approach recently adopted by Swansea Council had been welcomed by partner agencies, and as such is reaching out to young people with the aim of ensuring that they were not disenfranchised.

At a strategic level, principal officers and elected members in children's services reported a culture of partnership working, enhanced by a high level of commitment to the corporate parenting board from across the council and partner agencies. Senior managers also report effective relationships between partners and it was apparent that some recently established operational and strategic forums, for example with providers of substance misuse and housing services, have further promoted closer working relationships. Third sector providers were very positive about relationships with Swansea Council, reporting their views were highly valued; commissioning and contracting services were described as excellent. We heard further work was ongoing in promoting joint understanding of elements



of safeguarding and other aspects, underpinned by the development of new documentation and joint training, when circumstances allow.

Whilst we heard generally positive messages from health strategic partners and most third sector representatives in relation to adults services, some also felt there was not always the resource at a strategic level to drive ideas forward. Practitioners told us whilst the pandemic had brought about opportunities for enhanced partnership working, there had also been inhibiting factors. These included some staff working from home whilst those in other agencies remained office-based, and the fact that different agencies did not use the same virtual platforms.

**Well-being - We asked:** To what extent is the local authority promoting well-being, ensuring people maintain their safety and achieve positive outcomes that matter to them?

Despite Swansea Council's innovative approach and creative reallocation of resources at an early stage, it was acknowledged there were currently waiting lists in some areas of adult service provision. These included social work allocation in the community assessment teams, and for the community occupational therapy service. Whilst we did not see these having a detrimental impact in the small number of cases reviewed, it was positive to note managers had established mechanisms to monitor, risk assess and review the priority status of those people waiting for a service. We also noted in some adult service teams, senior practitioners and managers had worked hard to keep waiting list pressures away from front line staff so they could continue to concentrate on meeting the needs of people on their existing caseloads.

It was clear that during what has been an unrelentingly challenging period, staff continued to feel under significant pressure in a number of teams. Feedback from staff via focus groups and survey results confirmed they felt appropriately supported throughout the pandemic. They felt the pressures they were working under were acknowledged and understood, and they appreciated senior managers retaining a clear line of sight on front-line practice.

The need for additional support for and engagement with staff was recognised and acted upon via a corporate wellbeing programme, which included initiatives such as the provision of 'psychological first aid' for front line workers. We also heard local peer support and group initiatives at team level in children's services had been further enhanced by mentoring and coaching approaches targeted at staff who had been newly recruited or recently qualified. Most staff indicated they were looking forward to offices being re-opened, and would welcome a more blended way of working in the future.

From the files we reviewed, safeguarding enquiries and investigations were conducted in line with statutory requirements. A broad view of safeguarding was taken, which not only focused on risk but also considered people's well-being outcomes and quality of life, and took into account measures aimed at preventing escalation. Partners viewed the recent

introduction of the new adult safeguarding team as a positive development and were optimistic this would support consistency of decision-making and provide additional rigour. Strategy meetings or discussions were timely, effective and involved appropriate people and agencies. Generally, we identified good analysis of risk, which demonstrated an appropriate balance between risk management and individual well-being, with protection plans in place and action taken when necessary. We also saw good recording of key decisions and robust management oversight in this area.

### **Method:**

- we reviewed documentation supplied in advance of our visit
- we spoke with people who were receiving or had received care and support, including four young people who had left care
- we reviewed a total of 25 case files
- we held case tracking discussions on a further ten case files
- we administered eight surveys to people who had experience of care and support, third sector organisations, staff and healthcare professionals
- we met with representatives from police, education, health, service providers and the third sector

### **Next Steps**

We have identified strengths and areas for priority improvement and we will review the progress of these areas through our performance evaluation review meetings with the heads of service and director. We expect the areas of improvement we have identified to be included in the local authority's improvement plans. We would like to extend our thanks to all those who helped with the arrangements for this assurance check and to those people and staff who spoke with us.

Please see our Privacy Notice at <https://careinspectorate.wales/how-we-use-your-information>

Yours sincerely,



**Lou Bushell-Bauers**

Head of Local Authority Inspection

**Care Inspectorate Wales**

# Agenda Item 9.



Cyngor **Abertawe**  
**Swansea** Council

## Report of the Section 151 Officer

Council – 7 October 2021

### Review of Revenue Reserves

<b>Purpose:</b>	To undertake a mid-year review of the Revenue Reserves position and to agree any suggested reclassification of reserves based on current requirements.
<b>Policy framework:</b>	Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget Strategy
<b>Consultation:</b>	Cabinet Members, Corporate Management Team, Legal and Access to Services.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That Council approves the recommendations made in this report at Sections 3.10 and 3.11
<b>Report Author:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

#### 1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1. Local Authorities have a corporate responsibility to operate within available resources and to remain financially sound over the short, medium and longer term.
- 1.2. One of the key tools available to Authorities in managing its affairs is the creation and use of both General and Earmarked reserves to assist in delivering services over a period longer than one financial year.
- 1.3. In terms of guidance on the review and management of reserves, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), via the Local Authority Accounting Panel, issued a bulletin in July 2014 (LAAP 99) intended to give guidance to Local Authorities on the management and review of reserves. This bulletin is considered best practice in terms of Local Authority financial administration and effectively must be followed. A copy of the bulletin is at Appendix A to this report.

- 1.4. Within the existing statutory and regulatory framework, it is the responsibility of Chief Financial Officers to advise Local Authorities about the level of reserves that should be held and to ensure there are clear protocols for their establishment and use. Reserves should not be held without a clear purpose.
- 1.5. It is the duty of the Chief Financial Officer to specifically report on the robustness of estimates and reserves when the Council considers its budget requirement, as such the Revenue Budget approved by Council in March 2021 made specific references to the adequacy of reserves at that time.
- 1.6. Notwithstanding that specific statutory requirement, it is the duty of the Chief Finance Officer to regularly review the position regarding available reserves of the Authority having specific regard to:
- The original and current need for each category of reserve held
  - An assessment of current and future risks (both operationally and financially) facing the Council
  - The impact of known and predicted funding levels likely to impact on the Council going forward.
- 1.7. Swansea Council's Chief Finance Officer is the Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer.
- 1.8. This report considers the position regarding both General and Earmarked reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and makes specific recommendations in respect of reclassification of elements of those specific reserves.

## 2. Position as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

- 2.1. The audited Statement of Accounts 2020/21 includes the following entries in respect of reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021:

<b>Cash-Backed Usable Reserves</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
1. General Fund Revenue Reserves		
a) General Fund Balance	10,000	Used as an overall contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies and as a means of smoothing out annual budgets where there is significant change
b) Earmarked Revenue Reserves	134,510	Consisting of sums set aside for specific purposes to support Corporate and Service needs
2. General Fund Capital Reserves		(only usable for capital purposes)
a) Capital Receipts Reserve	6,211	Capital monies received by the Council set aside for funding ongoing Capital schemes per the Capital Programme.

		These sums are committed to current schemes and <b>cannot be used to support Revenue expenditure</b>
b) Capital Grants Unapplied Account	26,816	Relates to committed funding on Capital schemes and <b>cannot be used to support Revenue expenditure</b>
3. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Reserves		(only usable for HRA purposes)
a) Housing Revenue Account	6,244	Exists to support expenditure for Housing Revenue Account purposes only and <b>cannot be used to support General Fund Council Revenue or Capital expenditure</b>
<b>Total Usable Cash Backed Reserves</b>	<b>183,781</b>	

- 2.2. Usable reserves are cash-backed and can be used to support expenditure – albeit occasionally with some specific rules around the type of expenditure that they can be used for. For example the Housing Revenue Account Reserve has been created from rents received, it is a cash reserve, however it is ring-fenced for use within the Housing Revenue Account only; it can only be spent on items relating to Council Housing.
- 2.3. In addition the Council holds a net £102.496m in unusable reserves arising purely from accounting technicalities (this includes capital financing and pensions liabilities). These reserves are not cash-backed and therefore cannot be spent. They tend to arise from entries that have to be made for accounting purposes, but which are not permitted to affect the taxpayer. As has been recently flagged by the external auditor the authority needs to do some work to restate the split (net nil effect overall) between two of these technical non-useable reserves in future years.
- 2.4. **These cannot be used to support revenue or capital expenditure of the Council in any form and as such are not part of this review.**
- 2.5. The HRA reserve and the Capital reserves detailed above are ring-fenced and are regularly reviewed as part of business planning. As such they are provided for general information only, no further review is proposed at this time.
- 2.6. The General Fund Balance of the Council as detailed above takes account of decisions made by Cabinet based on the 2020/21 Revenue Outturn position considered on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021.
- 2.7. Comparisons with other Welsh Councils show that, as a percentage of Gross Revenue Expenditure, the level of the General Fund reserve is below the All Wales average (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020) and as such no planned use of the balance is recommended. At the end of 2020/21 the opportunity was taken to

make a moderate increase to the General Fund Reserve, however it is still deemed to be low both in absolute and proportionate terms both historically and compared to all other Councils in Wales. For Members to achieve that aim of increasing general reserves, whilst trying to maintain services in the face of significant budgetary constraint, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is accepted by the Section 151 to be exceptionally equally difficult to consider.

- 2.8. The Statement of Accounts as agreed by our external Auditors (Wales Audit Office) and presented to Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 included an analysis of earmarked reserves with the proviso that each reserve was subject to strategic review by the Section 151 Officer based on an analysis of current need and changing Council risks.
- 2.9. This report is the result of that strategic review.

### **3. Outcomes and recommendations**

- 3.1. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Council on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 forecast a cumulative deficit on General Fund Revenue Expenditure of some £38m by 2025/26, based on a 1% increase in Government funding, with an immediate savings requirement of £4.4m for 2022/23. This is in addition to the current year savings requirement of £8.1m. More recent forecasts indicate an even larger savings requirement will be likely, predominantly as a result of ongoing demographic pressures and issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.2. Equally, there is clear and compelling evidence that it is unlikely that any Directorate will be able to live within original budget this year primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has also limited the ability of departments to achieve savings planned in the 2021/22 budget, which may put future years' savings in jeopardy.
- 3.3. To put it into context, if all planned savings for 2021/22 are achieved it still leaves a minimum gap of £4.4m to be addressed for 2022/23, in line with previous medium term financial plan assumptions. The impact of COVID-19 is likely to significantly affect this.
- 3.4. The Council's strategy for dealing with ongoing budget reductions and Service reforms – through the Recovery Plan – is ongoing and it is clear that there is likely to be considerable cost in relation to change, together with potential significant investment in digital technology solutions.
- 3.5. Dealing with the cost of future structural change is a significant financial risk facing the given the scale and pace of budget pressures to be addressed by the Council.
- 3.6. In assessing both the level and use of Earmarked and General reserves, the LAAP bulletin sets out some of the factors that should be considered, including:-

- The treatment of demand led pressures
  - The treatment of planned efficiency savings/productivity gains
  - The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships or changes in service delivery
  - The general financial climate to which the Authority is subject.
- 3.7. Having considered the above, and in the context of a medium term financial plan that shows ongoing and sustained budget reductions, it is the opinion of the Section 151 Officer that the Council needs to continue to prepare for significant change in service delivery that will inevitably impact on direct employment levels going forward.
- 3.8. Changes on such a scale will inevitably come with substantial up-front costs and it is important at this time that the Council plans operationally and financially to meet these changes. There is £3m held in the Restructure Reserve for these costs.
- 3.9. It is vitally important that the Restructuring Reserve is protected as much as possible to enable the Council to carry out any necessary restructuring as it continues to transform under the Recovery Plan – Achieving Better Together.
- 3.10. As recommended previously a capital equalisation reserve was created from the underspending on debt charges and the fundamental review by council last year of our approach to the Minimum Revenue Provision calculation. The recommendation continues to be that this reserve is topped up wherever possible, by capital financing underspending in year, to help with any timing issues around the need to fund any City Deal projects in advance of receipt of funding from other bodies. Exceptionally, however, as reported in the Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report to Cabinet on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, the S151 Officer has identified that the £10m rolled forward contingency fund will be potentially required to fund additional costs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, on top of the full use of the in-year contingency fund. This may change significantly if additional UK and Welsh Government support is announced to assist with costs and income losses However at the current time it is not expected that any additional draw from reserves will be required in any scenario.
- 3.11. **To this extent, and following a review of current earmarked reserves, no re-classification of earmarked reserves is recommended at this juncture:-**

<b>Category of Earmarked Reserve</b>	<b>Current Balance 31/03/21 £'000</b>	<b>Proposed Change £'000</b>	<b>Recommended Position £'000</b>
Technical/third party	3,262	0	3,262
Insurance	16,989	0	16,989
Transformation and efficiency	15	0	15
Schools delegated reserves	20,780	0	20,780
Equalisation reserves	17,634	0	17,634
Commuted sums	7,044	0	7,044

Repair and renewal funds	2,866	0	2,866
Profit share on joint ventures	1,575	0	1,575
Service earmarked reserves	23,904	0	23,904
Capital reserves	7,441	0	7,441
Restructuring costs reserve	3,000	0	3,000
Contingency	10,000	0	10,000
Recovery Fund	20,000	0	20,000
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>134,510</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>134,510</b>

#### **4. Evaluation of reserve requirements**

- 4.1. A number of the reserves highlighted above have been set aside for specific purposes; these include the insurance reserve set aside to meet the potential cost of excess payments should a claim on external insurers materialise or should the Council have to meet claims from its own resources. Repair and renewal funds set aside to meet future major repair and renewal costs on strategic assets (for example Crematorium, Quadrant Bus Station), and reserves set aside for profit share on disposals of assets where reclamation has been funded by the WDA/Welsh Government.
- 4.2. Following the extremely favourable 2020/21 outturn result, a new reserve was created called the Recovery Fund - £20m has been set aside to aid the recovery from COVID-19. At the date of writing this report, in the region of £10m has been approved for schemes spanning the next two years.
- 4.3. It is essential that monies set aside for the above purposes are regularly reviewed in order to confirm their accuracy and relevance.
- 4.4. To that extent formal assurance will be sought on the adequacy of these reserve levels as part of the annual budget setting process.
- 4.5. It has previously been determined, following a formal review, that a take of £700k per annum from the insurance reserve is possible until 2022/23. This has already been built into planning assumptions.
- 4.6. As part of the budget setting process for 2022/23 a review will be carried out again of all service earmarked reserves to test their continued relevance and value.

#### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires each Local Authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and that the Chief Finance Officer (in our case the Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer) has responsibility for those affairs.
- 5.2. Under guidance detailed at Appendix A to this report the Chief Finance Officer is required at all times to monitor the purpose and use of reserves.



## **6. Integrated Assessment implications**

- 6.1. 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 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
  - 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.
- 6.2. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 6.3. Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 6.4. As this report is a technical review and reclassification of reserves held by this authority there is no impact on anyone with a protected characteristic. The review is the duty of the Section 151 Officer only, there is no wider involvement. Any consideration of the Well-being of Future Generations Act would take place as part of any proposal to use the reserves, and risks and impacts would be assessed as part of any proposal. An IIA screening form has been attached as Appendix C

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – LAAP Bulletin 99 – Local Authority Reserves and Balances

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Appendix C – IIA Screening Form

# LAAP BULLETIN 99

## Local Authority Reserves and Balances

*July 2014*

The Local Authority Accounting Panel issues LAAP Bulletins to assist practitioners with the application of the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, SeRCOP and Prudential Code, and to provide advice on emerging or urgent accounting issues. Bulletins provide influential guidance that is intended to be best practice, but are not prescriptive and do not have the formal status of the Code, SeRCOP or Prudential Code.

Please address any queries to CIPFA Technical Enquiry Service for CIPFA members and students  
[technical.enquiry@cipfa.org.uk](mailto:technical.enquiry@cipfa.org.uk)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy  
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CIPFA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, is the professional body for people in public finance. Our 14,000 members work throughout the public services, in national audit agencies, in major accountancy firms, and in other bodies where public money needs to be effectively and efficiently managed. As the only UK professional accountancy body to specialise in public services, CIPFA's qualifications are the foundation of a career in public finance. They include the benchmark professional qualification for public sector accountants as well as a postgraduate diploma for people already working in leadership positions. Our in-house CIPFA Education and Training Centre delivers the range of our programmes at locations across the UK, and works with other places of learning to provide our courses locally. We also champion high performance in public services, translating our experience and insight into clear advice and practical services. They include information and guidance, courses and conferences, property and asset management solutions, consultancy and interim people for a range of public sector clients. Globally, CIPFA shows the way in public finance by standing up for sound public financial management and good governance. We work with governments, accounting bodies and the public sector around the world to advance public finance and support its professionals.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. LAAP Bulletin 55 (Guidance note on local authority reserves and balances) was issued in February 2003. This was followed by its replacement in 2008 by LAAP Bulletin 77. LAAP Bulletin 77 included a number of events and changes that occurred including the publication of the Prudential Code and the beginnings of the financial downturn. Since the issue of LAAP Bulletin 77, the IFRS-based Code<sup>1</sup> has been published and this bulletin has been updated to reflect the new requirements of that Code. In addition, during a period of financial austerity for the public sector, the Local Authority Accounting Panel considers that it is necessary to update the guidance on local authority reserves and balances.
2. The "New Reporting Framework" described in LAAP Bulletin 55 has now largely been overtaken by statutory requirements, but is included in Appendix A for information.
3. The advice previously provided by LAAP Bulletin 77 which focussed on the financial impact of flooding is included in Appendix B.
4. Further resources and information are provided at Appendix C.
5. Relevant extracts from the IFRS-based Code are provided at Appendix D.

