



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Scrutiny Programme Committee

**At:** Remotely via Microsoft Teams

**On:** Tuesday, 17 August 2021

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Chair:** Councillor Peter Black CBE

#### Membership:

Councillors: C Anderson, E W Fitzgerald, D W Helliwell, T J Hennegan, P K Jones, H Lawson, W G Lewis, C E Lloyd, S Pritchard, G J Tanner, W G Thomas and T M White

Statutory Co-opted Members: D Anderson-Thomas and A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, S M Jones, L R Jones and J W Jones

**Watch Online:** <https://bit.ly/3znl4o2>

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**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.

### Agenda

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<b>2 Disclosures of Personal &amp; Prejudicial Interest.</b> <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a>	
<b>3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.</b>	
<b>4 Minutes.</b> To approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 5
<b>5 Public Question Time.</b> 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.	

<b>6</b>	<b>Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism (Councillor Robert Francis-Davies).</b>	<b>6 - 64</b>
5	Tourism, Destination Management & Marketing.	
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<b>7</b>	<b>Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Service Improvement &amp; Finance (Councillor Chris Holley, Convener).</b>	<b>65 - 70</b>
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	Discussion on:	
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	b) Opportunities for Pre-Decision Scrutiny.	
	c) Progress with Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.	
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<b>12</b>	<b>Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.</b>	<b>152</b>

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 14 September 2021 at 4.00 pm



**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Tuesday, 10 August 2021**

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**Contact: Democratic Services - Tel (01792) 636923**

# Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 13 July 2021 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided for Minute No's 15 – 17 and 20-25  
Councillor Peter Jones (elected Chair Pro Tem) presided for Minute No. 19

**Councillor(s)**  
E W Fitzgerald  
H Lawson  
G J Tanner

**Councillor(s)**  
D W Helliwell  
W G Lewis  
W G Thomas

**Councillor(s)**  
P K Jones  
S Pritchard  
T M White

### **Statutory Co-opted Member(s)**

D Anderson-Thomas      A Roberts

### **Councillor Co-opted Member(s)**

P R Hood-Williams      L R Jones  
S M Jones      J W Jones

### **Also Present**

Councillor Mark Thomas      Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management

### **Officer(s)**

Bob Fenwick	Group Leader Highways Maintenance
Kate Jones	Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Martin Nicholls	Director of Place
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Mark Thomas	Group Leader Traffic & Highway Network Management

### **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): C E Lloyd  
Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley

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## **15 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interest was declared:

Councillor Peter Black – Minute No. 19 – Councillor Peter Black declared a personal and prejudicial interest and withdrew from the meeting for the item.

**16 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.**

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

**17 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on the 15 June 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**18 Election of Chair Pro-Tem for Item 5 (Minute No. 19)**

**Resolved** that Councillor Peter Jones be elected Chair Pro-Tem for Agenda item 5 (Minute Number 19).

**Councillor P K Jones (Chair Pro-Tem) presided**

**19 Public Question Time.**

Questions had been received from two members of the public, who were present to ask their questions, which related to agenda item six (minute no. 20).

Ms S Morgan, on behalf of residents of Green Close made a request to reinstate a crossing that had been taken away from the end of the road due to the ongoing construction of the cycle path on Mayals road. It was believed that safety and accessibility would be seriously compromised if a replacement is not put in place.

Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure, responded It was confirmed that a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit would be carried out following completion of the works and should any problems be identified further action would be considered.

Mr H Francis asked the following questions around the service provided by the Highways Department.

1. Figures published by the Council show that it has failed to achieve its own housing target in each of the last 10 years by a cumulative margin of approximately fifty per cent; Contractors and Developers believe that delays in highways is a significant contributor to this failure. To what extent do you think that the Highways Department can improve its service to address this shortcoming?
2. Do you think that the Highways department has sufficient resources available to discharge its statutory functions as well as support capital works such as Council regeneration projects?
3. Is there scope for further outsourcing of technical services to external consultants by Highways to help improve its service?

Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure, responded. It was acknowledged that on some developments specific



issues could arise, however it was not agreed that there was an overall problem with the service provided by the Highways Department and given the circumstances of the pandemic it was felt that the Department had coped extremely well. There was a discussion on the issue of resources, both the ability to fill qualified posts as well as staffing for changeable levels of work. It was confirmed that external resources (including outsourcing work) could and had been used where it was felt necessary.

**Councillor P M Black (Chair) presided**

**20 Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities.**

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, supported by the Group Leader Highways Maintenance and the Group Leader Traffic & Highway Network Management, presented a report on Highways and Engineering, Infrastructure and Maintenance.

A verbal address was provided further to the written report circulated specifically highlighting the following:

- What work was covered by the Highway Maintenance Section and what they were responsible for
- Maintenance regimes and the maintenance budget – the 2021/22 budget for maintenance was £3.9 Million. An additional £1.4 Million had been allocated for the last 4 years following the commissioning report. Further funding had also been received from the Welsh Government.
- The current maintenance programme was for the period 2020-2025 – it was hoped that the programme would be completed 1 year ahead of schedule in 2024
- A Drainage Review had been carried out in 2020/21 – impact of increased heavy rainfall on the roads and highways infrastructure
- Work during the Pandemic – the service remained operational throughout and changes were made to the programme in order to continue work whilst also keeping both staff and the public safe e.g. avoidance of residential streets and bring forward work away from properties such as Loughor Bridge when traffic count was at a record low
- More resurfacing works had been carried out than in the previous year
- Future challenges and opportunities – flooding and ward boundary changes
- Risks

Questions and Discussions focussed on the following: -

- Sufficient / correct allocation of resources given there was a backlog of £70 Million of works
- Prioritisation of works
- Clarification of current figures for the backlog of works to make clear comparisons
- Challenges of climate change – increased flooding, effect of increasing temperatures on tarmac, impact of wetter / colder winters on highway surfaces as well as air pollution

- Measures to assist with the challenges of climate change – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), Soakaways and planted areas
- Communication / co-ordination with utility companies on street works – increased signage and clarity on who was carrying out the works
- Inspection of street works following the completion of works – noted that a sample were tested for quality and compliance
- Highway maintenance, e.g. Issue raised following replacement of raised roundabouts with flat roundabouts – noted issues around cost of maintenance
- Trees overhanging highways / leaves falling into drains – limited powers available to enforce unless there was an obstruction to the highway
- Cyclist speeding on shared use paths
- Impact of 20 miles per hour (mph) speed limit being considered by the Welsh Government for residential areas – funding, signage and enforcement
- Gulley teams and available Gulley machines – noted that regular cleansing was only interrupted for reactive flooding
- Blocking of carrier drains – being looked at by the Investigation Team

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Members and Officers.

**Resolved** that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

**21 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Education (Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener)**

Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener, presented the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel Update.

Further to the written report provided, he specifically highlighted three key areas of focus:

1. Schools sharing best practice
2. Support for children on free school meals
3. Readiness for the City Deal e.g. Swansea Skills Partnership

The Item on Harassment had been deferred and would be looked at in September, when more information was available.

In respect of the Education otherwise than at School (EOTAS) provision, the Panel had found that during the pandemic some children and young people were struggling to engage at school with their peers. The importance of rebuilding the relationship between pupils and schools, and not become excluded was remarked upon.

Thank Chair thanked Councillor Lyndon Jones for the update.

**Resolved** that the update be noted.

## **22 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.**

The Chair presented a report on the Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

The Committee noted the appointment of Performance Panel Conveners by respective Panels for the 2021/22 municipal year so far as follows:

- Child & Family Services - Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams re-appointed
- Adult Services - Councillor Susan Jones re-appointed
- Service Improvement & Finance – Councillor Chris Holley re-appointed
- Education – Councillor Lyndon Jones re-appointed
- Natural Environment – Councillor Peter Jones re-appointed
- Development & Regeneration – Councillor Jeff Jones re-appointed

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) Councillor Mike Durke be removed from the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel

## **23 Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Chair presented a report on Scrutiny Work Programme.

He highlighted that the Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry had now re-commenced. It had reviewed and agreed terms of reference and key question for the inquiry. The Panel was now evidence gathering.

The next Scrutiny Programme Committee was scheduled for 17 August 2021. The main item scheduled was a discussion on the Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities listed below with the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism:

- Tourism, Destination Management and Marketing
- Business and City promotion

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

## **24 Scrutiny Letters.**

The Chair presented a report on 'Scrutiny Letters' for information.

**Resolved** that the scrutiny letters log be noted.

## **25 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.**

The dates and times of the upcoming Panel / Working Group meeting were **noted**.

The meeting ended at 5.25 pm

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 6



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

<b>Purpose:</b>	To enable the Committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to specific areas of responsibility.
<b>Content:</b>	<p>The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:</p> <p>a) Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</p> <p>The specific areas of responsibility being discussed are:</p> <p>a) Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing b) Business &amp; City Promotion</p>
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question the Cabinet Member on the specific portfolio responsibilities</li><li>• Make comments and recommendations as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the Council's Cabinet to account. The Cabinet (also known as the Executive) is made up of the Leader and other councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific portfolio responsibilities.

1.2 There are 10 Cabinet portfolios:

	<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
1	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader of the Council)	Cllr Rob Stewart
2	Delivery & Operations (Joint Deputy Leader)	Cllr David Hopkins
3	Climate Change & Service Transformation (Joint Deputy Leader)	Cllr Andrea Lewis
4	Adult Social Care & Community Health Services	Cllr Mark Child
5	Business Improvement & Performance	Cllr Andrew Stevens
6	Children Services	Cllr Elliott King
7	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	Cllr Robert Smith
8	Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management	Cllr Mark Thomas
9	Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
10	Supporting Communities	Cllr Alyson Pugh Cllr Louise Gibbard

NOTE:

- All Cabinet Members have responsibility for Poverty Reduction
- Supporting Communities Portfolios operate under a job share system with two named Councillors sharing the responsibility, rotated on a regular basis; however, formally they remain as one cabinet portfolio.
- Detailed Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility listing is **attached** to this report.

1.3 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the Cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.

1.4 The Committee has moved away from general Cabinet Member Question Sessions, looking at overall responsibilities, in favour of focusing on specific areas of interest / concern, taking into account any gaps in the overall scrutiny work programme and ensuring good coverage of scrutiny across all cabinet portfolios.

1.5 The Committee should be mindful to avoid duplication of any issue(s) which are being examined elsewhere in the scrutiny work programme e.g. within Performance Panels.

## 2. Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

- 2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:
- a) Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
- 2.2 The Cabinet portfolio responsibilities that the Committee will focus on are:
- a) Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing
  - b) Business & City Promotion
- 2.3 The Cabinet Member, will attend, along with lead officers who can assist the Committee, to report on aims / objectives, plans, and the delivery of work related to these portfolio objectives. Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee.
- 2.4 The Cabinet Member has provided a report on the portfolio responsibilities under discussion to help the Committee focus the discussion and questions - see **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2**.
- 2.5.1 The session also provides opportunity for the Committee to follow up on action following recommendations made by the Tourism Scrutiny Working Group, convened by Councillor Peter Jones. The Working Group, which focused on the marketing and development of tourism in Swansea, including eco/sustainable tourism, reported to Cabinet and received Cabinet response in November 2019. Of the 12 recommendations considered by Cabinet: 8 were agreed, 1 agreed in part, and 3 were not agreed. As a result of this scrutiny the Cabinet response indicated the action(s) that would be taken, including the following:
- Considering the possibility of a Gower off-road cycle route that would develop and promote a network of bridleways as a way of enjoying the countryside by bike and enable visitors to explore large areas of Gower AONB by bicycle, and investigate grant funding to deliver this.
  - Giving consideration to making more use of volunteers to help maintain our environmental assets such as footpaths, steps etc.
  - Improvement to signage, especially in Gower, subject to findings of the 2019 visitor and trade surveys, and budget constraints.
  - Work to identify future grant funding possibilities, post-Brexit, including exploration of potential partnership funding models for future projects.
  - Looking at good practice elsewhere regarding the marketing of accommodation in Swansea.

- Ensuring a ‘whole council’ approach to supporting big events in Swansea, e.g. Refuse and Street Cleansing working effectively with the Tourism team to ensure events run smoothly and everything is cleaned up afterwards.
- More use of social media for advertising, and marketing videos / digital content to show more of what people can do and see if they visit Swansea. Councillors were told that new videos are already planned for 2020 ‘Year of the Great Outdoors’.
- Facilitating all Councillors to help promote Swansea as a tourist destination e.g. ensuring awareness of the various platforms / digital channels used by the Council that they can follow and share more widely.

2.5.2 The Committee last met with Councillor Francis-Davies in March 2020, which included discussion on the Working Group recommendations. Amongst the issues picked up by the Committee then, were around:

- The maintenance and cleanliness of key tourist destinations such as the City Centre and Marina, Mumbles, Langland, Caswell, parks etc. – whilst budgets were stretched the Committee felt it was important to focus on the small number of key sites to raise standards, including the basics like litter bins, toilets, and fencing. The Cabinet Member had expressed frustration at the lack of funding to be able to do more to improve sites. He highlighted the fact that Swansea has many sites within its tourism offer and it was difficult to keep on top of maintenance in time of austerity, when other priorities took precedent.
- Eco-tourism and possibility of extending cycle ways throughout Gower – the Cabinet Member had committed to investigating grant funding to see how we can boost opportunities for people to enjoy the area by bike, making use of bridleways etc. He pointed out that the provision of cycle ways was a matter for the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management to consider, however would raise this with Cllr Mark Thomas to see what can be done.
- The Committee praised the improvements to walkway between Limeslade and Langland, a very popular route, making it more accessible.

2.5.3 The Cabinet Member’s report, which is appended, includes an update on delivery of the action plan produced in response to the Tourism Scrutiny Working Group.

### **3. Approach to Questions**

3.1 The session should provide Committee members with a greater understanding of what these specific responsibilities entail, resources, priorities / objectives / commitments, key activities / headlines / achievements, performance measures, and overall assessment of service health (including, for example, how we compare with others, challenges / risks) and improvement / impact / difference made. This

will give the Committee the chance to ask focused questions and provide challenge on actions and performance in relation to these areas of responsibility, as well as future thinking.

3.2 In terms of themes that cut across all cabinet portfolios, the Committee can ask Cabinet Members about:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act – impact on their work / decisions e.g. what they are doing to achieve the well-being goals and ways of working, e.g. focus on long-term thinking, collaboration / involvement etc (including regional / collaborative working, service user / public engagement)
- Links to Poverty Reduction
- Reducing inequalities, including socio-economic disadvantage
- Links to the Council's Recovery and Transformation Plan
- Links to the Public Services Board (PSB)

3.3 The Committee has also invited members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions that the Committee should ask. It is up to the Committee how to deal with any suggested questions within the session.

3.4 Following each session the Chair will write to Cabinet Members in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for them to consider.

3.5 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during the session then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

3.6 The Committee should note that Councillor Robert Francis-Davies has already been engaged in scrutiny, or is planned, of the following:

- Ongoing Scrutiny of various Development & Regeneration matters including Swansea Central (Arena etc.) (Development & Regeneration Performance Panel)
- Commercial Opportunities in Rural Areas (Development & Regeneration Performance Panel)
- Welsh Public Library Standards – Annual Performance Report (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
- Healthy City (planned Working Group)

#### **4. Next Session**

4.1 The next scheduled Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities, on 14 September, is with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Service Transformation, Councillor Andrea Lewis, and Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, Councillor Mark Thomas.



4.2 Councillor Andrea Lewis has been asked to specifically report on:

- Energy Policy (inc. Generation, Supply & District Heating)

4.3 Councillor Mark Thomas has been asked to specifically report on:

- Litter & Community Cleansing

## **5. Legal Implications**

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

## **6. Financial Implications**

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

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Cabinet Member Report – Tourism

Appendix 2: Cabinet Member Report – Business & City Promotion

Appendix 3: Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility Listing



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism

### Scrutiny Programme Committee - 17 August 2021

## Tourism

<b>Purpose:</b>	To brief/update the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Content:</b>	An overview of the work of the Tourism and Marketing Team and its performance during the pandemic and how it is supporting the sector as part of the Council's Economic Plan. The Report (via Appendix A) also updates the Action Plan that was developed from a previous Tourism Scrutiny Working Group.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Consider the information provided and to forward views to the Cabinet Member via a letter from the Chair.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Frances Jenkins, Strategic Manager - Tourism, Marketing & Events / Steve Hopkins, Tourism & Marketing Manager
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith

### 1. Background

The scrutiny report on the work of the tourism team was submitted to Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019 after the Scrutiny Working Group completed a detailed inquiry.

The recommendations from the action plan have been updated in Appendix A - Scrutiny Working Group on Tourism – Cabinet Member Response and Action Plan (November 2019, revisited July 2021).

This report is to allow for greater discussion of the work of the team during the pandemic and covers the strategic aims and actions for tourism's contribution towards the Council's Economic Recovery Plan as agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Investment Regeneration and Tourism.

The report will demonstrate how the team have (both during the pandemic and into recovery):

- Supported the private sector with advice and information.
- Continued to remain in touch with our customers with targeted communications.
- Worked with Visit Wales and partners throughout, including researching the market. and marketing behaviours in readiness for reopening.

The main focus of the report was shared with our tourism stakeholders as part of our online tourism stakeholder event in May 2021, where the Cabinet Member also highlighted some of the wider business support interventions the tourism sector has received from across the Place Directorate and as part of the Council’s Economic Recovery Plan.

**2. Role of the Tourism Team**

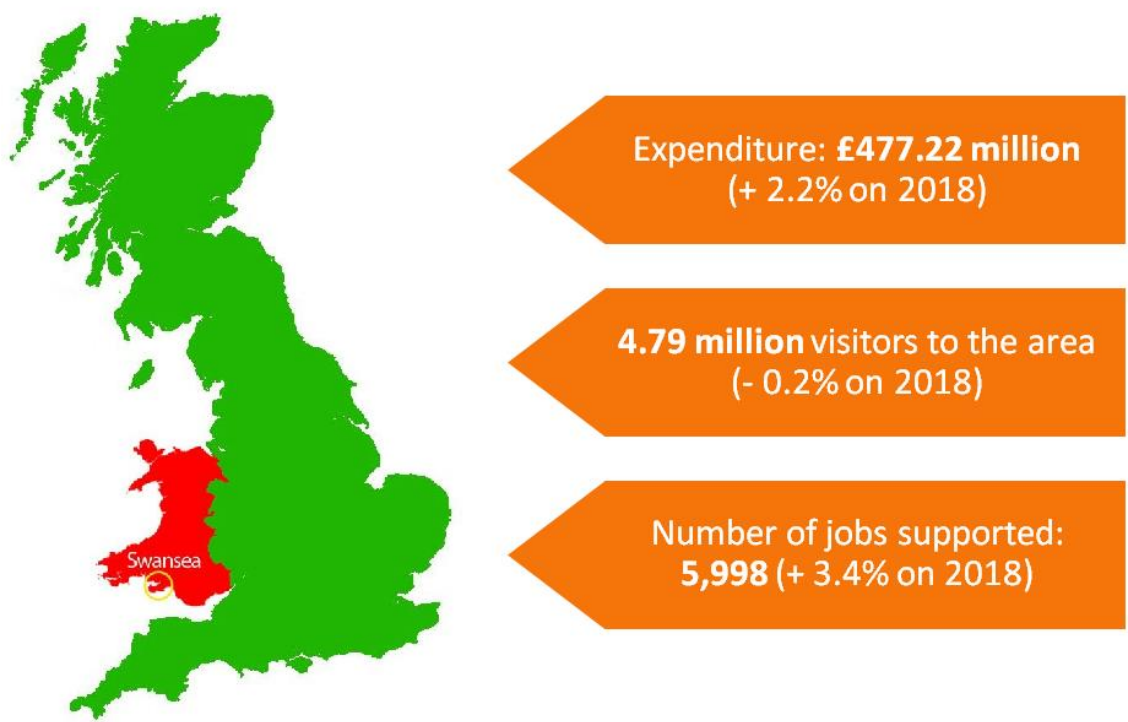
The tourism team, part of Cultural Services, within the Place Directorate, is responsible for marketing Swansea Bay, Mumbles and Gower as a visitor destination, primarily to the key UK markets of the South West of England, Midlands, North West of England and the M4 corridor.

In addition, the in-Wales market continues to grow, in part due to the pandemic (e.g. national lockdowns) and marketing to Welsh audiences has become an integral part of the campaigns (however, some of the activity featured in this report will only have been published outside of Wales and may not have been seen by members of this Committee).

The team actively support sustainable destination development through the Council’s Destination Management Plan (DMP), in partnership with Visit Wales/Welsh Government and Tourism Swansea Bay, the local tourism association. This has been increasingly important and has proved a successful vehicle for collaborating and consulting with the industry groups represented in the steering group, which the cabinet member chairs.

**3. The value of Tourism to the Local Economy**

Value of Tourism to the Local Economy (2019)



**Fig 1:** 2019 data highlighting the value of tourism to Swansea (Swansea, Mumbles and Gower) in terms of expenditure, number of visitors and number of jobs supported

#### **4. The Impact of Covid-19 on the Tourism Industry**

The tourism, leisure and hospitality sector was one of the worst affected sectors of the economy and included businesses associated with accommodation, attractions, food & drink and events.

Key impacts on the industry included:

- UK government intervention began in March 2020 – at the very start of the tourism season.
- The first sector to close and the last one to re-open (at the time of writing this report, the Events sector in Wales is still to properly re-open).
- Travel restrictions and lockdowns continued throughout 2020 and into the first eight months of 2021 (to date).
- The impacts of the pandemic resulted in staff redundancies, cancellations and refunds to customers.
- Phased re-opening and changing restrictions brought additional challenges and extra costs for instigating Covid protocols.
- Recruitment challenges on re-opening continue to be an issue.

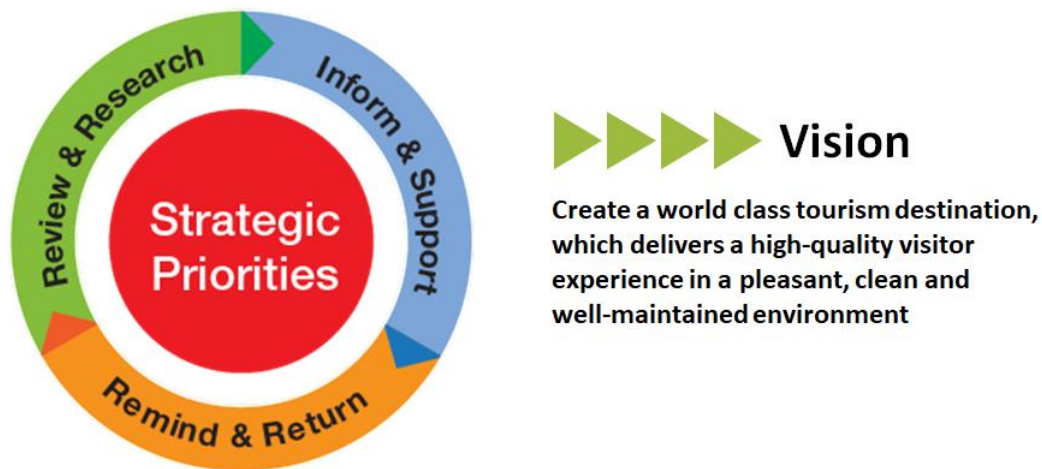
#### **5. Integration of tourism priorities into the Economic Recovery Plan for Swansea**

The Tourism Recovery Action Plan (TRAP) was developed as part of the recovery strategy for the sector and forms an integral part of Swansea Council's wider Economic Recovery Plan (approved 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021). Its development was also timely for the following reasons:

- The Council's second Destination Management Plan (2017-2020) had expired.
- Covid-19 presented an opportunity to revisit strategic priorities for recovery, testing how the market was adapting and how our marketing was evolving to anticipate this new marketplace.
- A medium-term interim plan was developed, focussing on 2021/22, to support the industry during re-opening and into a post-Covid recovery.

It was essential that we linked our support for the sector with the wider Economic Recovery Plan, further raising the profile of the sector and its contribution towards the local economy. The Tourism Recovery Plan has since been approved and assimilated into the Council's over-arching Economic Recovery Plan for Swansea.

## Tourism Recovery Action Plan



**Fig 2:** Graphic demonstrating the main focus of the Tourism Recovery Action Plan

The development of the Tourism Recovery Action Plan refocussed the immediate priorities of the proposed new Destination Management Plan. Urgent interim measures were required to accommodate the unusual circumstances caused by the pandemic.

This interim plan has three Strategic Priorities aimed at supporting the recovery of the local economy in 2021/22 as outlined below.

### **6. Strategic Priority 1 - Review and Research**

#### **Review: Primary areas of research undertaken**

- To maintain up-to-date information about our visitors.
- Improve market intelligence and identify new trends.
- Undertake bedstock, occupancy and trade surveys.
- Monitor performance and review activity as appropriate.

