

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

PART A - SUPPLEMENTARIES

1.	<p>Councillors CA Holley, PB Black & LG Thomas</p> <p>Will the Leader publish the cost benefit analysis for his possible selling off of the Civic Centre and replacing it with a new build or conversion of a current building in the City Centre? Will the Leader tell Council what plans he has for the future of the Central Library, West Glamorgan Archives, Contact Centre and the Café.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>The Council has the responsibility to manage its assets to secure best value for the people of Swansea. The concept of the relocation from the Civic Centre to a city centre location is currently under consideration as part of the city centre framework review process. At a strategic level the relocation would offer significant regeneration benefits for the city centre, however, the concept is currently at preliminary feasibility stage, and will need to be informed by a number of detailed technical and financial assessments in due course before a full cost-benefit assessment could be undertaken. The Library, Archives, Contact Centre and Café would all be part of the analysis.</p>
2.	<p>Councillors MH Jones, JW Jones & CA Holley</p> <p>Will the new Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance tell Council what his priorities are, how he will ensure they are achieved and how will he measure progress made in achieving those objectives.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance</p> <p>The Council has in place an ambitious programme of performance improvement and transformation, Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the future, based on the Council 5 key priorities.</p> <p>There are many elements which make up this strategic framework which include:</p> <p>4 work streams – Efficiency, New Delivery Models, Prevention, Stopping Services</p> <p>14 Delivery Strands</p> <p>And many Change/Transformation Projects impacting all aspects of Council Business, all underpinned by our Innovation Programme.</p> <p>While the purpose of Sustainable Swansea is to drive a culture of change and performance improvement over the short, medium and long term, my immediate priorities are based around ensuring good governance is in place at an early stage to achieve the delivery of this framework. In particular I will be focussing on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensuring the completion of the current Budget Review Strategy to enable delivery of the Council Budget 2014/15 whilst also reviewing the governance process for future years.2. Implementing an effective stewardship process for the delivery of Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future to enable the delivery of the many work streams in a timely, cost effective and efficient manner.3. Reviewing and reducing the current measurement set/KPI's to ensure they

	<p>align with delivering the Council priorities and values.</p> <p>I look forward to updating Council at regular intervals over the coming months on progress in achieving these priorities and the delivery of the work streams, delivery strands and projects that make up Sustainable Swansea.</p>
3.	<p>Councillors AM Day, MH Jones & CL Philpott</p> <p>Will the Deputy Leader tell Council what are her priorities for Children and Young People, how will she ensure they are achieved and how will she measure progress made in achieving those objectives.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Services for Children & Young People</p> <p>I believe that my priorities for Children and Young People in Swansea reflect what we would all want for our own children.</p> <p>We must ensure that that the voice of children is at the heart of all that we do.</p> <p>This Council is the first in the UK to embed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into its decision-making processes. Members and officers of the City & County of Swansea will ensure that they give due regard to the UNCRC when exercising their functions as laid out in Council's Children's & Young People's Rights Scheme, agreed by Cabinet on 21st October this year and officially launched on 20th November, Universal Children's Day.</p> <p>'Due regard' to the UNCRC is rooted alongside the wider arrangements of all impact assessments within the City and County of Swansea and has been embedded within the existing Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process. This will include monitoring of the scheme.</p> <p>We will also continue promoting & encouraging Rights-Respecting schools.</p> <p>We must support our children to grow up safe, happy & healthy; We must give children the best start in life. Wherever possible, children should live within their own families, communities & to attend local schools. For the small number of children unable to live safely within their own families, we must support them to be able to live in or as close to Swansea as possible; and within a family rather than an institutional setting.</p> <p>We must support all children to grow up into being adults best able to live independent, productive lives that meet their aspirations, whilst enjoying meaningful & satisfying social relationships.</p> <p>Through Child & Family Services, we are monitoring progress against these priorities through a suite of indicators within the Safe LAC reduction strategy. We will further enhance that suite of indicators through the development of new measures that will allow us to better report on the impact of the prevention workstream that forms part of Sustainable Swansea.</p> <p>Flying Start monitors developmental progress, take-up and attendance for eligible children. I hope that scrutiny will continue to support Council and play its part as critical friend in monitoring performance in these areas.</p>