## PURPOSE

6. This bulletin provides guidance to local authority chief finance officers in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on the establishment and maintenance of local authority reserves and balances.

## APPLICATION

7. In England, Scotland and Wales the guidance is applicable to local authorities, joint committees and joint boards of principal authorities.
8. In England and Wales the guidance is applicable to Police and Crime Commissioners, Chief Constables and fire and rescue authorities.
9. In Northern Ireland the guidance applies to all district councils.
10. The general principles set out in this guidance apply to an authority's General Fund, Council Fund, Police Fund and, where appropriate, to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
11. The advice in this bulletin relates to reserves, not provisions. The Code definitions of provisions and reserves are included in Appendix D to this bulletin for information.
12. This bulletin replaces LAAP Bulletin 77.

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<sup>1</sup> *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code).

## LEGISLATIVE / REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

13. The requirement for financial reserves is acknowledged in statute. Sections 31A, 32 42A and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. Section 93 of the 1992 Act requires Scottish authorities, in calculating council tax, to take into account 'any means by which those expenses may otherwise be met or provided for'. This includes reserves.
14. In Scotland there are explicit statutory powers under schedule 3 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975 permitting certain local authorities to establish a renewal and repair fund, an insurance fund and a capital fund alongside a requirement, as in England and Wales, to maintain a General Fund (section 93 of Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973). LASAAC has published guidance on reserves which is available from the LASAAC website. In Northern Ireland, Section 9 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 enables councils to maintain other funds in addition to the General Fund. Local authorities may however ' earmark ' specific parts of the General Fund reserve. This earmarking of a proportion of the General Fund is referred to in this Bulletin as Earmarked Reserves.
15. There are also a range of safeguards in place that help to prevent local authorities over-committing themselves financially. These include:
  - the balanced budget requirement:
    - England, sections 31A, 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended
    - Wales, sections 32 and 43 and Scotland, 93 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and
    - section 85 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999
  - chief finance officers' duty to report on robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves (under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003) when the authority is considering its budget requirement (England and Wales)
  - chief finance officers' duty to report on the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves (under sections 4 and 6 of the Local Government and Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
  - the legislative requirement for each local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and that the chief finance officer / proper officer has responsibility for the administration of those affairs section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 95 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and section 1 of the Local Government and Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
  - the requirements of the Prudential Code.
16. These requirements are reinforced by section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 which requires the chief finance officer in England and Wales to report to all the authority's councillors if there is or is likely to be unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. This would include situations where reserves have become seriously depleted and it is forecast that the authority will not have the resources to meet its expenditure in a particular financial year. The issue of a section 114 notice cannot be taken lightly and has serious operational implications. Indeed, the authority's full council must meet within 21 days to consider the s114 notice and

during that period the authority is prohibited from entering into new agreements involving the incurring of expenditure.

17. Whilst it is primarily the responsibility of the local authority and its chief financial officer to maintain a sound financial position, external auditors will confirm that there are no material uncertainties about going concern. Even where as part of their wider role auditors have to report on an authority's financial position, it is not their responsibility to prescribe the optimum or minimum level of reserves for individual authorities or authorities in general.
18. CIPFA's Prudential Code requires chief finance officers in local authorities to have full regard to affordability when making recommendations about the local authority's future capital programme. Such consideration includes the level of long term revenue commitments. Indeed, in considering the affordability of its capital plans, the authority is required to consider all of the resources available to it/estimated for the future, together with the totality of its capital plans and revenue forecasts for the forthcoming year and the following two years.

#### ROLE OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (PROPER OFFICER IN SCOTLAND)

19. Within the existing statutory and regulatory framework, it is the responsibility of chief finance officers (proper officer in Scotland) to advise local authorities about the level of reserves that they should hold and to ensure that there are clear protocols for their establishment and use. Reserves should not be held without a clear purpose.
20. CIPFA and the Local Authority Accounting Panel consider that local authorities should establish reserves including the level of those reserves based on the advice of their chief finance officers. Authorities should make their own judgements on such matters taking into account all the relevant local circumstances. Such circumstances vary. A well-managed authority, for example, with a prudent approach to budgeting should be able to operate with a level of general reserves appropriate for the risks (both internal and external) to which it is exposed. In assessing the appropriate level of reserves, a well-managed authority will ensure that the reserves are not only adequate but are also necessary. There is a broad range within which authorities might reasonably operate depending on their particular circumstances.
21. Section 26 of the Local Government Act 2003 gives Ministers in England and Wales a general power to set a minimum level of reserves for local authorities. However, the government has undertaken to apply this only to individual authorities in the circumstances where an authority does not act prudently, disregards the advice of its chief finance officer and is heading for serious financial difficulty. This accords with CIPFA's view that a generally applicable minimum level is inappropriate, as a minimum level of reserve will only be imposed where an authority is not following best financial practice (including the guidance in this bulletin).

#### TYPES OF RESERVE

22. When reviewing their medium term financial plans and preparing their annual budgets local authorities should consider the establishment and maintenance of reserves. These can be held for three main purposes:
  - a working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing – this forms part of general reserves;
  - a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies – this also forms part of general reserves;

- a means of building up funds, often referred to as earmarked reserves (or earmarked portion of the general fund in Scotland - see below), to meet known or predicted requirements; earmarked reserves are accounted for separately but remain legally part of the General Fund.

Category of Earmarked Reserve	Rationale
Sums set aside for major schemes, such as capital developments or asset purchases, or to fund major reorganisations	Where expenditure is planned in future accounting periods, it is prudent to set aside resources in advance.
Insurance reserves (note that the Insurance Fund is a statutory fund in Scotland)	Self-insurance is a mechanism used by a number of local authorities. In the absence of any statutory basis (other than in Scotland) sums held to meet potential and contingent liabilities are reported as earmarked reserves where these liabilities do not meet the definition of a provision under the requirements of the Code's adoption of IAS 37 <i>Provisions, Contingent Assets and Liabilities</i> ).
Reserves of trading and business units	Surpluses arising from in-house trading may be retained to cover potential losses in future years, or to finance capital expenditure.
Reserves retained for service departmental use	Authorities may have internal protocols that permit year-end underspendings at departmental level to be carried forward.
Reserves for unspent revenue grants	Where revenue grants have no conditions or where the conditions are met and expenditure has yet to take place. The Code Guidance Notes recommend that these sums are held in earmarked reserves (see paragraph 29 below).
Schools balances	These are unspent balances of budgets delegated to individual schools.

## FINANCIAL REPORTING FOR RESERVES

23. The IFRS-based *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code) introduced the Movement in Reserves Statement to local authority financial statements in the 2010/11 financial year. This Statement presents the movement in the year of the reserves of the authority analysed into usable reserves, (eg General Fund, HRA Balances and earmarked reserves) and unusable reserves (see paragraph 24 below).
24. Unusable reserves arise out of the interaction of legislation and proper accounting practice either to store revaluation gains or as adjustment accounts to reconcile accounting requirements driven by reporting standards to statutory requirements.

These reserves<sup>2</sup>, which are not resource-backed and cannot be used for any other purpose, are described below:

#### *Revaluation Reserves*

- The Revaluation Reserve - this is a reserve that records unrealised gains in the value of property, plant and equipment. The reserve increases when assets are revalued upwards, and decreases as assets are depreciated or when assets are revalued downwards or disposed of. Local authorities might benefit from these gains in the future from the continued use of the assets or from their sale. The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.
- The Available-for-Sale Financial Instruments Reserve – this is a reserve that records unrealised revaluation gains arising from holding available-for-sale investments, plus any unrealised losses that have not arisen from impairment of the assets. Local authorities might benefit in the future from the gains when the investments mature or are sold or they might be lost in falls in value.

#### *Adjustment Accounts*

- The Pensions Reserve – this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the payments made for the year to various statutory pension schemes in accordance with those schemes' requirements and the net change in the authority's recognised liability under the Code's adoption of IAS 19 – *Employee Benefits*, for the same period. A transfer is made to or from the pensions reserve to ensure that the charge to the General Fund reflects the amount required to be raised in taxation. For example, the debit balance on the Reserve shows that an authority has made commitments to fund pensions that the Government has permitted it to fund from contributions to be made in future years.
- The Capital Adjustment Account - this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the different rates at which assets are depreciated under proper accounting practice and are financed through the capital controls system. Statute requires that the charge to the General Fund is determined by the capital controls system. For example, the credit balance on the Account shows that an authority has generally financed capital investment in advance of receiving the benefits of that investment. The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.
- The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account – this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the different rates at which gains and losses (such as premiums on the early repayment of debt) are recognised under proper accounting practice and are required by statute to be met from the General Fund. For example, the debit balance on the Account shows that an authority has incurred expenses on borrowings that the Government has permitted it to spread over future years.

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<sup>2</sup> In addition to the Reserves included in this list authorities may hold the deferred capital receipts reserve and the accumulated absences account. Further details on these reserves are included in the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom Guidance Notes for Practitioners 2013/14 Accounts*.

- The Unequal Pay Back Pay Account - this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the different rates at which payments in relation to compensation for previous unequal pay are recognised under proper accounting practice and are required by statute to be met from the General Fund. This account is not applicable to Scotland.
  - Collection Fund Adjustment Account – this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the differences arising from the recognition of council tax and non-domestic rates income (England)) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to those amounts required to be charged by statute to the General Fund. For example, the credit balance on the Account shows that more tax has been collected on behalf of the authority and the precepting bodies (and central government in England for non-domestic rates income) than an authority is permitted to transfer out of the Collection Fund by 31 March. This account is not applicable to Scotland.
25. Other such reserves may be created in future where developments in local authority accounting result in timing differences between the recognition of income and expenditure under proper accounting practice and under statute or regulation.
26. In addition authorities will hold the following two usable reserves:
- a Major Repairs Reserve (England and Wales), where relevant – in England this reserve records the unspent amount of HRA balances for capital financing purposes in accordance with statutory requirements for the Reserve. In Wales this represents the amounts unspent from the Major Repairs Allowance capital grant.
  - a Capital Receipts Reserve (Capital Fund in Scotland<sup>3</sup>) – this reserve holds the proceeds from the sale of assets, and can only be used for those purposes specified in the capital finance and accounting regulations<sup>4</sup> in England, Northern Ireland and Wales and for capital purposes in Scotland.
27. The Code recommends that earmarked reserves are reported on the face of the Movement in Reserves Statement. Particularly significant movements might need to be reported individually on the face of the Statement to ensure key messages are presented clearly to users. However, effective reporting may either as an alternative or as a supplementary report necessitate similar disclosures in the notes to the financial statements (see paragraphs 3.4.2.41 and 3.4.2.42 of the Code which are also included in Appendix D for ease of reference).
28. When establishing reserves, local authorities need to ensure that they are complying with the Code and in particular the need to distinguish between reserves and provisions. Definitions of reserves and provisions are included in Appendix D of this Bulletin.
29. The introduction of the IFRS-based Code on 1 April 2010 has meant that grant income should be recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (and therefore against the General (Council) Fund or HRA Balances for

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<sup>3</sup> *The Statutory Basis for Accounting and Disclosing Reserves in Local Authorities in Scotland* [LASAAC, 2005] states "Useable capital receipts reserves are considered to be allowable under the power contained within Schedule 3, para 22 of the 1975 Act. Such a reserve effectively acts as a subset of the capital reserve specifically permitted by legislation."

<sup>4</sup> The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting)( England) Regulations 2003, as amended, The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2003, as amended and the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011.



revenue grants) where grant payment is unconditional or grant conditions have been satisfied<sup>5</sup>. The Code Guidance Notes recommend<sup>6</sup> that where these grants have been received prior to the expenditure having taken place authorities should consider establishing earmarked reserves. This will ensure that amounts are set aside from the General (or Council) Fund and HRA balances in earmarked reserves to provide financing to meet the requirements of the grant. The amounts set aside will be posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund and HRA expenditure in future years. It is likely therefore that since the introduction of the IFRS-based Code there is an increased tendency to hold earmarked reserves.

30. The statutory reporting regime described earlier and effective financial management underpin the need for clear, transparent reporting arrangements for reserves and therefore in addition to the financial reporting requirements above, LAAP recommends that for each earmarked reserve (earmarked portion of the general fund in Scotland) held by a local authority there should be a clear protocol setting out:
- the reason for / purpose of the reserve;
  - how and when the reserve can be used;
  - procedures for the reserve's management and control; and
  - a process and timescale for review of the reserve to ensure continuing relevance and adequacy.

#### PRINCIPLES TO ASSESS THE ADEQUACY OF RESERVES

31. In order to assess the adequacy of unallocated general reserves when setting the budget, chief finance officers should take account of the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority. Where authorities are being reorganised, this assessment should be conducted on the basis that the services will continue to be provided, and adequate reserves will therefore be required by successor authorities. The assessment of risks should include external risks, such as flooding, as well as internal risks, for example, the ability to deliver planned efficiency savings. In England and Wales, statutory provisions require authorities to review at least once in a year the effectiveness of their system of internal control, which will include risk management. The CIPFA/SOLACE framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* details an approach to giving assurance that risk, control and governance matters are being addressed in accordance with best practice.
32. The Codes of Audit Practice in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland make it clear that it is the responsibility of the audited body to identify and address its operational and financial risks, and to develop and implement proper arrangements to manage them, including adequate and effective systems of internal control. The financial risks should be assessed in the context of the authority's overall approach to risk management.

Budget Assumptions	Financial standing and management assessment/impact
The treatment of inflation and interest rates	The overall financial standing of the authority (level of borrowing, debt outstanding, council tax collection rates)

<sup>5</sup> See Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom Section 2.3.

<sup>6</sup> See *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom Guidance Notes for Practitioners 2013/14 Accounts*, paragraphs C39 and C40.

	<p>etc.). Rises in the prices of some commodities, eg fuel, highlight the relevance of using a number of inflation rates in the budget and financial strategy, and considering whether general reserves are adequate to deal with unexpected increases. Volatility in the financial markets also points to the need to consider investment and borrowing risks and their impact on income.</p>
<p>Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts</p>	<p>The authority's track record in budget and financial management including the robustness of the medium term plans. Authorities will also need to take into account changes in the property market, and adjust estimates and assumptions for reserves accordingly.</p>
<p>The treatment of demand led pressures</p>	<p>The authority's capacity to manage in-year budget pressures, and its strategy for managing both demand and service delivery in the longer term.</p>
<p>The treatment of planned efficiency savings/ productivity gains</p>	<p>The strength of the financial information and reporting arrangements. The authority should also be in a position to activate contingency plans should the reporting arrangements identify that planned savings or gains will either not be achieved or be delayed.</p>
<p>The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements or major capital developments</p>	<p>The authority's virement and end of year procedures in relation to budget under/overspends at authority and department/directorate level. Risk management measures in relation to partnerships, including consideration of risk allocation. Contract provisions designed to safeguard the authority's position in the event of problems arising from outsourcing arrangements.</p>
<p>The availability of reserves, government grants and other funds to deal with major contingencies and the adequacy of provisions</p>	<p>The adequacy of the authority's insurance arrangements to cover major unforeseen risks. When considering insurance cover, the structure of the cover as well as the overall level of risk should be taken into account. Risk assessments should be used when balancing the levels of insurance premiums and reserves.</p>
<p>The general financial climate to which the authority is subject</p>	<p>External factors, such as future funding levels expected to be included in Spending Reviews and expected referenda principles and limits, will influence an authority's ability to replenish reserves once they have been used. Any plans for using reserves will</p>

	<p>need to consider the need and ability of the authority to replenish the reserves, and the risks to which the authority will be exposed whilst replenishing the reserves.</p>
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Whilst many of these factors relate to setting the annual budget, the level of risk and uncertainty associated with these factors will be relevant in determining an appropriate level of reserves.

33. Authorities have been faced by increasing financial pressures since 2008. This has been followed by a period of significant reduction in government funding which is anticipated to continue for some time, ie the spending review 2013 announced that the government will reduce total spending in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 in real terms at the same rate as during the spending review 2010 period. Demands on local government services continue to increase. In addition to reduction in government funding other pressures include:
- councils striving to constrain council tax increases,
  - reductions of income,
  - new service demands and responsibilities such as:
    - the transfer of public health functions
    - the localisation of non-domestic rates retention, council tax freezes and council tax benefits/support
  - severe weather and floods.

Furthermore, events such as the losses in Icelandic banks and the problems in global financial markets are likely to mean that Councils will focus on cautious investment strategies. Council budgets and reserves have remained under pressure and are likely to continue to do so for some time.