#### **Research: Current and planned activity – to inform recovery**

- To continue to assess the impact of the tourism industry on the local economy via the STEAM economic model. Assessing the data in a regional and national context. By adding Airbnb bedstock data to this model, we have improved the accuracy of the STEAM input data.
- To continue to track the trend of business recovery by monitoring the Visit Wales and Visit Britain Tourism Business Barometer.
- To continue to track consumer sentiment and intent via the COVID-19 UK Tourism Consumer Tracker Survey.

- Continue to monitor the activity of our competitors, providing useful intelligence to shape campaign plans and inform their implementation.
- A Bedstock Survey has been completed and the final report is being prepared. A new database is being developed to make it easier to interrogate the data and to maintain its accuracy.
- The planned Trade Survey has been postponed partly due to the businesses being fully engaged in re-opening and managing their demand. In addition, a number of other tourism trade surveys have been ongoing and we anticipated a poor response due to 'survey fatigue'. This has been postponed to early in 2022.
- To continue to monitor the performance of all marketing activity to determine the most cost effective way to maximise customer engagement and therefore bookings for our tourism business partners.

### **7. Strategic Priority 2 - Inform and Support**

#### **Inform: Specialised business support during the pandemic**

- Hundreds of business enquiries have been dealt with since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Businesses have received support in accessing grants from both the Council and Visit Wales/Welsh Government.
- Assistance has been given to businesses in interpreting the Welsh Government guidelines and legal requirements (as applied to a specific business operation or sector).
- A weekly online tourism trade newsletter supplying the latest information on grants, funding, changes to the restrictions and forthcoming marketing opportunities has received over 86,000 page views and been praised by the tourism business community for its invaluable help during the ongoing health crisis.

#### **Inform: Current and planned activity – business support**

- Local tourism businesses continue to require the support outlined above, as re-opening safely with adherence to Welsh Government guidance presents a new set of challenges.
- As does the issue of recruitment, as many tourism and hospitality vacancies remain unfilled. The weekly newsletter gives operators another platform to share their vacancies, which are also promoted on the Visit Swansea Bay Partners Facebook page.
- A high level of engagement will continue to be maintained with local tourism operators, to provide business support on a wide range of topics. In addition to assistance relating to the pandemic, support is also offered in relation to road signage, planning, environmental health issues, transport and more – by facilitating the operator to access the relevant Council or Welsh Government department to assist them.



**Fig 3:** Examples of Partner communications – weekly newsletter and Facebook

### **Support: Marketing support during the pandemic**

- Visit Swansea Bay Partner Packages give local operators a cost-effective way of marketing their business to the UK holiday and short-break market. Marketing opportunities are specifically designed to raise the profile of a tourism business (as a Visit Swansea Bay Partner) and direct customers to their own dedicated web page on [visitswanseabay.com](http://visitswanseabay.com).
- Visit Swansea Bay Partner Package costs were refunded back to businesses when the pandemic closed down tourism and hospitality in March 2020. This was part of the Council's #HereForSwansea package of support for the local economy.
- Targeted marketing continued, flexing with the restrictions to maximise windows of opportunity for businesses as they occurred.
- The [visitswanseabay.com](http://visitswanseabay.com) website was also developed to include the wider industry – to extend the types of businesses promoted as part of the campaigns, e.g. local producers.
- Social media campaigns were implemented to maintain customer engagement with the Swansea Bay brand and with the destination, whilst following the Welsh Government guidelines and restrictions in relation to travel and public safety.





Fig 4: Examples of [visitswanseabay.com](https://visitswanseabay.com) web developments designed to raise the profile of partners during 2020

Page	Total Page Likes	From last week	Posts This Week	Engagement This Week
1  I love Cornwall	303.5K	▲100%	2	883
YOU 2  Visit Swansea Bay, Mum...	81.8K	▲100%	14	9.2K
Keep up with the Pages you watch. <a href="#">Get More Likes</a>				
3  Visit Bristol	51.1K	▲100%	11	10.7K
4  Visit Devon	31.7K	▲100%	11	1.8K
5  Hastings, East Sussex	27.5K	▲100%	0	29.8K
6  Visit Cardiff / Croeso Ca...	26.4K	▲100%	10	676
7  Visit Pembrokeshire	21.9K	▲100%	12	5.9K
8  Visit Brecon Beacons	21.5K	▲100%	1	189
9  Visit Isles of Scilly	20.5K	▲100%	5	5.9K
10  Darganfod Sir Gâr - Disc...	16.2K	▲100%	17	950

Fig 5: Example of a Facebook 'leaderboard', which shows Swansea Bay's performance (second in the list above) in terms of 'likes' and engagement in relation to other leading coastal and Welsh destinations



- We have contributed towards benchmarking some key performance indicators against other destinations which demonstrate similar geographic and economic characteristics in terms of location, population and type. The above table (Fig. 5) demonstrates some of those characteristics, including how other Welsh destinations are performing.

**Support: Current and planned activity – marketing support**

- As part of the Tourism Recovery Plan (part of the Council’s wider Economic Recovery Plan) the Visit Swansea Bay Partner Package remains free at entry level. The aim is to encourage as many businesses to participate as possible and benefit from the marketing support as tourism and hospitality resumes.
- Additional paid-for opportunities are also available to enhance the visibility of businesses as tourism and hospitality begin to fully re-open. This gives the tourism team a new income stream to develop, as partners gain confidence and begin to commit budget to marketing their business.
- Website developments continue, to future-proof the online offer, raising the profile of local producers and online sales across the spectrum of tourism businesses.

**8. Strategic Priority 3 - Remind and Return**

**Remind: Engaging with our customers during the pandemic**

- As the first lockdown began in March 2020, all campaign activity was paused and urgently reassessed. A new campaign plan was developed which maximised the existing popularity of our social media platforms to continue to engage with our online audience throughout the pandemic.
- The new campaign needed to constantly adapt to the changing restrictions and their national boundaries, often having to promote a different message to different areas of the UK (with national, regional and local lockdowns). (More detail on the campaign follows below, with examples of content in Fig. 7 on p11)
- The aim was to keep our existing customers engaged with uplifting imagery and appropriate, responsible messaging; whilst also reaching a new audience who may not have considered Swansea Bay in the past – but who may be looking for a new staycation destination in the UK once travel restrictions were lifted.
- As the first lockdown began in March, consumer messaging immediately changed to support the UK and Welsh Government ‘#StayHome’ message. In synergy with ‘Visit Wales. Later’, all customer communications were seeded with ‘Visit Swansea Bay. Later.’
- In local lockdowns residents were encouraged to support local businesses with online sales, click & collect and take-away purchases, using the caption #LoveBeingLocal.
- UK and Welsh Government initiatives such as the ‘We’re Good to Go’ Covid safe accreditation scheme were promoted and partners were encouraged to participate and receive recognition of their accreditation on [visitswanseabay.com](https://visitswanseabay.com). The ‘Eat Out

to Help Out’ scheme was similarly supported with social media campaigns and website banners to encourage customer support.

- As restrictions eased customers were asked ‘[What’s on your Wishlist](#)’ and encouraged to share what they were missing most about Swansea Bay. This campaign recommended that customers plan their visit in advance of travel.
- Once travel restrictions into Wales were lifted, a positive ‘Welcome Back’ campaign demonstrated to customers how much our businesses were looking forward to welcoming them back. While the ‘Plan-Book-Travel’ message encouraged visitors to make all their bookings prior to travelling to avoid disappointment (due to social distancing and reduced capacity).
- Underlying all the messaging, once restrictions began to ease, was to ‘Visit Swansea Bay. Responsibly.’ which superseded the visit ‘Later’ message. This has continued into 2021 and is complementary to Visit Wales’ ‘Addo’ (‘Promise’) campaign which encourages safe, respectful and sustainable travel.
- All campaign activity was online and therefore, it was imperative to keep the content engaging and fresh. Existing video footage was used to create new videos (see Fig. 6 and links to videos on p10) and when restrictions allowed, new photography was commissioned that showed businesses and customers complying with restrictions.
- Social media was key and played a significant role in keeping our existing customers interested in the destination, whilst introducing new customers to Swansea Bay.
- The destination website, [visitswanseabay.com](http://visitswanseabay.com), continually evolved to keep pace with the changes in messaging, with new content and new website listings to bring the tourism businesses to the forefront of all marketing activity. For example, ‘Gift Ideas’, ‘takeaway’ listings, ‘outdoor eating’ and ‘outdoor activities’; complementing the restrictions at the time and highlighting the fact that we have plenty of outdoor spaces and fresh air.

Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our audience grew to just under <b>80k</b></li> <li>• An increase of over <b>+2,705</b> during the pandemic (in 2020) (2019 saw an increase of +874)</li> <li>• Audience engagement improved from 2.8% (2019) to <b>3.6%</b>, which is considered ‘excellent’ by industry standards (+2% is considered ‘good’ performance).</li> </ul>
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Followers increased by +433 to over <b>16.5k</b></li> <li>• Audience engagement rose from 2.4% to <b>2.9%</b></li> </ul>
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Followers increased from 874 (in 2019) to <b>4,754</b></li> <li>• Audience engagement rose <b>from 0.4% to 3.8%</b></li> </ul>
Campaign video views 4 x videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of <b>970,989</b> views on YouTube and Facebook</li> <li>• <b>87.5%</b> (average) of each video viewed (before the viewer navigates away to other content)</li> <li>• A total of <b>219,615</b> reactions, shares and comments</li> </ul>

Table 2: <a href="https://visitswanseabay.com">visitswanseabay.com</a> performance during the pandemic (2020)	
Full year results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.4 million</b> page views – down 18.2% on 2019</li> <li>• Unique visitors to the website – down 22% on 2019</li> <li>• This included extended periods of UK, national and local lockdowns when the public were required to stay home or travel was restricted, i.e. 23 March to 6 July and 27 September to end December (in 2020).</li> </ul>
Summer results (self-contained accommodation could re-open from 11 <sup>th</sup> July 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page views increased by <b>26%</b> on same period in 2019</li> <li>• And unique visitors increased by <b>12.5%</b></li> <li>• Partner Food &amp; Drink webpages saw an increase of <b>92%</b> on 2019</li> <li>• Blog page views increased by <b>48%</b></li> <li>• #LoveBeingLocal and Enjoy campaigns saw local audiences rising. Including Swansea <b>88%</b> and Cardiff <b>86%</b></li> </ul>

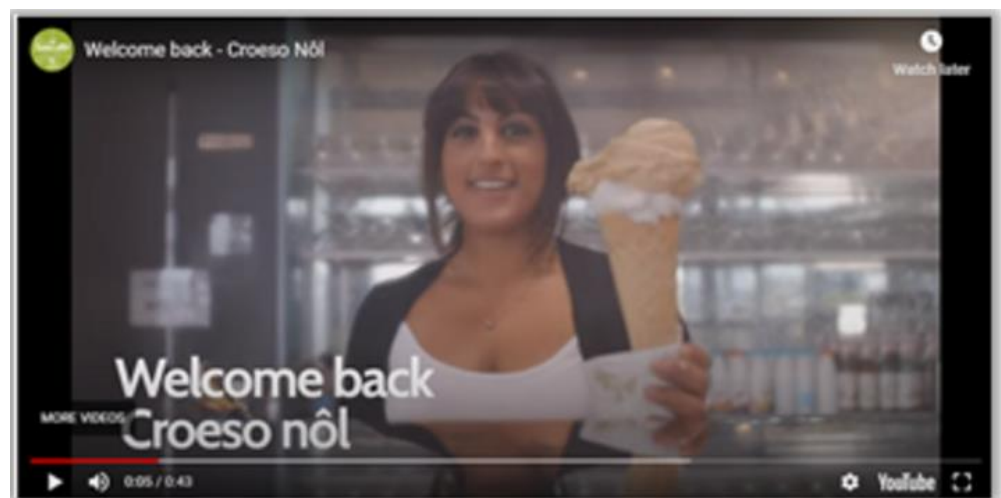


Fig 6: Welcome back video – opening frame

Links to campaign videos: [‘What’s on your Wishlist](#)  
[‘Welcome Back’](#)

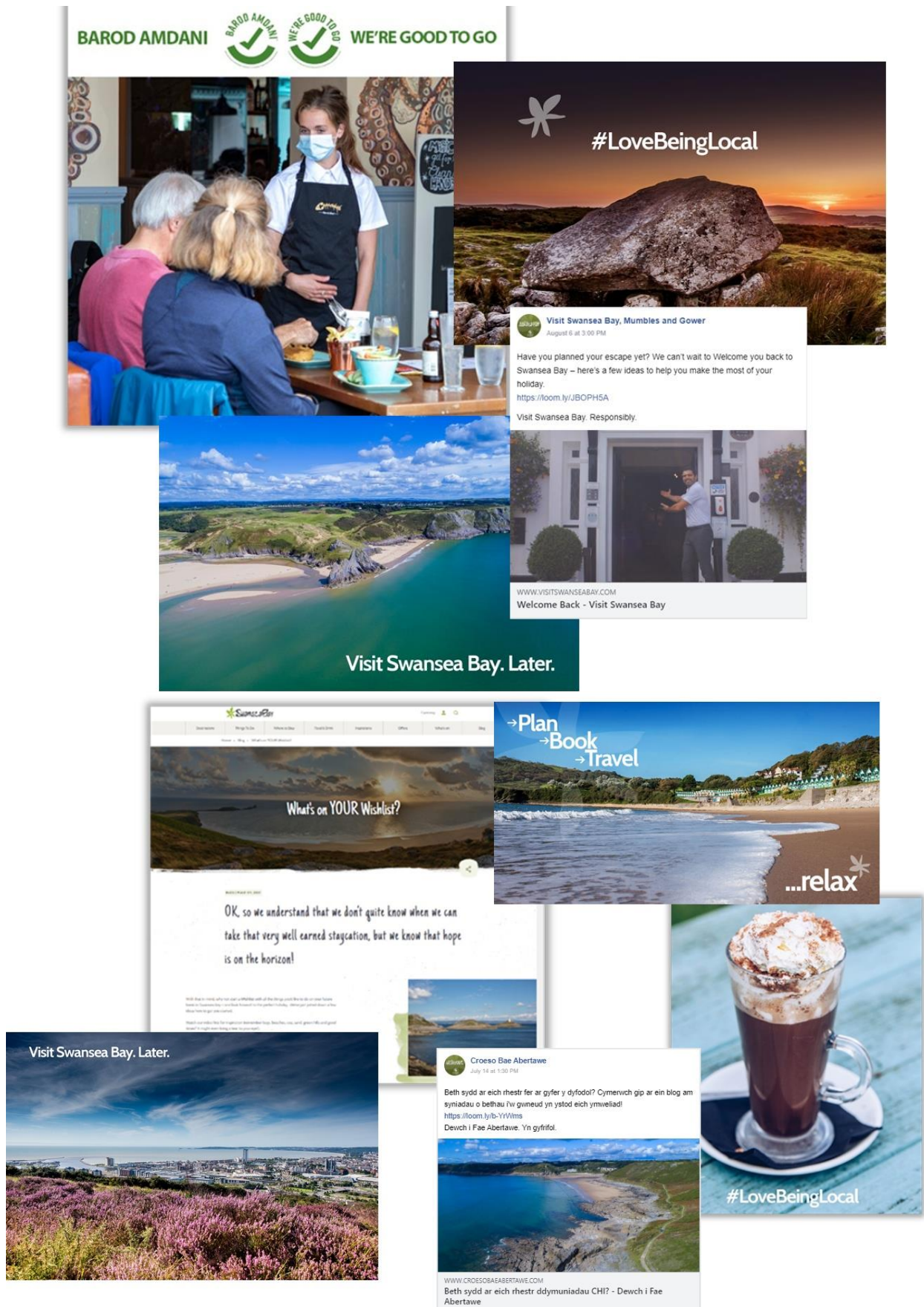


Fig 7: Examples of campaign content during 2020



## 8. Strategic Priority 3 – continued

### Return: Current and planned activity – 2021 marketing campaigns

- At the beginning of 2021 the team planned for the gradual easing of restrictions with a series of campaigns designed to promote those areas of the local tourism economy as they were allowed to open. Specifically targeting only those parts of the UK that were accessible (due to the differing restrictions across the UK nations).
- It was imperative to have campaigns ready to launch as all UK destinations would be eager to benefit from the increased number of potential visitors looking for a staycation at home (as international travel regulations continued, and still continue, to fluctuate). This presented an opportunity to introduce a whole new audience to Swansea Bay and our tourism businesses – and the growth in our online audience demonstrated that this audience was already engaged (see Table 1).
- A series of marketing campaigns, outlined below, were launched in line with the above strategy (please see Fig. 8, pgs 14 & 15 for examples of content).
- In response to the lockdown at the beginning of the year, the ‘Visit Swansea Bay. Later’ message was supplemented by further developing the online sales section of the website ([Gift Ideas](#)) to promote ‘Valentine’s Day’ and ‘Mother’s Day’ gifts etc – and vouchers to redeem later (post-lockdown) to support businesses during the closures.
- As restrictions eased, a safe return to responsible travel was encouraged by promoting advanced planning and responsible customer behaviour with ‘[Visit Swansea Bay. Responsibly](#)’ messaging.
- As tourism businesses began a phased re-opening, a fresh, new 2021 campaign was launched with a positive and uplifting message – ‘Make Swansea Bay your Happy Place in 2021’.
- This campaign was designed to celebrate all the different facets of Swansea Bay that staycaters have been (and will be) looking for in a post-lockdown holiday – primarily, open spaces, fresh air, coast and countryside (as informed by the consumer research and social media engagement). As well as holiday operators who can demonstrate that they are ‘Covid safe’ and have all the necessary protocols in place to keep customers safe.
- The aim is to foster customer confidence and rise above our close competitors in reaching a new UK staycation market – in addition to welcoming back our existing customers.
- The campaign encourages audience engagement by asking ‘where is your Happy Place in Swansea Bay’, using our popular social media platforms linking through to [visitswanseabay.com](#), which features [new web pages](#) and [blogs](#). Two new videos were produced to launch the campaign (see Fig. 9 and links to the videos on page 15).
- All activity links through to the destination website, which features our partners (tourism businesses) to facilitate bookings. In addition, partners have been

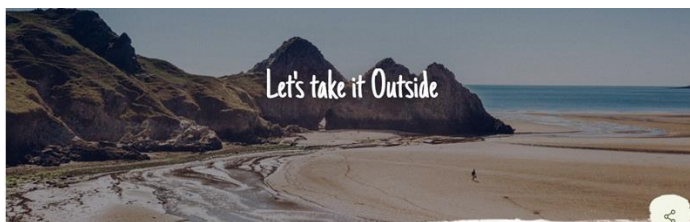
encouraged to get involved to help raise their profile with customers. Partner content has been shared on social media, with operators introducing customers to their own 'Happy Place'.

- A sister campaign promoting Swansea Bay as a destination for 'dog-friendly holidays', recognises that many UK families introduced a new pet into their home during lockdown. 'Dog-friendly' partners are participating and are [supplying content](#) for [visitswanseabay.com](#).
- In addition, associated seasonal campaigns promoting outdoor activities, walking and city cultural breaks are also planned. Together with promoting events as they resume and preparing for the opening of the Arena.
- New videos, photography and supporting content is in production, to roll out as the 'Happy Place' campaign progresses throughout 2021/22.

<b>Table 3: Social media performance 2021 (to end of July)</b>	
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4.3M</b> impressions (number of times a post is displayed) on VSB Facebook alone</li> <li>• <b>162,800</b> engagements (shares, reactions etc)</li> <li>• <b>19,700</b> clicks through to the website from Facebook</li> <li>• Net increase in Followers/Page likes = <b>3,636</b> growing our audience to <b>81,812</b> Fans</li> <li>• Engagement rate of <b>3.7%</b> (excellent, average is below 1%)</li> </ul>
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>17,240</b> total followers</li> <li>• <b>378,000</b> impressions</li> <li>• <b>12,300</b> engagements</li> <li>• <b>3.3%</b> engagement rate (excellent, average 0.07%)</li> </ul>
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5,201</b> total followers</li> <li>• <b>8323</b> engagements</li> <li>• Engagement <b>6.5%</b> (Instagram benchmark average is 1.19%)</li> </ul>
'Happy Place' video views (to July 2021) 2 x videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of <b>962,119</b> views on YouTube and Facebook</li> <li>• <b>95.12%</b> (average) of each video viewed (before the viewer navigates away to other content)</li> <li>• Engagements on Facebook to date (shares, reactions etc) <b>153,117</b></li> <li>• Happy Place video #1 is the most viewed video we have ever produced with <b>292,045</b> YouTube views to-date with an average view rate of <b>95.76%</b>.</li> </ul>

**Table 4: [visitswanseabay.com](https://visitswanseabay.com) performance 2021 (to end of July)**

<p>Results to end of July 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.3 million</b> page views – <b>42% higher</b> than the same period in 2019 (pre-Covid)</li> <li>• On course to break 2 million page views by the end of the year</li> <li>• Customers are spending longer on each page – the bounce rate is <b>46%</b> - down from 59.3% in 2019 (the lower the figure the better)</li> <li>• We have added over <b>18,000</b> additional Wales based website visitors</li> <li>• Taking us to <b>88,600</b> visitors so far this year (compared to 70,000 in 2019).</li> </ul>
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**It's Great Outdoors!**

If you don't already know this – then we've got lots of ideas to show you how you can get active, get some fresh air AND have some fun! And when you need to refuel – we've got some tasty places where you can enjoy a meal or a refreshing drink outdoors. Click on the links to find out how, what and where!

But whatever you do always **Play Safe** and remember social distancing and hygiene – so we can all keep enjoying our Great Outdoors!



**Eating Outdoors**  
SEE MORE



**Walking Holidays**  
SEE MORE



**Places to Stay**  
FIND ACCOMMODATION

**Visit Swansea Bay, Mumbles and Gower**  
June 6 at 3:00 PM

Returning to your Happy Place soon or want to discover your new Happy Place? Either way...we can't wait to see you!  
Visit Swansea Bay. Responsibly.



**Visit Swansea Bay, Mumbles and Gower**  
July 6 at 3:00 PM

'My Happy Place is on my horse on Llansgannoch beach. Getting fresh air and enjoying the open space with 4 miles of sand to enjoy'. (Lara Joslin, Director, Kings Head, Gower).



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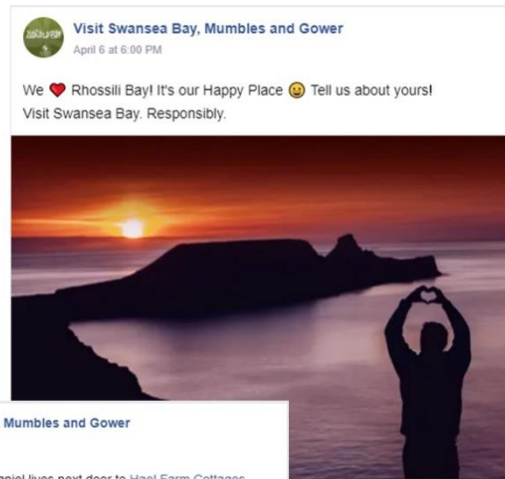
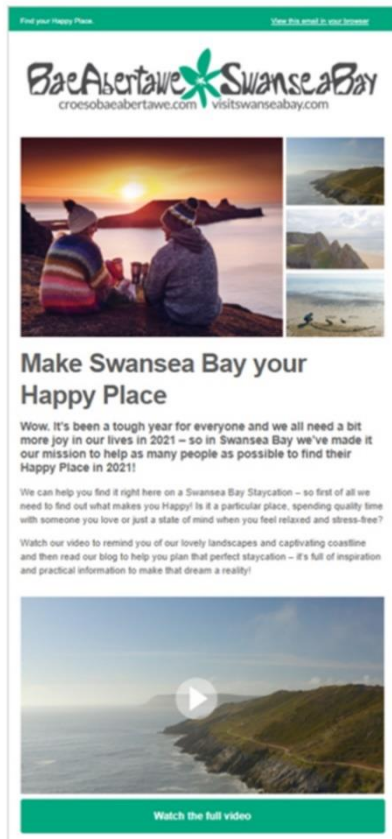


Fig 8: Examples of campaign content from the current 'Happy Place' campaign



Fig 9: 'Happy Place' video still

Links to campaign videos:

[‘Happy Place #1’](#)

[‘Happy Place #2’](#)



- During travel restrictions all media visits were paused and planned journalist and blogger visits were halted.
- As part of the Tourism Recovery Plan an extended PR contract was procured up until the end of March 2022 to maximise press and media opportunities once the travel media began looking for content once more. Targets were set for Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) and PR Value (Public Relations Value) and the performance is recorded (to date) below in Table 5.
- Journalist visits have now resumed. So far, the destination has hosted a UK travel blogger, 'The Globe Trotter', as well as The Telegraph's Saturday supplement 'Stella' magazine and 'The Guardian' travel pages. Additional journalist/blogger visits are in the planning stages including an international blogger, 'Absolutely Lucy' and 'The Sunday Times'.
- In addition, coverage paused during the pandemic has been published as well as new 2021 coverage, raising the profile of the destination even further. Please see Appendix C for examples of national coverage.

