

## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 27 October 2014

### SCRUTINY LETTERS

<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure the committee is aware of the scrutiny letters produced following various scrutiny activities, and responses to date.
<b>Content</b>	The report will include a log of scrutiny letters that are produced this year and provide a copy of recent correspondence for discussion.
<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(s)</b>	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer(s)</b>	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
<b>Report Author</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>

#### 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.
- 1.3 Scrutiny letters, whether they are written by the Programme Committee or conveners of panels / working groups, are published in the committee agenda to ensure awareness and enable the committee to comment on the response to the matters raised, as well as to ensure visibility across the council and public.

- 1.4 As the current municipal year progresses this report will contain a log of scrutiny letters produced to enable the committee to maintain an overview of this activity over the year – see **Appendix 1**. It also provides for discussion a copy of full correspondence of recent letters where cabinet member responses were awaited and have now been received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response:
- a) Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel Meeting – 16 July)
- 1.5 Where requested, Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to scrutiny letters within one month. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take as a result of the views and recommendations made.
- 1.6 At the last committee meeting it was suggested that a request be made to amend the deadline for cabinet member responses to scrutiny letters to 20 days. On reflection an adjustment to 21 days will ensure that a deadline for a response will never fall on a weekend. This request has been raised with the Head of Democratic Services as this requires a change to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Council Constitution.

## **2. Legal Implications**

- 2.1 There are no legal implications.

## **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

16 October 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard

Finance Officer: Ben Smith