34. The many factors involved when considering appropriate levels of reserves can only be assessed properly at a local level. A considerable degree of professional judgement is required. The chief finance officer may choose to express advice on the level of balances in cash and/or as a percentage of budget (to aid understanding) so long as that advice is tailored to the circumstances of the authority. The Audit Commission Report (December 2012) *Striking a Balance* makes a number of recommendations to both Chief Finance Officers and elected members to better assist councils in their decision making. Similarly the Accounts Commission in its report *An overview of local government in Scotland 2014*<sup>7</sup> commented that more needs to be done to provide information on why reserves are held, how this fits with the councils financial strategy and how they will be used. The principles and financial reporting established in this and the previous LAAP bulletins on reserves will provide for the information requirements and an appropriate framework for this.
35. The advice should be set in the context of the authority's risk register and medium term plans and should not focus exclusively on short-term considerations. Balancing the annual budget by drawing on general reserves may be viewed as a legitimate short-term option. However, it is not normally prudent for reserves to be deployed

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<sup>7</sup> Issued by the Accounts Commission in March 2014

to finance recurrent expenditure. CIPFA has commented<sup>8</sup> that Councils should be particularly wary about using one off reserves to deal with shortfalls in current funding. Where such action is to be taken, this should be made explicit, and an explanation given as to how such expenditure will be funded in the medium to long term. Advice should be given on the adequacy of reserves over the lifetime of the medium term financial plan, and should also take account of the expected need for reserves in the longer term.

36. Events such as the floods and severe weather that occurred earlier this year (2014) and previously in the floods during the summers of 2007 and 2008 have emphasised the need for authorities to be prepared for major unforeseen events. Adequate insurance cover combined with appropriate levels of reserves will enable authorities to manage the demands placed on them in such circumstances. However, these arrangements need to take account of all possible scenarios. An example quoted in the Audit Commission report *Staying Afloat* is that the total cost of the flooding was reduced where authorities had specifically considered the impact of a wide scale, serious event affecting many assets, and had taken appropriate action, for example, negotiating insurance policies that capped the total excesses linked to one event.
37. Part of the risk management process involves taking appropriate action to mitigate or remove risks, where this is possible. This in turn may lead to a lower level of reserves being required, and it would be appropriate to consider reducing the level of balances held where appropriate action to mitigate or remove risks has been successfully undertaken. A balance will need to be found between maintaining adequate levels of reserves and investing in risk reduction measures. This balance should form part of the risk management process and be considered as part of the annual budget process.
38. Emergency financial assistance from central government may be available to assist authorities in dealing with the immediate consequences of major unforeseen events, normally under the Emergency Financial Assistance to Local Authorities scheme (commonly known as the 'Bellwin' scheme). However, there is no automatic entitlement to financial assistance, and where financial assistance is given, it will not cover all of the costs even in exceptional circumstances. Further details of the scheme are available on the relevant government web sites (links can be found in Appendix C of this bulletin). Authorities should plan to have access to sufficient resources (through reserves, insurance or a combination of both) to cover the costs of recovering from events that are likely to be unavoidable.
39. When considering the level of reserves, it would be appropriate for authorities to take into account the likely level of Government support that would be available, and to consider how the balance would be funded in the event of an unforeseen event occurring.
40. Flooding, the effects of severe weather and the impact of the problems experienced by the global financial markets are examples of external risks which local authorities may need to take into account in setting levels of reserves and wider financial planning. An assessment of external risks should not be limited to those issues, but should range more widely, to take account of all significant external risks identified through the authority's risk management processes.

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<sup>8</sup> See comments by CIPFA Chief Executive *Building up council reserves to protect the public from future financial problems is good financial management* – CIPFA  
<http://www.cipfa.org/about-cipfa/press-office/latest-press-releases/building-up-council-reserves>

EXTRACT FROM LAAP BULLETIN 55

7 A New Reporting Framework

7.1 The finance director has a fiduciary duty to local taxpayers, and must be satisfied that the decisions taken on balances and reserves represent proper stewardship of public funds.

7.2 The level and utilisation of reserves will be determined formally by the Council, informed by the advice and judgement of the finance director<sup>9</sup>. To enable the Council to reach its decision, the finance director should report the factors that influenced his or her judgement, and ensure that the advice given is recorded formally. Where the finance director's advice is not accepted this should be recorded formally in the minutes of the council meeting.

7.3 It is recommended that:

- the budget report to the Council should include a statement showing the estimated opening general reserve fund balance for the year ahead, the addition to/withdrawal from balances, and the estimated end of year balance. Reference should be made as to the extent to which such reserves are to be used to finance recurrent expenditure
- this should be accompanied by a statement from the finance director on the adequacy of the general reserves and provisions in respect of the forthcoming financial year and the authority's medium term financial strategy
- a statement reporting on the annual review of earmarked reserves (including schools' reserves) should also be made at the same time to the Council. The review itself should be undertaken as part of the budget preparation process. The statement should list the various earmarked reserves, the purposes for which they are held and provide advice on the appropriate levels. It should also show the estimated opening balances for the year, planned additions/withdrawals and the estimated closing balances.

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<sup>9</sup> LAAP Bulletin 99 normally refers to Chief Finance Officers – previous editions of this Bulletin referred to Finance Directors.

EXTRACT FROM LAAP BULLETIN 77

27. "...Alternative arrangements, for example mutual aid agreements, may help to reduce the reliance on reserves or insurance. The Pitt Review into the 2007 floods, although specifically focused on England, will be of relevance to all local authorities. This recommended that "Local authorities should continue to make arrangements to bear the cost of recovery for all but the most exceptional emergencies, and should revisit their reserves and insurance arrangements in light of last summer's floods." The Government's position remains that it is primarily the local authority's responsibility to bear such costs, and authorities should note this position when considering the appropriate level of reserves."

28 "... However, both the Pitt Review and Staying Afloat noted that most central government assistance provided to local authorities in relation to the 2007 floods was ad hoc in nature. The government has been keen to stress that they should not be seen as setting a precedent and should not be relied on in the future. Authorities will therefore need to make their own assessments of the likely level of support. "

FURTHER INFORMATION:

*The Pitt Review* can be downloaded from:

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100807034701/http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pittreview/thepittreview/final\\_report.html](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100807034701/http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pittreview/thepittreview/final_report.html)

*Staying Afloat* can be downloaded from:

[http://archive.audit-commission.gov.uk/auditcommission/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/StayingAfloat\\_REP14Dec07.pdf](http://archive.audit-commission.gov.uk/auditcommission/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/StayingAfloat_REP14Dec07.pdf)

Both reports provide additional advice to local authorities on planning for and managing the financial impacts of exceptional events.

LASAAC Guidance on Reserves in Scotland can be downloaded from:

<http://www.cipfa.org/regions/scotland/policy-and-technical/local-authority-scotland-accounts-advisory-committee/guidance-and-publications/accounting-for-interest-on-reserves>

Details of the Emergency Financial Assistance (Bellwin) Scheme can be downloaded from:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/210953/The\\_Bellwin\\_Scheme\\_of\\_Emergency\\_Financial\\_Assistance\\_to\\_Local\\_Authorities.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210953/The_Bellwin_Scheme_of_Emergency_Financial_Assistance_to_Local_Authorities.pdf)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/17999/Bellwin>

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/finandfunding/emergency/publications/efas-guidance-notes-14-15/?lang=en>

The Audit Commission Report *Striking a Balance* can be downloaded from:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/2012/12/striking-a-balance-improving-councils-decision-making-on-reserves/>

Accounts Commission *An overview of local government in Scotland 2014* (March 2014) can be accessed at:

[http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2014/nr\\_140327\\_local\\_government\\_overview.pdf](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2014/nr_140327_local_government_overview.pdf)

CODE OF PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM  
DEFINITIONS (AND RELEVANT EXTRACTS OF) RESERVES AND PROVISIONS

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

**2.1.2.25 Reserves** – the residual interest in the assets of the authority after deducting all its liabilities. The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the true economic cost of providing the authority's services, represented by the line 'Surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services'. Some income and expenditure is required to be recognised on a different basis or in a different accounting period (ie in accordance with legislation) in the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account. These differences are shown in the line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'. Voluntary transfers to or from the General Fund Balance and Housing Revenue Account Balance also affect the amount to be funded from council tax or council dwelling rents; these are shown in the line 'Transfers to or from reserves available to fund services'. The Movement in Reserves Statement also shows Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure, for example revaluation gains.

CHAPTER THREE: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

3.4.2.41 The classification of reserves presented in the Movement in Reserves Statement shall include the following items; authorities may choose to present additional items on the face of the statement:

- a) General Fund Balance (in Scotland, includes earmarked portion of General Fund Balance)
- b) Earmarked General Fund Reserves (not Scotland) (recommended but not mandatory)
- c) Housing Revenue Account Balance (in Scotland, includes earmarked portion of Housing Revenue Account Balance)
- d) Earmarked Housing Revenue Account Reserves (not Scotland) (recommended but not mandatory)
- e) Major Repairs Reserve (England and Wales)
- f) Revenue statutory funds (Scotland)
- g) Capital Receipts Reserve (England and Wales); Capital statutory funds (Scotland)
- h) Capital Grants Unapplied Account
- i) Total usable reserves
- j) Unusable reserves
- k) Total reserves of the authority
- l) Authority's share of the reserves of subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures (Group Accounts only)
- m) Total reserves (Group Accounts only).

3.4.2.42 A local authority shall present, either in the Movement in Reserves Statement or in the notes, an analysis of the amounts included in each item of the classification of reserves required by paragraph 3.4.2.41. This analysis shall present amounts held for capital purposes separately from those held for revenue purposes, and shall separately identify the total reserves held by schools.

CHAPTER EIGHT: LIABILITIES

**8.2.2.9** A **provision** is a liability of uncertain timing or amount.

8.2.2.12 A provision shall be recognised when:



- an authority has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event
- it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits or service potential will be required to settle the obligation, and
- a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

8.2.2.13 If the above conditions are not met, no provision shall be recognised.

8.2.2.14 In some cases it is not clear whether there is a present obligation. In these cases, a past event is deemed to give rise to a present obligation if, taking account of all available evidence, it is more likely than not that a present obligation exists at the reporting date. A past event that leads to a present obligation is called an obligating event.

<b>Glossary of Terms</b>	
Reserves	A sum or sums of money held by the Council for future use or application
General Reserves	A sum of money set aside by the Council for general use in an emergency. Should not be considered for everyday use.
Earmarked Reserves	Sums of money set aside by the Council for use in specific instances. Some of these may be legally enforceable (such as commuted sums), others are just an indication of what the Council wishes to set monies aside for.
Commutated Sums	Monies given to the Council to carry out specific works as per Section 106 agreements - as an example a developer may wish to give the Council a sum of money to maintain open spaces on new housing estates. These monies must be used for the purpose for which they were given, or returned under the terms of the agreement.
Chief Finance Officer	The Officer of the Council with ultimate responsibility for all things financial. Also referred to as 'The Section 151 Officer' as this is the legislation awarding the powers.
Usable/Unusable Reserves	Reserves can be usable or unusable - to be usable they must be cash backed ie there must be cash available to support the reserve. Unusable reserves are those created through technical accounting entries and will have no cash to support the reserve.
Gross Revenue Expenditure	A particular calculation of a Council's gross spend, this can be used to compare across Councils
Medium Term Financial Plan	The Council's three year forecast of budget pressures and savings
Minimum Revenue Provision	The minimum amount of money the Council needs to set aside each year to repay debt.

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

**Which service area and directorate are you from?**

Service Area:

Directorate:

**Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?**

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

**(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:**

**Annual mid-year review of revenue reserves to suggest and agree any reclassifications of those reserves.**

**Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)**

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

There is no consultation undertaken on the review of reserves – this is a task for the Section 151 officer only, as it is just a technical reclassification of the reserves. Use of the reserves is decided as part of the budget process, which follows all requirements for consultation

**Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan’s Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

**Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

**Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes  No If yes, please provide details below

**Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**

*(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)*

There is no cumulative impact on people and/or communities. This is a technical review and reclassification of reserves. Any use of reserves to fund initiatives would be subject to assessment as part of that proposal.

**Outcome of Screening**

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

- Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)
- Summary of involvement (Q3)
- WFG considerations (Q4)
- Any risks identified (Q5)
- Cumulative impact (Q7)

**As this report is a technical review and reclassification of reserves held by this authority there is no impact on anyone with a protected characteristic. The review is the duty of the Section 151 Officer only, there is no wider involvement.**

**Any consideration of the Well-being of Future Generations Act would take place as part of any proposal to use the reserves, and risks and impacts would be assessed as part of any proposal.**

**As this is a technical report then no full IIA needs to be completed.**

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Sarah Willis</b>
<b>Job title: Principal Finance Partner</b>
<b>Date: 16/09/21</b>
<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Ben Smith</b>
<b>Position: Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer</b>
<b>Date: 16/09/2021</b>

Please return the completed form to [accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 10.



## Joint Report of the Monitoring Officer, Head of Property & Head of Democratic Services

Council – 7 October 2021

### **Amendments to the Council Constitution – Land Transaction Procedure Rules and the Scheme of Delegation**

<b>Purpose:</b>	To make amendments in order to simplify, improve and / or add to the Council Constitution. A decision of Council is required to change the Council Constitution.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Council Constitution.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) Council approves and adopts the amendments as outlined in paragraph 1.6 and Appendix A of this report.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Geoff Bacon
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 An amendment has been proposed to the Council Constitution. The Constitution Working Group is asked to consider the amendment as outlined in paragraph 1.6 and at **Appendix A** of this report and recommend adoption by Council.

#### 2. Land Transaction Procedure Rules (Council Constitution Part 4.7 Rules of Procedure)

a. On undertaking a recent review of the Council's Land Transaction Procedure Rules (LTPR) the need to clarify certain decision making

processes was highlighted. These include the way in which the Council disposes of Land (as defined within the LTPR), the criteria to be applied when selling Land for less than best consideration and also in circumstances where there has been no marketing of the Land or where there is only one person interested in buying the Land. As the changes to the LTPR are extensive it is not possible to track change the amendments and CWG are being asked to approve the new version LTPR in their entirety as attached at Appendix A.

- b. Please note in particular Rule 3 which clarifies the definition of surplus or under-used Land and Rule 5 which clearly sets out the Council's obligation to achieve the best consideration reasonably obtainable and the circumstances under which the Council can lawfully accept less than best consideration. Rule 5.4 states that any disposal at any undervalue must be approved by Cabinet.
- c. Also note Rule 6.6 which clarifies the circumstances in which the Council can dispose of Land where no marketing exercise has been undertaken or only one person has indicated an interest to purchase the Land. A clear reference to the Council's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy has been included at Rule 6.6(c) and CAT Policy is now formally incorporated within the LTPR and appended at Appendix 2 to the LTPR.
- d. The review of the LTPR has also allowed for the inclusion of the appropriation of Land at Rule 4.5 and 4.6 and the process to be followed to enable officers to authorise the appropriation of Land held for one purpose to another purpose.

### **3. Part 3.1 – Responsibility for Functions (Introduction – Scheme of Delegation)**

- a. The delegated authority limits have been amended at Part 3.1.6 Rule 2 (Officer Delegation) in relation to acquisitions, disposals and leases. Consequently this report is recommending the following changes to the Council Constitution at Part 3.1.6 as follows:-

Sub-paragraph 2 a) is deleted in its entirety as set out below

- a) *The exercise of functions by Responsible Officers in relation to the acquisition or disposal of property shall be limited as follows:*
  - i) *Acquisition of freehold or leasehold property (where a premium only is payable) up to £250,000;*
  - ii) *Acquisition of freehold or leasehold property where a rent is payable – up to £50,000 per annum;*
  - iii) *Disposal of freehold property or leasehold property (where a premium only is payable) up to £500,000 or for anything other than best consideration;*

- iv) *Disposal of leasehold property where a rent is payable – up to £50,000 per annum.*

And replaced with:

a) *The exercise of functions by Responsible Officers in relation to the approvals of disposals, acquisitions and leases shall be undertaken in accordance with the Land Transaction Procedure Rules and shall be limited as follows:-*

- (i) *Acquisition of freehold or leasehold property (where a premium only is payable) up to £1,000,000;*
- (ii) *Acquisition of freehold or leasehold property where a rent is payable – up to £250,000 per annum;*
- (iii) *Disposal of freehold property or leasehold property (where a premium only is payable) up to £1,000,000;*
- (iv) *Disposal of leasehold property where a rent is payable – up to £250,000 per annum.*

3.2 A further amendment is proposed so that sub paragraph 2 b) is amended as follows:

2(b) In cases where the consideration is not straightforward such as involving varying rents or a combination of rental and premium the Director of Place or his nominee shall assess the total capital value of the transaction to establish if such value exceeds the limits of this delegation.

so that the words “*Director of Place*” above are replaced with the “*Head of Property*”

## **2. Financial Implications**

2.1 None arising directly from this clarification and simplification of the LTPRs. Financial implications arising directly from individual property transactions will continue to be undertaken, budgeted and accounted for under extant FPRs.

## **3. Legal Implications**

3.1 The proposed changes to the Land Transaction Procedure Rules together with the associated changes to the Scheme of Delegation provide clarity on the decision making process to be followed when the Council is seeking to acquire or dispose of Land. These changes are compliant with all relevant legislation affecting property transactions.