<b>Table 5: PR performance 2021 – value of coverage received (to end July)</b>	
AVE – the equivalent cost to purchasing advertising with the media title	<b>£503,337</b>
PR Value – takes into consideration that the endorsement of a journalist or blogger has more weight than an advertisement and that more than one individual can view each published item	<b>£1,511,313</b>

- Direct customer engagement continues via the customer contact form on [visitswanseabay.com](http://visitswanseabay.com) and via telephone enquiries. Customer queries are dealt with on a number of issues relating to the destination and Covid travel regulations.

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## 9. Tourism Recovery Plan – Outcomes

### Tourism Recovery Action Plan: Outcomes



### ▶▶▶▶ Outcomes

- Stronger local tourism and hospitality industry
- Renewed visitor confidence and engagement
- Increased number of bookings and visits
- Recovery, growth and prosperity of and for the local economy

**Fig 10:** Graphic outlining the envisioned outcomes of the Tourism Recovery Plan

As outlined above, the Tourism Recovery Action Plan has been approved and incorporated into the Council's Economic Recovery Action Plan. As detailed above, much of the activity is underway in order to give maximum support to a local industry challenged by months of closure.

Initial indications (from reaching out to operators) are that bookings are high and that accommodation in particular is very busy (official STEAM data will not be available until later in the year). However, capacities are still reduced due to social distancing and other protocols. In addition, recruitment problems and staff self-isolation mean that some businesses still have difficulties in re-opening even though they are permitted to do so.

It is therefore, necessary to ensure that the marketing activity continues into the autumn winter period to extend the season as much as possible. Campaign plans are in place for this and new content is being produced for this activity.

## 10. Tourism Recovery Plan – Resources

The tourism team are currently a small team of 4 FTE's. The demands and raising expectations on the service, resulted in a request for additional resources from the Economic Recovery Fund, which included a temporary increase in hours for two part-time members of staff.

In addition to the above staffing, additional resources for recovery were supported from the Economic Recovery Plan.

- Outdoor media campaign for tourism - £75K. To support the launch of the 2022 spring campaign with additional resources to target new and established platforms in key markets.
- Tourism Accommodation Improvement Grant - £50K. Supporting between 5 and 10 businesses to improve their Visit Wales star grading with specific improvements to their properties.
- Tourism Marketing Partner fees waived - £42K. This will help support the private sector by providing free platforms on which to promote their businesses. This approach has already generated an increase in the number of partners by 63 – with 185 partners in total supported to date (end July 2021).
- Extension to existing PR contract - £25k.

### **11. Conclusion**

The report highlights some of the extreme challenges tourism, its businesses and stakeholders have faced since March 2020, with much of this uncertainty around lost revenues, staffing, future investment and legislative changes.

The Council has continued to support the sector throughout the pandemic, by utilising its existing resources with an innovative and flexible approach to an unprecedented global crisis. This has succeeded in keeping the existing customer base engaged, while also reaching a new audience. Concurrently, tourism business partners have been kept both informed and supported to ensure that they have all the necessary tools to enable those that can, to re-open and plan for recovery.

However, there are still challenges ahead, but with the ongoing major investment taking place across the city and encouraging signs that economic recovery is underway, there are reasons to remain optimistic in the wake of 2020/21. Whilst some tourism businesses have closed as a result of the pandemic, others have diversified and are thriving and will no doubt diversify again as the situation changes. It is imperative that the profile of the tourism sector and its importance to the wealth of the local economy is recognised. It is also critical to note that the success of the sector is not purely down to the marketing of the destination. The customer experience once they arrive here must meet and indeed exceed expectations and it is essential that continued investment is also made in the wider tourism infrastructure.

### **12. Supporting Information**

- **Appendix A: Scrutiny Working Group on Tourism – Cabinet Member Response and Action Plan (November 2019, revisited July 2021)**
- **Appendix B: Tourism Recovery Action Plan 2021/22 (part of Council’s wider Economic Recovery Action Plan)**
- **Appendix C: Examples of PR coverage.**

### **13. Legal Implications**

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

**14. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## Appendix A

### Scrutiny Working Group on Tourism – Cabinet Member Response and Action Plan (November 2019, revisited July 2021)

**Key to officer references:**

*Cultural Services: Tourism – Steve Hopkins (SH), Special Events – David Price-Deer (DPD)*

*Highways & Transportation: Highways – Mark Thomas (MT), Transportation – Chloe Lewis (CL)*

*Regeneration: Nature Conservation – Deb Hill (DH), Countryside Access – Chris Dale (CD), External Funding Team – Paul Relf (PR)*

Recommendation	Action already being undertaken	New Action Proposed	Timescale / Responsible Officer	Update July 2021
1 <b>The Working Group was pleased to see how much hard work is being done by the Authority to promote tourism in the area. We feel that there is a lot more the Authority could do but recognise that this is restricted by the budget that has reduced drastically in recent years.</b>	Over the last 3 years, we have been working towards a 50% reduction in budget. This has resulted in the closure of the Tourist Information Centre (2016) and the re-focusing of activity in line with a digital strategy, which will increase more web visits, increase social media followers and engagement and capture additional segmented and profiled email addresses.	Having just reviewed the Destination Management Plan (DMP), one of the recommendations is to ensure greater input from those Heads of Service whose service areas play an important role in the management of the destination. These will be invited to future steering group meetings.  Cabinet Member comment: 'Consider how a Tourism Strategy may also be introduced, working alongside the current DMP.'	2020/21  SH	The DMP Steering Group now includes Head of Services for Cultural Services (Tracey McNulty) as well as Regeneration and Planning (Phil Holmes) along with private sector and Welsh Government representatives to discuss cross-cutting issues and give update of respective areas of work.  The DMP Steering Group has met more frequently during the pandemic.  The Destination Management Plan 2017-2020 has now expired and been replaced with a Tourism Recovery Action Plan 2021-22.
2 <b>We feel it is important to recognise the value of the natural environment to</b>	The Council has a duty under the Environment (Wales) Act to 'maintain and	In response to the specific recommendations:	2020- Onwards	<b>Update on specific recommendations:</b>



			<p>to cover full costs and future management implications.</p> <p>b) volunteers to help maintain environmental assets</p> <p>The Council already uses volunteers, for example the Ramblers, for such purposes. However, active, committed volunteers are only one part of a solution to meeting the demands of the service currently, which also includes equipment, supervision, training and transport costs. Even if the number of volunteers and volunteer days was doubled, the impact on the amount of maintenance needed would be minimal and so we are not in a position to increase our responsibilities as a result. However, the Service is in the process of appointing a Welsh Government funded, volunteer coordinator, to increase the number of volunteer projects undertaken</p>	<p>DH</p>	<p>work on this programme this year. The larger issue again however, is that this is funded by the Active Travel Fund, and must therefore focus on utility journeys to encourage modal shift for everyday journeys to be undertaken by walking or cycling.</p> <p>Similarly, funding from the Active Travel Fund has resulted in the production of a Swansea Bayways route map focusing on the defined network in the built-up area of Swansea, with routes generally only displayed that are compliant with Active Travel Design Standards.</p> <p><b>b. Network of volunteers / recruitment</b></p> <p>The activities of the Swansea Wildlife Volunteers group (led by the Council) have been on hold due to lack of staff resources to supervise and the constraints imposed by COVID. We are still awaiting the outcome of a Welsh Government ENRAW grant which, if approved, will fund a part time Volunteer Co-ordinator post for 2 years and enable us to re activate this Volunteer group.</p> <p>The Nature Conservation Team have now employed a permanent part time Biodiversity Officer (Mark</p>
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			<p>and we welcome the support to promote this, within the context of the information above.</p> <p>Recommendation is Partly Agreed to investigate grant funding for the network and increase the recruitment of volunteers.</p>		<p>Barber) to work across the Authority providing advice and support to ensure that all Council service areas understand and are compliant with their duty under the Environment (Wales) Act to 'maintain and enhance biodiversity' and to 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'. A Corporate Climate and Nature working group has been established to co-ordinate and monitor progress with this work.</p>
3	<p><b>The Working Group would like to see an improvement in signage especially in Gower.</b></p> <p>Many signs are missing or in need of repair. The Authority has a statutory duty to signpost footpaths and bridle paths and we would like people to be made aware that if the Department is informed of any signage issues for these areas they will rectify them.</p>	<p>Regarding different signage:</p> <p>Highways signage – a comprehensive audit was conducted a few years ago in partnership with Highways. Findings were forwarded to maintenance team for repairs / replacement. Some improvements still outstanding due to lack of budget to address all issues.</p> <p>Footpaths / bridleways signage – it is a statutory duty of the Council's Countryside Access Team to rectify any signage issues with footpaths and bridleways. However signage is only appropriate where the footpath or bridleway is fully accessible, i.e. maintained in a good condition. Due to</p>	<p>Await the findings of the 2019 visitor and trade surveys to see if there are issues with highways signage.</p> <p>Highways signage: consider another strategic audit for 2020 if resources could be ring-fenced for any identified improvements and repairs.</p> <p>Consider a site-specific, co-ordinated approach to signage between the various Council teams and allocate responsibility/pool resources for on-going maintenance.</p> <p>Cabinet Member comments:</p>	<p>2020/21</p> <p>Various Officers from Place Directorate depending on nature of signage</p> <p>MT</p> <p>SH</p>	<p>According to the 2019 Visitor Survey, fewer visitors rated both the standard of tourist signposting (pedestrian and road signs) as 'good or excellent' in 2019 when compared with the same survey undertaken in 2015: From 89% to 81% for pedestrian signs and from 86% to 79% for road signs.</p> <p>2020 highways signage audit has not been possible due to Covid and there are currently no proposals within Highways for signage improvements. However, any defects or missing Highways signs are reported by staff, inspectors or members of the public and signs are repaired or replaced as appropriate.</p> <p>Signage clutter at some of the beaches (e.g. Caswell) is being looked at as part of the Beaches Management Group or specific</p>



		<p>reduced maintenance budget and grant availability the number of footpaths and bridleways the Council is able to maintain in a good condition is decreasing every year.</p> <p>Waymarks Fingerposts – an audit was conducted 2 years ago at various Council-run beaches and a rolling programme is in place to repair/replace the wooden fingerposts on the seafront as and when budget becomes available. Langland Bay was completed this year and Caswell is to follow.</p> <p>Statutory Signage – e.g. dog ban, water quality, bye-laws, restrictions, planning notices, etc.</p> <p>Promotional / Interpretation Signage – e.g. Blue Flags, Lobster Campaign, Smoke-free Beaches, safety messages, etc.</p> <p>Signage ‘clutter’ is a recurring issue across the destination, however it becomes more evident in the traditional hotspots such as Port Eynon for example, where a lot of different signs have been erected over the years but not removed</p>	<p>‘Consider funding application and opportunity for policy commitments to resource signage improvement.’</p> <p>Recommendation is AGREED subject to budget constraints</p>	<p>CD</p>	<p>improvement schemes (e.g. Port Eynon).</p> <p>Footpaths / bridleways signage, waymarks and fingerposts on promoted routes have been checked over the past year and a photographic record of the condition of signage, waymarks and other features completed. A programme of repairs is being rolled out.</p>
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		(where relevant) or maintained (where needed). This is mainly due to the fact that signage, (as outlined above) has varying functions across different services and each with reduced or zero resources to apply a coordinated approach to ongoing maintenance or replacement.			
4	<b>We are concerned about funding post Brexit and recommend that a piece of work is undertaken to identify future grant funding possibilities.</b>	<p>The Economic Development and External Funding Team subscribes to an online grants database and continually monitors available grant and loan funding opportunities.</p> <p>There is a need for continued engagement with Welsh Government to influence the shape of tourism funding post Brexit, and to explore partnership funding models where other organisations may be in a better position to bid for funding but with the backing and support of the Council.</p> <p>There is some success already with this approach, e.g. Hafod Copperworks Musgrave Engine House project working with Swansea University and Friends of Hafod-Morfa Copperworks. External funding from EU</p>	<p>Explore innovative funding and investment strategies and borrow prudently to support the City Deal, only when it is right to do so.</p> <p>Implement a joined up approach to all public expenditure and the use of buildings and resources to ensure we can continue to do more with less and can seek the wider and more imaginative community use of public assets, such as Council-owned buildings.</p> <p>Continue to explore collaborative and innovative ways in which local services can be financed and delivered most</p>	2020-2022 PR	<p>Regen (Economic Development continues to work closely with colleagues in Welsh Government to help inform the shape of new funding opportunities based on regular internal dialogue within the Council and with external partners through Regeneration Swansea Partnership and other relevant fora.</p> <p>This ensures we are able to respond quickly to new opportunities which include capital and revenue funding through Welsh Government Transforming Towns, CADW, Visit Wales, Economy and Transport, UK Government Levelling up and community renewal. Also working with community development and others on external funding opportunities for smaller schemes cross-county, e.g. Brilliant Basics, Transforming Towns, Wales Tourism Investment Fund.</p>

		<p>sources has been decreasing as a percentage of overall external funding secured in recent years.</p> <p>The City Deal and regeneration of Hafod Copperworks remain a key priority for the Council in improving economic wellbeing and tourism in the area.</p>	<p>efficiently, and how the value of council assets can be maximised.</p> <p>In any new DMP action plan, ED&amp;EFT to review actions and identify potential funding streams</p> <p>Continue engagement with Welsh Government to influence shape of tourism funding post Brexit</p> <p>Explore potential partnership funding models for future projects.</p>		<p>The Economic Recovery Plan has been a key informer of new funding opportunities and underlines the essential link between economic development and tourism development.</p>
5	<p><b>We feel that the Authority should look at good practice from other areas regarding the marketing of accommodation in Swansea.</b></p>	<p>The accommodation sector is part of a destination's overall tourism offer and is intrinsically linked to other elements such as activities, attractions, food &amp; drinks and major events.</p> <p>Our marketing campaigns focus on promoting the destination as a whole rather than just the accommodation sector.</p> <p>However, we do have a comprehensive 'Where To Stay' section on the official tourism website with 56 listed</p>	<p>Research the arrangements that other LA's in Wales have with their businesses who want to promote their services with them.</p> <p>Review our current requirement to only accept graded properties on our tourism website and consider a policy statement for this.</p> <p>Report the findings of the visitor and trade</p>	<p>2020/21</p> <p>SH</p>	<p>CCS only LA in SWW to make it compulsory for accommodation operators to be listed / graded with Visit Wales before they can advertise on the official website. Other LAs only request basic details such as proof of public liability or having their own website. Whilst it is possible that this may have had a detrimental effect on our ability to recruit from a wider pool of businesses previously, following the Coronavirus pandemic the landscape has now changed as price is no longer a barrier – please see below.</p> <p>The Marketing Partner Package</p>

		<p>private sector accommodation providers (e.g. hotels, B&amp;Bs, hostels, caravan and camping sites, etc.). These are businesses / organisations who buy into a yearly marketing package with the Council, i.e. Visit Swansea Bay Marketing Partners.</p> <p>Our current requirements is that all accommodation operators on the tourism website must be inspected and graded/listed with either Visit Wales or The AA.</p> <p>Although this provides re-assurance to visitors and a level of protection for the Council in case of a complaint, this also restricts the number of businesses that can be recruited as Marketing Partners. It also doesn't reflect the way visitors now search for accommodation i.e. they search for brands, recommendations and increasingly, through the sharing economy.</p> <p>Some operators, whether graded or not, choose to promote their property through other, unregulated sharing economy networks such as Airbnb or local private websites (e.g.</p>	<p>surveys to relevant Cabinet Members and the DMP Steering Group.</p>	<p>which local tourism businesses purchased was refunded for 2020-21 as part of the Council's support of the tourism sector.</p> <p>In order to continue to support business recovery in 2021/22, a free entry level package is being offered to tourism businesses (additional opportunities to purchase are also available).</p> <p>As a result, our accommodation Partners have increased by <b>23</b>. The total number of new Partners is <b>63</b>, so <b>185</b> tourism businesses are now promoted on <a href="http://visitswanseabay.com">visitswanseabay.com</a> and across our marketing campaigns.</p> <p>In addition, Visit Wales are now offering free grading for all businesses, which has removed another barrier to participation (for accommodation operators) whilst enabling us to maintain an accredited accommodation listing on the website.</p> <p>Findings from the 2019 Visitor Survey have been presented to the DMP Steering Group, to the trade via a face-to-face event (Jan 2020) and published on the <a href="#">tourism trade website</a>.</p> <p>The trade survey was cancelled due to pandemic and the number of surveys already being targeted at the trade during</p>
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		<p>gower.com).</p> <p>We already undertake regular benchmarking exercises to assess how other comparable destinations market themselves and also exchange good practice e.g. through BRADA (British Resorts and Destinations Association) of which we are members.</p> <p>A few years ago, we also worked with Visit Wales in appointing a consultancy to undertake an Accommodation Demand Study. This work has informed some of the most recent hotel developments in the City Centre.</p> <p>STEAM figures and occupancy figures are also a good benchmark to determine how Swansea compares to the Welsh average and other destinations. Swansea occupancy figures for serviced accommodation, for example, are consistently higher than the Wales average and the STEAM figures demonstrate continuous growth.</p> <p>Regular visitor surveys give</p>			<p>various lockdowns. It is likely to be rescheduled in 2022.</p>
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		<p>us an insight into who our visitors are, where they come from, where they stay, how they booked their holiday, how much they spent, whether they are satisfied with their visit and likely to visit again and/or recommend us to others. We are able to use this intelligence to target our marketing activity more effectively.</p> <p>We are also planning a tourism trade survey for this Autumn to benchmark destination performance against the 2012 findings. Questions revolve mainly around destination management issues.</p>			
8	<p><b>We feel that there needs to be a 'whole council' approach to supporting big events in Swansea. Departments such as Refuse and Street Cleansing need to work with the Tourism team to ensure events run smoothly and everything is cleaned up afterwards.</b></p>	<p>Events are a key driver of Tourism. The Special Events Team currently works closely with several other Council departments / teams in order to deliver safe and enjoyable events across the City and County. These include Council organised events and those run by the private sector. For example:</p> <p>Highways – road closures, traffic plans, event parking, enforcement, Park &amp; Ride</p>	<p>That the Special Events Team within Cultural Services acts as the first and single point of contact for events and event organisers in relation to the delivery of events and event management enquiries.</p> <p>The delivery of events in public spaces is a cross-cutting activity involving all relevant departments as part of our ongoing ability to</p>	2020/21 DPD	<p>The Events Team in Cultural Services has been supporting businesses since very early on in the pandemic - key areas have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with several local businesses to deliver the highly successful Swansea Bay Pop-Up. Not only this did the facility provide a much needed outdoor F&amp;B facility welcomed by members of the public, but it also enabled those businesses to retain a significant number of their employees and supply chains.</li> </ul>

		<p>Parks &amp; Cleansing – event site preparation &amp;reparation; litter collection, recycling</p> <p>Public Health – food safety, event licensing</p> <p>Legal – events contractsand indemnities</p> <p>Communications – corporate press and social media support</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety – emergency management and contingency planning</p> <p>Cultural Services Marketing &amp; Tourism team undertake the event marketing activity to residents and visitors.</p>	<p>deliver on the Council’s priority of transforming our economy and infrastructure, inclusionand wellbeing factors.</p> <p>Endeavouring to ensurethat associated new developments or major events take into account sustainable development principles where possible and, where feasible, mitigating actions are developed regarding sustainability.</p>		<p>The companies involved had limited experience of operating a business of this nature in an outdoor environment and in the current situation. The Team supported the operators from the outset to facilitate the use of Singleton Park, working with them to review general safety and operational plans, advising on suitable suppliers, engaging with stakeholders and of course ensuring delivery in a Covid safe manner in line with the frequently changing Welsh Government Guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Mumbles, the Events team continues to support local operators in providing managed outdoor seating facilities within Southend Gardens and other green open spaces. The Team supported the businesses (and continues to support them) in order to ensure the activities are well managed and delivered in a safe and compliant manner.</li> <li>• Within the City Centre, the Events team has supported other Council services with guidance on a range of logistical issues e.g. external queuing, seating areas etc. in order to enable business to open externally.</li> <li>• Additionally, the Events team</li> </ul>
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					<p>has facilitated all requests for outdoor public space through the Events Letting Process (a single point of contact within the Council) and provided advice to a range of businesses regarding safe outdoor business operations.</p> <p>In all instances, the Events team has provided advice regarding how these outdoor activities should be delivered, in line with best practice, developing plans and recommending infrastructure and suppliers where applicable to enable businesses to operate externally in a Covid safe manner.</p> <p>Moving forward the Team is hopeful of returning to delivering a full programme of events. This programme will be enhanced in future years in line with the Council's Economic Recovery Plan</p> <p>The team is working with other stakeholders on the exciting Copr Bae development - in particular the installation and operation of the new digital assets (Arena Skin, Shop Front Architectural lighting, etc.). The team is also supporting the delivery of the City Centre Arts Strategy which includes new event and meanwhile spaces that are emerging as part of the city centre regeneration.</p>
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					The Team continues to support an ever increasing demand for the use of outdoor space (dance classes, choir practice, etc.) - including booking administration, safety advice and compliance in line with legislation and best practice.
10	<b>We would like marketing videos to show more of what people can do and see if they visit Swansea, such as walking/cycling in Gower and promotion of cultural tourism. We would also like to see more use of 'viral' types of advertising that have proved effective in the past and we would like to see more use of sites with large footfall throughout Swansea to promote / advertise tourism in the area, such as the Market and Quadrant Bus Station.</b>	<p>Our marketing activity targets potential visitors from outside of Wales, therefore it is not always visible to Swansea residents.</p> <p>We already have a range of promotional videos produced to market the destination, which can be viewed on our YouTube channel at: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/user/visitswanseabayTV">www.youtube.com/user/visitswanseabayTV</a></p> <p>Our videos are produced in a number of formats so that they can become viral, shared by our partners and are often produced in such a way that they can have a number of different uses.</p> <p>These videos are promoted online via the tourism website, social media and email marketing to our targeted audiences. This is one of the many channels we use to promote the 130 private sector Partners, who</p>	New videos are already planned for 2020 'Year of the Great Outdoors' however, a strong commitment to continue with this strategy for 2021 and beyond will be vital as Tourism is the only section within the Council, which proactively place-markets the destination.	2020/21 SH	<p>Online channels (social media, YouTube and the destination website <a href="http://visitswanseabay.com">visitswanseabay.com</a>) were crucial in continuing to communicate with our customers during the Coronavirus pandemic. Video content played a key role in engaging with our existing audience and building a new relationship with future potential visitors.</p> <p>During periods of lockdown and changing travel restrictions, attractive videos of the destination enabled us to broadcast the 'Stay Home' request in a softer way by reminding our audience of the positive aspects of the destination at the same time as delivering our <b>'Visit Swansea Bay. Later.'</b> message.</p> <p>At the height of the pandemic <b>971,000 video views</b> were achieved overall.</p> <p>Travel restrictions eased and we launched a new #HappyPlace</p>

		<p>have signed up to yearly marketing packages with us.</p> <p>Our digital content focusses on the main reasons why people visit Swansea Bay, which are the key findings of our visitor survey, i.e. beaches, natural landscape and our coastline.</p>		<p>spring campaign with two new videos encouraging responsible visits to the destination. These showcased our coastline, countryside and the wide variety of things to do in the area to support our local tourism businesses on re-opening.</p> <p>This campaign is ongoing but to date, during 2021, we have already achieved <b>962,119 video views</b> and over 95% of the whole video is watched.</p> <p>The <b><u>first #HappyPlace video</u></b> has reached 292,045 YouTube views alone and is the most watched video that we have produced.</p> <p>The #HappyPlace campaign will continue through summer and into the autumn/winter to extend the staycation season and support businesses even further.</p> <p>All recent videos can be viewed <b><u>HERE</u></b> on our YouTube channel and are either produced in a Welsh and English version or are bilingual.</p> <p>Eight new videos are in production. Highlighting our Coast, Countryside, City and Dog-Friendly Holidays. We've worked with our Partners to feature local tourism businesses in all the videos, but the new videos will also feature</p>
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					businesses showing our audience what makes Swansea Bay their #HappyPlace.
11	<b>Members of the Working Group are happy to promote tourism in Swansea through social media, by posting videos and tweeting links etc. We suggest all councillors are contacted, to ask if they will do the same.</b>	<p>We have existing channels that both businesses and consumers follow to receive information, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, e-newsletters, etc.</p> <p>We post regular updates and generate a high level of engagement with our audiences.</p>	To identify and share with all members the digital channels they can follow and sign up to, so they can assist in the promotion of the destination.	2020/21 SH	<p>Official destination website: <a href="http://www.visitswanseabay.com">www.visitswanseabay.com</a></p> <p><a href="#">Facebook</a> (81.8k likes)</p> <p><a href="#">Twitter</a> (17.1k followers)</p> <p><a href="#">Instagram</a> (5.3k followers)</p> <p><a href="#">YouTube channel</a></p> <p><i>Engagement figures can be found in the main report.</i></p>
12	<b>We feel that scrutiny needs to look at this topic in more detail than can be done in a one-off working group. We will therefore recommend to the Scrutiny Programme Committee that Tourism is considered as a future scrutiny inquiry topic.</b>	We have presented to scrutiny inquiries in 2014 and 2019 and welcome any further opportunities to raise the profile of Tourism and its importance to the local economy, Council priorities, Welsh Government priorities and the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.	Whilst we would be happy to be part of a future topic, the real challenge lies in ensuring that a tourism strategy for the destination is developed and integrated alongside other Council strategies and policies. An ideal starting point for this, at a time when the national strategy is being reviewed, is to present the work of the tourism team to the Policy Development Committee(PDC).	2020/23 SH	Tourism presented to PDC in October 2019.

