

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) **Inward Investment** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

Key Question: What can the Council do to influence inward investment into Swansea and the South West Wales region?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel met on the 2 July to discuss the draft final report and will now report to the Scrutiny Programme Committee meeting on 4 August.

b) **Public Engagement** (convenor: Cllr Joe Hale)

Key Question: How can the Council improve its engagement practices with the public, staff and external stakeholders?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The final report has been drafted and the panel is due to agree the final report and recommendations.

c) **Streetscene** (convenor: Cllr John Bayliss)

Key Question: How well does the Council maintain and keep clean the roads, footways and verges in Swansea, and what changes should it make?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel is due to meet to discuss the findings report and to draft conclusions and recommendations.

d) **Social Care at Home** (convenor: Cllr Jane Harris)

Key Question: How can Swansea Council and its partners support elderly people to enable them to remain in their own homes?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report						

The Panel's final evidence gathering session will take place on 5 August with representatives from the Red Cross. Home visits are also taking place w/c 21 July, w/c 28 July and w/c 4 August, with people who have recently been through the home care assessment process in order to understand the process from the point of view of service users. The next step will be for the Panel to consider its findings and commence work on developing a set of conclusions and recommendations. This will take place in September.

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	
Services for Looked After Children	17 Sep 2013	14	1	0	15 Jul 2014
Public Transport	12 Nov 2013	13	1	0	tba
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	tba
Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	1 Oct 2014
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	tba
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	tba

a) Services for Looked After Children (convener: Cllr Ceinwen Thomas)

Key Inquiry Question: How can the local authority and key partners improve the experiences of looked after children in Swansea at different life stages?

The Panel met on the 15 July and was attended by the Cabinet Member. Broadly, the panel was pleased with the progress made to implement the agreed recommendations and agreed that the work was complete, although there were some outstanding issues which the Scrutiny Programme Committee will need to consider (to be forwarded

in the Convener's letter). The panel agreed to reconvene at a later date to consider the additional information that the Cabinet Member agreed to provide and it made a number of recommendations to the Wellbeing panel with regards to performance monitoring.

3. Performance Panels:

a) **Wellbeing** (convener: Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams)

See item 5 for detailed progress report.

b) **Service Improvement & Finance** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The Panel met on 11 July and received a presentation from the Corporate Improvement Manager on the Corporate Improvement Plan 2013-17. The next meeting will take place on 20 August where the Panel will hold a Q & A session with the Cabinet Member for Skills and Learning in order to explore the impact of budget savings on services within his portfolio.

c) **Schools Performance** (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel will meet with the Head of Education Inclusion on the 21 August to look at elective home education. The Panel wanted to understand the responsibilities of the local authority and the performance of children that are home educated.

d) **Local Service Board** (convener: Cllr Mike Day)

The Panel met with Cllr David Phillips on 21 July in his capacity as Chair of Swansea's LSB. They explored the role of the Council within the LSB. The next meeting will take place on 22 September where the Panel will meet with other members of the LSB Executive Group, including South Wales Police, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services the Welsh Government and AMBU Health Board.

4. Working Groups:

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups.

a) **Planning Services** (convener: Cllr Mark Thomas)

Following the Working Group meet on 10 June a letter has been sent to the Cabinet Member for Place. A response is expected by 2 August. Further to the Group's discussion at the meeting the convener is giving thought to the most appropriate arrangement for any further scrutiny of performance in relation to planning enforcement, which the Scrutiny Programme Committee will need to agree upon.

b) the following Working Groups have been given priority and will be convened in the next few months:

- **Car Parks** (convener: Cllr Tony Colburn) – this has been arranged for 22 September with the purpose of discussing provision across Swansea, service performance, and plans for improvement.
- **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones) – this will be a further meeting, following initial meeting in January 2013, to discuss Environment Agency flood risk and flood hazard maps and specific areas of risk. The Council has not yet received the maps in a format which can be used. It is likely that information will be ready to be presented to scrutiny by the early autumn.
- **Corporate Building and Property Services** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a service briefing (what we do, why we do this, budget, performance, risk and challenges, assessment etc.) to enable questions about the effectiveness of the whole service, and follow up specific issues already raised including cost of services / charges relating to schools and community centres.
- **Sustainability** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide an assessment on current plans, priorities, activities and impact. This will enable questions on how this work is impacting on policies, service delivery and planning, and whether the authority is planning longer term / being preventative / considering future generations. The Working Group may wish to focus on specific future risks e.g. food security, climate change, energy supply.

c) the following Working Groups have also been identified and will be convened in the future as time and resources allow:

- **Target Areas** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide an assessment on progress with target areas work. This will enable questions about achievements and the impact of the new approach.
- **Roads / Highway Maintenance** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering service practices and procedures (e.g. dealing with pot holes), use of resources, prospects for improvement. This will enable questions about the quality and effectiveness of highway maintenance and repair, and also

issues relating to the relationship with utilities and strategic planning / co-ordination of works to minimise disruption to major access roads

- **Young Carers** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report on young carers. This will enable questions about the support available to young carers to minimise the impact on their personal development, education, employment and training.