## **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 An IIA screening form has been completed (appendix B), it determined that a full IIA report will not be required primarily as this is an updating and amendment to the decision making criteria. Each and any proposed disposal will be assessed on its individual merits.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Revised Land Transaction Procedure Rules

Appendix B - IIA

**1. General**

- 1.1 These Rules will be followed when dealing with all acquisitions and disposals of Land, whether freehold, leasehold or by grant of a tenancy, except as provided below.
- 1.2 In these Procedure Rules “Land” shall mean all and any interest in land (including buildings), or any right in, on, over or under land.
- 1.3 These Rules apply to:
- (a) The freehold acquisition or disposal of Land;
  - (b) The appropriation of Land in accordance with paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 below;
  - (c) The grant of a lease or tenancy exceeding 7 years in duration; and
  - (d) The taking of a lease or tenancy of any duration.
- 1.4 These Procedure Rules do not apply:
- (a) To disposals under the Leasehold Reform Act 1967, Leasehold Reform Housing and Urban Development Act 1993, Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002.
  - (b) To the renewal or restructuring of an existing lease or tenancy.
  - (c) Where Cabinet decides they will not apply.
- 1.5 Note: Where there is any conflict between these Procedure Rules and s.123 LGA 1972 or any other mandatory statutory provision, the relevant statutory provision must be followed.

**2 Acquisitions, Disposals and Leases – Authority**

In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation as set out in Part 3.1 of the Constitution, and subject to paragraph 5.4 below, the authority for approving disposals, acquisitions and leases shall be vested in:

- (a) Responsible Officers in relation to:
  - (i) Acquisition of freehold or leasehold property (where a premium only is payable) up to £1,000,000;
  - (ii) Acquisition of freehold or leasehold property where a rent is payable – up to £250,000 per annum;
  - (iii) Disposal of freehold property or leasehold property (where a premium only is payable) up to £1,000,000;
  - (iv) Disposal of leasehold property where a rent is payable – up to

£250,000 per annum.

- (b) In cases where the consideration is not straightforward such as involving varying rents or a combination of rental and premium the Head of Property shall assess the total capital value of the transaction to establish if such value exceeds the limits of this delegation.
- (c) Subject to any limitations imposed by the Leader, all Responsible Officers may authorise another Officer to exercise their delegated functions provided that the Responsible Officer has line management responsibility for that Officer. In those circumstances it is expected that a written “chain of authority” will be maintained.

### **3 Definition of Surplus/Under-used Land**

3.1 Identification of surplus/under-used Land is the responsibility of individual Departments. The Head of Service should keep all Land holdings under review and where the Land is deemed surplus or under-used Land shall prepare a report to be approved by Head of Property Services in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member which states that the Land is surplus to requirements or under-used Land.

3.2 In making a decision to determine whether Land is surplus, the Head of Service should consider if:

- (a) The Land is currently required to deliver their operational functions.
- (b) There is a clearly evidenced plan to use the Land to deliver their future operational functions.
- (c) The Land is held for commercial purposes and/or is integral to the continuity of service delivery.
- (d) The Land is vital for business contingency, in line with the Departments strategic and operational plans.

If Land satisfies any of the above criteria it is unlikely to be surplus.

3.3 Land may be deemed to be surplus to the Council’s requirements if:

- (a) It is not used for current delivery or required for future delivery of the Departments operational functions and policies.
- (b) The Department has no formal approved strategy and timetable for bringing the Land back into permanent full operational use.
- (c) The Land makes no contribution to the delivery of;
  - (ii) a Council’s service, or

- (iii) a strategic, financial, corporate objective.
- (d) An alternative site or method of service delivery i.e. Community Asset Transfer (Appendix 2) has been identified which would be more cost effective in delivering the Departments service.
- (e) It will not contribute to the provision of a sustainable pattern of development.

3.4 Land is deemed to be under-used if:

- (a) Part of the Land is vacant and is likely to remain vacant for the foreseeable future; or
- (b) The income being generated from the Land is consistently below that which could be achieved from:
  - (i) Disposing of the Land and investing the income;
  - (ii) An alternative use;
  - (iii) Intensifying the existing use; or
- (c) Only part of the Land is used for service delivery and this could be delivered from an alternative site or by alternative methods.

#### **4 Land Identification**

4.1 Land for possible disposal may be identified in the following ways:

- (e) Through the Asset review activity undertaken by the Head of Property Services
- (f) Through a structured corporate property portfolio review or area review;
- (g) Through Service Units declaring specific sites as being surplus to requirements;
- (h) Through direct property enquiries to the Council;
- (i) Where an under-used asset is generating an income, a cost/benefit analysis has been carried out to establish whether it is in the Council's best interests to dispose of the site.

4.2 Once potential Land has been identified the Head of Property Services will undertake an initial feasibility test to establish if the Land could be disposed of to generate a capital receipt for the general fund/HRA.

- 4.3 If the initial feasibility test indicates it is possible then there will be further consultation with Planning and Highways colleagues and with Legal Services to generate a Report on Title to establish if there are any legal constraints, including but not limited to Title restrictions and legislative restrictions e.g. disposal of public open space and school playing fields.
- 4.4 Subject to these investigations and if the Land has been declared surplus or underutilised for operational purposes by a service department, then there will be discussion between the appropriate Head of Service and the Head of Property Services, for an appropriate handover for all relevant premises budgets to enable the ongoing management of the asset up to disposal and then the appropriate saving being returned to the Corporate Centre. At that time, the Head of Property Services will also discuss with the Chief Legal Officer whether a formal appropriation is required or desirable prior to disposal.
- 4.5 The Head of Property Services and Head of Housing and Public Protection (in the case of Land held under the HRA) shall have delegated authority to appropriate Land for any purpose under the provisions of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 or Section 232 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, subject to any statutory limitations and to the written agreement of the relevant Director or Head of Service who has responsibility for the Land prior to its appropriation
- 4.6 Where the Land is HRA land consideration must be given when appropriating such Land to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (S74 and Sch 4) and whether such Land may be appropriated pursuant to the general powers under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972. Further, that consideration is given to whether consent of the Secretary of State or the Welsh Government is required for the disposal of such Land pursuant to S32 or S43 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended).

## **5 Disposals - Best Consideration**

- 5.1 The general power of disposal is section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 which gives a local authority the power to dispose of land held by it in any manner it wishes provided that the local authority achieves the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained except where the disposal is for a short tenancy (the grant of a term not exceeding seven years or the assignment of a term which has not more than seven years to run) or the local authority has the consent of the Secretary of State or the Welsh Ministers.
- 5.2 The Secretary of State and the Welsh Ministers have issued a general consent for disposals of land under section 123 for less than best consideration. This allows a local authority to dispose of land for less than best consideration if it considers that the disposal will contribute to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area and the extent of the undervalue is no more than £2m.

- 5.3 Subject to the exemptions set out in paragraph 5.1, there is a legal obligation as noted above placed upon the Council to achieve the best consideration reasonably obtainable for land. Best consideration does not necessarily mean the highest financial premium and other matters of commercial or monetary value (such as an overage provision) can be taken into account when assessing best consideration but caution will need to be exercised and a full review of relevant case law will need to be undertaken. An alternative may be to utilise the General Disposal Consent above. It is also possible to seek approval from Welsh Government to a particular transaction.
- 5.4 Any disposal at undervalue other than a disposal in accordance with a Concessionary Lettings Policy (Appendix 1) shall require Cabinet approval and shall be set out in a Cabinet Report and include the following:
- (a) the policy background supporting the proposal;
  - (b) the potential consequences of not approving the disposal;
  - (c) whether the disposal needs the consent of Welsh Government or falls within the General Disposal Consent;
  - (d) whether it confers any commercial advantage on the prospective purchaser;
  - (e) details of the sale price and any relevant terms of the disposal.
- 5.5 Any disposal of public open space shall comply with the requirements of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 5.6 Any disposal of playing fields shall comply with the requirements of the Playing Fields (Community Involvement in Disposal Decisions) (Wales) Regulations 2015. Any disposal of allotments shall comply with the Allotments Act 1925.
- 5.7 Where a disposal has the potential (a) to confer an economic advantage that is not available on market terms and (b) to affect international trade, it must comply with the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, World Trade Organisation agreements and/or other Free Trade Agreements as applicable.
- 5.8 Where a disposal is or is part of a public contract within the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the requirements of those Regulations shall be complied with.
- 5.9 It is the Head of Property Services who will be providing the best consideration certification but if there are situations where officers wish to consider a lower financial bid in terms of overall best consideration, the Chief Legal Officer must be consulted and the appropriate legal implications advice given.
- 5.10 In any dealings with Land, proper regard will be had to professional advice from the Head of Property Services and/or the Chief Legal Officer (as appropriate) at all relevant stages during the process.
- 5.11 No disposal shall progress except in consultation with the Head of Property Services.
- 5.12 Procedures will be followed precisely so that probity and accountability can be demonstrated and value for money achieved. Further and in order to provide for transparency and a proper audit trail, every procedure step or decision taken

under these rules must be recorded in writing and be available for inspection at any time.

## **6 Invitation of Offers - Disposal of Land**

- 6.1 The Head of Property Services will determine a marketing strategy where appropriate, either in-house or through an appropriate agent. Where possible, costs (both surveyors and legal) will be recovered from the eventual purchaser.
- 6.2 The timing of any marketing/disposals will need to be considered against the background of the Council's budgetary requirements, together with the current state of the market. Before recommending that a disposal is to proceed, the following factors are to be taken into consideration.
- (a) Current market conditions;
  - (b) Potential for the site value to increase in the future;
  - (c) Current and proposed Development Plans;
  - (d) Any legal constraints or factors.
- 6.3 In any disposals of Land which do not fall within the delegated authority of Responsible Officers (as defined in this Constitution) and have to be reported to Cabinet, the Responsible Officers shall consult with the relevant Electoral Ward Members and any responses received from Electoral Ward Members shall be reported to Cabinet. On any proposed disposals or acquisitions falling within the delegated authority of the Responsible Officers, the officers shall consult with Electoral Ward Members where the proposal under consideration would involve a change of use in the Land requiring planning consent. Any consultation required to be carried out under this paragraph shall be in writing (letter or e-mail) and any Members consulted shall be given 10 working days in which to respond. If there is no response within this timescale it shall be assumed that the member has no comments to make. Responsible officers shall take any consultation responses received into account in making their decision.
- 6.4 No offers for the disposal of Land will be invited except with the prior approval of the Head of Property Services.
- 6.5 The Head of Property Services will determine whether disposals will be made by way of a sealed offer, private treaty or auction and such determination will be made as to the most appropriate method of disposal.
- 6.6 If there has been no marketing of the Land or only one person has indicated an interest to purchase, the Council will not proceed to a disposal of the Land by private treaty unless the Head of Property Services is satisfied that the disposal would be in accordance with the applicable statutory requirements. In the case of a disposal under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Head of Property Services will need to be satisfied that the disposal would either (i) be for the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained, (ii) meet the requirements of a general or specific consent granted by the Welsh Ministers, or (iii) be for a short tenancy (as defined). In considering this, the Head of Property Services may have regard to the following matters (among others):

- (a) The robustness of the valuation evidence.
  - (b) The likely market for the Land now and in the future given its relevant physical, legal or other characteristics.
  - (c) The potential for the Land to be transferred to and used by a community council or Third Sector/Community Group in accordance with the Community Asset Transfer Policy set out in Appendix 2.
  - (d) The responses (if any) received by the Council following reasonable marketing of the Land.
  - (e) Whether the disposal would achieve a corporate objective or contribute to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of people or communities in its area (taking into account all considerations including subsidy controls).
- 6.7 Where Land is to be the subject of a marketing exercise The Head of Property Services will decide upon the method of advertisement as he thinks appropriate.
- 6.8 Any advert will, generally (but with a general discretion in favour of the Head of Property Services), set out:
- (a) A description of the Land;
  - (b) The terms and conditions upon which offers are to be submitted;
  - (c) Whether further particulars may be obtained;
  - (d) The last date and time when offers will be received;
  - (e) The mechanism and form of receipt and consideration of offers.

## **7 Evaluation and Acceptance of Offers**

- 7.1 The final offer that represents the best consideration obtainable by the Council will be selected for acceptance (save for any utilisation of any relevant general disposal consent or reference to Welsh Government in respect of any proposed disposal ~~at~~ under value).
- 7.2 If there is to be a sale by auction, a designated employee may be authorised under the Scheme of Delegation for that particular sale. This authorisation will extend to making a decision on reserve price and to sign a contract at the auction providing that this accords with the general principles of these Procedures Rules.
- 7.3 Nothing in these rules binds the Council to accept any offer.

## **8 Completion of Contracts**

- 8.1 All contracts and transactions for disposals of Land (and for the avoidance of doubt this shall include any letting licence lease or hire agreement notwithstanding that such disposal is to a charitable organisation or one in which the Council has a close working relationship) will be in writing and executed in accordance with Article 14 of the Constitution and as may be required in law to give effect to the transaction.



8.2 Only the Head of Property Services may issue instructions to the Chief Legal Officer for the preparation and completion of documentation in respect of any transaction in Land.

8.3 Every contract will comply with relevant UK, EU, Welsh Government Law, Directives and any appropriate guidance

## **9 Retention of Documents**

9.1 Deeds, title documents, leases, charges on land, guarantees and documents of a similar nature may only be destroyed with the consent of the Chief Legal Officer.

9.2 Details of all offers will be retained for a period of six years.

## **10 Acquisition of Property**

10.1 The general power of acquisition of land by agreement is section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 which gives a local authority the power to acquire by agreement any land, whether situated inside or outside their area, for the purposes of any of their functions under the Local Government Act 1972 or any other enactment or for the benefit, improvement or development of their area.

10.2 A local authority also has the power to acquire land compulsory in accordance with section 121 of the Local Government Act 1972 or by appropriation in accordance with section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972.

10.3 On each occasion that the Council wishes to acquire Land the relevant Responsible Officer will instruct the Head of Property Services to negotiate, settle or confirm the terms of such acquisition after taking into account any relevant statutory provisions or guidance and any advice from the Chief Legal Officer.

10.4 Once terms are finalised, the Head of Property Services will instruct the Chief Legal Officer in writing to proceed with an acquisition of the Land including for avoidance of doubt the utilisation of compulsory purchase powers.

10.5 The terms of such acquisition will be in accordance with the market value of the interest to be acquired and the body of statute and case law together known as the "compensation code" and in accordance with the principles of best value.

10.6 The terms of acquisition may only be approved in writing by the Head of Property Services save for acquisition by auction or sealed offer wherein a designated employee may be authorised in writing by the Head of Property Services for that particular acquisition to make an offer that accords with the general principles of these Procedure Rules.

## **11 Miscellaneous**

11.1 In considering and determining all matters under these Rules the Head of Property Services shall have regard to taxation law and practice and in particular to VAT; further the Head of Property Services will be expected to seek the advice of the Chief Legal Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer (as appropriate) and shall have a duty to so consult prior to any disposal.

11.2 In the absence for whatever reason of the Head of Property Services these Rules shall be read in conjunction with the Scheme of Delegation set out in Part 3 of the Constitution.

## Appendix 1 - Concessionary Lettings Policy

### Background

1. The Council has in the past, leased land and buildings at less than full market value. Often these disposals have been to the trustees of leisure, recreational or sports clubs and societies who have limited resources. In addition to rent reviews and lease renewals which occur with such previous lettings, a number of new requests are received from similar organisations for disposals at less than market value. The Land Transaction Procedure Rules (LTPR) set out the guidance / rules which the Head of Property Services should normally follow.
2. In addition to the LTPR the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 123) provides that a Council should not dispose of land other than at the best consideration reasonably obtainable without the specific consent of the Welsh Government or the application of the General Disposal Consent. This applies to leases exceeding 7 years in duration.
3. The General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 Order came into force on 31 December 2003. This Order removed the former requirement for the Council to seek a specific consent for a disposal at an undervalue where the Council considers that the disposal is in the interests of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole or part of its area, or any or all persons resident or present in its area and the undervalue is up to and including £2,000,000 or less.
4. Under Part 3 of the Council's Constitution a Responsible Officer has delegated authority to exercise functions for which he or she has budgetary, managerial, operational or statutory authority provided that the Cabinet does not itself make a decision in a particular case.
5. The Audit Commissions Report on Local Authority Property Management highlighted the need for any such concessionary disposals to be identified and the amount of the concession to be quantified. There is also a practical need for all such disposals to be identified and recorded in this way, if consistency between the amounts of concessions granted is to be maintained. In view of the current financial pressures faced by the Council it is appropriate to consider this financial burden on the Council and in addition a periodic review of these allowances should be undertaken as a matter of good management practice.

### Application of Policy

1. It is recommended that the following approach is adopted as a consistent basis for implementing the policy framework described above subject to the LTPR that:
  - (a) The full market value of the interest to be leased should be assessed. This could occur at a rent review, at a lease renewal or at the proposed granting of a new tenancy. The market rent would be assessed in the usual way taking account of the nature of the property, its current state, the interest which is to be created with the obligations to be carried out by both parties and any other relevant factors;
  - (b) The tenant who is seeking a reduction from that market value should be asked to identify all the relevant circumstances in support of his case,

including alignment with the Council's corporate objectives, accounts and financial evidence relating to the activity to be undertaken either on or relating to the premises. This would also require a declaration of any grant or assistance which has been obtained from the Council or any other party;

- (c) The Council shall allow a rent concession only when it can be clearly demonstrated that such grant is necessary for the organisation to continue to deliver its service. There shall be an expectation that grant recipients will develop a financial strategy steadily to diminish the level of grant required. This strategy must be demonstrated as part of the grant application;
- (d) The level of rent grant should be the minimum necessary to ensure continuity of the operation and if possible should not exceed 75% of the rental value of the premises. The precise level shall be determined by careful analysis of the current financial position and financial strategy of the organisation;
- (e) Ideally each payment of rent grant shall be given explicitly. The mechanism for this will be to charge the full rental value for the premises and separately make an explicit grant payment to that organisation;
- (f) Decisions whether to grant rent concessions for leases of less than 7 years and, if so, at what level, will be undertaken by the relevant operational Head of Service and the Head of Property Services, after consultation with the relevant Cabinet or Council Members. Ultimately however under the LTPR, it is the responsibility of the Head of Property Services to determine whether a concession should be granted.