<b>Appendix B Tourism Recovery Action Plan 2021-22</b>					
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Partners (lead in bold)</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<b>REVIEW AND RESEARCH: Improving marketing intelligence</b>					
Identify the impact of Covid-19 on the local tourism and hospitality sector via the Tourism Trade Survey.	2022	<b>Swansea Council</b> /Tourism businesses	In house resources	Trade survey development in progress – deferred to 2022	Execute survey, undertake analysis and produce report.
Assessing the impact on the tourism industry as a whole in the destination via the STEAM economic model.	Dec 2020	<b>Swansea Council</b> /GTS UK Ltd	Existing budget	Completed, report received	Assess data in a regional and national context.
Utilise Air DNA (Airbnb bedstock data) to improve accuracy of the STEAM input data.	Dec 2020	<b>Swansea Council</b> /GTS UK Ltd	Existing budget	Completed, report received	Continue to incorporate Air DNA data to improve consistency of STEAM economic trend model.
Undertake bedstock survey to attain a more accurate assessment of bedstock within the destination. This is a key input to maintain the accuracy of the STEAM economic model and is also a vital component of the information required by potential investors/developers.	Mar 2021	<b>Swansea Council</b> /Welsh Government	Existing budget/Welsh Govt funding	Survey complete	Maintaining the database for accuracy of future reporting.
Measure the success of our paid social media campaigns by using the Potential On Investment algorithm. $POI = C_v \times C_i \times M_q$	Ongoing	<b>Swansea Council</b>		Used to estimate the potential ROI of any Tourism team paid social media activity	Analyse 2020 spend using this analysis and continue to calculate at regular intervals throughout the year. This will be used to inform our future campaigns.

REMIND AND RETURN: Destination marketing					
<p><b>Autumn/Winter Campaign:</b> Audience segmentation dependant on restrictions, with message appropriate to Tiers/Restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Local</b> (#LoveBeingLocal) – supporting local businesses (responsibly, within restrictions).</li> <li>• <b>Wales</b> (travel within Wales) – walking and the outdoors (Escape Routes campaign) and ‘I’m a Celebrity’ social media campaign linked to Swansea Bay businesses.</li> <li>• <b>England</b> (tier one and two) – primarily future travel plans, groundwork for spring campaign. Continuing to promote visiting Swansea Bay ‘Responsibly’, and within certain markets (Tier Three) ‘Visit Swansea Bay. Later.’</li> </ul>	Dec 2020 – Mar 2021	<b>Swansea Council/Tourism &amp; hospitality businesses and local producers</b>	Existing budget	<p>Daily social media posts issued across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to the different audience segments, linking to new sections developed on <a href="http://visitswanseabay.com">visitswanseabay.com</a> and to tourism businesses.</p> <p>New video content procured to boost online engagement and to support paid-for social media campaign (in appropriate markets).</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	<p>Maintain flexible approach to destination marketing in line with constantly changing situation in terms of Wales and UK wide restrictions.</p> <p>Maintain brand awareness of the destination and sustain growth in customer engagement with <a href="http://visitswanseabay.com">visitswanseabay.com</a> content and therefore the destination’s tourism businesses to support recovery.</p>
<p><b>Gift Ideas Campaign:</b> Targeting all audiences, to encourage engagement and pre-bookings with tourism businesses and local producers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting businesses with a mail order business (eg local producers)</li> <li>• Those offering gift vouchers</li> <li>• And encouraging customers to ‘give the gift of a Swansea Bay experience’ (in line with Visit Wales’ Christmas campaign).</li> </ul>	Dec 2020 onwards	<b>Swansea Council/Tourism &amp; hospitality businesses and local producers</b>	Existing budget	<p>Communicated with 125 partners and secured almost 40 gift offers from local businesses. (Including 5 new businesses offering gifts.)</p> <p>Developed new section of website and actively promoted on social media from mid</p>	<p>Develop gifts section for future campaigns, for example, Birthdays, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day etc.</p> <p>Recruit additional businesses to take part in gifts section.</p>

				November until Christmas.  COMPLETE	
<p><b>Spring Campaign 2021 – ‘Make Swansea Bay your Happy Place’:</b> Target markets: <b>New visitors</b> – to encourage new visitors to make Swansea Bay their Happy Place by using key images and promoting staycations.</p> <p><b>Existing visitors</b> – tapping into memories with existing visitors who perhaps couldn’t visit in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, encouraging them to return.</p> <p>Marketing activity to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 key campaign videos to launch</li> <li>• 8 ‘Happy Place’ videos featuring local businesses</li> <li>• New photography content</li> <li>• Brand awareness media campaign (new visitors)</li> <li>• PR campaign, including journalist and blogger visits, and optimising editorial opportunities</li> <li>• Digital marketing campaign – both organic and paid-for content. Across social media and YouTube.</li> </ul>	Jan-May 2021	<b>Swansea Council</b> /Tourism & hospitality businesses and local producers	Existing budget	<p>Planning phase, including procurement of external contracts (launch of campaign dependant on government restrictions)</p> <p>Videography and photography contracts awarded.</p> <p>Campaign launched end of march 2021 and on-going</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand awareness media campaign</li> <li>• Develop creative/content for videos, media and online campaigns</li> <li>• Plan, write and publish online content</li> <li>• Develop and execute paid-for digital advertising campaign</li> <li>• Create bespoke itineraries for journalist/blogger visits</li> <li>• Plan, write copy, design and publish Plan-Book-Travel Guide</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop web content including campaign led blogs, refreshed and new web pages</li> <li>• Plan-Book-Travel Guide potentially for publication in Summer (restrictions allowing)</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Additional Campaigns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaigns promoting pre-booking and online purchases e.g. Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day etc.</li> <li>• City cultural breaks, to coincide with the soft-opening of the Arena, re-opening of City attractions and when events re-start – emphasising the city’s seafront location</li> <li>• #LoveBeingLocal, an on-your-doorstep campaign encouraging residents to engage with local businesses</li> <li>• Outdoor activities and walking, focussing on health and sustainability</li> <li>• Dog-friendly holidays, to reflect the growth of dog ownership during the pandemic (lockdowns)</li> <li>• Event led campaigns e.g. Olly Murs, Foals and Catfish and the Bottlemen</li> </ul>	Jan-Dec 2021	<b>Swansea Council/Tourism &amp; hospitality businesses and local producers</b>	Existing budget	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan, write and publish online content</li> <li>• Develop and execute paid-for digital advertising campaign</li> <li>• Sourcing additional offers for pre-booking and online purchasing campaigns</li> </ul>



REMIND AND RETURN: Online marketing					
<p><b>Website Developments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to marketing partner section and menu navigation</li> <li>• Add more visually prominent and integrated “Good To Go” accreditation badge.</li> <li>• Development of the mail-order and gift voucher section to enable business to generate income even during times of lockdown.</li> <li>• Implement Google AdSense advertising. Adding advertising spaces on the site in order to bring in some passive income to help cover costs.</li> <li>• Improve the Enjoy Swansea Bay section and navigation to create more of a suitable home for local and events-based content.</li> </ul>	Mar 2021	<b>Swansea Council</b>	Existing Budget	AdSense integrated into website.  In Progress	Hand brief to web developer – in progress.  Implement, test and approve.  Trial AdSense by monitoring income generated and impact on bounce rates/any reduction in traffic or negative feedback from customers etc. - in progress
INFORM AND SUPPORT: Business engagement and partnership working					
Offer existing Visit Swansea Bay Partners and other local tourism businesses the opportunity to participate in destination tourism marketing activity and feature on <a href="http://visitswanseabay.com">visitswanseabay.com</a> (vsb.com) at no cost for an entry level package. (The	Jan 2021 to March 2022 (Partner Package now corresponds	<b>Swansea Council</b> /Tourism & hospitality businesses and local producers	Existing resources	Proposal approved by senior management subject to achieving a reduced income target (to reflect reduced buy-in)	Continue to recruit new partners - ongoing

<p>Package cost was refunded in 2020 as part of a support package for local tourism businesses.)</p> <p>Being a Partner is of direct benefit to the business, and as a collective, Partners improve the product and overall destination offer available on <a href="http://vsb.com">vsb.com</a>. This in turn makes vsb.com more attractive to the customer, which increases engagement and bookings with the Partners.</p>	<p>to financial year)</p>			<p>Existing Partners and potential new Partners contacted.</p> <p>Launch of new 'free at entry level' 2021/22 Packages and additional 'paid-for' activity.</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	
<p>Use the above opportunity as a means of recruiting additional Partners to increase not only the number of businesses who feature in destination marketing activity (and on vsb.com), but also the variety of different business types (e.g. local food producers, craftworkers and breweries).</p>	<p>Jan 2021 – Mar 2022</p>	<p><b>Swansea Council</b>/Tourism &amp; hospitality businesses and local producers</p>	<p>Existing resources</p>	<p>Planning phase: compiling list of new contacts whilst awaiting decision</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	<p>Contact new businesses and implement proactive recruitment campaign.</p> <p>ONGOING</p>
<p>Work with the Partners to improve their marketing profile on vsb.com and in destination marketing activity to maximise their exposure to customers and facilitate bookings.</p> <p>This includes offering additional paid-for activity to boost their marketing footprint across a range of available opportunities (e.g. website banners, social media posts on vsb.com channels, features on customer emails etc.).</p>	<p>Jan 2021 – Mar 2022</p>	<p><b>Swansea Council</b>/Tourism &amp; hospitality businesses and local producers</p>	<p>Existing resources</p>	<p>Completed audit of existing Partner pages and identified improvements.</p> <p>ONGOING</p>	<p>Actively encourage Partners to improve their webpages on vsb.com and facilitate increased involvement in campaign activity.</p> <p>Encourage the take-up of paid for activity to boost Partner visibility across the destination's marketing campaigns and generate income for the Council.</p>

					ONGOING
Continue to support local tourism & hospitality businesses with the latest information and sign-posting services to relevant legislation, guidance, grants & funding, planning, business development, research, marketing opportunities, etc. via a weekly e-newsletter and tailored one-on-one support.	Jan 2021 – Mar 2022	<b>Swansea Council</b> /Tourism & hospitality businesses and local producers	Existing resources	ONGOING	Maintain high level of engagement with local operators and continue to provide business support on wide range of topics.
<b>Additional resources</b>					
To enable delivery of the above elements of the Recovery Plan the existing Tourism Team would require additional resource to ensure that the profile of the destination and its local businesses continue to gain ground in what will be an increasingly competitive ‘Staycation’ marketplace. It is also imperative to nurture as many businesses as possible to both support the recovery of the industry and increase the product offer on the destination website to convert web views to bookings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a temporary increase in hours for two part-time members of staff.</li> </ul>	March 2021 onwards	Swansea Council	Additional Resources	Requires approval APPROVED	Seek approval for increasing hours.  APPROVED



Examples of PR Coverage received up to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Times, May 2021



'Shorelines don't get much more spectacular than at this bay' (Three Cliffs Bay)

'Our first and arguably finest Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' Philip Thomas

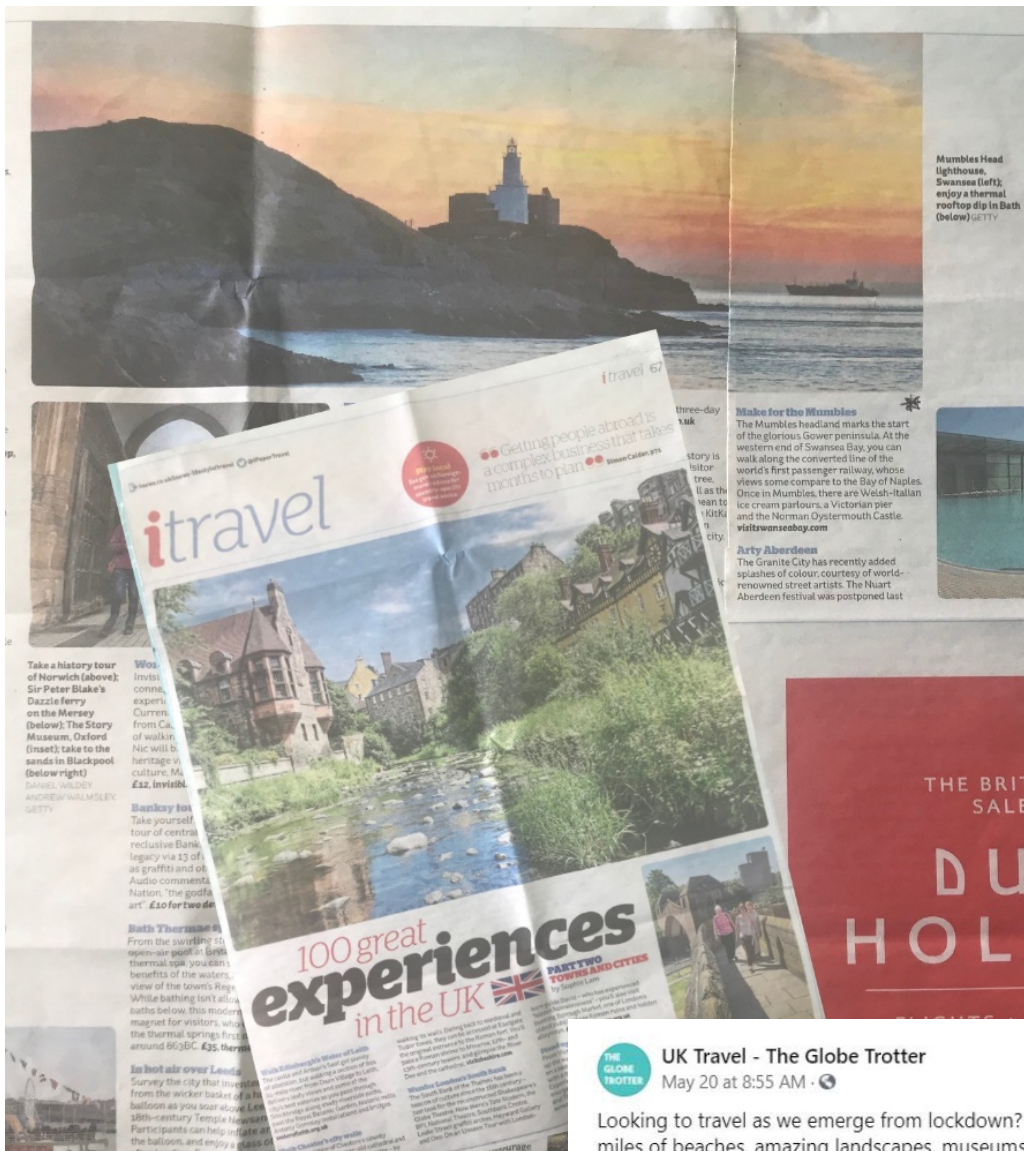
Country Walking, March 2021





## Appendix C

### Examples of PR Coverage received up to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021



The 'i' Newspaper, May 2021

*'... whose views some compare to the Bay of Naples'* Sophie Lam

*'You must plan a visit to Swansea Bay'* Deeptha Doshi

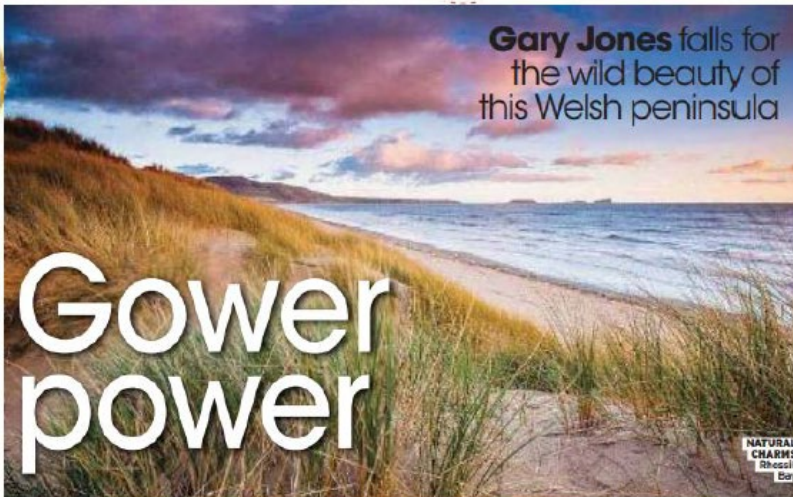
The Globe Trotter Blog, May 2021



## Appendix C

### Examples of PR Coverage received up to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**DAILY EXPRESS**



*'one of the world's most beautiful locations' Gary Jones*

**Y**ou'll fall in love at first glance. Jaw-droppingly beautiful, the light bounces off her majestic features, which were first celebrated 65 years ago as the UK's first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. After the tedium of a long drive, the sight of the Gower Peninsula in West Wales instantly eradicates any feelings of tiredness and you want to embrace the panoramic scenery. We had switched from the M4 to the coastal road approaching Swansea, and stopped at the seaside city - dramatically transformed in recent years - before winding our way to the Oxwich Bay Hotel and its incredible beach views. We've visited the hotel on several occasions, lured by excellent surfing conditions for our teenagers, and fabulous coastal walks for us - never disappointing,

whatever the weather. We stayed in the hotel's Secret Garden, housing six modern accommodation pods. They are small but comfortable, and an enjoyable alternative to traditional hotel accommodation. The staff worked wonders to keep them spotlessly clean - no mean feat after we returned somewhat grubby after a day in the great outdoors. The hotel itself, a former rectory, prides itself on offering a warm Welsh welcome and tasty food using locally sourced ingredients. To set you up for the day I'd recommend the Welsh full breakfast with laverbread, a traditional delicacy made from seaweed. You'll certainly need your energy for surfing on the amazing Rhossili Bay. Our instructor, Guy Richards, has a friendly and easy-going manner that is perfect for beginners. And if you're less than agile on the waves there are always the views to admire.

After a morning of strenuous activity, we had an excellent lunch at The Bay on top of Rhossili cliffs. In the afternoon, we explored the endless expanse of coastal paths. Part of the appeal of this rugged coastline is that you can easily avoid the crowds. We took a stroll to the rocky promontory known as Worms Head, where poet Dylan Thomas was once stranded when he misjudged the tides. Two of his short stories, Extraordinary Little Cough and Who Do You Wish Was With Us? were inspired by his love of this "very beautiful peninsula, some miles from the blowsy town and so far the tea-shop philistines have not spoil: the most

**The Daily Express, July 2021**  
This was syndicated across the media company's other titles, also appearing in **The Daily Mirror, Sunday People** and **six regional titles**

**BOOK IT**  
Secret Garden Pods at Oxwich Bay Hotel, Gower Peninsula, start at £69 a night. [oxwichbayhotel.co.uk](http://oxwichbayhotel.co.uk)  
Beach House reservations at [beachhouse01wch.co.uk](http://beachhouse01wch.co.uk)  
Surf lessons at [flangeninthsurfschool.com](http://flangeninthsurfschool.com)  
**MORE INFO**  
[visitswanseabay.com](http://visitswanseabay.com)





Appendix C

Examples of PR Coverage received up to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Yours**



*'Plantasia – the UK's answer to a tropical rainforest'*



Yours Magazine, June 2021



# Appendix C

## Examples of PR Coverage received up to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

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### Car-free coast Wales holidays

**Phoebe Taplin**  
Wed 4 Aug 2021 06:30 BST

## I could be by the Med: a car-free short break in Swansea

▲ Marina in Swansea from above, on a sunny day. UK Photograph: Alamy

A vibrant waterfront sets the tone for a trip of cultural delights, Dylan Thomas sights, great food and the beauty of the Gower peninsula nearby

Tall plane trees, hanging baskets and pavement cafes line pedestrianised Wind Street as it passes the ruined castle. I don't know what I expected Swansea to look like but it wasn't quite this.

My preconceptions were partly based on Dylan Thomas's "ugly, lovely town" by the sea, "white-horsed and full of fishes". After three hours on an air-conditioned Great Western Railways train from London, I'm striding past the 17th-century [No Sign bar](#) towards the city's five-mile-long beach.

Any lingering doubts about Swansea as a holiday base are dispelled when I reach Morgan's Hotel near the marina. The Edwardian building, with its dome and grand staircase, was once the offices of the Port Authority. The decor nods to its maritime history with stained-glass boats, wave-form lamps and an anchor on the stairs; my high-ceilinged, wood-floored bedroom is cool and elegant.

▲ Morgan's Hotel at dusk. Photograph: Greg Balfour Evans/Alamy

Almost next door, [Swansea Museum](#) reopened in June. Inside its Victorian neoclassical mansion is a humble

“How's it above? characters ask Cap (boiled, pureed sea Swansea Market, the her family's shellfish Penclawdd, eight mile tide sands, as they hawk cockles were brought as toast, with pasta, in a guche, or as part of a Welsh breakfast alongside

▲ Carol Watts (left) and sister Jo at the stall in Swansea Market. Photograph: Phoebe Taplin

I take a couple of raisin-dotted welshcakes, cooked on the hotplate of a stall nearby, for a picnic, and catch bus 118 from the nearby bus station to the village of Penmaen. It's half an hour's ride away on the lovely [Gower peninsula](#).

Visit [Swansea Bay](#) has a list of walking routes you can reach by bus. The short ones are mostly circular, so drivers can use them, too. With no parked car to get back to, I adapt the [Penmaen route](#) and make it linear. Following the panoramic [Wales Coast Path](#) a mile or so eastwards, through bracken and pink spires of rosebay willowherb, I climb down the sandy track to Three Cliffs Bay, past carpets of samphire and purple sea lavender.

▲ Walking to Three Cliffs Bay from Penmaen. Photograph: Phoebe Taplin

The coast path crosses the Pennard P'ill stream on stepping stones (except at high tide), but by the time I get there, I want nothing more than to take off my walking boots and wade towards the sea. The Bristol Channel has the world's second-highest tidal range and Gower beaches change dramatically every six hours. I've been swimming for 20 minutes near a cave under the three crags that give the bay its name before I realise the tide is rising and hurry to rescue my boots from their rocky island. Cooler now, I follow the grassy bank of Pennard P'ill, with the ruins of a medieval castle on the hill above, and wind through shady woods to Parkmill, home of [Gower Heritage Centre](#) (£2 for car-free visitors).

Guardian Travel  
16

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Caroline Williams ... always by the "Med" in Swansea

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**‘the smell of garlic and fresh fish frying, the boats backed by pine-covered hillside: it's not too hard to imagine I'm somewhere Mediterranean.’ Phoebe Taplin**

**The Guardian (online), August 2021**



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Business and City Promotion

<b>Purpose</b>	To brief the Scrutiny Committee on the work being undertaken on business and city promotion in Swansea
<b>Content</b>	The report sets out the activities being undertaken to support business and city promotion.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	Consider the information provided and give views.
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Robert Francis- Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism
<b>Lead Officer Report Author</b>	Phillip Holmes, Head of Planning and City Regeneration Sue Woodward Tel: 07796 275278 E-mail: sue.woodward@swansea.gov.uk
<b>Legal Officer</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer</b>	Paul Roach

#### 1. Overview

- 1.1 The ultimate goal is to make Swansea a vibrant and exciting place to live, work, visit and study. To achieve this it needs thriving businesses, offering good quality jobs for its citizens in addition to a range of leisure pursuits for residents and visitors. To achieve this we need to:
- Engage with business to better understand their needs in order to provide support and opportunities for them to grow and create quality jobs.
  - Create an interest in new business coming to Swansea by promoting its advantages to Wales and the wider UK/global audience.
- 1.2 The Planning & City Regeneration Service is primarily responsible for business and city promotion, working closely with the Communications and Marketing Team. It is delivered through the Economic Development and External Funding team who undertake business engagement and inward investment and the Development and Physical Regeneration team, dealing with business investment and city promotion within the scope of large development schemes. There is also significant tourism marketing and business engagement with the tourism and

hospitality sector carried out by the Tourism and Marketing team, although that does not fall within the scope of this report.

