

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 is currently scheduled for 20 January Cabinet Meeting.

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 was presented to Cabinet on 21 October. A response to the recommendations should then follow within 3 months.

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's final report is being presented to Cabinet on 16 December.

d) **Social Care at Home** (convenor: Cllr Uta Clay)

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's final report will be presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 22 December. Subject to agreement it will be formally presented to Cabinet in January.

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 again once the action plan arising from the independent review is available for discussion in early December. The Panel will then consider whether / what further scrutiny activity is required. Any specific proposals will be reported back to the committee for agreement.

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups:

a) **Transformation of Adult Social Services** (convenor: Uta Clay)

This pre-inquiry working group met on 13th October to consider an overview of the subject from the cabinet member and officers and to discuss how to take forward scrutiny involvement in the Transformation of Adult Social Services programme.

Councillor Uta Clay was appointed convenor. The Panel agreed that it would meet on a regular basis to provide scrutiny input and challenge to the ongoing transformation programme.

The Panel agreed to:

- receive an initial report which covered the rationale and the drivers for the transformation programme
- decide on a number of priorities to scrutinise
- peg its work to Cabinet decisions and the timetable for the transformation programme to ensure scrutiny has impact.

The Panel asked that the Cabinet Member provide the panel with the independent review report on older people's services as soon as possible and then panel will meet to discuss it.

Dates for the initial meeting are being sought.

b) **Corporate Culture** (convenor: Cllr Andrew Jones)

This pre-inquiry working group met on 12 November with an overview of the subject from the Corporate Director and the Organisational Change Manager. The Working Group agreed that an in-depth inquiry

should take place and with agreement from the Scrutiny Programme Committee will proceed to putting together their terms of reference for this work and start their evidence gathering.

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	20 Oct 2014
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	3 Dec 2014
Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	17 Nov 2014
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	tba
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	April 2015

4. Performance Panels:

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

See separate report in item 7 of the agenda.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel met on the 13 November to look at the affect of behaviour including the affect drug and alcohol issues have on school performance. This included looking at written feedback from schools on the issue. On 11 December the Panel will look at the Annual Education Performance Data.

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

The Panel met on 17 November and held discussions with Health and Police representatives on the LSB Executive Group. 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 also looked at good practice examples of work undertaken by other LSBs in Wales.

The Convener met with the Chair of the LSB Scrutiny Panel in Bridged in order to learn from their experiences. The outcomes of the discussion will help the Panel shape their approach to the work plan.

The Panel's next meeting will take place on 26 January where they will meet with Councillor Rob Stewart, the new Chair of the LSB in order to gather his views on the LSB and plans for taking it forward.

d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: Paxton Hood-Williams)

The panel met on 27th October to consider a progress report on the review and development of the Permanence Services within Child and Family Services. The panel supported the review and development of the Permanence Service. The panel was concerned about whether Barnardos would be able to re-shape their services to meet local authority expectations.

The panel was interested in understanding more about the implementation of the permanence service after the review is completed. It agreed to examine the implementation plan at its meeting in March.

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

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

The Working Group met on 22 September and on 6 November to discuss car parks provision across Swansea, service performance, and plans for improvement. They are currently putting together their Convener's letter to the Cabinet Member outlining their views and detailing a number of recommendations and service improvements.

c) **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

The Working Group met with Stuart Davies, Head of Transportation and Mike Sweeney, Principal Engineer on 13 November. The purpose of the meeting was to consult the Panel on the progress towards the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan, following the production of the more detailed Flood Hazard and Risk Maps. They are currently

putting together their Convener's letter to the Cabinet Member outlining their views and giving a number of comments and recommendations.

d) **Corporate Building and Property Services (CB&PS)** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

The Working Group met with Martin Nicholls, Chief Operating Officer and Head of CB&PS, on 29 October. The Group received a service briefing to enable questions about the effectiveness of the service, and followed up specific issues raised by Councillors at the work planning conference, including cost of services and charges relating to schools and community centres. The Group made several recommendations, including that a new approach to advice and budget information is developed by CB&PS, which offers a range of options and more creative solutions to help schools and other organisations manage their limited budgets. These have been included in a Convener's letter to the Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities and a response is expected by mid-December.

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

- **Sustainability** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide an assessment on current plans, priorities, activities and achievements. 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, taking account of specific future risks e.g. food security, climate change, energy supply.

f) 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.