

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA  
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones  
Convenor, Service Improvement & Finance  
Performance Panel

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RS/SH

Date / Dyddiad:

5<sup>th</sup> Aug, 2014

**If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me**

Dear Councillor Jones

**SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND FINANCE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL 10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014**

Thank you for your letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014 regarding the above, and apologies for the delay in responding.

I set out below detail as requested in relation to your specific information requests:

**Performance Monitoring – 3rd Quarter - We noted that performance in relation to indicator CHR/002 (number of working days lost to sickness absence) has declined somewhat and would like to be provided with a breakdown of sickness absence figures for each Department.**

Please see attached information showing a breakdown of sickness absence figures for each Department.

In relation to the specific queries on the Policy Commitments Tracker please see below:

**Policy Commitment 2: Give a stronger voice to residents in the design of community-based facilities, such as the development of suburban shopping centres, transport and other neighbourhood schemes, by ensuring there is full citizen engagement, including young people.**

***What areas are covered by the Safe Routes in Community Bids and will this funding be on-going?***

The Townhill area was covered by a grant of £550,000 during 2014/15. The Morryston area was covered in 2013/14 and the Penlan area during 2012/13. The scheme is part of a Welsh Government grant and WG determine which individual schemes are funded. The continuation of the funding will be determined by Welsh Government.

***How much funding has been allocated from the District Regeneration Assistance Grant and what has been funded?***

A figure of £150,000 was made available from the Council's revenue budget for a grant scheme entitled 'Regeneration Area Grant'. The purpose of the grant was to wide ranging – to support jobs and regeneration, tackle poverty, support suburban centres and the City Centre, and addressing problem buildings.

An offer of grant assistance (£75k) has also been made to the owner of the Palace Theatre for works in connection with safeguarding the future of the building. Whilst the grant offer has been accepted, no works have commenced to date and officers are currently in discussion with the owner regarding the timescales and the deteriorating condition of the building.”

The other half of the District Regeneration Area Grant' (£75,000) was allocated to providing small grants to businesses in Swansea seeking a contribution to enable improvements to be made to their operations either through the purchase of new equipment and technology or tools with which they could promote themselves better. Applications were invited via established local business networks and originated from businesses and entrepreneurs who were mainly, already receiving business advice from Welsh Government's 'Business Wales' support providers. There were two categories, one for new business starts and the other for those that have been trading for over two years. Applicants provided information on their new business idea or operations to date along with a proposal on what they would need in terms of support and how it would enable their business to grow.

In business support terms this was small scale funding and for those successful applicants already trading the grant funded 50% of the agreed project cost retrospectively and on receipt of evidence that the applicant's half had already been paid. New business start approved applications received a grant of up to £500 towards their start-up costs. In total, forty one new businesses were offered support but only thirty one took it up to a total of £15, 544 and sixteen existing businesses received an average of £2500 in funding for a total of £35,444. Not all of the applications received were successful, but £50,989 of the available funding was awarded.

**Policy Commitment 3: Tackle poverty and unemployment, especially amongst young people and within the most deprived communities. Draw up and implement an anti-poverty action plan for the city.**

**□□ How are delivery plans and outcomes for Communities First improving the lives of people living in the areas?**

The new programme is improving the quality of life for individuals, families and groups in our most deprived communities by building confidence, resilience and aspiration through engagement, involvement and progression.

Cluster projects are helping people to:

- Save money, claim entitlements, borrow responsibly and develop their financial management skills, improving the quality of their lives and their dependants.
- Access learning and develop skills that increase life opportunities.
- Improve their eating and cooking habits and skills.
- Increase digital awareness, access and skills.
- Move closer and into employment.
- Remove or reduce barriers to community involvement and self development.
- Prepare and negotiate the changes in Welfare Reform.
- Develop the confidence and knowledge to help themselves.

Clusters are actively collecting case studies of individuals who are benefitting from the Communities First programme and telling the individual stories of the difference we are making to their lives.

The focus and priorities of the Communities First programme in Swansea are as follows:

### **Prosperous Communities**

#### **Focus:**

- Debt and Money Management
- Welfare
- Employability / Employment
- Advice and Support
- Volunteering

#### **Priorities:**

- Helping people to develop employment skills and work (ages 25+)
- Reducing youth unemployment and disengagement (ages 16 – 24)
- Promoting digital inclusion
- Financial inclusion – Improving financial capability, managing debt and raising income
- Supporting enterprise and timebanking, building social capital

### **Healthier Communities**

#### **Focus:**

- Food, Nutrition and Growing
- Physical Activity
- Health Information

#### **Priorities:**

- Encouraging Healthy Eating
- Promoting Physical Well Being (ages 7 and above)
- Reducing Risks

### **Learning Communities**

#### **Focus:**

- Early Years
- Adult Learning
- Family Learning

#### **Priorities:**

- Promoting Family Learning in the Early Years
- Supporting Young People to do Well as School
- Supporting Families to be Engaged in their Children's Education
- Lifelong Learning in Communities “

***Has the Poverty Forum met and what are its plans?***

Yes the Poverty Forum meets once every two months. It is chaired by Chris Sivers – Director of People, and a number of work plans have been implemented over the last 2 years

covering the following themes: Income & debt, Employment, Health, Education, and Family Support.