## 2. Key Areas of Work

2.1 A broad range of activities that support business and city promotion are currently being delivered:

### Business Engagement:

- Launch of new Business Swansea business support service, which has made great strides since its inception in April 2021.
- Making contact with existing business in Swansea, gathering information, making them aware of the support available to them to help them grow. This includes signposting to other Council areas (e.g. rates, planning, environmental health), connecting them with partners (e.g. Business Wales, Development Bank of Wales, BID) or financial support.
- Fortnightly Business Swansea business information newsletter and monthly “business hour” information/advice sessions for existing business and Enterprise Club for new business start-ups commenced in July.
- Pre start-up business sessions to explore the basics of running a business, including real business case experience.
- Business Swansea Start-up and young business small grants.

### Inward Investment:

- Providing a seamless end-to-end service for inward investors who are considering relocating in Swansea. This includes, amongst other things, providing advice and support on funding availability, assistance with identifying sites & premises, facilitating contact with other areas of the Council, including planning policy for pre-application advice and scheme design, links with Universities, Welsh Government, and labour market/skills availability etc.
- Liaising with Invest Wales and UK on business enquiries for Swansea
- Producing information on the benefits of relocating to Swansea
- Working with Welsh Government to support business relocating to Swansea
- Gathering information on local business supply chains.

### Food Businesses:

- Working with local food producers to improve their business model
- Swansea Food Partnership formed to develop local food innovations, networking and supply chain solution
- Working with Farmers to develop and diversify primary products/land offer
- Supporting rural food businesses to develop funding applications
- Promotion of local food businesses and the use of local produce
- Supporting food projects through Rural Development Partnership to facilitate pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chain



### City Promotion

- High profile marketing of the Copr Bay development, including the new Digital Arena, by the Development and Physical Regeneration team to a UK/global audience: [www.coprbayswansea.com](http://www.coprbayswansea.com)
- Annual promotion of Swansea and initiatives through Estates Gazette which gives Swansea access to the EG online database and universal coverage.
- Working with Welsh Government and wider to promote Swansea at international events such as MIPIM.
- #Brand Swansea highlighting the best of Swansea in community, health, business, arts etc. in order to change negative perceptions of the city.
- Swansea Business Guide ([www.swansea.gov.uk/businessguide](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/businessguide)) produced biannually showcases what Swansea has to offer as a business location and includes an online business directory – [www.itslocalSwansea.co.uk](http://www.itslocalSwansea.co.uk) – to promote local businesses
- Business promotion – new Business Swansea service – supporting local businesses
- Shop Local campaigns, initially piloted in Morriston but now extended to all other district centres – Gorseinon, Pontarddulais, Uplands, Mumbles, Clydach, Sketty, Killay and Gowerton.
- Ongoing City promotion through the Council's Communications and Marketing Team, linking in with the work of the Economic Development and External Funding Team and Development and Physical Regeneration Team.
- Promotion of Swansea as an inward investment location through the Council website

### **3. Management and Resources**

- 3.1 As outlined above, business and city promotion activities are primarily delivered through the Planning and City Regeneration Service area's Economic Development and External Funding team and Development and Physical Regeneration team, which is part of the Place Directorate. Governance is through the City Regeneration Programme Board and the City Regeneration Member Steering Group.
- 3.2 The focus on working closely with business in the City & County is increasing, and the business resource has increased to include an Inward Investment Officer in July 2019 and since April 2021, two new Economic Development Officers focusing on Business Engagement. This has expanded the work carried out by the team and means that, going forward, the Council will have a better insight into the needs of its businesses. The Development and Physical Regeneration team and Inward Investment Officer work closely together in providing solutions to business wishing to move to Swansea. The teams link with others within and outside the Council, such as Business Wales to add value to the Council's offer by utilising the resources of others.
- 3.3 Through the Regeneration Swansea Partnership the Council works closely with senior representatives from other public, private and third sector organisations including Welsh Government, Universities, Coastal Housing, Pobl, Family Housing, Natural Resources Wales, Jobcentre Plus, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services, Swansea BID, not for profit businesses and others, to

support economic regeneration across the city and county. Regeneration Swansea has established a branding sub-group (comprising the Council's Tourism/Marketing, Communications & Marketing and Economic Development teams along with Universities and private sector) to develop an overarching brand that represents Swansea. The #Brand Swansea project is the first phase of this.

### **4. Activities During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

- 4.1 Over the past year the Economic Development and External Funding team has played a key role in supporting local businesses. This has included administering Welsh Government covid-19 grants to businesses (and the team is still involved in issuing WG discretionary grants), dealing with general enquiries from business regarding grant assistance and liaising with other areas of the Council (regarding Rates related grants) and Welsh Government, Business Wales on their behalf. 48 covid-19 business newsletters were issued during 2020-21 to keep local businesses informed of the support that was available. In addition, an online list of local food businesses and other essential suppliers was produced at the time when shops were closed to the public.

### **5. Improvements and Impact**

- 5.1 An overall health assessment of the business offering in previous years concluded that, although we were able to signpost to our partners in Business Wales, we did not have the resources, providing a real challenge to make those vital links with business.
- 5.2 Subsequently, an Inward Investment role was created, dealing with enquiries from outside the County and in 2021 the creation of Business Engagement officers to deal directly with business and offering a dedicated business resource for Swansea.
- 5.3 The support now offered is comparable with that of other local authorities in the region, alongside the additional areas of support described earlier. In this short time direct support and contact with business has increased immeasurably, providing greater business support at a time when it is needed most.
- 5.4 To further support business engagement, a corporate business CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system is now under development. Currently a number of areas of the Council hold details on businesses, which they use to contact them for their varying services. A Swansea Business Account (based on the residents My Swansea account) is being developed so that businesses will be able to sign up once and be linked to Council information and services.

### **6. Legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

**7. Finance Implications**

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**Appendices:** None

## Appendix 3 - CABINET PORTFOLIOS (as at 20 May)

<b>Economy, Finance &amp; Strategy (Leader) (Cllr Rob Stewart)</b>	<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Community Health Services (Cllr Mark Child)</b>	<b>Supporting Communities (Cllr Alyson Pugh; Cllr Louise Gibbard)</b>	<b>Business Improvement &amp; Performance (Cllr Andrew Stevens)</b>	<b>Children Services (Cllr Elliot King)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brexit &amp; New Economic Relationships</li> <li>• Capital Programme Delivery</li> <li>• City Centre Redevelopment</li> <li>• City Deal Delivery</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Community Leadership</li> <li>• Constitutional Changes</li> <li>• Emergency Planning</li> <li>• Finance Strategy, Budget &amp; Saving Delivery</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Future Digital Networks (City Deal)</li> <li>• Legal Services</li> <li>• Local &amp; Regional Investment Strategy</li> <li>• Planning Policy (Regional)</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Public Services Board (PSB)</li> <li>• Recovery Plan Lead</li> <li>• Regeneration Strategy &amp; Major Projects</li> <li>• Regional Working Lead (All Bodies)</li> <li>• Strategic Partnerships</li> <li>• Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee - Chair</li> <li>• Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) – Deputy Leader</li> <li>• WLGA Lead on Europe, Brexit, Economy &amp; Energy</li> <li>• WLGA representative to LGA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities to Promote Independence &amp; Ageing Well</li> <li>• Adult Social Services Modernisation</li> <li>• Assessment / Care Management</li> <li>• COVID-19 Response – Adult Social Care</li> <li>• Elderly Care</li> <li>• Healthy City Partnership</li> <li>• Integration of Health &amp; Social Care</li> <li>• Joint Equipment</li> <li>• Learning Disability</li> <li>• Local Area Coordination Lead</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Physical &amp; Sensory Impairments</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Adult Services Lead</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• Strategic Health &amp; Social Care Collaboration Opportunities</li> <li>• Supporting People</li> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board (RPB) – Leader’s Representative</li> </ul>	<p>Cllr Alyson Pugh (leading on):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Homeless Support</li> <li>• 3rd Sector Services</li> <li>• Community Cohesion</li> <li>• Community Safety</li> <li>• Community Safety – Board Representative</li> <li>• Community Support for Refugees &amp; Asylum Seekers</li> <li>• Employability</li> <li>• Financial Inclusion</li> <li>• Food Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Lifelong Learning</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Working</li> <li>• NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) 19-25</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction in Communities</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Community Support Services Lead</li> <li>• Safer Swansea Partnership Representative</li> <li>• Services for Vulnerable People in Communities during COVID-19</li> <li>• Substance Misuse</li> <li>• Support for Veterans</li> <li>• Swansea Working</li> <li>• Welfare Reform &amp; Rights</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Louise Gibbard (leading on):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Services</li> <li>• Community Centres</li> <li>• Community Groups, Engagement &amp; Development</li> <li>• Community Growing (inc. Allotments)</li> <li>• Community Support Services</li> <li>• Co-production</li> <li>• Councillor Champions – Coordination, Liaison &amp; Networking</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Equalities</li> <li>• Future Generations Compliance</li> <li>• Human Rights City</li> <li>• LAC Services in Communities</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction in Communities</li> <li>• Preventing Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse &amp; Sexual Violence</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Community Support Services Lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agile Working</li> <li>• Business &amp; Service Improvement</li> <li>• Community Digital Connectivity (inc. free WiFi)</li> <li>• Community Hubs, Service Protection</li> <li>• Contact Centre</li> <li>• Corporate Building Rationalisation</li> <li>• Corporate Delivery of Priorities</li> <li>• Corporate ICT and Digital Delivery of Services</li> <li>• Councillors Community Budget Scheme Delivery</li> <li>• Councillors ICT Services Lead</li> <li>• Crowd Funding &amp; New Community Funding Models</li> <li>• Digital Inclusion</li> <li>• Information &amp; Business Change (inc. Better ICT)</li> <li>• Localised Services and Opportunity for New Business Models</li> <li>• Performance Management &amp; Improvement</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Digital Services Transformation Lead</li> <li>• Risk &amp; Resilience Management</li> <li>• Rural Economy Lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apprenticeships Support</li> <li>• Best Start in Life</li> <li>• CAMHS (Child &amp; Adolescent Mental Health Services)</li> <li>• Child &amp; Family Services</li> <li>• Children &amp; Young People (CYP) Chair</li> <li>• Continuum of Care</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Lead</li> <li>• Families First</li> <li>• Flying Start</li> <li>• NEETS Reduction Support (Not in Education, Employment or Training)</li> <li>• Opportunities for Young People</li> <li>• Play Opportunities</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Promoting Youth Inclusion &amp; Youth Citzenships</li> <li>• Readiness for Work (Support)</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Children Services Lead</li> <li>• Regional Adoption Service</li> <li>• Safe Looking After Children (LAC) Reduction Strategy</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)</li> <li>• YOS (Youth Offending Service)</li> <li>• Youth Services</li> </ul>



## Appendix 3 - CABINET PORTFOLIOS (as at 20 May)

<b>Delivery &amp; Operations (Joint Deputy Leader) (Cllr David Hopkins)</b>	<b>Education Improvement, Learning &amp; Skills (Cllr Robert Smith)</b>	<b>Environment Enhancement &amp; Infrastructure Management (Cllr Mark Thomas)</b>	<b>Climate Change &amp; Service Transformation (Joint Deputy Leader) (Cllr Andrea Lewis)</b>	<b>Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism (Cllr Robert Francis- Davies)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Control</li> <li>• Cemeteries, Crematoriums, Births, Deaths &amp; Marriages</li> <li>• City Profile</li> <li>• Collaboration Opportunities</li> <li>• Commercial Services, Procurement &amp; Frameworks</li> <li>• Councillor Champions – Overall Responsibility</li> <li>• Corporate Delivery of Priorities</li> <li>• Councillor Development</li> <li>• Democratic Services</li> <li>• Environmental Health incl. COVID-19 Regulation Enforcement</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety Policy</li> <li>• Houses in Multiple Occupation</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Landlord Licensing</li> <li>• Licensing Policy</li> <li>• Mayoral &amp; Civic Functions</li> <li>• Outside Bodies (Participation Oversight)</li> <li>• Petitions</li> <li>• Planning Policy</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Public Protection</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Policy Change Lead</li> <li>• Scrutiny Services</li> <li>• Strategic Estates &amp; Property Management</li> <li>• Statutory Nuisance Matters (inc. Noise, Pests, Overgrown Gardens)</li> <li>• Sustainable Development (incl. Biodiversity) Lead</li> <li>• Trade Union Engagement (JCC Lead Member)</li> <li>• Trading Standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21st Century Schools Programme (inc. School Building Upgrades)</li> <li>• Apprenticeships Lead</li> <li>• Catchment Review</li> <li>• City of Learning - Member of UNESCO COL Steering Group (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Commonwealth of Learning)</li> <li>• Children &amp; Young People Board Member</li> <li>• Education Regional Working (ERW) - Leader's Representative</li> <li>• Education Services from 3 to 19</li> <li>• Further Education</li> <li>• Future Schools Estate Scoping &amp; Delivery</li> <li>• Inclusion &amp; Learner Support</li> <li>• NEETS Prevention (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Lead</li> <li>• Quality in Education (QEd) Programme</li> <li>• Readiness for Work Lead</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Schools &amp; Education Lead</li> <li>• Regional Workforce Planning &amp; Skills Development</li> <li>• School Improvement</li> <li>• Schools Estate Planning &amp; Resources Planning</li> <li>• Schools' Organisation &amp; Performance</li> <li>• Skills &amp; Talent Project (City Deal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Quality &amp; Pollution Incidents</li> <li>• Coastal Defence</li> <li>• Community Caretakers (Non Housing Revenue Account - HRA)</li> <li>• Cycleways</li> <li>• Estates Maintenance Management (Non HRA)</li> <li>• Fleet Renewal &amp; Maintenance</li> <li>• Fly Tipping Task Force</li> <li>• Grass Cutting Services</li> <li>• Highways &amp; Engineering</li> <li>• Infrastructure Repairs &amp; Maintenance</li> <li>• Litter &amp; Community Cleansing</li> <li>• Marina, Foreshore &amp; Beach Maintenance</li> <li>• Parking Policy, Control &amp; Enforcement</li> <li>• Parks Maintenance</li> <li>• Pothole Task Force</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Place Based Service Lead</li> <li>• Regional Collaborations for Transport, Highways &amp; Waste</li> <li>• Regional Transport Policy (Lead Member of Joint Transport Authority)</li> <li>• Streetscene</li> <li>• Transport Services</li> <li>• Waste Management &amp; Recycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agile Rollout Programme - Lead</li> <li>• Building Services</li> <li>• Cooperative Housing</li> <li>• Council House Management</li> <li>• Council House Repairs</li> <li>• COVID-19 Response on Housing &amp; Homelessness</li> <li>• COVID-19 Recovery Plan – Strategic Service Transformation Lead</li> <li>• Energy Policy (inc. Generation, Supply &amp; District Heating)</li> <li>• Green Energy Infrastructure</li> <li>• Green Fleet Transport &amp; Green Vehicle Adoption</li> <li>• Homes as Power Stations (City Deal)</li> <li>• Homelessness Lead &amp; Supporting People</li> <li>• Housing Adaptions &amp; Renewal Schemes</li> <li>• Housing Policy, Affordable Housing &amp; Housing Options, Tenancy Support (Housing Support Grant)</li> <li>• More Homes Delivery</li> <li>• Organisational Development</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Public Services Board – Leader's Representative</li> <li>• Safer Swansea – Partnership Lead</li> <li>• Sheltered Housing</li> <li>• Tenancy Enforcement</li> <li>• Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Programme Lead</li> <li>• Western Gateway – Leader's Representative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business &amp; City Promotion</li> <li>• City Centre Management (inc. Swansea Market)</li> <li>• City Projects and Major Development Opportunities (Shaping Swansea)</li> <li>• City Waterfront &amp; Marina Promotion</li> <li>• Creative City</li> <li>• Culture, the Arts &amp; Galleries</li> <li>• Events and Attractions</li> <li>• Healthy Night Life / Purple Flag</li> <li>• Heritage Protection &amp; Restoration</li> <li>• Inward Investment Opportunities</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• New Local &amp; Regional Business Opportunities</li> <li>• Parks &amp; Play Development</li> <li>• Parks, Beaches and Foreshore Events &amp; Promotion</li> <li>• Play &amp; Sports Facilities</li> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Recovery Plan – Tourism Economy Lead</li> <li>• River Corridor Development</li> <li>• Science City</li> <li>• Suburban Centres &amp; Community Regeneration Initiatives</li> <li>• Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing</li> <li>• Universities Collaboration (Development)</li> </ul>

# Agenda Item 7



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report

<b>Purpose</b>	The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panel conveners will regularly provide a progress report, updating the Committee on headlines from their Panel's work and impact.
<b>Content</b>	This report focuses on the following Performance Panel: a) Service Improvement & Finance
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure awareness and understanding of the work of the Panel</li><li>• Consider its effectiveness and impact</li><li>• Consider any issues arising and action required</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Chris Holley (Panel convener)
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author</b>	Emily-Jayne Davies Tel: 01792 636292 E-mail: <a href="mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk">scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 There are six Performance Panels which have been established by the Committee. Whilst the work of an Inquiry Panel leads to the production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet based on evidence gathered on a specific issue, the work of a Performance Panel represents regular monitoring of, and challenge to, particular services / service areas and issues.
- 1.2 Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet / lead members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about the performance of services and service delivery.

1.3 The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panels Conveners will therefore provide a regular progress report to the Committee to enable:

- a discussion on the work of each Panel, achievements, effectiveness and impact
- the Committee to consider any issues arising from Panel activities which may have an impact on the overall scrutiny work programme
- awareness amongst the Committee as well as visibility across the council and public.

1.4 This report is about the following Performance Panel:

- a) Service Improvement & Finance – this is an update on work carried out since last report to the Committee in February 2021.

To focus the discussion a short written report has been provided by the convener, and is **attached**. This includes a summary of Panel activities, correspondence between the Panel and relevant Cabinet Members, recommendations and impact.

1.5 The Service Improvement & Finance Panel involves the following members:

**Labour Councillors: 3**

Phillip Downing	Des Thomas
Peter Jones	

**Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 5**

Peter Black	Mary Jones
<b>Chris Holley (CONVENER)</b>	Jeff Jones
Lynda James	

**Conservative Councillors: 2**

Paxton Hood-Williams	Brigitte Rowlands
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**Uplands Councillors: 1**

Irene Mann	
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## 2. Legal Implications

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

## 3. Financial Implications

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

**Background Papers:** None

### Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Performance Panel – SPC Update

**Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Update**

**1. Remit of the Panel**

The overarching purpose of the Panel is to ensure that the Council’s budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient. The Panel meets on a monthly basis.

**2. Key Activities**

Meetings have included a range of issues such as budget monitoring, annual performance reports and the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report as outlined in the table below.

Since the last update in February 2021 meetings have resulted in a number of convener’s letters to Cabinet Members. The issues covered were as follows:

8 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mid-Year Budget Statement 2020/21</li> <li>2. Q3 Budget Monitoring 2020/21</li> <li>3. Treasury Management Strategy</li> </ol>
12 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate Complaints Annual Report</li> </ol>
10 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update</li> <li>2. Annual Review of Work Plan 2020/21</li> </ol>
17 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Development of 71/72 The Kingsway &amp; 69/70 The Kingsway</li> </ol>
11 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overview: Understanding Financial Reporting</li> <li>2. Revenue Outturn, HRA Outturn and Capital Outturn and Financing 20-21</li> </ol>
23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report</li> <li>2. Overview: Byelaws</li> </ol>

**3. Achievements / Impact**

***Financial Monitoring***

The Panel has heard that in Q3 the Council submitted a loss of income claim to Welsh Government, the position regarding which has now been confirmed as £2.2M. We understand that officers have now submitted the Q4 loss of income claim, although the final awarded amount remains to be confirmed.

We heard that Capital financial requirements will go up by hundreds of millions of pounds, measured as a percentage of the revenue budget. Officers explained that, in every scenario, they see budgets going up, although subject to complex interplays. We heard that the Chief Finance Officer would have liked to have externalised borrowing already but, as restricted by law and the code of practice, cannot borrow in advance of need.

Officers explained that there are currently relatively low interest rates, which are favourable. We heard that there is a risk inflation will go up, and subsequently interest rates will also rise; officers explained that the Council would ideally externalise borrowing soon and to lock in at good rates.

We queried the general fund capital expenditure – there is now a £115M general requirement. We questioned why there is such a huge difference in original estimate / outturn. Officers explained that this is due to a direct consequence of building the Arena, fuelled by the field hospital expenditure. The Chief Finance Officer commented that this demonstrates the sheer amount of capital spend that is underway.

### ***Capital and Revenue Budget Monitoring***

The Panel noted the unprecedented figures outlined within this report and, in particular, the exceptional £50M reserves figure. It was explained to the Panel that these figures had come about due to the unparalleled level of funding and compensatory grants awarded by Welsh Government since the beginning of the pandemic. We heard that such funds covered compensation for failure to deliver planned savings, and extra digital costs to remain agile and flexible during lockdown.

Officers highlighted that the Revenue Outturn report demonstrated the sheer scale of money that flowed in and out, both to the Council directly and also through the Council as an Agent of Welsh Government providing support to businesses. Despite the positive reflections in the report, we are aware that future economic consequences remain unclear and the longer-term impacts unknown.

We heard that the Capital Financing costs, in the short to medium term, reflect significant underspends due to the deferring of the financing of the capital programmes by externalised borrowing. We noted that a Council Tax deficit of £2.5M has been neutralised as a consequence of grant compensation from Welsh Government.

### ***Corporate Complaints Performance Monitoring***

The Panel held a brief discussion about the circumstances surrounding the availability of the report, and the data therein, as impacted upon by the pandemic restrictions. The Panel's attention was drawn to the fact that this report was late coming to Scrutiny due to these unavoidable repercussions, both on workforce and resources. The Panel understood that this data was, therefore, somewhat out of date and look forward to a full discussion on this topic when the next report becomes available.

### ***Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update***

The Panel heard that the last fourteen months have been challenging, following pandemic restrictions in terms of internal work on properties. It was explained to the Panel that emergency repair work was carried out when required, and we acknowledged the hard work of staff working sympathetically and carefully during the pandemic. We recognise that this did

set back targets, however, we understand Welsh Government have addressed this and subsequently extended the compliance deadline.

Officers explained that the WHQS programme was introduced in 2002 with the objective of raising the standard of social housing across Wales, embracing a large number of legal and regulatory obligations. Officers explained that the Council has a duty to compile and present statistics annually. We heard that normal reporting cycles have been disrupted by the pandemic and this report subsequently covers the longer period from April 2019 to December 2020. The pandemic also impacted upon the ability to deliver the work programme. Welsh Government have given an extension of twelve months to meet the compliance period, now being 31st December 2021.

Officers outlined achievements since April 2019 as; an increase in compliance by 2,338 properties, a 17% increase in compliance since last reported. 5,795 properties are currently categorised as an acceptable fail, inclusive of 3,165 properties where residents have chosen not to participate in the scheme. Officers calculate that the Council will not achieve beyond 77% of compliance, in line with other Local Authorities statistical returns, due to tenant choice.

### ***Development of 71/72 The Kingsway & 69/70 The Kingsway: Pre-Decision Scrutiny***

The Panel, along with members of the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel, met on 17 May to consider the report presented to Cabinet on 20 May, and gave a view on the proposed decision. This item was considered in closed session in accordance with the cabinet report.

### ***Welsh Language Standards Annual Report***

Officers highlighted the new format of the report this year, in line with new guidance issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner in September 2020. We also heard that 2020-21 was a challenging year due to the pandemic restrictions, however, in general the Council has continued to make improvements on implementing the Welsh Language Standards.

Officers explained that the report aims to highlight updates across the Standards Groups (Service Delivery, Policy making, Operational, Promotional and Record-Keeping Standards). We understand that the Service Delivery standard continues to be a priority, and this is also the main area for which complaints are received. Officers explained that the complaints policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect helpful feedback from both the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Ombudsman.

Members queried the intention for the Council to review whether more jobs can be recruited with mandatory Welsh skills, and the possible effect on recruitment. Officers assured the Panel that this will not apply to all posts, based on skills and job markets, although some posts could be made mandatory Welsh in the future. The Panel raised concerns over whether this could jeopardise the availability of the right candidates, should Welsh language skills become mandatory. Officers highlighted that regard would be had to the five year strategy, enhancing training for existing staff.