# City and County of Swansea

## Community Asset Transfer Policy

### 2021



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**City and County of Swansea**  
**Community Asset Transfer Policy 2021**

**What is a Community Asset Transfer?**

Community Asset Transfer is an established mechanism used to enable the community ownership and management of publicly owned land and buildings.

The General Disposal Consent allows a range of public bodies to transfer the ownership and management of land and buildings they own to local communities at 'less than best consideration' – at less than full market value.

Communities can enter into discussions with public bodies about Community Asset Transfer where it is their intention to promote social, economic or environmental well-being.

Any proposal for a Community Asset Transfer must be supported by a Head of Service and the relevant Cabinet Member. If the proposal does not have internal support then it cannot proceed.

If supported then under the Council's Land Transaction Procedure Rules (LTPR), the Head of Property Services must be consulted. The latter will assess the status of the property, its tenure, open market value and potential for realisation of a capital receipt and liaise with the supporting department. Property Services and Finance must be consulted prior to reporting to consider the financial implications of the CAT and to ensure it does not breach subsidy controls. Legal, financial and any possible Equality and Engagement Implications will also need to be considered and discussed at this stage.

The supporting department must then be willing to present a report to Cabinet detailing how the proposal benefits both the Council and the community by promoting social, economic or environmental well-being in the relevant area.

The ultimate aim of Community Asset Transfer is community empowerment – that is, to ensure that land and buildings are retained or transformed for public benefit through community asset ownership and management.

**Purpose of this Policy**

- This Policy describes how the Authority will work with communities to support the transfer of Authority-owned and operated land and buildings to town/community council or third sector organisations, for the benefit of the community.
- This Policy explains what is meant by the term Community Asset Transfer and sets out how it will be achieved. It provides a clear framework to support the transfer of land and buildings from the Authority to a town/ community council

or a strong community based group of local people, and will maximise the likelihood that the transfer will be successful and sustainable in the longer term.

- This Policy is not generally intended to cover property that is surplus to the Authority's requirements; such property should continue to be disposed of in accordance with the Land Transaction Procedural Rules.
- This Policy will apply to all potential Community Asset Transfers, but where the expression of interest was received prior to adoption of the Policy, any necessary adaptations to this Policy will be made to accommodate previous different practice.

### **Asset Transfers within the City and County of Swansea**

The Authority recognises that:

- The way its physical assets are managed can have a very positive impact on the long-term strength of local communities and the third sector more generally.
- Through asset ownership or management, community based groups can grow and become more secure, gaining access to sources of additional investment that the Authority itself may not be able to access.
- Successful asset transfer requires a long-term partnership approach between the Authority and the community based groups that take over the management of an asset.

### **Rationalisation of Assets**

The Authority is continually reviewing its property assets and over recent years there has been an ongoing rationalisation programme. Those assets which have been, and will in the future be identified as surplus to the Local Authority's requirements, will continue to be disposed of in accordance with existing policies, which are described in the Land Transaction Procedure Rules

Through discussions with service providing departments the Authority is also aware of properties that could potentially be run and managed by suitable community groups, Town and Community Councils and other local groups.

This Policy is intended to cover those assets which are being used for current service delivery and could be managed more effectively by local groups.

Given the current financial pressures on the public sector it is anticipated that a number of non-statutory services will need to be delivered in different ways and it is expected that the delivery of these services by community based organisations (and the assets necessary to deliver those services) will play a significant role in reducing future costs.

### **Community Asset Transfer – Key Principles**



The Authority's procedures on Community Asset Transfer are underpinned by the following principles: -

- Generally the transfer will only be approved if property required for continuation of a service;
- The transfer must create a mutual benefit to both the Council and the Community by promoting social, economic or environmental wellbeing and supporting the aims and priorities of the Authority;
- More often than not there should be an initial element of financial benefit to the Authority.
- The Authority will encourage collaboration between community based groups and the sharing of assets to optimise social value and value for money;
- The proposed use of the asset must be for the benefit of the community, and would offer real opportunities for successful and independent, community or third sector organisations to become more sustainable in the long term;
- The Authority is not obliged to undertake Community Asset Transfers.
- The basic terms of any transfer will generally be non-negotiable and will be on the basis that the organisation that the asset is being transferred to will be taking full responsibility for repair and all outgoings of that land or asset.

### **Who can apply?**

Expressions of interest (see Appendix 2) are welcome from community and voluntary sector groups or Town / Community Councils. Ideally interested parties should meet the following criteria:

- They should be community-led, with strong links with the local community and local people must be able to control the organisation's decision making processes;
- Their primary purpose must be to enhance service provision to the local community;
- The organisation and key individuals managing the asset and associated project have appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise to sustain the project in the long term.
- They must be open to and demonstrate an inclusive approach to members of the wider community.
- They must not duplicate activities, services or facilities already provided in the local community.

## **The basis of transfer**

- The Council will transfer on a leasehold basis in order to ensure continuation of use. In the event that the use ceases the asset would return to the Authority. Transfer for a new use will be considered in exceptional circumstances and only on a leasehold basis.
- The Authority will discuss with interested parties what length of lease would be most suitable to meet the needs and expectations of the groups and local people. Funding bodies may have requirements that must be met if a community based group is to be eligible to receive grant monies.
- During the lease period the Authority will expect the community organisation to be responsible for the running costs of the building, including repairs, maintenance and all insurances.
- The Authority will share with any interested parties all available information regarding the condition and operating costs of any asset that may be transferred.
- The Authority will encourage collaboration between community based groups and the sharing of assets to optimise social value and value for money.
- There may be competing groups interested in the same asset. In such cases the Authority will expect community groups to work together and organise themselves in such a way that sharing and use of the asset is optimised between them. If a joint approach is not agreed, the Authority will balance the merits of the different organisations' proposals and decide to which group (if any) the asset should be transferred. Failure of community organisations to collaborate on a joint approach may make it less likely that any acceptable proposal for asset transfer will be achievable. Town or Community Councils may have a role in such cases to take the lead in managing the asset on behalf of a number of users.
- The transfer will normally be at "a peppercorn" or nominal rent but a rent at market value for the restricted use may also have to be implemented depending on individual business cases and circumstances.

## **How Applications are Assessed and Decisions Made**

Community and voluntary sector groups or Town / Community Councils applying for asset transfer will need to set out some or all of the following:

- Proposals for the use and maintenance of the asset
- Benefits to the Authority, the community based group and the wider/community, together with planned outcomes

- Consideration of whether there are, and will continue to be, any conflicts/overlap of other similar facilities in the locality
- Capacity of the community based group(s) to manage and insure longevity of the asset
- Some form of business plan, the detail of which will reflect the scale of asset being transferred
- A community governance structure (how local people will be involved in decision making in relation to the asset and its use)
- Evidence of financial support for future development
- Liabilities and how these will be addressed
- How they have considered the effect of the opportunities for people to use the Welsh language; or how the Welsh language will be treated no less favourably than the English language? How the decision could be made so that it has positive or increased positive effects; or so that it does not have adverse effects or a decreased adverse effect on the opportunities for people to use the Welsh language? How can it be assured that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language post transfer including any service provision currently provided through the medium of Welsh and how these services will continue.

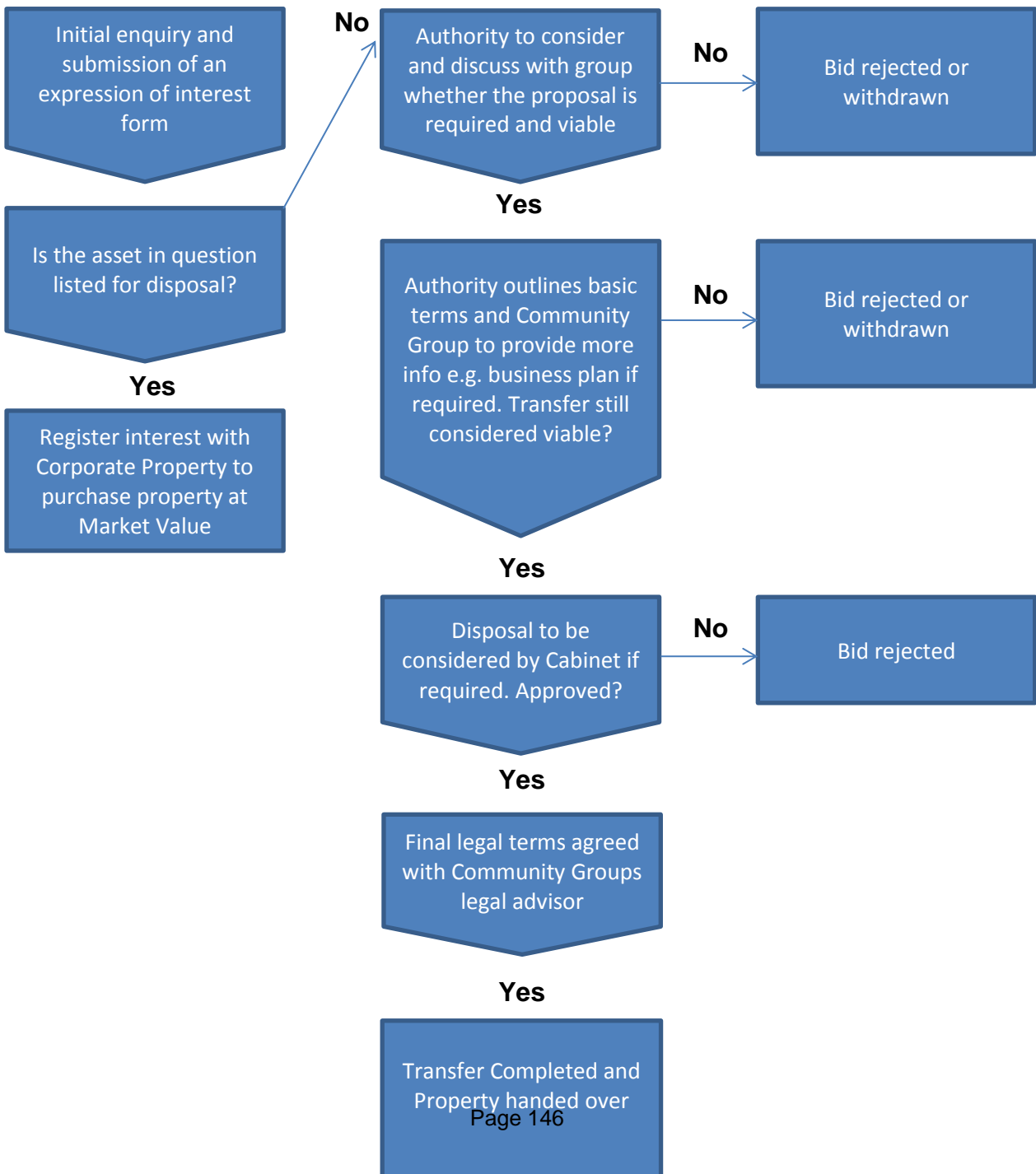
The table below summarises the process the Authority will follow where an asset transfer request has been made:-

Stage	Who is Responsible
Expression of interest submitted for consideration (Appendix 2) or other appropriate form	Community Group
Application form appraised and recommendations made	Local Authority
<i>Business plan submitted (if deemed necessary)</i>	<i>Community Group</i>
<i>Appraisal of business plan (if deemed necessary)</i>	<i>Local Authority</i>
Decision on whether to proceed with	Local Authority

transfer with support from relevant Head of Service and in accordance LTPR (with Cabinet/Local Member involvement as necessary)	
Detailed terms agreed and transfer completed	Local Authority

Appendix 1

**COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER PROCESS**



## Appendix 2

# **Expression of Interest for the Transfer of a Community Asset.**

- 
- Please complete this form in as much detail as possible and ensure all questions have been answered. If you are unable to provide an answer or the evidence requested, please explain why.
- Please ensure you have read and understood the City and County of Swansea's Community Asset Transfer Guidance.
- All community asset transfers will need to be supported by a Council Head of Service and a Cabinet Member. Your completed form will be forwarded to the relevant Head of Service to be assessed. In most cases it will be necessary for that Head of Service to submit a report for Cabinet approval.
- The Council may need to request further information from you to enable a decision to be reached.
- In some cases a business plan may be requested to show the on-going viability of your proposal.
- Please remember that we are looking for proposals that present a mutual benefit for both the community and the Council.

**Community Asset Transfer Expression of Interest Form**

**Please return to:**

**Community and Voluntary Sector Partnership Officer, Poverty and Prevention  
Team, Civic Centre, Oystermouth Road, Swansea. SA1 3SN**

**1.0 Name of the asset. Please include a plan where possible.** (If you haven't identified a particular asset, please detail your requirements here)

**2.0 Organisation Details**

2.1 Name of organisation

2.2 Main contact name, position in the organisation and contact details including postal address, telephone number and email address:

2.3 Purpose of your organisation, what is the organisation constituted to do?

2.4 Your organisation's status (e.g. Registered charity, company etc.) Please include any relevant numbers. Is the organisation a Legal entity in its own right? If not provide full names and addresses of all persons intending to hold the property.

2.5 Provide details of your organisational structure including your governance arrangements.

**3.0 Financial Health and Sustainability**

*(If you are unable to provide any of the information requested in this section, please give details on why. E.g. If you are newly established organisation)*

3.1 Please attach preceding three years of your organisation's audited and signed accounts

3.2 Provide a budget and cash flow forecast which demonstrate your intended income and expenditure for your tenure of the asset for the next 2 years.
3.3 Provide details of reserves currently held and reserves policy.
3.4 Do you have the funds in place to set up the project or is it dependant on another funding source? Please give details.
<b>4.0 Track Record</b>
4.1 Please tell us if you have entered into any contracts or lease agreements with the City & County of Swansea before and if so, please give us details of a referee we can contact.
4.2 Detail any experience of managing a community facility
<b>5.0 Proposal</b>
5.1 Please detail your proposal for the transferred asset?
5.2 What key outcomes will your tenure of the asset aim to achieve?
5.3 Please detail proposed management and governance arrangements for the asset
<b>6.0 Community benefit</b>
6.1 Will your proposal be accessible to the whole community? YES/NO Please give details.

6.2 Will your proposal maintain an existing service or activity in the local community? YES/NO. Please give details.
6.3 Will your proposal present a conflict or overlap with existing facilities in the area? <i>(Consider whether there are any similar facilities in the vicinity and the impact this proposal will have on them)</i>
6.4 Will your proposal create opportunities for local organisations to work together? YES/NO. Please give details.
6.5 What facilities and services do you propose to deliver to provide from the asset?
6.6 Please detail the evidence of need for your proposal, including details of who you have consulted with and any letters of support.
6.7 How will you ensure that you will provide services and opportunities to members of the community through the medium of Welsh and treats the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?
<b>I confirm that to the best of my knowledge this form has been completed accurately. I understand that the Council may need further information from me to make a full assessment on the proposal presented.</b>
<b>Signed:</b>
<b>Name:</b>
<b>Date:</b>



Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

**Which service area and directorate are you from?**

Service Area: Property

Directorate:Place

**Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?**

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

**(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:**

To amend the Land Transaction Procedure rules by increasing officers financial delegations and at the same time clarifying how disposals at less then best consideration to assist any future proposed Community Asset Transfers. This will ensure all proposals are properly considered and actioned accordingly.

This Policy describes how the Authority will work with communities to support the transfer of Authority-owned and operated land and buildings to town/community council or third sector organisations, for the benefit of the community.

This Policy explains what is meant by the term Community Asset Transfer and sets out how it will be achieved. It provides a clear framework to support the transfer of land and buildings from the Authority to a town/ community council or a strong community based group of local people, and will maximise the likelihood that the transfer will be successful and sustainable in the longer term.

This Policy is not generally intended to cover property that is surplus to the Authority's requirements; such property should continue to be disposed of in accordance with the Land Transaction Procedural Rules

**Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)**

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches? Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

The proposed updating of the Land Transaction Procedure Rules deals with future processes to accelerate decision making but makes not changes to the consultation required for any proposed disposal. These consultations will be undertaken with relevant groups who may be affected with specific proposals, identified either through the process of declaring assets surplus or as a result of expressions of interest from a community and voluntary sector groups or Town / Community Councils

**Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan’s Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
 Yes x                       No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
 Yes x                       No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
 Yes x                       No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
 Yesx                       No

**Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/>	Low risk x <input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------------------	---	--

**Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes                      x  No                      If yes, please provide details below

**Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**

*(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)*

The benefit of the proposal is that it will simplify and clarify decisions made in relation to disposals at market value but also those at less than best consideration. All those effected by future disposals will be consulted with in the appropriate manner, having due consideration to current legislation. All implications will be considered in line and other with the policy and IIA process will be applied to ensure that no groups have been adversely impacted. The policy provide consistency applies equality to all those seeking for community asset transfer.