4.	<p>Councillors PM Meara, MH Jones, JW Jones</p> <p>Only 28 people responded to the Consultation on the Council’s Anti – Poverty Strategy. Is the Cabinet Member confident that the people the strategy is intended to benefit really engage with the Council’s strategic approach to poverty issues.</p> <p>Response of Cabinet Member for Anti Poverty</p> <p>Although the number of responses was disappointing, it will in no way deter our absolute commitment in tackling and reducing the scourge of Poverty on our most vulnerable and underprivileged in the deprived areas and communities across the City. We will continue to work closely with Welsh Government and other strategic partners, in engaging with those citizens, where there is greatest need.</p> <p>Individuals and communities often engage in the tackling poverty agenda when they are in need themselves. In which case they will be accessing operational services which are part of our wider approach to tackling poverty. A whole strand of the poverty strategy is based on the involvement and empowerment of people experiencing poverty – called Empowering Local People. You will see in the action plan there are a number of proposed activities to begin to address the importance of engaging people in its delivery.</p>
5.	<p>Councillors CA Holley, PM Meara & CL Philpott</p> <p>What lessons does the Cabinet Member draw from the fact that <u>NO</u> member of the public responded to the Council’s consultation on a Casino Policy.</p> <p>Response of Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Health City</p> <p>We have learnt that none of those consulted on the changes to the Gambling Policy in respect of casinos raised any issue with the proposed change. The council had a statutory duty to carry out the consultation and there were clearly no objections to the proposals.</p> <p>The legislation prescribes a list of persons to be consulted. The list is very wide and this enables licensing authorities to carry out a comprehensive consultation exercise with anyone who may be affected by or have an interest in the Gambling Policy. In this case a range of persons were written to directly, including South Wales Police, solicitors and organisations representing the gambling industry, all local authority Members, Community Councils, residents groups and various Council Departments. The consultation was also published on the Council’s website.</p> <p>Despite the extensive consultation exercise carried out no responses were received</p>

6.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member clarify why the Council intends to close Pennard library on 31 March 2015 when a review is underway of the Library Service? Isn't this a premature decision.</p> <p>Response of Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration</p> <p>As Councillors state a full library review is now underway. As such its position will be assessed in line with the outcomes of the review, as will the future of all libraries in Swansea.</p>
7.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member advise Council if the review of the Library Service incorporates all libraries in Swansea.</p> <p>Response of Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration</p> <p>Yes. The review has been tasked to look at all libraries currently operating within the City and County of Swansea.</p>
8.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>Could the Leader explain why, when his weekly column in the Evening Post asked communities for their support in taking over and running Council assets, he and his Cabinet appear unwilling to co-operate with the communities of Gower to keep open Pennard Library.</p> <p>Response of Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration</p> <p>Officers are continuing to work with the community to look at alternative models of service provision in Pennard. The original proposal was not able to be supported as it entailed CCoS administering a significant grant, new build and committing ongoing revenue costs.</p>
9.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member inform Council of the annual maintenance costs of each individual children's playground in Swansea for the year 2012-12 and 2013-2014? What is covered by these costs.</p> <p>Response of Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation</p> <p>With regards to the financial years requested we had not introduced a system of recording all costs per individual play area, however we can give an approximate cost on expenditure for replacement, repair or new items for each financial year.</p>

Equipment Replacement, Repair or New, inclusive of surface material

During Financial year 12/13 approximate cost of £63,000

During Financial year 13/14 approximate cost of £103,000

The above figures are purely on material purchases only

We are unable to break this down between sites, However, this financial year all costs are being broken down for each playground, which includes labour.

A further £300,000 (allocated by the current administration) has been spent as part of the Council's capital programme during 2013/14 and 2014/15, for the redevelopment of 5 play sites across the City, Brynydon, Gors Avenue, Maesteg Park, Bleanymeas and Kings Head Road.

We have also been successful via HLF schemes to finance the upgrade and installation of new play equipment at Brynmill and Cwmdonkin Park.

Parks Internal Inspection Process

We have to ensure inspection of each site for safety reasons, our inspection process is based on 3 per year by a trained and qualified internal officer and one inspection has to be undertaken by an independent company.

In addition to this our Litter Operatives are expected to undertake a visual inspection of each site on at least 3 occasions per week, this is to check for any obvious damage, remove weeds and level loose fill bark periodically.

Cost for such inspections is £990 per year per site.

PART B - None