#### 4. Future Work Programme

The Panel also have some new items for monitoring in the remainder of this year, including but not limited to:

<b>20 September</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q1 Budget Monitoring Report – 2021/22</li> <li>2. Peer Review &amp; Self-Assessment (Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021)</li> </ol>
<b>19 October</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q1 2021/22 Performance Monitoring Report (provisional)</li> <li>2. Mid-term Budget Statement</li> <li>3. Overview from Ben Smith: Understanding Financial Reporting (Reserves)</li> <li>4. Review of Reserves</li> </ol>
<b>16 November</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q2 Budget Monitoring 21-22</li> <li>2. Planning Annual Performance Report, inclusive of public questions.</li> </ol>
<b>15 December</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring</li> <li>2. Draft Budget Proposals (TBC)</li> </ol>
<b>18 January 2022</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Q2 2021/22 Performance Monitoring Report</li> <li>2. Sustainable Swansea Commissioning Reviews (Outcomes)</li> </ol>
<b>15 February 2022</b>	TBC
<b>22 March 2022</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan</li> <li>2. Welsh Public Library Standards – Annual Performance Report</li> </ol>

*It should be noted that there is the possibility of a further meeting regarding the City Deal, to clarify aspects of funding / projects.*



# Agenda Item 8



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide a report on the work of scrutiny for the municipal year 2020/21.
<b>Content</b>	This report provides background to the annual report and attaches the draft annual report 2020/21.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	Consider the annual report and endorse its presentation to Council.
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair Councillor Terry Hennegan, Vice Chair
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author(s)</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk">scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Catherine Window

#### 1. Introduction

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

1.2 The Scrutiny Annual Report is used to:

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

1.3 The report is produced as a simple scorecard. This approach is intended to highlight a small number of key indicators that illustrate four performance questions. These questions, which are intended to reflect a 'results based' approach, are:

- How much scrutiny did we carry out?
- How well did we do?
- How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?
- What were the outcomes of scrutiny?

1.4 Charts have been added that show comparative data with previous years where available. Arrows on the main scorecard have also been added to indicate the direction of change for each measure. As well as data, the report highlights stories about the impact made by scrutiny, and a reflection on efforts to improve and develop scrutiny.

1.5 Councillors should also consider whether the indicators will be suitable for future reports or whether different indicators should be used or developed.

1.6 Subject to agreement, the annual report could be presented to the next available Council meeting, which would be 2 September 2021.

## **2. Financial Implications**

2.1. There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

## **3. Legal Implications**

3.1. The Council Constitution requires that a scrutiny annual report is produced each year although the style and content of the annual report is not prescribed.

## **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

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

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

- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'. Our Integrated Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.
- 4.3 There are no impact assessment implications associated with this report.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21



# Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21

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Scrutiny Programme Committee  
City and County of Swansea - Dinas a Sir Abertawe



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# 1. Chair's Foreword

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor Peter Black

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## 2. Swansea Scrutiny Results Scorecard 2020-21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

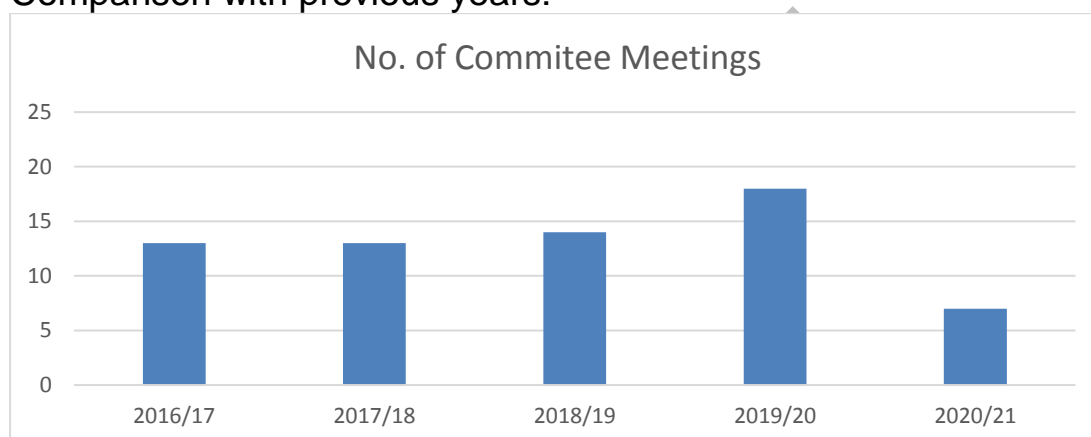
The Committee agreed a work programme that would cover the period until the end of the current Council term, in May 2022. Specific scrutiny activities included in the work programme are carried out either by the Committee or by establishing informal Panels and Working Groups. All meetings are held in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

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

The following topics were also examined by the Committee:

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

Comparison with previous years:



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

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

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

There are two types of panels:

**Inquiry Panels** - these undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis, usually around six months, and will produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered.

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

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

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

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

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

Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services. Performance Panels will hold relevant Cabinet Members to account with clear opportunities for questioning, to explore their work, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. Performance Panel conveners provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Workforce
- Digital Inclusion

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

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

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

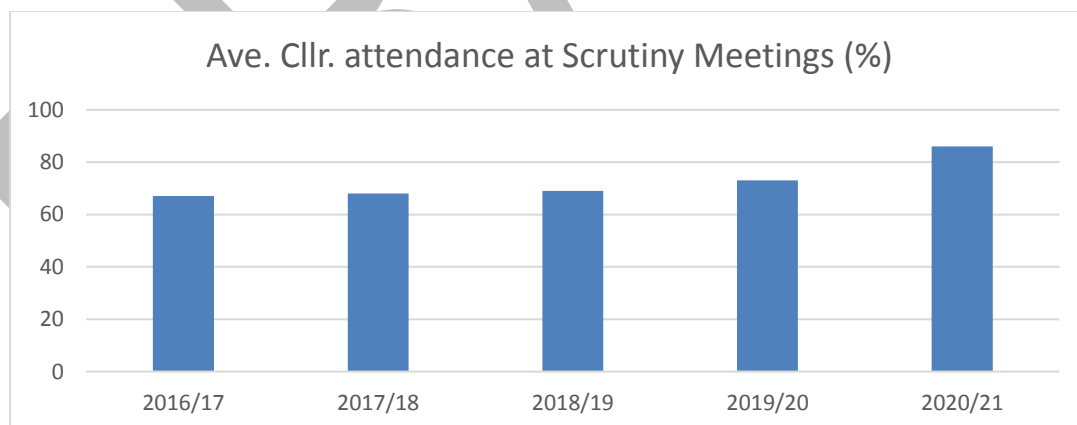
The rate of councillor attendance measures an important aspect of effectiveness as it reflects the engagement of councillors in the scrutiny process.

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

Attendance figures for councillors are collected by the Council's Democratic Services Team and published on the Council's website. Our figure is an overall attendance figure that includes the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Panel meetings and Working Groups. Attendance at the Committee meetings was 90%.

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

Comparison with previous years:

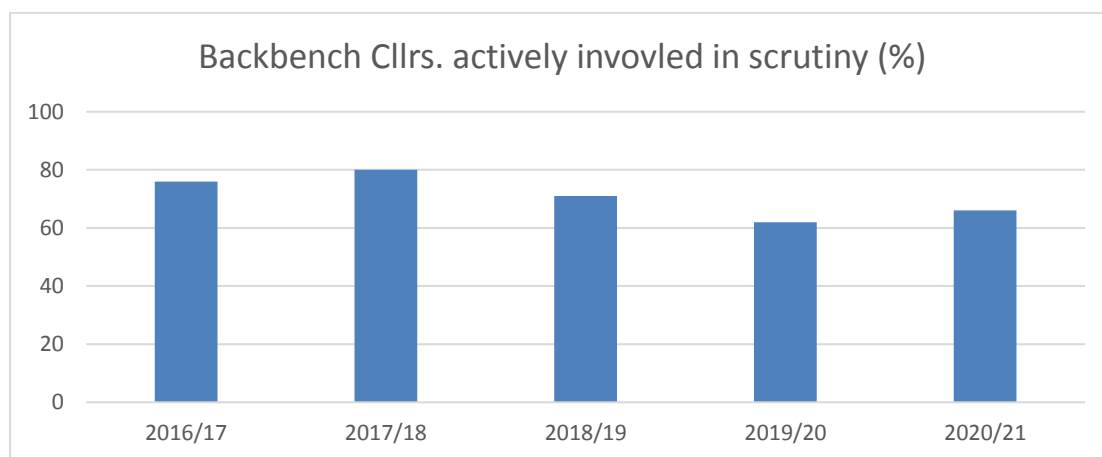


### **3.6 Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 66%**

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

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

Comparison with previous years:



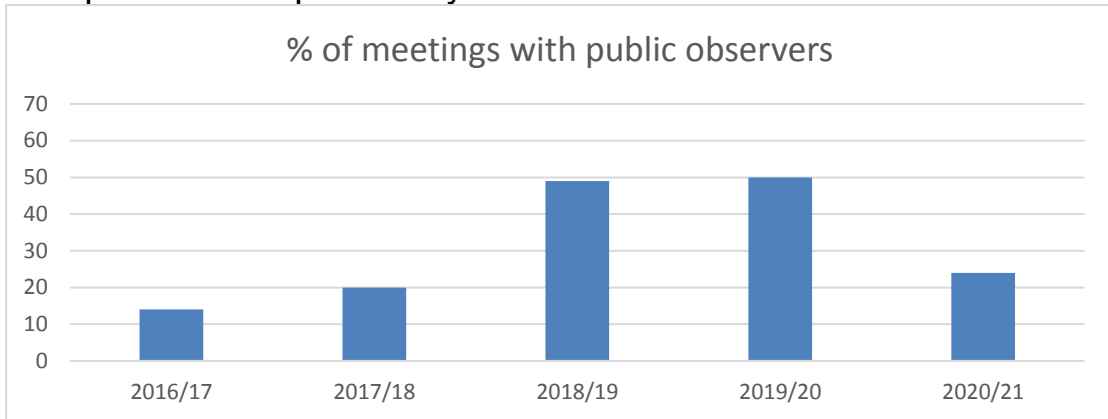
### 3.7 Meetings with public observers = 24%

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

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



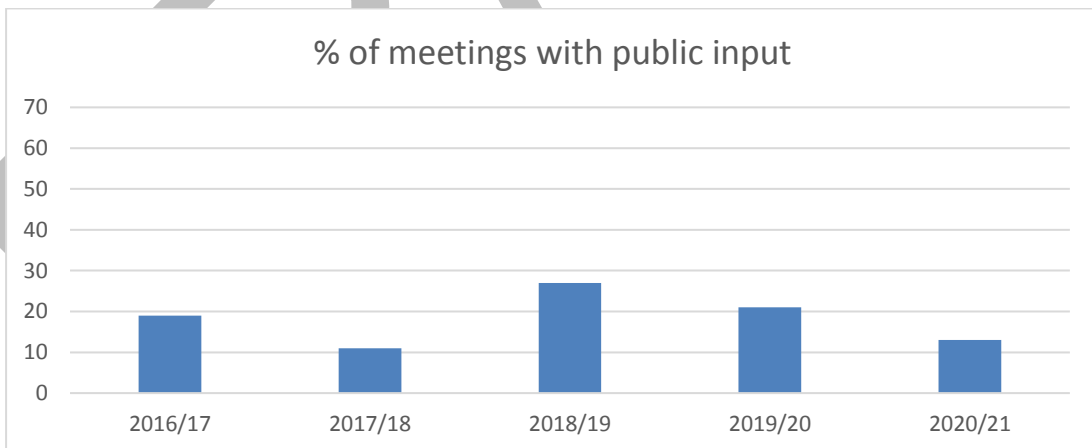
Comparison with previous years:



### 3.8 Meetings with public input = 13%

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

Comparison with previous years:

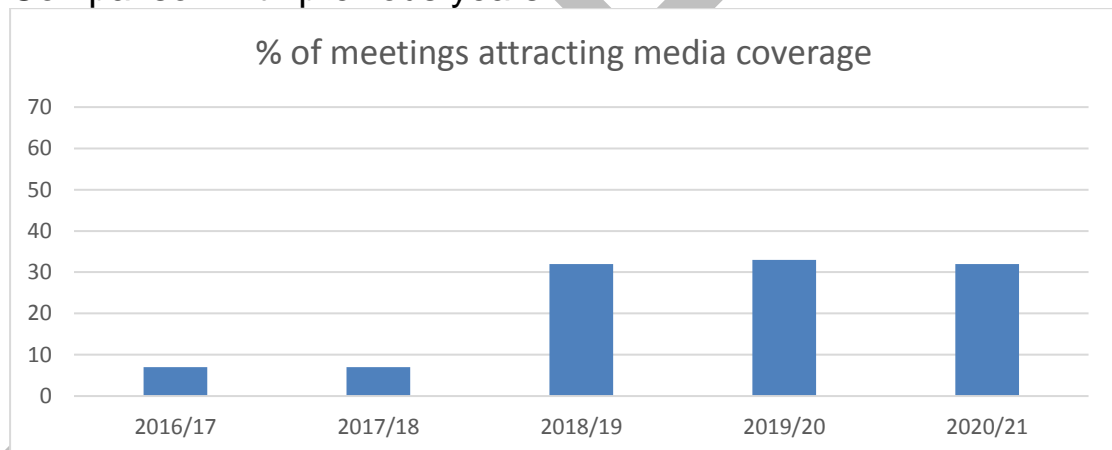


### 3.9 Meetings attracting media coverage = 32%

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

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

Comparison with previous years:

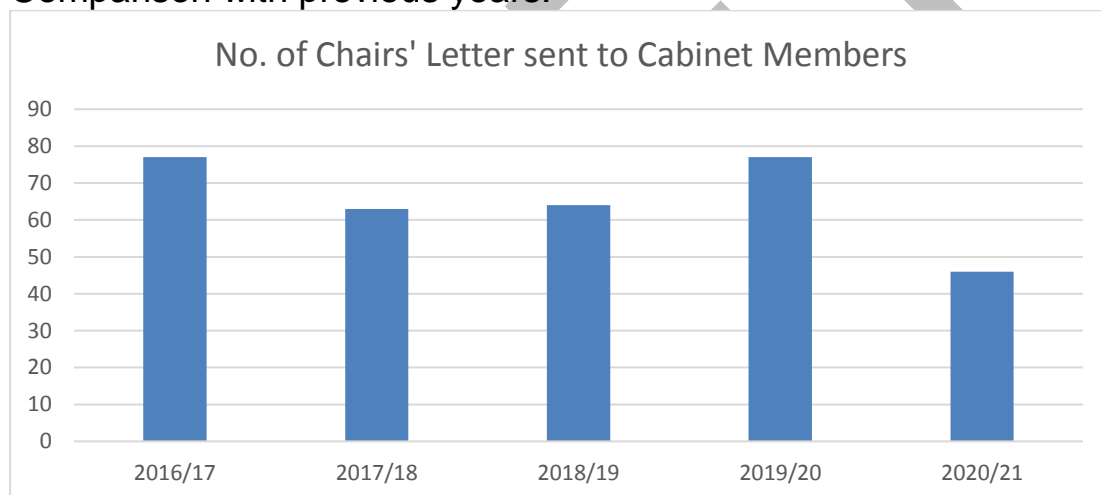


## C. How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?

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

Chairs letters are an established part of the scrutiny process in Swansea. They allow the Committee and Panel meetings / Working Groups to communicate quickly and efficiently directly with relevant cabinet members. They will send letters to raise concerns, recognise good practice, ask for further information and make recommendations for improvement, reflecting the discussion at Committee / Panel / Working Group meetings. Letters are effectively 'mini-reports' with conclusions and proposals from scrutiny – and where necessary require a response. 46 letters were sent to Cabinet Members.

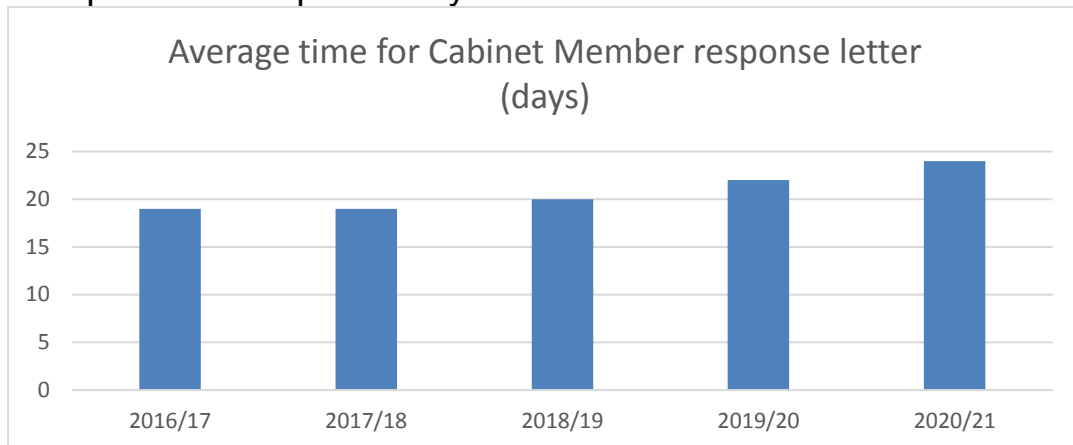
Comparison with previous years:



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

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

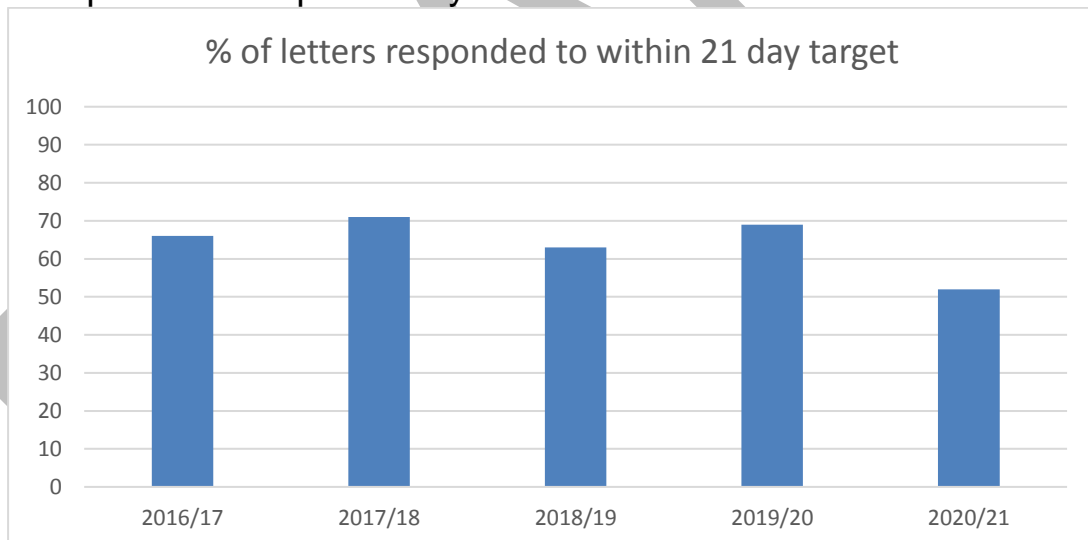
Comparison with previous years:



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

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

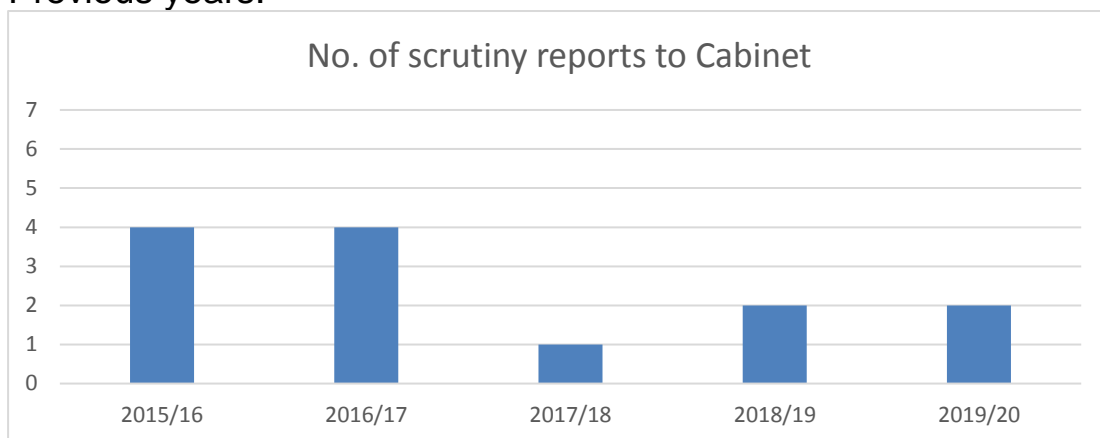
Comparison with previous years:



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

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

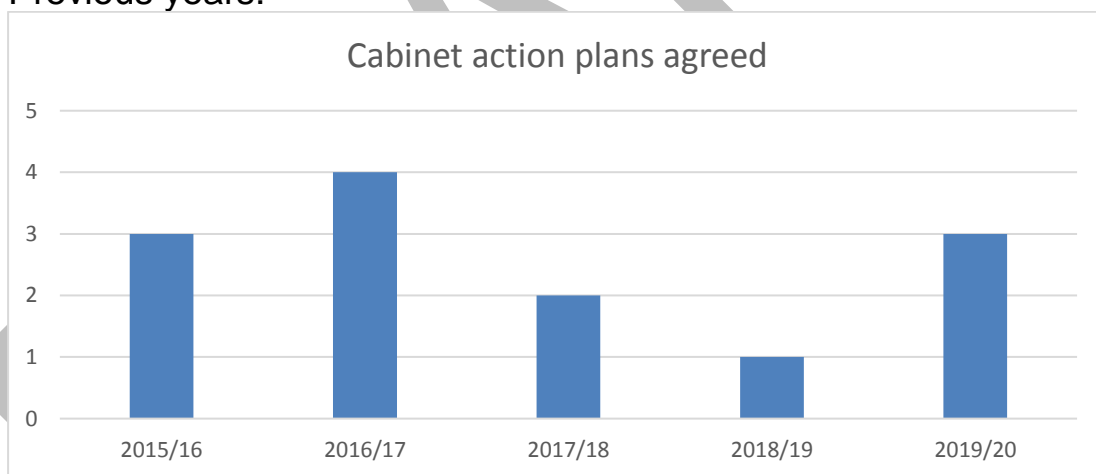
Previous years:



### 3.14 Cabinet action plans agreed = 0

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

Previous years:



### 3.15 Follow ups undertaken = 1

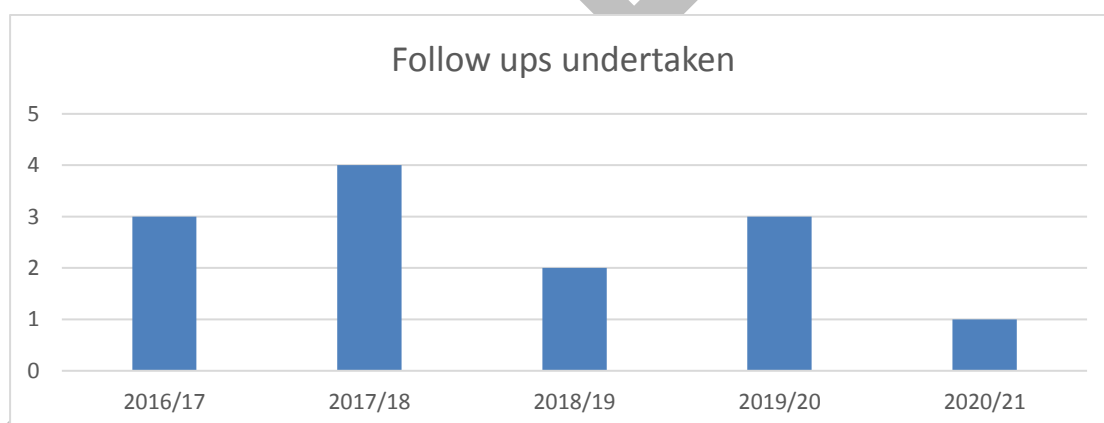
Inquiry Panels reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and Cabinet action plans, and assess the impact of their work. A meeting will usually be held 6-12 months following Cabinet decision, with a further follow up arranged if required.