**Outcome of Screening**

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

The screening form has determined that a full IIA report will not be required primarily as this is an updating and amendment to the decision making criteria.

Consultation will be undertaken on specific disposals when they occur ensuring all those impacted have a chance to input their views.

This policy supports the WFG act by ensuring that expressions of interest for a community asset transfers are welcome from community and voluntary sector groups or Town / Community Councils. Ideally interested parties should meet the following criteria:

- They should be community-led, with strong links with the local community and local people must be able to control the organisation's decision making processes;
- Their primary purpose must be to enhance service provision to the local community;
- The organisation and key individuals managing the asset and associated project have appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise to sustain the project in the long term.
- They must be open to and demonstrate an inclusive approach to members of the wider community.
- They must not duplicate activities, services or facilities already provided in the local community.

The impact to protected groups in relation to the amended policy are low because of the abilities created by this policy to either respond to relevant consultation or to express an interest for a community asset transfer.

We have considered the impact on Welsh language and the policy itself ensures that we consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

Each and any proposed disposal will be assessed on its individual merits.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Geoff Bacon</b>
<b>Job title: Head of Property</b>
<b>Date: 27/9/21</b>
<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Geoff Bacon</b>
<b>Position: Head of Property</b>
<b>Date: 27/9/21</b>

Please return the completed form to [accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 11.



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Council – 7 October 2021

### Lay Members on the Governance & Audit Committee

<b>Purpose:</b>	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.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The Governance & Audit Committee recommendation that the Committee comprise of 15 Members (10 Councillors and 5 Lay Members) be approved.  2) The process of recruiting the additional Lay Members commence in line with Council procedures.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Huw Evans
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Part 6 S 116 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides that the membership of the Governance & Audit Committee shall consist of one third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) Lay Members from May 2022. It also provides that the Committee Chair must be a lay person.
- 1.2 The Governance & Audit Committee currently comprises 15 Members (13 Cllrs & 2 Lay Members). The Governance & Audit Committee

considered the legislative requirement that  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Committee would be Lay Members at its meeting on 14 September 2021.

- 1.3 The Committee recommended to Council that the Governance & Audit Committee comprise 15 Member (10 Councillors and 5 Lay Members). The Committee also agreed however, that Council should be made aware that one Councillor favoured a Committee Size of 12 and that the Lay Chair of the Committee and the additional Lay Member both supported a Committee Size of 9 in line with the Audit Wales recommendations and comments / discussions made at a recent All Wales Governance & Audit Committee Chairs meeting.

## **2 Welsh Chief Auditors Group (Further Information Since the Governance & Audit Committee Meeting)**

- 2.1 Not surprisingly, other Councils are also in the process of considering the membership size of their Governance & Audit Committees. The Chief Auditor has attended meetings where the vast majority of Authorities have indicated that they are moving to a Committee size of 9 and at most 12.

- 2.2 The arguments for a smaller Committee are in line with:

- i) The recommendation of Audit Wales.
- ii) Value for money when considering costs and economy. The costs of each additional Lay Members will include Attendance Costs, Travel Costs, ICT Allowance etc.
- iii) Effective and efficient Committee discussions allowing all participants to hear and be heard.

## **3 Political Representation & Committee Size Impact on the Governance & Audit Committee**

- 3.1 The table sets out the Political & Lay Member representation on the Committee based on differing Committee sizes. The top line sets out the current membership, prior to the  $\frac{1}{3}$  Lay Members being introduced in May 2022.

- 3.2 Note that the “Breakdown by Political Group” column could change at any time, should a Councillor change Political Group Membership or following a Local Government Election.

Cttee Size	(1/3) Lay Members	No. Cllrs	Breakdown By Political Group			
			Labour	Lib Dem / Ind	Con	Uplands
15	2	13	9	2	2	0
15	5	10	7	2	1	0
14	5	9	6	2	1	0
13	5	8	5	2	1	0
12	4	8	5	2	1	0
11	4	7	5	1	1	0
10	4	6	4	1	1	0
9	3	6	4	1	1	0

**Note:** When the Committee size is not divisible by one third to allow a whole number result (14, 13, 11 & 10) the figures have been rounded up as legislation states that the Lay Membership must be one third. It is therefore logical, that the Committee size should be divisible by 3 (9, 12 or 15).

#### 4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Following Council determining the size of the Committee the additional lay members will need to be recruited in line with council procedures.

#### 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The additional cost of a Lay Member or Lay Members will be met within existing budget.

#### 6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Failure to comply with this legislation would put the Council in breach of legislation. The Governance & Audit Committee cannot legally meet post May 2022 unless 1/3 of its membership are Lay Members.

#### 7. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 7.1 As this report relates to a statutory requirement relating to the composition of the Governance and Audit Committee there are no integrated assessment implications.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Appendices:** None.

# Agenda Item 12.



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Council – 7 October 2021

### Democratic Services Committee Annual Reports 2019-2020 & 2020-2021

<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide Council with the Annual Reports 2019-2020 & 2020-2021 for the period 9 May 2019 to 30 September 2020 and 1 October 2020 – 19 May 2021. The reports outline the work of the Democratic Services Committee during those periods.
<b>Report Authors:</b>	Huw Evans & Allison Lowe
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar
<b>For Information</b>	

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 required each Principal Council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The Annual Meeting of Council held on 24 May 2012 originally established the Democratic Services Committee.
- 1.2 Councillor P M Black was originally elected Chair of the Democratic Services Committee at the Annual Meeting of Council on 19 May 2016 and re-elected annually until Councillor L James was elected Chair on 2 July 2020.
- 1.3 The Democratic Services Committee is serviced by the Head of Democratic Services, Huw Evans.
- 1.4 The Democratic Services Annual Reports are attached at:  
Appendix A – Democratic Services Annual Report 2019-2020 and  
Appendix B – Democratic Services Annual Report 2020-2021.



## **2. Integrated Assessment Implications**

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

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

2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 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'.

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

2.4 There are no integrated 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 other than those set out in the body of the reports.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A - Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2019-2020  
(9 May 2019 to 30 September 2020)

Appendix B – Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2020-2021 (1 October 2020 – 19 May 2021)



# Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2019-2020

## City & County of Swansea



**Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2019-2020  
(9 May 2019 to 30 September 2020)**

<b>Table of Contents</b>	
1	Foreword by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee
2	Membership of the Democratic Services Committee
3	Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings
4	Democratic Services Committee - Terms of Reference
5	Activities of the Democratic Services Committee
6	Member Development
7	Democratic Services Team 9 May 2019 to 30 September 2020
8	General Information

**1. Foreword by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee**

- 1.1 During 2019-2020, the Democratic Services Committee focussed its work on providing advice and guidance to Councillors on the work of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales via their Annual Report for 2020-2021 including the importance of Councillors utilising the Reimbursement of Costs of Care to assist them to carry out their role as a Councillor.
- 1.2 Frequency of meetings for the 2019-2020 Municipal Year were severely affected due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.3 Whilst the Democratic Services Committee did not meet as frequently as anticipated, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Committee for their time, dedication and support during this difficult period.
- 1.4 A number of officers have helped considerably with the work of the Committee. In particular, I would like to thank Huw Evans, Head of Democratic Services, Allison Lowe, Democratic Services Officer and the Democratic Services Team for their support and professionalism.

**Councillor P M Black**  
**Chair of Democratic Services Committee**

## 2. Membership of the Democratic Services Committee

2.1 The membership of the Democratic Services Committee for the period 9 May 2019 to 30 September 2020:



Councillor Peter Black – **Chair**  
(Until 4 June 2020)\*



Councillor June Burtonshaw



Councillor Nick Davies



Councillor Mike Durke



Councillor Louise Gibbard



Councillor Joe Hale



Councillor Lynda James (from 4 June 2020 & **Chair** from 2.7.2020)\*\*



Councillor Susan Jones



Councillor Erika Kirchner



Councillor Wendy Lewis  
**Vice Chair**



Councillor Brigitte Rowlands



Councillor Gloria Tanner



Councillor Linda Tyler-Lloyd



Councillor Lesley Walton

2.2 It should be noted that on 4 June 2020 Councillor Peter Black\* ceased to be a member of the Democratic Services Committee and was replaced by Councillor Lynda James\*\*.

2.3 Councillor Lynda James\*\* was elected Chair of the Democratic Services Committee at Council on 2 July 2020, however the Committee did not meet between July and the end of the Municipal Year (30 September 2020).

### 3. Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings

3.1 The Democratic Services Committee met on these dates during 2019-2020:

16 July 2019	6 November 2019
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3.2 Two meetings scheduled for 21 April 2020 and 13 July 2020 did not take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 4. Democratic Services Committee - Terms of Reference

4.1 The remit of the Democratic Services Committee is set out in **Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011** and is to:

4.2 Exercise the function of the local authority under section 8(1) (a) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (designation of Head of Democratic Services).

4.3 Review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, including:

- a) Achievement of the Welsh Local Government Association's (WLGA) Member Support and Development Charter;
- b) Councillor Training;
- c) Improvements and innovations such as electronic voting, web casting etc.

4.4 Make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

4.5 It is for a Democratic Services Committee to determine how to exercise those functions.

4.6 To determine whether or not the Councillors period of family absence should be cancelled in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

4.7 To determine whether or not to withhold a Councillor's Remuneration should they fail to return following a period of family absence on the date specified in the notice provided.

## **5. Activities of the Democratic Services Committee**

5.1 During the municipal year 2019-2020 the work of the Democratic Services Committee was greatly reduced due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Municipal Year was also extended until September 2020. However in that time the Committee did consider:

### **5.2 Democratic Services Annual Report 2018-2019.**

5.2.1 The Head of Democratic Services presented the Democratic Services Annual Report 2018-2019 which outlined the work of the Committee during that period.

### **5.3 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) - Draft Annual Report 2020-2021 - Consultation**

5.3.1 The Committee considered the draft Annual Report published by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and provided a draft response, which was considered by Council prior to submission to the IRPW.

5.3.2 In addition, The Committee agreed that the reimbursement of costs of care could assist those Councillors and Co-opted Members with caring responsibilities, which in turn might help to increase diversity in democracy by encouraging people to stand as candidates as the caring responsibility barrier was removed.

## **6. Member Development**

6.1 The following training / briefings were provided in 2019-2020, however opportunities were significantly reduced due to the Covid-19 pandemic:

11 June 2019	National Approach to Statutory Advocacy – Implementation
18 June 2019	Ash Dieback presentation
13 August 2019	Financial Management & Accounting (for Audit Committee Members)
8 October 2019	Review of Audit Committee Effectiveness (for Audit Committee Members)
10 December 2019	Risk Management Training (for Audit Committee Members)
17 March 2020	Covid-19 briefing / training

6.2 All Councillors were provided with 1-2-1 training by the Digital Change Co-ordinator in the use of the “Microsoft Teams” platform in order to enable Committee meetings to be held remotely.

6.3 In addition, all Councillors are encouraged to complete various e-learning training, including mandatory Safeguarding training via the Learning Pool platform.

## 7. Democratic Services Team 9 May 2019 – 30 September 2020

7.1 The Team Structure for Democratic Services and Scrutiny for the period 2019-2020 are set out below. The Posts are all 1 Full Time Equivalent (fte) unless otherwise stated.

### 7.2 Democratic Services Team

Job Title	Officer Name
Head of Democratic Services	Huw Evans
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Samantha Woon
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Kate Jones
Democratic Services Officer	Gareth Borsden
Democratic Services Officer	Jeremy Parkhouse
Democratic Services Officer	Allison Lowe
Democratic Services Support Officer	Caroline Davies
Democratic Services Administrative Assistant	Karen Thomas
Democratic Services Support Assistant	Diane Clatworthy

7.2.1 The Democratic Services Team supports Full Council and all of its Committees and the formal decision-making and good governance of the Council. This includes the preparation and publication of agendas, minutes & report packs using the Modern.Gov committee administration system and booking rooms for meetings and pre-meetings. Support is provided to the following meetings.

- Council, Cabinet & External Funding Panel
- Regulatory: Planning, General and Statutory Licensing Committees including Sub Committees;
- Governance: Appeals & Awards Committee, Appointments Committee, Audit Committee, Chief Executive's Remuneration & Appraisal Committee, Constitution Working Group, Corporate Parenting Board, Democratic Services Committee, Pension Fund Committee, Standards Committee;
- Joint Committees: Local Pension Board, Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee, Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee;
- Other: Armed Forces Covenant Signatories Panel, Community / Town Councils Forum, Corporate Briefing, Development Advisory Group, Gower Area Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Steering Group, Joint Consultative Committee, Sustainable Development Fund Panel and Trustees Panel.



- 7.2.2 The Democratic Services Team arrange suitable dates, prepare agendas, co-ordinate report approval, circulate documents, draft minutes, record decisions and attendances and publish appropriate information on the various websites.
- 7.2.3 The team also co-ordinates the delivery of the audio visual and webcasting facilities for Cabinet, Council, Planning, Audit, Scrutiny Programme Committee and Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee.
- 7.2.4 Since March 2020 the team have developed the use of remote meetings and successfully delivered a remote meeting capability, including the live streaming of many meetings. This brings additional administrative and preparatory work including placing a recording on our website once each meeting has concluded.
- 7.2.5 From July 2020 the live streaming of meetings expanded to include: Pension Fund Committee, 5 x Policy Development Committees, Statutory Licensing Sub Committee, Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee and Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Steering Group.

## 8. General Information

- 8.1 The Democratic Services Committee is keen to see members of the public attending its Meetings. With the exception of confidential items, all business is held in public. All of the public papers are published online [www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy)
- 8.2 Further information can be provided by Democratic Services: [Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk) or on 01792 636923





# Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2020-2021

## City & County of Swansea



**Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2020-2021  
(1 October 2020 to 19 May 2021)**

<b>Table of Contents</b>	
1	Foreword by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee
2	Membership of the Democratic Services Committee
3	Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings
4	Democratic Services Committee - Terms of Reference
5	Activities of the Democratic Services Committee
6	Member Development
7	Democratic Services Team 1 October 2020 to 19 May 2021
8	General Information

## **1. Foreword by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee**

- 1.1 During 2020-2021, the Democratic Services Committee provided advice and guidance to Councillors on the work of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales via their Annual Report for 2021-2022.
- 1.2 Frequency of meetings for the 2020-2021 Municipal Year were again severely affected due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.3 Whilst the Democratic Services Committee did not meet as frequently as anticipated, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the former Chair, Councillor Peter Black and the whole Committee for their time, dedication and support during this difficult period.
- 1.4 A number of officers have helped considerably with the work of the Committee. In particular, I would like to thank Huw Evans, Head of Democratic Services, Allison Lowe, Democratic Services Officer and the Democratic Services Team for their support and professionalism.

**Councillor L James**  
**Chair of Democratic Services Committee**

## 2. Membership of the Democratic Services Committee

2.1 The membership of the Democratic Services Committee for the period 1 October 2020 to 19 May 2021:



Councillor Lynda James  
**Chair**



Councillor June Burtonshaw



Councillor Nick Davies



Councillor Mike Durke



Councillor Louise Gibbard



Councillor Joe Hale



Councillor Susan Jones



Councillor Erika Kirchner



Councillor Wendy Lewis  
**Vice Chair**



Councillor Brigitte Rowlands



Councillor Gloria Tanner



Councillor Linda Tyler-Lloyd



Councillor Lesley Walton

2.2 Councillor Lynda James\*\* was elected Chair of the Democratic Services Committee at Council on 2 July 2020 and re-elected Chair at the Annual Meeting of Council on 1 October 2020.

2.3 The Democratic Services Committee did not meet between 2 July and 1 October 2020.

### 3. Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings

3.1 The Democratic Services Committee met remotely via Microsoft Teams on the following date in 2020-2021:

14 October 2021	
-----------------	--

3.2 Two meetings scheduled for 9 November 2020 and 1 March 2021 did not take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 4. Democratic Services Committee - Terms of Reference

4.1 The remit of the Democratic Services Committee is set out in **Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011** and is to:

4.2 Exercise the function of the local authority under section 8(1) (a) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (designation of Head of Democratic Services).

4.3 Review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, including:

- a) Achievement of the Welsh Local Government Association's (WLGA) Member Support and Development Charter;
- b) Councillor Training;
- c) Improvements and innovations such as electronic voting, web casting etc.

4.4 Make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

4.5 It is for a Democratic Services Committee to determine how to exercise those functions.

4.6 To determine whether or not the Councillors period of family absence should be cancelled in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

4.7 To determine whether or not to withhold a Councillor's Remuneration should they fail to return following a period of family absence on the date specified in the notice provided.

## 5. Activities of the Democratic Services Committee

5.1 During the municipal year 2020-2021 the work of the Democratic Services Committee was once again affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. However the Committee did consider:

### 5.2 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) - Draft Annual Report 2021-2022 - Consultation

5.2.1 The Committee considered the draft Annual Report published by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and provided a draft response, which was considered by Council prior to submission to the IRPW.

