

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) 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:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The panel's final report was presented to Cabinet on 20 January. A response to the recommendations by Cabinet is still awaited.

b) Corporate Culture (convenor: Cllr Andrew Jones)

Key Question: How can the City and County of Swansea ensure that service delivery is always supported by a can do culture?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel has produced a final report and this is being presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 July 2015 for agreement. It will then be submitted to Cabinet for decision.

c) 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:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Education Inclusion Inquiry Panel on 3 July will visit Clase Primary School who has been cited by Estyn as having good practice in the area of Education Inclusion. The Panel will also on the 6 July meet with the Youth Services Manager. The Panel then on the 21 July plan to start concluding the inquiry by looking at their findings.

Projected End Date: September 2015

d) School Governance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

Key Question: How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering			Draft Final Report				

The Panel has completed its planning (terms of reference attached) and begun collecting evidence. The first evidence gathering session will be taking place on 9 July when the Panel will be hearing from representatives of governors' organisations. Professor Catherine Farrell (University of South Wales), an academic specialist in school governance in Wales, has been co-opted onto the Panel.

Projected End Date: December 2015

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups:

a) Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (convener: Hazel Morris)

The Working Group was scheduled for June but had to be postponed and will now be held July. Sian Harrop-Griffiths, Director of Strategy, ABMU, and Dr. Claire Ball, Clinical Director, CAMHS, Cwm Taff Health Board will present a report on the current arrangements for the planning and provision of services for children and young people with emotional and mental health needs in the ABMU area.

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	15 Jul 2014 (Follow up complete)
Public Transport	12 Nov 2013	13	1	0	20 Oct 2014 (Follow up complete)
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	3 Dec 2014 (Follow up complete)

Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	17 Nov 2014 (Follow up complete)
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	24 Jun 2015 (Follow up complete)
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	11 Jun 2015 (Follow up complete)
Inward investment	20 Jan 2015	10	0	2	14 Jul 2015
Public Engagement	17 Feb 2015	15	1	0	Sept 2015
Streetscene	14 April 2015	14	4	3	Nov 2015

4. Performance Panels:

a) Service Improvement & Finance (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

See separate report in item 6 of the agenda

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Schools Performance Panel will next meet on the 16 July 2015 when they will look at the educational performance and support for children that are looked after and also children from traveller communities.

c) Local Service Board (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

Due to scheduling difficulties, the Panel is due to meet later this month and Chris Sivers will attend the meeting to give an overview of the Older People's Independence priority. The work plan for 2015/16 and terms of reference will be drafted following the overview.

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

The panel met on 11th May to examine the March 2015 Child & Family Services performance report.

Overall the panel was pleased with the sustained and well balanced performance in the department. In particular: the number of children in need cases allocated to a qualified social worker, all cases of looked after children and children on the child protection register were allocated to a qualified social worker and the recent positive inspection of Foster Swansea.

The panel had a number of concerns which are detailed below but the panel concluded that performance in these areas could be affected by the piloting of a new way of working in the CARRA team which sees locality teams undertaking initial assessments. We agreed that we

would pay particular attention to the areas highlighted as concerns when we review performance again in August.

The panel also met on 8th June and agreed its final work plan for the year. As part of the consultation to draft the work plan, the convener met with the Head of Service and the Cabinet Member. The work plan for 2015/16 has been circulated to officers and the Cabinet Member.

5. Other Panels / Working Groups:

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

a) Transformation of Adult Social Services (convener: Bob Clay)

The panel met on 1st June and 29th June.

1st June

The panel agreed: the purpose of its engagement with carers was to capture carers' perceptions of their current circumstances and their hopes; evidence gathering would be achieved through a number of methods including writing to organisations, consultation sessions and panel meetings; questions would be broad and along the lines of identifying barriers to improving their lives, what would improve your life as a carer and what sorts of things provide help and support to your current caring role.

The panel's final report would be used to inform the panel's scrutiny of future cabinet proposals on support for carers.

There were a number of outstanding cabinet member responses to several convener's letters. The panel agreed to include any outstanding issues in the current letter.

The panel had a number of concerns which it wished to bring to the attention of the Cabinet Member:

- The lack of availability of information to the panel on the domiciliary care commissioning review
- The importance of scrutiny councillor involvement in commissioning reviews
- Duplication between the work of scrutiny and the CACs
- Difficulties regarding responses to the panel's requests for information
- Service provision provided by Alpha Care in Neath Port Talbot

29th June

The panel discussed in detail the current commissioning review of domiciliary care services. It agreed that it would include in its letter to the cabinet member suggestions for how the TASS panel could be involved in the commissioning review.

b) **Planning Services** (convener: Cllr David Cole)

The Working Group held a concluding meeting on 19 March 2015 and the letter to / from the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Regeneration, including a number of conclusion and proposals, are attached in the agenda papers.

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

The Scrutiny Programme Committee has agreed that an additional meeting of this working group can take place to participate in the consultation process draft Flood Risk Management Plan for Swansea. The relevant officers have been contacted to arrange a suitable meeting date.

d) **Sustainability** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

A further meeting of the working group took place on the 9 June to look at more detailed example of sustainability around food security. Although the report the panel received covered wider issues in relation to future trends the panel mainly focused on food security. The working group found the information provided very informative but after a discussion found they still had many questions that will require a bigger piece of work, possibly even an in-depth inquiry in order to answer those questions. They therefore have referred the topic to the Scrutiny Programme Committee to consider this further work. The convener's letter from this meeting is included in the agenda for the committee's consideration.

e) the following Working Groups were identified during 2014/15 and will be convened in the future as time and resources allow, in the following order of priority agreed by the committee:

- **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.

- **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.
- **Civic Events** (convener / membership tbc) – this was identified at the committee meeting in December. The Working Group will consider the organisation, support for and management of civic events.
- **Welsh Housing Quality Standard** (convener / membership tbc) – this was identified at the committee meeting in December following a request from the Affordable Housing Scrutiny Inquiry Panel. The Working Group will consider the Council's progress towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard within its social housing stock

School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

Terms of Reference

Key Question

The panel has agreed that the primary focus for the inquiry should be on the role that governors play in ensuring that schools are effective and improving. The key question, therefore, is:

How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

Lines of Inquiry

- a) **Role:** There seems to be a lack of clarity about the role of school governors. How can this be addressed?
- b) **Skills:** If governors are to challenge effectively they need confidence and the right skills. Do they have these skills? How can training and development be improved?
- c) **School culture:** If governors are to be effective then schools must have a culture that supports challenge. The relationship between governors and head teachers is particularly important in this respect. How can we make sure that this culture is right?
- d) **Challenge advisors:** The relationship between school governors and challenge advisors is important. Can this be improved?
- e) **Information:** To be effective governors need the right information provided in the right way. Is this being provided? How could it be improved?
- f) **Recruitment:** A shortage of governors has been identified as a problem. How can the numbers of school governors be increased?

Intended Impact and Contribution

School governors play a vital role in ensuring that schools perform well. This inquiry intends to support the work of school governors by providing:

- Evidenced proposals that will lead to school governors being more effective and school performance being improved
- The views of key stakeholders including governors, head teachers, clerks to governing bodies, Estyn and ERW
- Consideration of the conclusions and recommendations from regional and national reports and an assessment of the implications for Swansea
- Increased councillor understanding about the school governor role and how it contributes to school performance

- Greater public awareness of the work of school governors