In order to check whether the agreed action plans have been carried out, scrutiny will ask for follow up reports from Cabinet Members. If councillors are satisfied they can then conclude the work for that inquiry. Previous scrutiny inquiries that required a follow up were followed up:

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

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

Comparison with previous years:

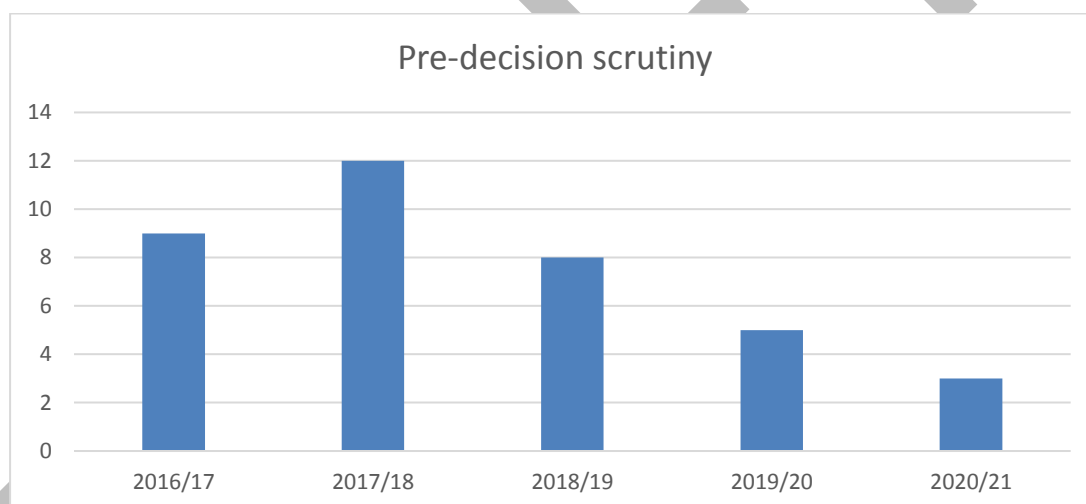


### 3.16 Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre-decision scrutiny = 3

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

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

Comparison with previous years:



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

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



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

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

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

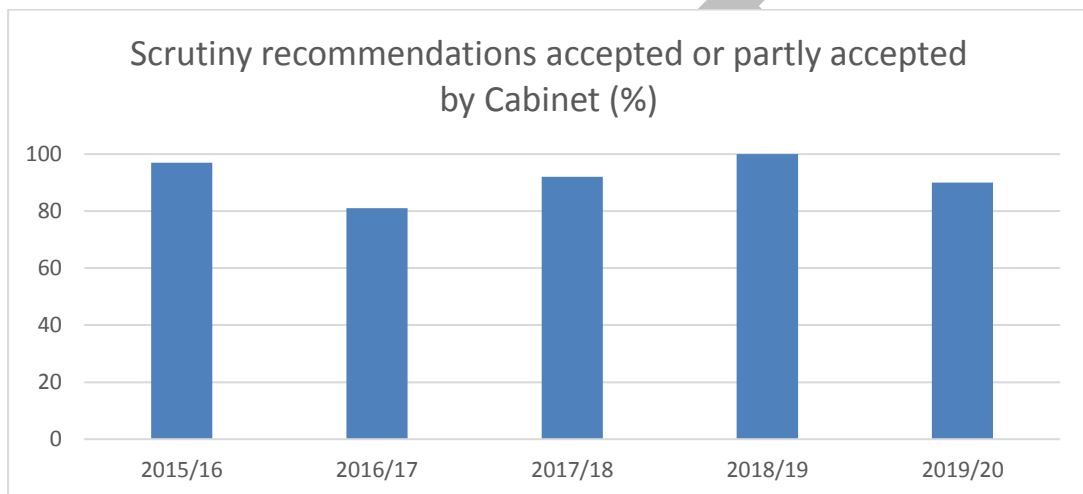
Although there are 10 Cabinet Portfolios, during 2020/21 there were 11 councillors in cabinet positions. The Supporting Communities portfolio operating under a job share system between two councillors sharing the responsibilities. Our target is always 100%.

## D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?

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

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

Previous years:



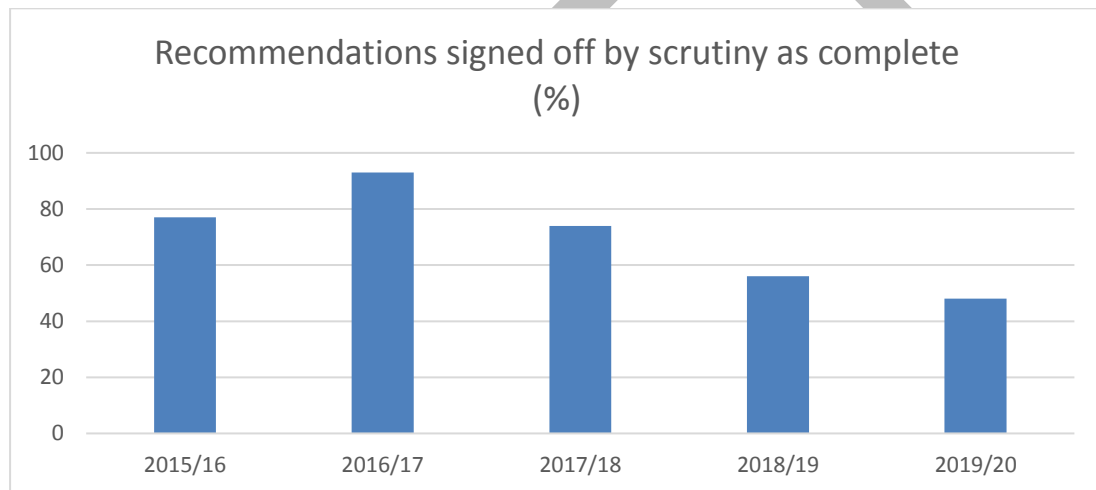
### 3.20 Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = n/a

When follow up reports are presented to scrutiny (usually within 12 months following original Cabinet decision) they detail which of the recommendations from the in-depth inquiry (or other scrutiny report) have been completed in line with the agreed cabinet member's action plan and which have not. In the case of in-depth inquiries scrutiny councillors consider whether they agree with the assessment about implementation of recommendations, taking into account the evidence they are presented with about the changes that have happened following scrutiny and its impact. This indicator would represent the percentage of recommendations accepted by scrutiny as being completed for the year.

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

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

Previous years:



## **4. Impact**

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

#### 4.1.1 Scrutiny Councillors make a difference by:

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

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

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

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

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

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

This includes reference to:

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

## 5. Feedback and Improvement

### 5.1 Improving Scrutiny

5.1.1 It is good practice for those involved in the scrutiny function to undertake regular self-evaluation of this work. Taking into account characteristics of effective scrutiny and experiences, it is important for the continuous improvement of the function that any issues identified about current scrutiny practice are discussed and addressed. Annual review discussions are usually held within the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Scrutiny Performance Panels towards the end of each municipal year.

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

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

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

## 5.2 Scrutiny Improvement Objectives

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

### **WAO Proposals for Improvement**

- 1) The Council should consider the skills and training that scrutiny members may need to better prepare them for current and future challenges, and develop and deliver an appropriate training and development programme, including providing additional training on the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.
- 2) The Council should strengthen its evaluation of the impact and outcomes of its scrutiny activity.
- 3) The Council should further clarify the distinction between scrutiny and Policy Development Committee activity in relation to policy development.

### **Councillor Improvement Issues**

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

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

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



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

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

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

DRAFT

## For further information:

### **Making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible**

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

### **Connect with Scrutiny:**

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

Twitter: @swanseascrutiny

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

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

# Scrutiny Dispatches

City & County of Swansea – 2020/2021

‘How scrutiny councillors are making a difference’

## Continuing to play a role in Regional Scrutiny

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

### Swansea Bay City Deal

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Education Through Regional Working (ERW)

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

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

- Support consistent scrutiny across each council
- Share scrutiny good practice
- Encourage shared scrutiny approaches and avoid the duplication of scrutiny work
- Provide critical and objective challenge to ERW on topics of interest as required
- Contribute to the good and effective governance of ERW

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

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

## Continuing to monitor issues of public concern

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

*(Lead: Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Active Travel

*(Lead: Councillor Peter Black)*

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

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

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

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

*(Lead: Councillor Cyril Anderson)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*(Lead: Councillor Chris Holley)*

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

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

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

## Considering work done to increase digital inclusion in Swansea

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

*(Lead: Councillor Lesley Walton)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





## Chair's Round up

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

### Chairing Scrutiny

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

### Work planning

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

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

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

### Adapting the work of Scrutiny

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

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

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

### **Questioning Cabinet Members**

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

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

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

### **Leading scrutiny activities**

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

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

### **Annual Report published**

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

# Agenda Item 9



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

<b>Purpose:</b>	The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups that are established. This report advises of relevant matters that need to be considered.
<b>Content:</b>	This report is provided to facilitate any changes that need to be made.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• agree the membership of Panels and Working Groups reported, and any other changes necessary.</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with Council report 18 October 2012, when current scrutiny arrangements were agreed, the Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups that are established.

#### 2. Proposed Revision to Current Scrutiny Panel / Working Group Membership

- 2.1 Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel

ADD Councillor Joe Hale.

This will take the membership of the Panel to 14.

### **3. Guiding Principles**

3.1 When determining membership / conveners or agreeing any changes there are some key considerations for the Committee:

- It is necessary for more than one political group to be represented on each Panel / Working Group.
- These bodies also need to be of a manageable size in terms of team working and effective questioning.
- To ensure that all political groups have opportunities and are engaged.
- Good scrutiny practice places emphasis on respect for minority party wishes around both chairing of such bodies and the work programme.
- Being fair and balanced in the appointment of conveners, when there is interest from more than one councillor, e.g. giving opportunity to those who have not acted as convener previously.
- The Committee should reflect on the existing 'balance' of conveners to help inform future appointments.
- A minimum of three members should be present at all Panel / Working Group meetings.

### **4. Legal Implications**

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

### **5. Financial Implications**

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

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** None

# Agenda Item 10



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Scrutiny Work Programme

<b>Purpose</b>	This report presents the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/22, which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.
<b>Content</b>	The agreed work programme is attached, which shows the topics that will be examined by scrutiny through various Panels and Working Groups. A plan for future Committee meetings is also attached. Progress against the agreed work programme is shown.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• plan for the Committee meetings ahead</li><li>• consider opportunities for Pre-decision Scrutiny</li><li>• review the Scrutiny Work Programme (including progress of current Panels and Working Groups)</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's scrutiny work programme, and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- 1.2 A report is provided to each meeting to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of agreed scrutiny activities, monitor progress, and coordinate work as necessary.
- 1.3 The broad aim of the scrutiny function is to engage non-executive councillors in activities to:

- provide an effective challenge to the executive
- help improve services, policies, and performance
- engage the public in its work

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

It also needs to be:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
- relevant to Council priorities
- adding value and having maximum impact
- coordinated and avoids duplication

1.5 The work of scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the Committee itself, by establishing informal Panels (for in-depth activities) or via one-off Working Groups. Panels and Working Groups would be open to all non-executive councillors - the Committee will determine membership and conveners following expressions of interest.

1.6 Scrutiny will regularly send letters to Cabinet Members communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, by producing reports. Inquiry panels will always produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered. Inquiry panels will reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and the impact of their work – usually 6-12 months following cabinet decision.

1.7 Although much of the work of scrutiny is carried out by informal Panels and Working Groups these meetings are accessible to the public. Agendas, reports and letters relating to all such scrutiny activities are published, in the same manner as the committee, on the Council's modern.gov online platform:

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

## **2. Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22**

2.1.1 The agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/22 is set out in **Appendix 1**.

2.1.2. The following paragraphs break down the work programme by specific ways of working to provide a brief overview.

## 2.2 Scrutiny Programme Committee:

2.2.1 The Committee's own work plan is attached as **Appendix 2**. This should be kept under review to ensure it represents a robust, manageable, and effective plan. As well as keeping an oversight on all scrutiny activities, the Committee plan covers a broad range of policy and service topics and aims to ensure coverage of scrutiny across all cabinet portfolios and address any gaps in the overall work programme. The Committee is also the designated Council Committee for scrutiny of the Public Services Board, and Crime & Disorder Scrutiny.

2.2.2 Committee members should review and confirm items for the next and future meetings giving specific consideration to who should attend so that meetings are always well planned and prepared for, e.g. information required and key questions that the Committee wishes to ask.

2.2.3 The main item(s) scheduled for the next Committee meeting on 14 September are:

- Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities:
  - a) Councillor Mark Thomas - Litter And Community Cleansing
  - b) Councillor Andrea Lewis - Energy Policy (incl. Generation, Supply & District Heating)

Cabinet Members, will attend, along with lead officers, to report on aims / objectives, plans, and the delivery of work related to these portfolio objectives. This should provide Committee members with a greater understanding of what these responsibilities entail, resources, priorities, key headlines / achievements, performance measures, and overall assessment of service health (including, for example, how we compare with others, challenges / risks) and impact / difference made. This will give the Committee the chance to ask focused questions and provide challenge on actions and performance in relation to these areas of responsibility, as well as future thinking.

2.2.4 The Committee will have the opportunity to review priorities and introduce issues of concern as and when they arise, e.g. pre-decision scrutiny or call-in, which may require extra meetings.

2.2.5 Pre-decision Scrutiny – this is carried out by the Committee unless delegated elsewhere. The Committee is invited to consider the available information on future Cabinet business and any opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny, taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications (see Cabinet Forward Plan attached as **Appendix 3**). Any requests will require discussion with relevant Cabinet Member(s) to confirm timescales and window of opportunity for scrutiny involvement. Pre-decision scrutiny enables scrutiny to develop



understanding about and ask questions on proposed Cabinet reports to provide 'critical friend' challenge and influence decision-making. The future Cabinet report on 'Business Case for the Relocation of the Civic Centre' has already been identified for pre-decision scrutiny and will be scheduled for Committee discussion in accordance with Cabinet decision-making timetable.

### 2.3 Inquiry Panels:

2.3.1 Once membership and a convener have been appointed the first task of an Inquiry Panel is to have a briefing on the issue and then determine the key question and terms of reference for the inquiry. Once the planning stage is complete, the inquiry will be evidence gathering, with the last stage being to develop the final report.

<b>In Progress / Planned</b>	<b>Completed (follow up stage)</b>
1. <b>Procurement</b> (evidence gathering)	1. <b>Equalities</b> (followed up 28 Jan & further follow up tba Nov 2021)

### 2.4 Performance Panels:

2.4.1 The following Performance Panels, which enables regular and structured monitoring of performance within these key areas, have been agreed and will meet on an ongoing basis until otherwise agreed by the Committee (frequency of meetings in brackets):

<b>Performance Panel</b>	<b>Convener</b>
1. <b>Service Improvement &amp; Finance</b> (monthly)	Cllr. Chris Holley
2. <b>Education</b> (monthly)	Cllr. Lyndon Jones
3. <b>Adult Services</b> (every six weeks)	Cllr. Susan Jones
4. <b>Child &amp; Family Services</b> (every six weeks)	Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams
5. <b>Development &amp; Regeneration</b> (every two months)	Cllr. Jeff Jones
6. <b>Natural Environment</b> (every two months)	Cllr. Peter Jones

2.4.2 Performance Panel conveners are scheduled to provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact.

## 2.5 Working Groups:

2.5.1 The following Working Groups are in the work programme. Dates of meetings already held, or planned for the year ahead:

<b>1. Workforce (29 March 2021, further meeting tba Nov 2021)</b> <b>2. Digital Inclusion (11 May 2021)</b>	<b>3. Bus Services (7 July 2021)</b> <b>4. Healthy City (tbc Sep 2021)</b>
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2.5.2 Additional Working Groups may be arranged, as time and resources allow, with reference to the identified reserve list of topics:

- Road Safety
- Active Travel
- Accessibility for the Disabled / Elderly

## 2.6 Regional Scrutiny:

2.6.1 **Education Through Regional Working** - Swansea Scrutiny has been involved, since 2016, in an informal regional scrutiny arrangement with the four (formerly six) councils participating in the 'Education Through Regional Working' (ERW) school improvement consortium. A Scrutiny Councillor Group has been meeting regularly to provide challenge to ERW, coordinate scrutiny work across the region and ensure a consistent approach. Swansea is represented by the chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and convener of the Education Performance Panel, with chairing rotated each meeting between the councils. The Swansea Scrutiny Team is providing the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

The Committee will be aware of decision to wind down the ERW regional consortium and establish a new South West Wales Education Partnership consisting of Swansea Council, Carmarthenshire Council and Pembrokeshire Council. A legal agreement between the Councils will confirm the terms of the partnership and governance arrangements, including scrutiny arrangements. Within item 11 of the agenda (Scrutiny Letters) there is latest correspondence between the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group and the Chair of the ERW Joint Committee. At the last meeting of the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel, Panel members heard about how things have moved forward and noted the following:

- A Shadow South West Wales Education Partnership Joint Committee has met twice.
- Concerns raised by the Scrutiny Councillor Group were discussed in this meeting.
- ERW would not wind down fully by 31 August 2021 and there will be a period of transition required.

- The staffing structure for the new partnership has been reduced in proportion to new body with a scaling down of approximately 40%.
- Agreement has been made in principle that services of the new Partnership would be available to other local authorities.
- The Governance structure will appear in the new legal agreement. This is currently in draft and needs to be finalised. It includes some of the issues raised by the Scrutiny Councillor Group. There is still work to be done and it is planned that the draft legal agreement will go to each Local Authority in the autumn.

2.6.2 **Swansea Bay City Region City Deal** – Swansea Scrutiny is also involved in the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee established during 2018/19. This formal arrangement involves three Councillor representatives from each of the four Councils involved in the City Deal, meeting to scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal programme. Swansea’s Councillor representatives, appointed by Council, are: Jan Curtice, Phil Downing & Jeff Jones. As per Joint Agreement, the Joint Scrutiny Committee is serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Although originally scheduled to meet quarterly meetings, additional meetings are being arranged as required.

### 3. **Monitoring the Work Programme**

3.1 The Committee is responsible for monitoring progress against the agreed work programme and this includes work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings, to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility.

3.2 **Appendix 4a** provides a timetable of all scrutiny activities (projected or actual where dates are known). Lead councillors and officers are also noted within.

3.3 **Appendix 4b** provides a snapshot of progress with all of the Panels and Working Groups established by the Committee and their current position.

3.4 Although a work programme has been agreed, with activities identified to take things up to the end of the current Council term (May 2022), the work programme is kept under constant review by the Committee, with changes made as necessary. The Committee will always retain the flexibility to adapt and re-prioritise the work of scrutiny, to ensure the continued relevance of the programme.

### 4. **Public Requests for Scrutiny / Councillor Calls for Action**

4.1 A public request for scrutiny of issues relating to planning services has been received by the Convener of the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel, Councillor Chris Holley. Issues raised will be explored during consideration of the Annual Planning Performance Report by the Panel at a meeting planned for 16 November.

## **5. Financial Implications**

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

## **6. Legal Implications**

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

**Background papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Programme Committee Work Plan 2021/22

Appendix 3: Cabinet Forward Plan

Appendix 4a: Scrutiny Work Programme – Projected Timetable of Activity

Appendix 4b: Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

## Appendix 1 – Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22

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

## Appendix 1 – Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22

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

## Appendix 2

### Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2021/22

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



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

\* denotes extra meeting

To be scheduled:

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

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

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2021 – 2022

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Annual Equality Review 2020/21.</b>	To publish the Council's Annual Equality Review for 2020/21 in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty and reporting regulations for Wales	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Business Improvement & Performance	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open
<b>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032.</b>	<p>This report seeks Cabinet approval to consult on Swansea's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2022-2032). The plan sets out proposals on how Swansea Council will carry out its education functions to:</p> <p>i. Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh; and</p> <p>ii. Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area;</p>	Rhodri Jones	Cabinet Member - Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2021 – 2022

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Increased Planned Places at Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn.</b>	Cabinet need to consider objections raised during the statutory notice period and determine the outcome of the proposal to increase the planned places at Ysgol Pen-y-bryn special school, to meet increasing demand.	Kelly Small	Cabinet Member - Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open
<b>Quarter 1 2021/22 Performance Monitoring Report.</b>	To report the performance indicator results and summarise the Council's performance meetings its priorities for the first quarter period April 2021 – June 2021.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Business Improvement & Performance	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open
<b>Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 1st Quarter 2021/22.</b>	To note any significant variations from the agreed budget 2021/22 and savings plan and the actions planned to achieve a balanced budget.	Ben Smith	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open
<b>Copr Bay Car Parking Charges.</b>	To seek approval of City Centre Car Parking Charges for the new Copr Bay North and South Multi Storey Car Parks.	Gavin Newman	Cabinet Member - Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open

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## Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2021 – 2022

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>FPR7 Report - Hafod Copperworks Powerhouse Redevelopment Project Update Report.</b>	To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No.7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals) - to commit and authorise the addition of schemes to the Capital Programme.	Richard Horlock	Cabinet Member - Business Improvement & Performance, Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Fully exempt
<b>Leasehold Sale of Land (Tennis Courts) at Langland Bay.</b>	The land has been advertised on the open market and tenders received. Bids have been analysed and a preferred bidder has now been identified and authority to enter into a lease is requested.	Lewis Hinds	Cabinet Member - Delivery & Operations (Deputy Leader), Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Fully exempt
<b>Disposal of Highway Land at Mumbles.</b>	The report updates members on progress to date and the necessity to adopt a revised approach in respect of the potential disposal of the land identified	David Turner	Cabinet Member - Delivery & Operations (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Fully exempt

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2021 – 2022

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>City Deal - Life Science &amp; Well-being Campuses - Business Case.</b>	To outline the business case and any implications for the Local authority and approve the onward submission to the regional Joint committee and UK and Welsh Governments.	Geoff Bacon	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open
<b>Review of the Gambling Policy.</b>	The report sets out the legislative requirements in respect of producing, publishing and reviewing the Council's Gambling Policy. Provides information on when the Gambling Policy was last reviewed, details of the basis for the current review of the policy, the results of the consultation undertaken and the proposed changes to the policy.	Lynda Anthony	Cabinet Member - Delivery & Operations (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	16 Sep 2021	Open

### Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2021 – 2022

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
<b>Annual Review of Performance 2020/21.</b>	To report the Council's compliance with its statutory obligations to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement as set out under Part 1 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Business Improvement & Performance	Cabinet	21 Oct 2021	Open
<b>Proposed Appropriation of General Fund Sites by Housing Revenue Account.</b>	To consider the potential appropriation of identified General Fund residential development sites to the Housing Revenue Account in order to support affordable housing provision via the More Homes initiative.	Carol Morgan, Stuart Ramsey	Cabinet Member - Climate Change & Service Transformation (Deputy Leader), Cabinet Member - Delivery & Operations (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Oct 2021	Fully exempt
<b>Quarter 2 2020/21 Performance Monitoring Report.</b>	To report the performance indicator results and summarise the Council's performance meetings its priorities for the second quarter period July 2020 – September 2020.	Richard Rowlands	Cabinet Member - Business Improvement & Performance	Cabinet	16 Dec 2021	Open



## Scrutiny Work Programme 2021-22 – Projected Timetable of Activity (actual dates shown)

Activity / Month	MAY 2021	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
<b>SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Brij Madahar Lead Cabinet Member: cross-cutting Lead CMT: cross-cutting Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	18 2020/21 year	15	13	17	14	19	16	14	18	15	15	19 to be cancelled
<b>INQUIRY PANELS:</b>		Planning	Evidence Gathering						Findings/Final Report			
<b>Procurement</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: David Hopkins Lead CMT: Adam Hill Lead Head of Service: Chris Williams		24	27	16	13 27							
<b>Equalities Follow Up</b> (Cabinet decision: 21 November 2019) First follow up - 28 Jan 2021 Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Alyson Pugh / Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Adam Hill / Sarah Lackenby Lead Head of Service: Lee Wenham							2					

## Appendix 4a

Activity / Month	MAY 2021	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
<b>PERFORMANCE PANELS:</b>												
<b>Service Improvement &amp; Finance</b> (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Emily Davies Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / Andrew Stevens Lead CMT: Adam Hill / Ben Smith Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	10 & 17* <small>2020/21 year</small>	11 & 23			20	19	16	15	18	15	22	
<b>Education</b> (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	13 <small>2020/21 year</small>	24	15		1 30	21	18	9	20	17 Budget date TBC	24	
<b>Adult Services</b> (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Sue Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Mark Child Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Amy Hawkins / Helen St John		2	14		8	20	30		12	Budget date TBC	2	
<b>Child &amp; Family Services</b> (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Paxton Hood-Williams Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Elliot King Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Julie Davies	25	22		11	21		3	13	25	Budget date TBC	9	



Activity / Month	MAY 2021	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
<b>Topic 3 – Bus Services</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Mark Thomas Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls Lead Head of Service: Stuart Davies			7									
<b>Topic 4 – Healthy City</b> Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Mary Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Mark Child / Robert Francis-Davies Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Tracey McNulty												
<b>REGIONAL SCRUTINY:</b>												
<b>ERW - Education through Regional Working</b> (quarterly) Lead Scrutiny Councillors: Lyndon Jones / Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead ERW: Ian Altman / Greg Morgan / Gareth Morgans Lead Cabinet Member: Jennifer Raynor Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Regional Lead: Phil Roberts (Lead Director for ERW)		28										

Appendix 4a

Activity / Month	MAY 2021	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
<b>Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee</b> (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Rob James (Carmarthenshire Council) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Jan Curtice / Phil Downing / Jeff Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Stacy Curran, Neath Port Talbot Council Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Phil Roberts / Martin Nicholls Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes			20		27		29		11		8	

\* denotes extra meeting

Information correct as of 10/08/21 10:56

## Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

### 1. Inquiry Panels:

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis, and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers).

#### a) Procurement (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

Key Question: What is the Council doing to ensure it procures locally, ethically, and greenly while being cost effective and transparent in its practices?

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

On the 27 July the Panel met with Internal Audit to look how Procurement is audited. The Panel will now start their meetings with individual Council Departments starting with the Place Directorate on the 16 August.

The inquiry may take up to six months to complete, as it will call for wide ranging evidence, and will lead to a report with conclusions and recommendations that will be presented to Cabinet.