## 6. Member Development

6.1 The following member training was provided in 2020-2021, however opportunities were significantly reduced due to the Covid-19 pandemic:

Various dates in January 2021	E-voting training by the Head of Democratic Services
24 & 25 February 2021	Members Webinar on the ONS Census
29 & 30 March 2021	Member Briefing on Socio-Economic Duty by the Equality & Human Rights Commission

6.2 All Members are encouraged to complete various e-learning training, including mandatory Safeguarding training via the Learning Pool platform.

## 7. Democratic Services Team 1 October 2020 – 19 May 2021

7.1 The Team Structure for Democratic Services and Scrutiny for the period 2020-2021 are set out below. The Posts are all 1 Full Time Equivalent (fte) unless otherwise stated.

### 7.2 Democratic Services Team

Job Title	Officer Name
Head of Democratic Services	Huw Evans
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Samantha Woon
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Kate Jones
Democratic Services Officer	Gareth Borsden
Democratic Services Officer	Jeremy Parkhouse
Democratic Services Officer	Allison Lowe
Democratic Services Support Officer	Caroline Davies
Democratic Services Administrative Assistant	Karen Thomas
Democratic Services Support Assistant	Diane Clatworthy

7.2.1 The Democratic Services Team supports Full Council and all its Committees and the formal decision-making and good governance of the Council. This includes the preparation and publication of agendas, minutes & reports packs using the Modern.Gov committee administration system and booking rooms for meetings and pre-meetings. Support is provided to the following meetings.

- Council and Cabinet
- Regulatory: Planning, General and Statutory Licensing Committees including Sub Committees;
- Governance: Appeals & Awards Committee, Appointments Committee, Audit Committee, Chief Executive's Remuneration & Appraisal Committee, Constitution Working Group, Corporate Parenting Board, Democratic Services Committee, Pension Fund Committee, Standards Committee;
- Joint Committees: Local Pension Board, Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee, Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee;
- Other: Armed Forces Covenant Signatories Panel, Community / Town Councils Forum, Corporate Briefing, Development Advisory Group, Gower Area Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Steering Group, Joint Consultative Committee, Sustainable Development Fund Panel and Trustees Panel.

7.2.2 The Democratic Services Team arrange suitable dates, prepare agendas, co-ordinate report approval, circulate documents, draft minutes, record decisions and attendances and publish appropriate information on the various websites.

7.2.3 The team also co-ordinates the delivery of the audio visual and webcasting facilities for Cabinet, Council, Audit Committee, Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Steering Group, Planning Committee, Pension Fund Committee, 5 x Policy Development Committees, Scrutiny Programme Committee, Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee, Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee.

7.2.4 All of the above meetings are streamed live and a recording placed on the Council's website once each meeting has concluded.

## **8. General Information**

8.1 The Democratic Services Committee is keen to see members of the public attending its Meetings. With the exception of confidential items, all business is held in public. All of the public papers are published online [www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy)

8.2 Further information can be provided by Democratic Services: [Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk) or on 01792 636923





# Agenda Item 13.



## Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Council – 7 October 2021

### Scrutiny Dispatches – Impact Report

<b>Purpose:</b>	To present the latest report from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to Council on the impact of scrutiny.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None
<b>Consultation:</b>	Finance, Legal, Access to Services
<b>Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Cridland
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Catherine Window
<b>For Information</b>	

#### 1. Introduction

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

## 2. Scrutiny Dispatches

2.1 'Scrutiny Dispatches' is intended to demonstrate scrutiny achievements and outcomes. It is effectively a regular report about impact and how scrutiny is making a difference, rather than a descriptive account of scrutiny activities. The aim is to focus on and promote a small number of 'significant stories'. A chair's roundup is also featured to highlight other work.

2.2 The latest report is attached for Council's information and any discussion – see **Appendix 1**. This issue reflects on the first part of the 2021/22 municipal year, and features scrutiny of:

- Bus Services
- Tourism and Business / City Promotion
- Natural Environment
- Procurement

The Chair's roundup talks about progress with the Scrutiny Work Programme, the Annual Report for 2020/21, praise for our Scrutiny arrangements from internal audit, the Committee work plan, and regional Education Scrutiny.

2.3 As well as being a report to Council the content will be shared more widely, with advice and support from the Council's Communications Team and utilising social media. This should help raise awareness of the work and impact of scrutiny, and hopefully encourage more public engagement and participation in scrutiny. It is anticipated that some of the impact stories within Scrutiny Dispatches will generate press releases. Scrutiny Dispatches will also form part of the Scrutiny Annual Report.

2.4 In order to ensure that people are informed more generally about the work of scrutiny a monthly e-newsletter is also being produced, via an email subscription ([www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutinyemail](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutinyemail)), and includes details of:

- Topics being looked at by Scrutiny
- Progress with current activities
- Forthcoming Panel and Working Group meetings

## 3. Integrated Assessment Implications

3.1 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.

3.1.1 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’.

3.1.2 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.

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

#### **4. Financial Implications**

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

#### **5. Legal Implications**

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

**Background papers:** None

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report

Appendix 2 – IIA Screening Form

# Scrutiny Dispatches

City & County of Swansea – 2021/2022 (No.1)

## ‘How scrutiny councillors are making a difference’

### Focussing on the importance of efficient bus services in Swansea

The Bus Services Working Group met to look at bus network coverage and levels of service, community transport provision and integration with other forms of transport. Representatives of First Cymru and Cardiff Bus were invited to participate.

(Lead: Councillor Lyndon Jones)

Scrutiny Working Groups are one-off meetings where scrutiny councillors focus on one particular item and produce a letter with comments and recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member.

The Bus Services Working Group met early in July with Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management.

The Working Group talked about the importance of getting a regular bus service to all areas in Swansea to tackle residents’ isolation and to start to shift away from car use to using public transport. People who have given up driving need to be able to access public transport otherwise they become prisoners in their own home. Funding for active travel has been used to make it easier for people to cycle or walk, but not everyone is able to do this and accessibility has to be the main point for the elderly.

The Working Group emphasised the importance of bus companies and public transport more generally contributing to carbon emission reduction.

The Working Group recommended that regular meetings are held between Members and First Cymru to raise and discuss issues and felt it was very important for the Authority and bus companies to listen to people who currently do not use buses in Swansea, as well as people who do, to help shape current and future bus services.

The importance of joining up bus and rail times so services are more co-ordinated and the introduction of cross ticketing between bus and rail were also issues emphasised by the Working Group.

A follow up meeting of the Working Group is anticipated in around six months to see what changes / improvements have been made, as it is vitally important to see positive changes taking place that will benefit Swansea residents.

## Holding Cabinet Members to account

The Scrutiny Programme Committee continues to hold cabinet members to account through regular question sessions. Acting as a 'critical friend' Scrutiny Councillors explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to specific areas of responsibility. The Committee recently met with Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism.

*(Lead: Councillor Peter Black)*

The Committee questioned the Cabinet Member on specific areas of his portfolio responsibilities, namely Tourism, Destination Management & Marketing and Business & City Promotion. The Panel heard about the value of tourism to the local economy and the impact of Covid-19 on the tourism industry.

Committee Members were informed of strategic priorities outlined in The Tourism Recovery Action Plan (TRAP), developed as part of the recovery strategy for the Tourism Sector and forms an integral part of Swansea Council's wider Economic Recovery. The vision of TRAP is to 'Create a world class tourism destination, which delivers a high-quality visitor experience in a pleasant, clean and well-maintained environment.'

The Committee also discussed the specific effect of the pandemic on the city centre and recovery plans. Committee Members discussed the large number of empty units in the Quadrant and heard that work is ongoing with the owners of the Quadrant and new lettings were due to come on board. Committee Members heard that a 'City Centre Repurposing Strategy' report is scheduled to go to Cabinet in September.

## Continuing to monitor council performance in relation to the natural environment

The Natural Environment Performance Panel has continued to examine performance indicators on issues relating to the natural environment including climate change, air quality and Ash Dieback disease affecting local trees.

*(Lead: Councillor Peter Jones)*

The Panel recently considered progress on the Council's response to Ash Dieback and future aims. Ash Dieback is a disease that affects Ash Trees and causes trees to become brittle over time with branches breaking away from the main body of the tree. If they are not dealt with, trees are at risk of collapsing, presenting an immediate danger to the surrounding area. The Council have surveyed trees on council land and categorised them in four categories with category three and four being at highest risk. Hundreds of trees that cause a risk to the public such as on highways, parks and cemeteries have been felled.

The Panel questioned Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management on what the council is doing in terms of re-planting and which trees are being re-planted. Panel Members heard that should a single ash tree be removed within a cluster or woodland, then nature is allowed to take its course and no replanting at that site would be carried out. To offset the removal of trees the Council has a replacement programme in place where trees that are planted will be of a natural native and mixed species to ensure that any other future diseases that may naturally come along, only affect individual trees within a cluster.

Panel Members queried if there is currently any engagement ongoing to inform members of the public why trees are being felled. Officers explained that extensive communication via social media, media outlets and its' website has occurred and that notice boards are used where large tree felling operations are carried out. Panel Members felt that permanent signage maybe more suitable so that information is also available post the felling operations. Panel Members put forward ideas to get members of the public engaged more and recommend that information on large felling operations should be circulated with all Councillors for awareness.

## Commencing of Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry

The Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry has commenced and is currently in the evidence gathering stage. The key question of the Inquiry is: *'What is Swansea Council doing to ensure it procures locally, ethically and greenly while being cost effective and transparent in its practices?'*

*(Lead: Councillor Chris Holley)*

The inquiry is looking at procurement in relation to the provision of council functions. It will consider what the Council does well and what can be improved in this area. This will include:

1. Legislation/policy including national, local and European influences on our procurement practice
2. Positive social/local procurement
3. Environmentally and ethical procurement practices
4. Equalities Duty
5. Systems/processes and consistency of approach
6. Joint procurement activities and working with others
7. Measuring success

Panel Members met the Council's Chief Auditor to answer a set of key questions on how procurement is audited internally. To understand what the departmental perspectives are on procurement activities the Panel have already met with the Director of the Place Directorate and are due to meet with Social Services and Education services.

The Panel recognise the importance of ensuring probity, transparency and value for money in its procurement practices. They are keen to look at how we embed social value and sustainability in what we do.



### Chair's Round up

This is my first roundup of the work of scrutiny for 2021/22, as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

### Scrutiny Work Programme

The work of scrutiny continues in accordance with the Work Programme agreed in November 2020, which will take us up to the end of this Council Term. We are making progress on scrutiny priorities. The in-depth inquiry focusing on Procurement, which originally started before the pandemic, re-convened in June 2021 and will report around March 2022. Continuing from the previous municipal year, our six Performance Panels are meeting on a regular basis and we are working through a list of one-off Working Groups. I am grateful to the conveners for their leadership in delivering scrutiny activities and councillors across all parties coming together to participate in this important work. We continue of course to ensure the work programme, and demands of scrutiny, remain flexible whilst still in the midst of the pandemic.

### Looking back at 2020/21

Our Annual Report for 2020/21 is out. We have reflected on what was a relatively short municipal year, affected by the pandemic, but it nevertheless shows a good level of scrutiny. Councillors have worked hard in both supporting and challenging the organisation, contributing to better services, policies, decisions, and a better Swansea. I presented the report to Council on 2 September.

## **Praise for our Scrutiny arrangements**

I am pleased to report that an internal audit of scrutiny was carried out earlier this year, the outcome of which is a high level of assurance and no recommendations, with no key issues / risks found. The audit looked at the role of Scrutiny, its work programme and reporting lines, the relationship between the scrutiny and audit committees, scrutiny of partnership arrangements, coverage of corporate risks in the risk register, examination and follow-up of external reviews, and compliance with the Wales Audit Office discussion paper - Six Themes to Make Scrutiny Fit for the Future. The outcome was reported to the Governance & Audit Committee in June. Credit to all involved!

## **Committee Work Plan**

As well as monitoring the delivery of the work programme, the Committee has a varied work plan looking at a broad range of service / policy matters, targeting specific issues of concern and focused on addressing any gaps in the overall scrutiny work programme. The Committee will call in Cabinet Members as and when required to account for delivery of objectives, performance, and service improvement. We have already questioned Cllr. Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, on the Council's work and his responsibilities relating to Highways & Engineering, Infrastructure Repairs & Maintenance, and Litter & Community Cleansing. Similarly, the Committee has met with Cllr. Robert Francis-Davies on Tourism, Destination Management & Marketing, and Business & City Promotion, and Cllr. Andrea Lewis on Energy Policy (including Generation, Supply & District Heating).

We invite the public and all scrutiny councillors to contribute ideas to ensure the Committee asks the right questions. We publish a summary of each scrutiny session and views of scrutiny in a letter to relevant Cabinet Members, ensuring a clear and ongoing conversation between scrutiny and the executive to have an influence.

Future Committee meetings will include looking at: Recovery & Transformation Plan Progress, Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report, Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty, Scrutiny of Public Services Board, Parking Policy, Control & Enforcement, Q & A with the Leader of the Council, Crime & Disorder, and Children & Young People's Rights Scheme Annual Progress Report.

## **Regional Education Scrutiny**

With the winding down of the Education Through Regional Working (ERW) regional school improvement consortium and establishment of a new South West Wales Education Partnership consisting of Swansea Council, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Council, new scrutiny arrangements are to be developed. Those involved in the scrutiny of ERW, which has seen an informal regional Scrutiny Councillor Group operating since 2016, have been able to feed their views into the process as the new Partnership is developed. We await the legal agreement between the Councils will confirm the terms of the partnership and governance arrangements, for details on future scrutiny.

## **Making the work of scrutiny transparent and accessible**

Scrutiny agenda packs are available on the Council's 'agenda and minutes' webpage. There you can also find scrutiny letters sent to Cabinet Members following meetings and responses. Our meetings are open to the public and anyone living or working in Swansea can suggest a topic for scrutiny. There are also opportunities for anyone to suggest questions, and submit views. To keep an eye on what is going see the links below, subscribe to our newsletter, or even follow us on Twitter.

Connect with Scrutiny:

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

Twitter: @swanseascrutiny

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

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



# Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

## Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence

Directorate: Resources

### Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

### (b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Information report to Council on the impact of Scrutiny, which highlights scrutiny activity and how scrutiny councillors are making a difference through this work.

### Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Q3** What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

Scrutiny activities described are open to the public, promoted via Council media channels, and enable all citizens to ask questions, raise issues and/or input views.

- Q4** Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

- 
- Q5** What is the potential risk of the initiative? (*Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...*)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

- 
- Q6** Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?  
 Yes  No If yes, please provide details below

- 
- Q7** What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

No impact.

## Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

### Outcome of Screening

**Q8** Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

- Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)
- Summary of involvement (Q3)
- WFG considerations (Q4)
- Any risks identified (Q5)
- Cumulative impact (Q7)

There are no impact assessment implications associated with this report.

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name:</b> Brij Madahar
<b>Job title:</b> Scrutiny Team Leader
<b>Date:</b> 20 September 2021
<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name:</b> Tracey Meredith
<b>Position:</b> Chief Legal Officer
<b>Date:</b> 20 September 2021

# Agenda Item 14.



Council – 7 October 2021

## Councillors' Questions

### Part A – Supplementaries

1 **Councillors Lesley Walton, Cyril Anderson, Wendy Lewis, Mandy Evans, Mike Lewis & Sam Pritchard**

Please can the Leader tell the council how much the rise in National insurance will cost the local authority taxpayer in employer contributions, and how much employees will pay (by pay band).

#### **Response of the Leader**

While we of course support the need for extra investment in NHS and social care the way in which the funding is being raised, falling as it does on the lowest paid rather than those most able to pay is disappointing. It will also place significant cost on the Swansea taxpayer. The initial estimate of extra cost to Swansea Council taxpayers would be £3.625m a year or, put another way, equivalent to a council tax rise of around 3% if U.K. government do not provide the required financial support.

It can only be an initial estimate at this stage because the precise detail will follow but also because the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer have “guaranteed” in their Build Back Better document that all public sector bodies will be fully recompensed for the cost. Let’s see how long lived that part of this new double lock guarantee holds come the comprehensive spending review, national budget, Barnett consequentials and local government finance settlements.

Of course as the levy is longer term to be part ring fenced for adult social care I also look forward to the second part of the double lock, seeing specifically the tens of millions of pounds of extra funding this Council can expect to receive from the levy. Assuming that bit of the lock doesn’t jam shut in practice either. Furthermore this new levy only pays for an element of the care cap and reorganising health and social care in England ,not the costs of living, accommodation or food, not the growing costs of social care provision which will fall to councils. No wonder the sector is very worried. The U.K. Government document clearly states, all the costs of prices, pay, demography et al will continue to be met by council tax rises, (in England) the social care precept, and “long term efficiencies in the care sector”, for which we can presume the same old austerity cuts!

The levy on employees is an interesting one at a headline 1.25%. Despite pledges from the prime minister of having a ‘ready to go’ plan to solve social care, the last minute microwave meal rather than oven ready nature of it means for next year it’s just done via national insurance contributions, it will take a further year for the levy to be applied.

