



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Convenor, Service Improvement & Finance
Performance Panel
City & County of Swansea

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:
Your Ref / Eich
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

Councillor Rob Stewart
(01792) 637440
rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
RS/SH

18 September 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
20 AUGUST 2014**

Thank you for your letter dated 11 September 2014, regarding the above.

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

Public Engagement

I agree that we need to engage the right people in the budget process, whilst also ensuring a wider audience is aware of the financial and service challenges we face. Our strategy is designed to engage and inform a wide range of people. In preparation, we have provided training to Officers and Members through Participation Cymru to provide them with the skills to engage their communities in these important discussions.

I am pleased that the Panel recently discussed these matters at its meeting on the 17 September and I look forward to any views and ideas that have arisen from the meeting and to working together on this over the coming months.

**COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD**

CABINET OFFICE, CIVIC CENTRE, OYSTERMOUTH ROAD, SWANSEA SA1 3SN
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, CANOLFAN DDINESIG, HEOL YSTUMLLWYNARTH, ABERTAWE SA1 3SN

☎ (01792) 636141 ☏ (01792) 636196
✉ rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

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In terms of providing the engagement outcomes to the Panel prior to the 10 December, it is important for any results and/or feedback to be provided to the Panel at the earliest opportunity. Due to the nature of the on-going engagement process it is likely that feedback and results will come into the Council on a rolling basis over the coming months and I have asked that this is provided to the Panel as soon as it is available.

Digital Services

There are a number of benefits to providing digital services and, like most other public and private sector organisations, the Council is developing its digital offer across a wide range of service areas.

The Customer Contact Strategy, approved by Cabinet in July 2014, recognises the need for a balance between providing digital services and ensuring those who are unable to use online services can still receive services, including face-to-face contact with Council staff.

The Council's website is due to be re-launched later this month and this will provide a modern site that offers a wider range of online and transactional services to make it easier for customers to access services.

During the coming months we will be prioritising a number of services that will be available online. This will be supported by a marketing campaign entitled "*do it online*" to encourage people to use online services. However, we will also ensure that those people who unable to access services online are not excluded.

The Civic Centre Contact Centre will still be the focal point for face-to-face contact, and we are considering a range of initiatives to improve access and to reduce queuing times for customers there.

We will also consider creating community hubs so that people can access services and staff without the need to travel to the Contact Centre. At the same time we want to support people to use online services.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

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Earlier this year we launched a digital inclusion programme to provide training to people who do not have the skills to use online services. To date more than 600 people have attended the courses and we've also trained 70 digital champions who can provide support and advice to customers to use online services. We are currently considering extending this programme by a further year to support even more people in this way.

Governance Structures for Sustainable Swansea

As requested, an up-to-date Governance Chart will be provided once the Members have been nominated to support various aspects of Sustainable Swansea.

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
LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & STRATEGY

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, CIVIC CENTRE, OYSTERMOUTH ROAD, SWANSEA SA1 3SN
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