

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			

Report was presented to Cabinet on 26 August 2014. A response to the recommendations made is expected by the end of November 2014.

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 panel’s final report is being presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 29 September. Subject to agreement it will be formally presented to Cabinet on 21 October.

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 has drafted its conclusions and recommendations and the final report is being prepared.

d) **Social Care at Home** (convenor: TBA)

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 has completed its evidence gathering and is due to meet on 7 October to consider its findings report and agree draft conclusions and recommendations. A further meeting is planned for 28 October to consider the draft final report.

e) **Education Inclusion** (convenor: Cllr Cheryl Philpott)

Key Question: How can the Council improve education for those children who are other than at school?

Progress Bar:

Scoping				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Education Inclusion Inquiry Panel will reconvene on 23 October to consider the findings and outcomes of the departmental review, which will then inform whether / what further scrutiny activity is required. The Panel will report back to the committee on the headlines and any need for scrutiny.

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups:

a) **Transforming Adult Social Services** (convenor: tbc)

This pre-inquiry working group will meet on 19th October with an overview of the subject from the relevant cabinet member and officers.

b) **Corporate Culture** (convenor: tbc)

This pre-inquiry working group is planning to meet on 12 November with an overview of the subject from relevant cabinet member and officers.

3. 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	(1) 15 Jul 2014 (2) tba

Public Transport	12 Nov 2013	13	1	0	13 Oct 2014
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	tba – October/Nov
Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	tba
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	tba
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	tba

4. Performance Panels:

a) Service Improvement & Finance (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The Panel met on 17 September and received a report from Lee Wenham (Head of Communications and Customer Engagement) regarding the Budget Consultation Strategy. This is part of their ongoing scrutiny of the budget arrangements. Steve Barry from the Wales Audit Office attended to present the Annual Improvement Report, which provided the Panel with useful information about areas identified for improvement, areas of good performance and the Council's work to address areas for improvement. They also receive a number of financial monitoring reports from Mike Hawes (Head of Finance and Performance).

The Panel's next meeting will take place on 15 October, where they intend to look in more detail at performance issues around the Flying Start service and will receive several corporate performance monitoring reports.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel met with the Chief Education Officer and the new Head of School Improvement on 18 September to look at how we are ensuring consistency in the support given to schools by the School Improvement Service. On 16 October the Panel will meet with the Headteacher and chair of governors from Morryston Comprehensive School to discuss their school improvement plan.

c) Local Service Board (convener: Cllr Mike Day)

The Panel met on 22 September and held discussions with members of the LSB Executive Group, including Swansea Council for Voluntary Services and the Welsh Government. The discussion focussed on understanding the role of each organisation in delivering the LSB priorities and learning about key successes and challenges of LSB.

The Panel's next meeting will take place on 17 November where they plan to meet with the Health and Police representatives on the LSB Executive group to discuss their respective roles in delivering LSB properties. The Panel will also begin to consider a more detailed work plan.

d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: tbc)

The Panel is due to meet on 29th September and will consider the latest Child & Family Services Performance monitoring report.

5. Working Groups:

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

a) **Planning Services** (convener: tbc)

A response is awaited from the Cabinet Member to the Convener's letter sent on 2 July following the Working Group meeting on 10 June. Further to the Group's views that further monitoring is required, the Strategic Programme Committee will need to give thought to the most appropriate arrangement for any further scrutiny of performance in relation to planning enforcement, once the Cabinet Member's response has been received.

b) **Car Parks** (convener: Cllr Tony Colburn)

The Working Group met on 22 September to discuss car parks provision across Swansea, service performance, and plans for improvement.

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

- **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 meeting will be arranged for early November.
- **Corporate Building and Property Services** (convener: 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.