	<p>In the meantime, until that levy is sorted. those on just over £50k a year will pay just 3.25% (2% plus 1.25% levy) NICs above that threshold!!, Those employees on below £50k, almost our entire workforce, left paying the full 1.25% increase of course on top of the current underlying 12%. Of course if you are self-employed or pay voluntary top up contributions for your state pension you don't face an increase. One crumb of comfort, the levy won't be taken from pension income, only earnings, presumably to soften the blow of the ditching of the pension triple lock, we are about to come on to.</p> <p>No wonder the TUC, the CBI, the IFS, the LGA and others are deeply troubled by this half-baked plan on the back of a pin head. It's a tax on lower paid jobs and a tax on lower paid workers. It doesn't guarantee the necessary funding for either social care or the NHS. Those who voted for Brexit will wonder why it's is needed at all, after all £350m a week or £18.2bn a year was promised to be on its way to the NHS as part of the PM's Brexit divided. Which if it were true would deliver more annually than the proposed rise in NI.</p> <p>The care sector which is in crisis already is now facing cuts to take home pay for the lowest paid carers, and increases in care sector employer costs, truly the economics not just of the madhouse, but of the workhouse.</p>
2	<p><b>Councillors Wendy Lewis, Mandy Evans, Mike Lewis, Cyril Anderson, Lesley Walton &amp; Sam Pritchard</b></p> <p>We applaud the free bus travel initiative which has allowed many families and residents the opportunity to travel in Swansea for free this summer. Can the relevant Cabinet Member confirm how many extra journeys were taken by bus and what the potential saving was to families in Swansea.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement &amp; Infrastructure Management</b></p> <p>As a result of the free bus travel scheme on 5 weekends during the summer holidays over 226,400 benefitted from free travel. This figure is in addition to the trips made by concessionary bus pass holders who already travel for free.</p> <p>The cost of an adult day ticket with First Cymru is £4.70 on bus or £4.20 for an M ticket and for under 16's is £3.10. The cost of a family day ticket is £12.50 (1 adult and 4 children or 2 adults and 3 children). The free travel scheme has therefore enabled significant travel savings to be made throughout the summer holidays.by residents and visitors.</p>
3	<p><b>Councillor Irene Mann</b></p> <p>I would be most grateful if the council re evaluated its policy regarding the booking of time slots by residents who wish to use the Councils' waste amenity sites to dispose of garden / household waste". The policy was necessary at the height of the Covid Pandemic.</p> <p>However it (the policy) has led to a significant increase in fly tipping and complaints from residents regarding the storage in gardens of waste and detritus in neighbouring properties. Some residents who now have to wait weeks for an allotted time slot to attend the amenity sites are either flytipping or storing quantities of waste materials in their gardens.</p>

This situation has created increased pressure on an already over burdened "Environmental Health Department."  
I would hope that Councillor Thomas would consider reverting back to the original pre Covid procedures and policies. Residents could attend the sites at a time convenient to themselves but would have to wear face masks and practice social distancing when on site.

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management**

For clarity, I would confirm that the only site which had a booking system introduced was the Llansamlet Recycling Centre. This site previously experienced significant queuing on peak days, which worsened significantly due to Covid restrictions. The booking system has been well received by site staff and visitors who no longer have to experience extensive waiting times to enter the site.

The large number of slots available means that there are always slots available to be booked on the same day, so there is no waiting of weeks as suggested, and there is no evidence that the booking system has created any increase in fly tipping or storage of waste in gardens.

The other 4 Recycling Centres across the Authority can be visited without the need to book, and there is no current intention to remove the highly successful booking system at Llansamlet Recycling Centre. Indeed, in the Brynmill and Uplands area, the nearby site of Derwen Fawr is receiving material from residents as normal.

**4 Councillors Lyndon Jones & Brigitte Rowlands**

Following the success of Emma Raducanu at the US open it is clear that tennis is a popular national sport and our recreational spaces should be protected for young people to keep active and enjoy sports.

Cabinet has decided to not proceed with any of the schemes submitted for the double tennis court site at Langland. This location is a key tourist destination and deserves better.

Could the Cabinet Member give a commitment to a time scale on making a decision on this site or is he waiting until after the next election.

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism**

We made it clear that we want the very best for Langland Bay and rest of Swansea's beautiful coastline – and we were delighted with the interest that developers showed in this site. We thanked them for their interest.

There were a number of innovative and interesting schemes submitted. However, we don't think that any one scheme quite matched our ambition to deliver the best solution for Langland, its residents and its visitors.

It's an important location and we want to get it right with the right mix of top-class facilities and will therefore be preparing a more detailed development brief.

Along with a detailed development brief of this Langland site we're also ensuring we have a clear strategy for other defined sites around the bay

We'll let developers know of any future opportunities and will keep everyone up to date with the progress that we make.

5	<p><b>Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones &amp; Mary Jones</b></p> <p>This year is probably the worst year for weeds growing by the roadside and pavements. Although the schedule on the website states that the work has been carried out the results have been abysmal. Will the Cabinet Member please confirm that spraying has actually taken place in all areas and has the normal mixture been used.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement &amp; Infrastructure Management</b></p> <p>I can confirm that the weed spraying has been undertaken as shown on the website (<u>Weedspraying schedule - Swansea</u>) and that the same chemicals have been used. The first spray was started on time however the heavy rainfall in May delayed the spray by around 5 weeks allowing weeds to take root. This has led to a catch up situation were the second spray was also delayed, this is now nearing completion and the third spray will follow immediately afterwards. The contractor continues to work with us and recognises the affects the delays have caused. Any areas of significant weed growth that are present two weeks after a spray has been completed should be reported and our weed spraying contractor will revisit.</p> <p>Additional resources have been approved from the recovery fund, approximately £160k 21/22 and £600k 22/23 to tackle the areas where unacceptable overgrowth has occurred. This will include purchase of specialist equipment including two sweepers with weeding attachments.</p>
6	<p><b>Councillors Cheryl Philpott, Kevin Griffiths &amp; Chris Holley</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member agree that 'one cap' does not suit all when it comes to recycling. The City and County of Swansea is home to a number of high rise properties, sheltered housing and other areas of communal properties where recycling is not accountable to one particular household. Would the cabinet member agree that there should be a high expectation of recycling within these areas but that those who do recycle should not be penalised by those who, due to physical/mental (or both) disabilities are not able to fully understand the rudiments of recycling. For example - using green bags but mixing paper and glass and tins. As these bags are considered 'contaminated' the recycling crews do not collect them and they are then left. Outside of a particular address the issue could be addressed by the recycling team but in a communal recycling area this is close to impossible. What solution would the Cabinet Member offer.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement &amp; Infrastructure Management</b></p> <p>Our Waste Service has never adopted a "one cap" approach when dealing with recycling.</p> <p>The Waste Service works hard to engage with residents using communal collection points, including liaison with resident associations where beneficial, to assist residents to recycling, and adapt collection methods where appropriate.</p> <p>Residents are also approached individually, when there is evidence found of them not complying with the recycling scheme, to seek to resolve any issues they have, and a fully pragmatic approach of support is taken where residents are genuinely unable to recycle for a variety of reasons.</p>

7	<p><b>Councillors Lyndon Jones &amp; Brigitte Rowlands</b></p> <p>As we understand Mumbles Community Council submitted a proposal to take over all of the Langland tennis Courts and refurbish them and add provision for other sports such as basketball and netball. What did the Cabinet Member not like about this scheme specifically.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p>Please refer to response to Q4</p>
8	<p><b>Councillors Mandy Evans, Mike Lewis, Cyril Anderson, Wendy Lewis, Lesley Walton, &amp; Sam Pritchard</b></p> <p>Can the Leader give an indication of the potential loss to Swansea pensioners from the decision by the U.K. Conservative government to not implement the rise from the Pension triple lock.</p> <p><b>Response of the Leader</b></p> <p>The U.K. state pension provision is one of the lowest or put another way, the meanest in Europe. It is at best shambolic and divisive, at worst it is downright unfair and rarely worth the repeated promises this government makes.</p> <p>You may be aware the headline “new” full state pension, which hardly anyone can currently actually get, is £179.60 per week,</p> <p>Almost all existing pensioners can at best get the maximum old basic state pension of £137.60 per week, and many get much less than this, especially married women as a result of repeated inbuilt unfairness in the system and bungling by the DWP over NIC stamp contributions.</p> <p>Of course even this meagre basic provision offered the promise of the government’s “guaranteed” triple lock worth the higher of earnings growth, inflation or 2.5%. Everyone now knows the Prime Minister’s pledges and guarantees are as worthless as a slogan on a Brexit battle bus.</p> <p>Inflation is currently all over the shop and due to covid, brexit and more supply side issues (including especially gas and electricity and food which will hit pensioners hardest) we are going to see prices likely rise significantly later in year , Conveniently for this government just after the all-important September inflation figures are revealed of course!.</p> <p>So let us assume the 2.5% double lock guarantee holds rather than the conveniently ditched triple lock, just as pay is above 8% growth at present.</p> <p>That maximum basic state pension will rise to £141.04 per week instead of an expected £148.61 per week, a loss of £7.57 per week or just under £400 a year per pensioner. Midyear population estimates (2020) from Stats Wales indicates there are just under 26,000 residents over 65 meaning over £10m less in the pensioner economy in Swansea as a result of this callous decision.</p>



	<p>As pensioners mourn the loss of nearly £400 a year of their uplift, the one consolation they can have is the triple lock ditched by this government is at least only around one third of the callousness shown with the government's proposed £20 a week, or over £1,000 a year cut, to the poorest residents receiving Universal Credit <u>from 1 October</u>.</p> <p>On top of this all pensioners and residents face the prospect of rising prices, food shortages, significant rises in gas and electricity this year. The triple lock should have been honoured, and the £20 per week universal credit uplift retained to help mitigate the impacts of the Covid pandemic and the Tory Brexit deal disasters.</p>
	<b>Part B – No Supplementaries</b>
9	<p><b>Councillors Mike Day, Cheryl Philpott &amp; Wendy Fitzgerald</b></p> <p>I'm sure that the ParksFest was enjoyed by all those who could attend. Can the Cabinet Member tell Council how the venues for ParksFest activities were selected. And how were the events funded.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p>This summer just under 8000 people were able to visit and enjoy one of the Council run ParksFest events, welcoming our local communities back to events, confident that they were doing so in a safe and managed environment.</p> <p>These two-day family based events included two outdoor cinema screenings on the first day, followed by children's activities including circus skills workshops, craft sessions, bouncy castles, children's rides, walkabout characters, sports activities and live music on the second day.</p> <p>The parks were selected primarily for geographical spread of activity across the City &amp; County as possible (given limited human and supply resources) and also because they met a range of other key criteria e.g. their size, topography and the availability of suitable access points etc. All events were advertised across the whole of the City and County as part of the Enjoy Swansea marketing campaign and all were welcomed.</p> <p>These new, one off events, complemented a range of other summer events and activities which have included a number of concerts in Singleton Park, Outdoor theatre in Mumbles along with the Admiral Swansea Bay 10k. The emphasis was on supporting people, businesses and communities, as we emerge from the long lockdown of the pandemic. The events were funded in part by the annual Events budget, supplemented by a small amount of sponsorship and trade and ticket income, with any defined shortfall supported by the Council's Economic Recovery Fund.</p>
10	<p><b>Councillors Mike Day, Jeff Jones &amp; Wendy Fitzgerald</b></p> <p>We know that our staff dealing with the Ash Die Back disease and planting new trees have been doing a fantastic job. But can the Cabinet Member confirm that the</p>

Council is not able to allocate enough resources to ensure regular maintenance of trees and hedgerows on Council land, and will now only be able to respond to calls involving dangerous trees.

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management**

Trees are managed by the Tree Services Unit within the Parks Service Area and hedgerows are managed under the grounds maintenance responsibilities of Parks therefore are separately managed. There is a defined works programme for each ward in relation to grounds maintenance which includes maintenance of hedgerows that are maintained depending on their species however generally done so annually and avoiding bird and bat nesting.

Our work on trees falls into the following categories:

- Urgent work: if a council-owned tree is in such a condition that it poses a very high risk to people or property, we will attend the site as an emergency, normally within 2 hours and always within 4 hours unless there is a major weather event in progress. If work cannot be completed, areas at risk will be cordoned off until resources are available. During major storms and weather events, we will respond as quickly as possible but will need to focus our priorities on keeping roads open for emergency services.
- Essential work: trees that are perceived as high risk but present no immediate risk to the public will be made safe within an adequate timescale depending on the level of perceived risk identified at the time of inspection.
- Desirable work: works on trees that are not considered urgent or essential will be classed as desirable and go into our low risk work programme. Desirable and low risk work will usually be carried out within one year where possible, unless unforeseen circumstances such as storms delay the work further.

With the resource pressures brought about by ash dieback there is a backlog in the delivery of Desirable work however this work has not ceased. Urgent and Essential works are still being delivered within appropriate timescales allowing adequate management of the authority's tree stock.

11 **Councillors Mike Day, Jeff Jones, Cheryl Philpott & Mary Jones**

We all appreciate the need to get people out of their vehicles and walking, running and cycling more in order to protect the environment. Can the Cabinet Member tell Council what calculations were done on what environmental damage would be done before the decision was taken to tarmac previously natural paths in Clyne Valley. How was the balance between benefits gained to the environment from encouraging people to use the routes more and the disbenefits caused by tarmacking the routes.

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management**

The Council commissioned an independent Ecologist to support with the delivery of the scheme. They carried out an assessment of the ecological impact and provided a watching brief for the duration of the works to ensure that the scheme was delivered without causing any environmental damage. This included an assessment of the alignment, material specification, size and type of construction plant, as well as the methodology for construction.

	<p>Significant effort was made to ensure that the extent of works did not exceed beyond the footprint of the existing path to safeguard the identified ecology. Amendments were also introduced to provide low alkali sub-base, bird boxes and additional tree planting to support long term environmental gain as part of the councils ongoing commitment to provide biodiversity enhancement when delivering infrastructure.</p> <p>The majority of the route was an existing footpath which has now been resurfaced to facilitate cycle usage and support greater inclusivity for the wider community. A number of which have already contacted the authority and welcomed the fact that they are now able to take advantage of the space and have acknowledged the effort taken to ensure that the works did not cause any environmental harm to the surrounding area.</p> <p>Some of the route was previously tarmacked, but the new and improved route provides the benefit of a uniform surface, but with a surface dressing that reflects the character of the former track. Much of the work was done with small sized plant to avoid impact to the mature trees and adjacent ecology to ensure that the route not only serves as a strategic connection to the wider active travel network, but also provides infrastructure that is inclusive to all users and enables them to continue to enjoy the character of the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The ultimate aim of the Active Travel programme is to encourage healthy and sustainable alternative modes of travel for the benefits afforded to the community and local environment. It is therefore disputed that the works were developed at the compromise of the local environment and it is proposed that the new infrastructure will ultimately offer environmental benefit.</p>
12	<p><b>Councillors Jeff Jones, Chris Holley &amp; Peter Black</b></p> <p>Can the Leader/ Cabinet Member tell Council when the iconic Guildhall clock will be operational.</p> <p><b>Response of the Leader</b></p> <p>A contractor has been appointed however the repairs required are of a very intricate/specialist nature potentially requiring recasting some of the original mechanism. We remain hopeful of progress over the next few weeks.</p>
13	<p><b>Councillors Mary Jones, Lynda James &amp; Jeff Jones</b></p> <p>Driving along Oystermouth Road during the summer months which is peak season we have noticed that a large number of the Guest Houses have been shut. Can the Cabinet Member shed any light on this.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p>We are not aware of hotels/ b&amp;bs being closed to business. We are aware that several have diversified their means of income during covid, when restrictions on travel and hospitality were high, by supporting temporary housing options for the homeless and vulnerable, but no concerns have been raised via our partners, visitors or other tourism bodies in recent times.</p>

	<p>We will monitor the situation as part of our bed stock monitoring, which forms part of the STEAM assessment of the volume and value of tourism and which understanding available bed stock is a vital element of.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p><b>Councillors Jeff Jones, Mary Jones &amp; Kevin Griffiths</b>  Can the Cabinet Member tell Council if litter bins are ever cleaned in addition to them being emptied.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement &amp; Infrastructure Management</b></p> <p>Cleansing Operatives who empty bins are expected to carry out clearance of all litter and waste in the vicinity of any bin however historically did not clean the bin itself due to resources and time constraints. The Cleansing service area received additional resources this year to tackle a number of non-routine works that includes the deep cleaning and maintenance of bins. With a stock of circa 2000 bins within the authority this work will take some time however these deep cleans have commenced and are ongoing.</p>

# Agenda Item 15.



**Council – 7 October 2021**

## **Notice of Motion – Fireworks.**

**Notice of Motion from Councillors L V Walton, D H Hopkins, R C Stewart, A S Lewis, M C Child, R Francis-Davies, L S Gibbard, E J King, A Pugh, R V Smith, A H Stevens & M Thomas**

Fireworks are used by people throughout the year, to mark different events. Whilst they can bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant anxiety and fear for some individuals and also animals, both pets and livestock.

We therefore call on Swansea City & County Council to:

1. Request that all organised Public Displays within the Local Authorities Boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take necessary precautions for their animals and vulnerable peoples.
2. Actively promote a Public Awareness Campaign about the impact of fireworks on animals and vulnerable people, detailing existing regulations, and including precautions that can be put in place to mitigate the risks.
3. Encourage Local Suppliers of Fireworks to only Stock a “quieter version “of fireworks than used for Public Displays.
4. Write to both UK and Welsh Governments, urging them to review and consider the existing legislation and to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90 dB that can be sold to the members of the public for private use.