The Poverty Forum is an internal co-ordination group for the Poverty & Prevention Service to take forward the tackling poverty agenda across the whole Council, and with colleagues in Health.

A new Swansea Partnership Poverty Forum has met recently to work across the city and county with partners on this agenda, which reports into the LSB.

**□□ *What progress has been made in implementing the Council's strategy for target areas, particularly in relation to young people?***

Swansea Young People Services has now realigned its core funded service provision to ensure that provision is appropriately proportioned to the Target Areas. This realignment included careful analysis of Lower Super Output Area Data, NEET Data and the Vulnerability Assessment Profile data as well as current core and externally funded provision.

- 3 out of the 5 Young People Hubs (including Info-nation) are located within the Target Areas.
- 50% of Full Time Core Funded Staff are located within the Target Areas.
- 33% of Part Time Staff Provision and Projects are located within Target Areas.
- All secondary schools that have catchment areas within the Target Areas have an attached Youth Worker.

In addition the work of Infonation has been focussed on working more closely with schools that support vulnerable young people from the Target Areas, ensuring that they are prioritised in terms of capacity for workshops and Information sessions.

There are very close working relationships with the Communities First Programme with all Communities First Cluster Areas having a small Communities First funded Youth Work Team. With three of the Cluster Areas lying in the Target Areas, this significantly increases our youth work capacity for the areas and ensures increased partnership work with both the Community and Partner Organisations.

The Families First Funded Ohana and Promoting Inclusion Projects also prioritise referrals from the target areas, working mainly with schools that share that catchment area.

**Policy Commitment 15: Improve facilities in the city centre for pedestrians, cyclists and visitors, and develop and promote 'green corridors' - environmentally friendly links to the city centre from the suburbs.**

**□□ *What plans are in place to improve cycle links from the city centre to the suburbs, and what areas will be included?***

The Council is currently committed to establishing a formal off-road cycle network for the City Centre; this is likely to be delivered in phases over the next three years as budgets allow. I have attached a plan of the proposed City Centre routes for information.

Beyond the City Centre proposals, the Council has a network of proposed cycle links which have been prepared by the Council's former walking and cycling officer. Whilst these would provide a good basis for investigating links to communities and residential areas, they have

not been subject to any form of appraisal. An early assessment has been undertaken to consider how links to the 'Target Areas' might be serviced by walking and cycling routes.



130530 Target Areas Cycle Routes Assessr 140206 City Centre Cycle Routes - Consu

On conclusion of the works to establish the City Centre Cycle Network, an assessment will be undertaken to consider routes to connect the residential areas of Swansea into the excellent strategic national cycle network routes which bound the city on three sides. This will need to take into account preferred alignments, access to services, communities and places of work. Scrutiny Panel should be aware that this work has not yet begun and will likely take some time to complete, notwithstanding the drastic reductions in transport infrastructure funding which would be required to deliver new routes. I would however wish to emphasise that cycling continues to increase at a healthy rate year-on-year of at least 10%.

**Policy Commitment 63: Seek wider and imaginative community use of public assets.**

***The Panel noted that a report on community asset transfer proposals was due to be considered by Cabinet in February and would like to know if the report has been completed.***

A draft report has been produced and has been discussed on a number of occasions, but it has not yet gone to cabinet. However, arrangements have been made for us to meet with all political groups and these are now set up during August and also the community council forum is also arranged for September.

I trust that this response provides the information that you requested, but if you require any further detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART  
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & RESOURCES**

**Sickness Comparison by Service Unit  
Mar 11 to Mar 14**

Service Unit	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Current Target
Env Public Protection	10.99	10.75	7.57	0.00	10.00
Communications and Consultation	6.35	8.52	5.62	5.44	10.00
Delivery and Information	6.18	7.94	5.62	6.32	10.00
Poverty & Prevention	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.71	10.00
Legal & Democratic & Procurement	9.87	5.67	9.12	7.06	10.00
Culture, Sport & Tourism	9.22	9.68	8.11	7.11	10.00
CB & PS	9.33	8.97	8.95	7.18	10.00
HR & OD	5.22	8.21	9.04	7.68	10.00
Housing & Public Protection	12.10	9.29	7.91	7.82	10.00
Finance	10.22	9.25	9.13	8.65	10.00
SS Directorate	10.72	12.20	10.23	8.88	10.00
Education Schools	9.30	9.10	8.95	8.99	10.00
Education Inclusion	9.58	12.14	13.91	9.02	10.00
Econ Regen & Planning	10.26	11.94	8.40	9.23	10.00
Transportation & Highways	12.45	10.31	7.66	9.48	10.00
SS Child & Family Services	10.48	11.90	13.18	9.76	10.00
Education Improvement	7.03	7.61	7.63	10.17	10.00
Waste Management	17.27	16.04	14.49	10.69	10.00
Education Planning & Resources	21.10	18.67	19.01	12.46	10.00
SS Adult Services	24.50	23.53	21.76	15.00	10.00
<b>Target</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>10.00</b>	
<b>Actual</b>	<b>11.17</b>	<b>11.14</b>	<b>10.33</b>	<b>8.82</b>	

**8.00 Proposed target for 2014/2015**