### 2. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

Follow-ups of inquiries will consider both the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and wider impact / difference made. Inquiry Panels are reconvened between 6-12 months after cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Equalities	21 Nov 2019	18	0	0	28 Jan 2021 Further follow up tba Nov 2021

### 3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

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

This Panel meets every month. A progress report appears separately under Agenda Item 7.

b) **Education** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Panel meets every month. At its most recent meeting on 15 July the Panel looked at how the delegated spend to secondary schools, relating to the Behaviour Strategy is being spent, meeting with two Headteacher's. The Panel Convener also updated the Panel on the current position in relation to ERW and the new Education Partnership following the regional scrutiny meeting on the 28 June.

Estyn is coming to the next Panel meeting on the 1 September to discuss the new Estyn Regime and Thematic Reviews. The Panel will also be updated on the current position with the Education Covid Recovery Plan and the New Regional Education Partnership.

c) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its last meeting on 14 July the Panel discussed the latest Performance Monitoring Report, received initial feedback on the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Visit in relation to Adult Services and agreed its work programme for 2021-22.

At its next meeting on 08 September the Panel will discuss the Workforce Support Programme - Support for Health and Social Care Staff.

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

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. The Panel last met on 22 June and received an update on the Regional Adoption Service, discussed initial feedback on the CIW Assurance Visit and agreed its work programme for 2021-22.

At its next meeting on 11 August the Panel will discuss the latest Performance Monitoring Report, receive a briefing on the CIW Assurance Visit Full Report in relation to Child and Family Services and a briefing on the Outcomes from the Ty Nant CIW Inspection.

e) **Development & Regeneration** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

This Panel meets every two months. The Panel met on 1 July to discuss the monitoring Dashboard Report and updates across all major projects.

At the next meeting on 7 September, the Panel will receive a presentation from Swansea University in relation to their involvement with the City Deal investment projects.

f) **Natural Environment** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

This Panel meets every two months. The Panel last met on 29 June, holding discussions surrounding the Council's Air Quality Management strategies. The Panel also heard from Swansea University regarding research into the human-health impacts of Air Quality. The Panel will next meet on 26 August to hear updates regarding Ash Die Back.

#### **4. Regional Scrutiny:**

This is collaborative scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

a) **Education Through Regional Working**

The Scrutiny Councillor Group met for the last time in its current form on the 28 June 2021. They met with the Lead Director and the ERW Chief Officers to discuss ERW and the move to the new Education Regional Partnership. They also discussed progress with the Business Plan and how they would like to see Scrutiny operate under the new Partnership.

The new South West Region Education Partnership will commence shortly, and will include Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. The Governance Structure for the new body is currently being finalised and will go to each of the three Councils for discussion in autumn. The new scrutiny arrangement will form part of this Governance Structure.

b) **Swansea Bay City Region City**

The Joint Scrutiny Committee continues to monitor the City Deal programme. The Committee met on 20 July and considered the Swansea Bay City Deal Annual Report. There was also specific discussion on: Skills & Talent Business Case, Swansea Bay City Deal Change Control Procedure, Benefits Realisation - Benefits Profiles, as well as overall programme and financial monitoring. The next meeting is planned for 27 September with focus on: Pentre Awel Project, Digital Infrastructure.



## 5. Working Groups:

A number of new topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting (in the order shown below) primarily involving discussion with relevant cabinet member(s) / officer(s), and any other persons called, to gather information, ask questions, and give views / raise any concerns.

### a) **Workforce** (convener: Cllr Cyril Anderson)

This Working Group met on 29 March 2021 and asked about the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of staff; how the Council is supporting this; issues around home working; staff sickness; staff turnover; use of agency staff and pressures. A range of information was considered by the Working Group, with input from relevant Cabinet Member(s) and officer(s). A letter with the Working Group's conclusions and recommendations was sent to the relevant Cabinet Members and this letter together with the Cabinet Members response was reported to the Committee in June.

With the Committee's agreement, the Working Group will meet again in the next six months in order to revisit the topic and consider the latest position, information and experience including the results of the further staff survey that will be carried out by the Council in the coming months.

### b) **Digital Inclusion** (convener: Cllr Lesley Walton)

This Working Group met on the 11 May where they congratulated officers for the good work done so far in relation this, especially through the difficult Covid period. Overall the Working Group were of the view that the Council is on the right track with its Digital Inclusion Strategy and do recognise that the Council is keen to make the right improvements moving forward. The Digital Inclusion Framework/Strategy and the Council Website is currently being reviewed and members of the Working Group asked to be included in this process. The letter from the Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Business Improvement & Performance was reported to the Committee in June.

The Working Group felt that further oversight of work on Digital Inclusion is necessary as things develop, perhaps annually, whether through Working Group or other method of scrutiny. This will be factored into future work planning discussion.

c) **Bus Services** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Working Group met on 7 July and asked about bus network coverage and levels of service; community transport provision; integration with other forms of transport, etc. Representatives of First Cymru and Cardiff Bus also participated in the meeting.

A letter with the Working Group's conclusions and recommendations is currently being drafted and will be sent to the relevant Cabinet Member in due course, and reported to the Committee.

d) **Healthy City** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

This will enable information, questions and discussion on Swansea as a healthy city, exploring in particular the provision, and promotion of, outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.

Reserve Working Group List:

- Road Safety
- Active Travel
- Accessibility for the Disabled / Elderly

# Agenda Item 11



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Scrutiny Letters

<b>Purpose:</b>	To ensure the Committee is aware of the scrutiny letters produced following various scrutiny activities, and to track responses to date.
<b>Content:</b>	The report includes a log of scrutiny letters produced this municipal year, and provides a copy of correspondence between scrutiny and cabinet members where discussion is required.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the scrutiny letters and responses</li><li>• Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
<b>Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Amanda Thomas

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The production of scrutiny letters has become an established part of the way scrutiny operates in Swansea. Letters from the chair (or conveners) allow scrutiny to communicate directly and quickly with relevant cabinet members.
- 1.2 These letters are used to convey views and conclusions about particular issues discussed and provide the opportunity to raise concerns, ask for further information, and make recommendations. This enables scrutiny to engage with Cabinet Members on a regular and structured basis.

## 2. Reporting of Letters

- 2.1 All scrutiny letters, whether they are written by the Scrutiny Programme Committee or conveners of Panels / Working Groups, are published to ensure visibility, of the outcomes from meetings, across the council and public.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee agenda also includes a copy of letters to/from Cabinet Members where specific discussion is required, e.g. letters relating to the Committee, Working Groups, and Inquiry Panel follow ups. Letters are included when cabinet member responses that were awaited are received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response.
- 2.3 Where requested Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to scrutiny letters within 21 calendar days. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take as a result of the views and recommendations made.
- 2.4 Letters relating to the work of Performance Panels are part of an ongoing dialogue with Cabinet Members and are therefore reported back and monitored by each Panel. However all Performance Panel conveners will provide a progress report to the Committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes.

## 3. Letters Log

- 3.1 This report contains a log of scrutiny letters produced to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of letters activity over the current municipal year – see **Appendix 1**. The letters log will show the average time taken by Cabinet Members to respond to scrutiny letters, and the percentage of letters responded to within timescale.
- 3.2 The following letter(s), not already reported to the Committee, are **attached** for discussion:

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>
a	Committee (Scrutiny of Public Services Board)	15 Jun	Letter to Chair of Public Services Board
b	Education Through Regional Working (ERW) Scrutiny Councillor Group	28 Jun	Letter to / from Chair of ERW Joint Committee

- 3.3 Education Through Regional Working - in view of changes to regional arrangements for school improvement and move away from ERW to a new regional partnership, correspondence relating to the recent meeting of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Working Group is provided to the Committee for awareness, and any comment. The meeting included discussion on how scrutiny might be modelled in new governance structure for the partnership.

**4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Letters Log – 2021-22

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Letters and Responses

## Scrutiny Letters Log (2021-2022)

Ave. Response Time (days): 23 (target within 21 days)      % responses within target: 0

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Meeting Date	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received	Days Taken
1	Working Group	11-May	Digital Inclusion	Business Improvement & Performance	26-May	n/a	n/a
2	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	10-May	Welsh Housing Quality Standard Annual Report	Climate Change & Service Transformation	26-May	n/a	n/a
3	Education Performance Panel	13-May	New Curriculum and progress with ALN reform	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	26-May	n/a	n/a
4	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	25-May	Update on CAMHS; Youth Offending Service	Adult Social Care & Community Health Services	14-Jun	n/a	n/a
5	Natural Environment Performance Panel	19-May	Climate Change Action Plan	Climate Change & Service Transformation	16-Jun	n/a	n/a
6	Adult Services Performance Panel	02-Jun	Transformation Programme; WAO Report actions; Review of Social Services Charges	Adult Social Care & Community Health Services	23-Jun	16-Jul	23
7	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	11-Jun	Revenue Outturn, HRA Outturn and Capital Outturn and Financing 20-21	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	30-Jun	n/a	n/a
8	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	22-Jun	Regional Adoption Service, Initial feedback from CIW Assurance Visit	Children Services	01-Jul	n/a	n/a
9	Committee	15-Jun	Public Services Board	Chair of Public Services Board	16-Jul	n/a	n/a

10	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	23-Jun	Welsh Language Annual Report	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	22-Jul	n/a	n/a
11	Natural Environment Performance Panel	29-Jun	Air Quality	Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management	22-Jul	n/a	n/a
12	ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group	28-Jun	Education Partnership moving forward	Chair of ERW Joint Committee	20-Jul	28-Jul	n/a
13	Education Performance Panel	15-Jul	Delegated spend and the Behaviour Strategy and new Education Partnership	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	02-Aug		
14	Working Group	07-Jul	Bus Services	Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management	09-Aug		
15	Adult Services Performance Panel	14-Jul	Performance Monitoring; Initial feedback CIW Assurance Visit	Adult Social Care & Community Health Services	09-Aug		
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**To/  
Councillor Rob Stewart &  
Councillor Andrea Lewis,  
Joint Chairs of Swansea Public  
Services Board  
BY EMAIL**

cc: Vice-Chair of Swansea PSB

*Please ask for:  
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:  
Linell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail  
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref  
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref  
Eich Cyf:*

*Date  
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637257

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

SPC/2021-22/1

16 July 2021

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Joint Chairs of Swansea Public Services Board following the meeting of the Committee on 15 June 2021. It is about the performance of the Public Services Board.

Dear Councillor,

### **Scrutiny Programme Committee – 15 June**

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session on the Public Services Board (PSB) with our views.

As part of our ongoing scrutiny, the Committee heard from two of the four Statutory Members of the PSB: Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service (MAWWFRS) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) about their organisation's role and responsibilities in relation to the PSB, and on the delivery of PSB Well-being Plan objectives that they are leading on.

This was further evidence to the Committee on how the PSB is performing and making a difference for citizens, and follows on from the December 2020 PSB Scrutiny session, at which we considered the PSB Annual Report 2019/20, and got an overview of progress made by the PSB, and the current situation. We wrote to you reflecting on that meeting in January and highlighted within that letter the need for the PSB to:

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU**  
**SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE**  
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE  
[www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk) / [www.abertawe.gov.uk](http://www.abertawe.gov.uk)



- a) improve the performance framework to better evidence the tangible difference the PSB is making.
- b) improve public visibility / messaging about the work of the PSB
- c) press the Welsh Government on PSB resources

At our meeting in June we heard from Roger Thomas, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, MAWWFRS (also vice-chair of the PSB Joint Committee), Steve Davies, Group Manager, MAWWFRS (operational lead on the PSB Well-being Objective 'Strong Communities'), Hamish Osbourne, Swansea Environment Team Leader, NRW, Philip McDonnell, Coordinator, Swansea Environmental Forum (operational lead on the PSB Well-being Objective 'Working with Nature'), and Adam Hill, Deputy Chief Executive, Swansea Council.

This letter reflects on what we learnt from the information presented, questions, and discussion. It shares the views of the Committee, and highlights any outstanding issues / actions for your response - main issues summarised below.

### **Making a Difference**

We asked what distinguishes the PSB from the organisational activities / collaborative working that perhaps might happen anyway in the delivery of shared objectives, e.g. what difference does the PSB as a body, and PSB Joint Committee when it meets, add or make?, what is it that the Statutory Members make happen? We heard how the PSB is considered a catalyst for wider partnership working across Swansea, providing space for senior members of each organisation to come together, and acting as an enabler for collaboration on tackling the key issues, both Well-being Plan objectives and specific issues that may arise and need wider involvement, and sharing of knowledge and expertise.

It was acknowledged that, in some areas, there is already effective partnership working, not dependent on the PSB, but overall we were told that the PSB, whilst not a perfect body, has served to strengthen relationships across public service providers, and with other sectors, with the Joint Committee maintaining an overview of partnership working, and taking decisions that will improve joint working and engagement and deliver shared objectives.

The Committee remarked upon minutes of previous PSB Joint Committee meetings, which could be clearer to the observer in respect of showing the outcomes from each meeting, to evidence positive action.

## **Performance Framework**

Further to our views on improving the performance framework to better evidence the tangible difference the PSB is making, the Committee would like to see target setting, clearer measures of performance / success and reporting of achievement attached to each of the PSB Well-being Plan objectives, ideally shown in the form of action plans, with milestones and timescales. This will facilitate our ability to assess progress, and scrutinise and challenge the performance of the PSB, to see whether you have done what you said you would and direction of travel, etc. We understand that this would mean a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures, in order to provide something meaningful. The Committee noted that this is work-in-progress for the PSB and look forward to an improved performance model.

## **PSB Resources**

There are still issues around PSB resources with a general recognition that pump-priming is necessary to accelerate collaborative working, and for the PSB to make a bigger difference and impact. Whilst the PSB may facilitate good engagement between partners, without that investment the PSB will remain challenging and, with respective organisations always under pressure to tighten their belts (not to mention financial challenges from the pandemic), this is a risk to its sustainability. A comparison was made with the relatively good level of financial support Regional Partnership Boards receive to support the delivery of health and care services. We noted that partners lobby the Welsh Government at every opportunity, and learned that some money has been forthcoming from the Welsh Government specifically for collaboration with Neath Port Talbot PSB to develop a common approach for the Assessment of Local Well-being for 2022.

Nevertheless, partners did feel that significant benefits have come out of the PSB, for example in progressing work on the shared 'Working with Nature' Well-being objective, and working together on advancing the development of Green Infrastructure in the City Centre, helped by PSB support including funding from NRW. There are benefits that can result from doing things differently; making better use of existing resources or with the additional of what might seem modest sums.

The issue of PSB mergers is still one that is live. It is possible that involvement in multiple PSBs by organisations that already work on a regional footprint impacts on their ability to engage more effectively with each local PSB, and mergers would help them.

## **Governance**

We also asked whether the overall governance of the PSB could be improved further; though understand that the operation of the PSB, since agreeing a new streamlined governance structure in 2019, has been impacted upon by the pandemic, e.g. affecting ability to hold PSB Partnership Forum meetings. We also queried the relationship between Objective Delivery Working Groups and the PSB Joint Committee, e.g. was there a clear line of communication between strategic leads and those working 'on the ground' to deliver objectives / work streams, to ensure awareness, with clear monitoring and feedback processes. We heard that the absence of the Partnership Forum has hindered things, in terms of wider information sharing of progress and awareness; however, the Objective Delivery Groups do report to the PSB Joint Committee. With the worst of the pandemic hopefully behind us, perhaps lessons learned over the past 15 months might help re-shape and re-focus things further so that the PSB can be more agile.

There was also some discussion, both in reference to the 'Strong Communities' Well-being objective and wider PSB involvement, of the role of the Police in multi-agency working. There was some concern about front-line police resources to support local work. We were assured that the Police were an active supporter of the PSB and committed, with meetings well attended, and that they were integral to the 'Strong Communities' work.

## **Scrutiny Views**

From our discussion, the Committee would highlight the following issues in terms of providing challenge to the PSB for improvement:

### **a) Improve the clarity of action and outcomes from meetings.**

The Committee would suggest that minutes of PSB Joint Committee meetings could be clearer to the observer, in respect of showing the outcomes from each meeting, to evidence positive action.

### **b) Improve the ability to measure progress in the delivery of Well-being objectives.**

The Committee would like to see target setting, clearer measures of performance / success and reporting of achievement attached to each of the PSB Well-being Plan objectives, ideally shown in the form of action plans, with milestones and timescales.

**c) Reflect on PSB governance in light of lessons learned from the pandemic.**

The Committee would suggest that the PSB consider how lessons learned over the past 15 months might help re-shape and re-focus things further to create a more agile PSB.

**Your Response**

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any comments, however we do not expect you to provide a formal response. However, we do expect the PSB to consider our views and the Committee will follow up on progress in addressing these issues.

We are planning our next PSB Scrutiny session for 14 December, at which we are looking to focus on the work of the Health Board and Swansea Council as the other Statutory Members of the PSB, and progress with delivery of the Early Years and Live Well, Age Well PSB Well-being Plan objectives, hopefully with action plans to show progress. If available, the Committee will also be able to consider the PSB Annual Report for 2020/21, and follow up on any issues arising from scrutiny, and action taken.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK**

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ [cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk)



To:  
**Cllr. Emlyn Dole**  
Chair of the ERW Joint Committee

Please ask for: **Scrutiny**  
Scrutiny Office Line: **01792 637256**  
e-mail: [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk)  
Date: **20.07.2021**

Dear Councillor Dole

### **ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group – 28 June 2021**

The Scrutiny Councillor Group would like to thank Gareth Morgans, Ian Altman, Greg Morgan and Tracey Meredith for attending our meeting, for presenting the information we requested and answering our questions. I am writing to you to reflect on our views from the meeting.

We had a detailed discussion with about current work of ERW, the early outline of the new partnership and also how scrutiny might be modelled in new governance structure.

We have detailed our thoughts, recommendations and issues as follows:

1. We felt strongly that the terms of the current legal agreement should be honored by all six original members of ERW, especially in so far as winding down and redundancy costs.
2. There must be a very clear and robust governance and legal structure to support and guide the new partnership. We can see that work has started on this but there is still a lot of work to be done. We felt it vital that all three constituent Councils know what the parameters and ground rules are from the outset.
3. There should be a clear Business Plan in situ ready for the start of the new partnership on 1<sup>st</sup> September.
4. We would like to see a scrutiny model similar to the current one, an informal model form part of the governance structure of the new partnership. We feel the current scrutiny model is effective, and efficient and cost effective. We would like to see a form of hybrid with informal regional scrutiny and strong local scrutiny. For this to work the functions of both will need to be clear. We would suggest that local scrutiny bodies monitor the impact of the business plan locally but that the regional scrutiny body should look at: value for money and the financial aspects of

running the partnership, strategic oversight, risk management and the business plan across the region.

5. We like to the Chair of the New Joint Committee to attend some of the regional scrutiny meetings to discuss performance of the body.
6. We would like to see the Chair of the new scrutiny body invited to attend Joint Committee meetings in at least an observer capacity. This would aid and assist in improving dialogue between the Joint Committee and Scrutiny.
7. And finally, we would like the new regional scrutiny body's involvement in decision making to be more timely. We would like to see scrutiny involvement at an earlier stage rather than when the decision is done and dusted.

Given the short time left before the end of the current partnership and resumption of the new we would welcome a prompt response to our letter before our membership changes.

We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

**Cllr John Davies**  
**Chair of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group**

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**28<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

**EDole@carmarthenshire.gov.uk**

**Cllr. John Davies**

**Chair of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group**

(by email only: [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk))

Dear Councillor Davies,

I would like to thank you for your letter and astute comments in relation to our '*Partneriaeth*' being developed by Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea. Your letter will be discussed at our next Shadow Joint Committee, and I have also asked officers to consider your views as they work on the arrangements to formally establish our collaborative arrangements for September onwards.

Below, I respond to each of the comments you note in your letter.

1. We felt strongly that the terms of the current legal agreement should be honoured by all six original members of ERW, especially in so far as winding down and redundancy costs.

**I agree wholeheartedly with you, as do the members of the Joint Committee, that all original partners are liable for any costs associated with bringing ERW to a close. Respective responsibilities are clearly articulated in the Legal Agreement, and we will ensure that they are implemented.**

2. There must be a very clear and robust governance and legal structure to support and guide the new partnership. We can see that work has started on this but there is still a lot of work to be done. We felt it vital that all three constituent Councils know what the parameters and ground rules are from the outset.

**Since your meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> June, there has been substantial progress in regard to the governance and legal basis of our '*Partneriaeth*'. A new Legal Agreement has been drafted and is currently being considered by each partner's Legal Officers. It is a detailed document which will ensure that the parameters and ground rules are clear from the establishment of the new regional arrangement.**

3. There should be a clear Business Plan in situ ready for the start of the new partnership on 1st September.

**This is being progressed by officers and will be shared with the Shadow Joint Committee early in the new school term.**

Cynghorydd | Councillor - **Emlyn Dole**

Arweinydd y Cyngor

Swyddfa'r Arweinydd, Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin, Sir Caerfyrddin SA31 1JP

Leader of the Council

Leader's Office, County Hall, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire SA31 1JP



BUDDSODD WYR | INVESTORS  
MEWN POBL | IN PEOPLE

Mae croeso i chi gysylltu â mi yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg

You are welcome to contact me in Welsh or English

**The Business Plan will build on the April-August 2021 Business Plan and will address Welsh Government expectations as well as some local priorities. The Business Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and will be amended to reflect emerging challenges and issues.**

4. We would like to see a scrutiny model similar to the current one, an informal model form part of the governance structure of the new partnership. We feel the current scrutiny model is effective, and efficient and cost effective. We would like to see a form of hybrid with informal regional scrutiny and strong local scrutiny. For this to work the functions of both will need to be clear. We would suggest that local scrutiny bodies monitor the impact of the business plan locally but that the regional scrutiny body should look at: value for money and the financial aspects of running the partnership, strategic oversight, risk management and the business plan across the region.

**The role of Scrutiny will be clearly articulated in the new Legal Agreement. I have forwarded your comments to Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer Swansea Council, who is leading on this work. I agree that the current informal model has worked well and benefitted ERW. I will share the relevant draft section with you once it is completed.**

5. We like to the Chair of the New Joint Committee to attend some of the regional scrutiny meetings to discuss performance of the body.

**This is acceptable however it will depend on the availability of the Chair of the New Joint Committee.**

6. We would like to see the Chair of the new scrutiny body invited to attend Joint Committee meetings in at least an observer capacity. This would aid and assist in improving dialogue between the Joint Committee and Scrutiny.

**This is acceptable and is already incorporated in the draft Legal Agreement.**

7. And finally, we would like the new regional scrutiny body's involvement in decision making to be more timely. We would like to see scrutiny involvement at an earlier stage rather than when the decision is done and dusted.

**This is acceptable. I will ensure that our Business Support Officer will align meeting dates in order that reports are presented to Scrutiny prior to being considered at the Joint Committee and comments from Scrutiny are then considered prior to making decisions.**

In addition, as an action from our most recent Joint Committee I was requested to clarify our position in regard to paragraph 3 of your 23<sup>rd</sup> March letter-

*Clarity on funding the new model is required. How will the commissioning aspect work financially in the new model? Also, what will the likely financial burden be on those LAs who sign up compared to those who choose to commission services?*



It was proposed that I would provide information on the background circumstances and stipulate what the arrangements would be going forward into the new partnership.

The **Partneriaeth** will be funded by Local Authority contributions and Welsh Government Grant Funding.

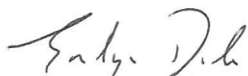
Currently ERW provides some key services to schools in both Neath Port Talbot and Ceredigion. These are predominately Welsh Government funded programmes in relation to leadership and professional development of the workforce. The funding allocated to each partner is recouped.

In regard to providing services to non-partners from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, this will be a decision for the Joint Committee of the Partneriaeth. Currently I'm aware that Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot and Powys are interested in securing certain services from the Partneriaeth. If the Shadow Joint Committee agree that the Partneriaeth will provide for others we will advise them of this decision.

Providing for non-partners would be a useful income stream and reduce the financial burden on partners however providing for others will not be at the detriment of the three partners. I envisage the Partneriaeth adding a 'Service-Charge' to the provision of services to non-partners which will include an element for strategic overview, workstream management and associated operational costs e.g., office costs, IT etc. If this is not acceptable to non-partners, then they will need to consider alternative arrangements for the provision of those services to their schools.

I hope that the comments above address the issues raised in your letter and I look forward to working with you in the future for the benefit of our children and young people.

Yours sincerely,



**Cllr. Emlyn Dole.**  
**Chair of ERW Joint Committee.**

# Agenda Item 12



## Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### **Date and Time of Upcoming Scrutiny Panel Meetings**

#### **17 August – 14 September**

- a) 26 August at 2.00pm – Natural Environment Performance Panel
- b) 1 September at 4.00pm – Education Performance Panel
- c) 7 September at 10.00am – Development & Regeneration Performance Panel
- d) 8 September at 3.30pm – Adult Services Performance Panel
- e) 13 September at 10.00am – Procurement Inquiry Panel

Meetings will be held remotely via MS Teams