

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) 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’s final report was presented to Cabinet on 17 March. A response to the recommendations from Cabinet is expected within two months.

Projected End Date: Complete

b) Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

Key Question: How is the Council working with health and other partners to reduce demand for specialist child & adolescent mental health services?

Progress Bar:

| Planning | Evidence Gathering | Draft Final Report |
|----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | |

The Panel has completed its evidence gathering and will now begin drafting its final report

Projected End Date: May 2016

c) Building Sustainable Communities (convenor: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

Key Question: How can the council best support residents to run services in their own communities?

Progress Bar:

| Planning | Evidence Gathering | Draft Final Report |
|----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | |

In April the panel will speak to the Head of Poverty and Prevention about the role Community First has in relation to Community Action and what is being done in those areas not covered by Communities First to engage with communities. The panel has also produced a

survey that is closely shortly. It has been particularly targeted at Councillors, Community Councils and Community Groups although it is also available online and in hard copy in a number of locations.

Projected End Date: May 2016

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups:

a) Tackling Poverty (convener: Sybil Crouch)

Preparations for this inquiry will begin shortly. A pre-inquiry Working Group is planned for 20 April. The Scrutiny Councillors involved in this will have an initial meeting, to receive an overview report and relevant information from the Cabinet Member and officers, and come to a view about the focus for any in-depth inquiry and terms of reference.

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 & 3 March 2016 (Follow up complete) |
| Public Engagement | 17 Feb 2015 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 25 Aug 2015 (Follow up complete) |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|----|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| Streetscene | 14 Apr 2015 | 14 | 4 | 3 | 20 Jan 2016 (Follow up complete) |
| Social Care at Home | 20 Aug 2015 | 16 | 5 | 1 | May 2016 |
| Corporate Culture | 15 Oct 2015 | 19 | 0 | 0 | Jul 2016 |
| Education Inclusion | 21 Jan 2016 | 19 | 0 | 1 | Oct 2016 |

4. Performance Panels:

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

The Panel met on 9 March where they held Q&A sessions with Cllr Christine Richards, Cabinet Member for Services for Children & Young People and Cllr Jane Harris, Cabinet Member for Adults & Vulnerable People. The purpose was to monitor the implementation and impact of savings targets for 2015/16 within their portfolios.

The Panel discussed the following areas in detail with the Cabinet Member for Services to Children & Young People:

- The financial strategy for Child & Family Services and the success of the Safe Looked After Children Strategy
- Youth Services and the further development of InfoNation on the Kingwsay as a one-stop-shop, including increasing the number of services operating from there as a response to the response to the challenging budget situation
- Changes to outdoor activity centre provision
- A change in approach to youth work, moving away from the traditional outreach role to a more targeted approach to supporting young people
- Progress of the Regional Adoption Service, including the success of the link between financial contributions and the performance framework.
- Youth Citizenship – the Panel recommended that the Cabinet Member look at the possibility of introducing a Swansea wide award for Youth Citizenship
- The Flying Start Programme and the development of an Early Years Strategy to cover support for the whole of Swansea.

The Panel discussed the following areas in detail with the Cabinet Member for Adults & Vulnerable People:

- The anticipated Adult Services budget overspend including the key areas of pressure and the measures in place to try to address this.
- Demand management/eligibility criteria and the impact of the new Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act
- Impact of Business Support review on Social Services
- the development of an equipment register

- Plans to develop a business case to make use of Invest to Save funds to improve use of assistive technology
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

The Panel also considered the 3rd Quarter Budget monitoring report as part of their regular finance and performance monitoring role.

The Panel will next meet on 13 April. On their agenda is the Cabinet report (January 2016) on the closure of the ICT project to bring the service back in-house. They will also consider the 3rd Quarter performance monitoring report.

b) **Schools Performance** (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

See separate report - item 7 of the agenda.

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

The Panel met on 21 March where they received a briefing on the Wellbeing Assessment that will be produced by the Public Services Board and will form the evidence base of the new local Well-being Plan. They also looked in detail at the Local Service Board Driver Diagrams, which are a tool that helps translate a high level improvement goal into a set of underpinning goals ('drivers') and projects. This was in order to help them understand the performance monitoring arrangements that are being developed.

The Panel are in the process of finalising their findings letter to the Chair of the Local Service Board, which will provide their conclusions and recommendations from their work over the last six months looking at how effective the Board has been in addressing its priority of Older People's Independence. The intention is that the recommendations made by the Panel will assist in the development of the Public Services Board.

The Panel will next meet on 25 April in order to focus on scrutiny's role under the new Public Services Board arrangements and the changes that are required to the Panel's membership in order to reflect the revised statutory membership of the Board. Once the new members have been identified then invitations will be sent to the relevant representatives inviting them to join the Panel. Following this, meeting dates and a work plan will be arranged for the forthcoming municipal year.

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

The panel met on 14 March to discuss the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy. The panel learned that the Corporate Parenting Panel had undergone a revision. The Head of Service and the Corporate Parenting Panel had discussed what the panel should look like, its

terms of reference and membership. The panel will now be a decision making body.

The Corporate Parenting Annual Report will be added to the scrutiny panel's work plan.

The panel was concerned that the Corporate Parenting Strategy did not contain outcomes but was informed that the strategy was still in development and that work on it had been allocated to officers to complete. Lead officers had been identified, multi-agency working was taking place and children were being consulted.

The panel was pleased to hear that the Head of Service supported a rolling programme of corporate parent training and the panel suggested that a councillor briefing on corporate parenting could be arranged.

The panel was informed about the Virtual School which will contain all information on the education of looked after children in one place and that this would be accessible by the children themselves, parents and corporate parents.

Performance data on looked after children has been revised and will now be presented to the panel in 9 categories and this will continue to be presented to the panel each quarter in the performance report.

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: Uta Clay)

The panel has been gathering evidence over the last 18 months in response to the transformation of adult services programme. The overall purpose of the panel was to focus on the transformation and change in adult services and provide critical friend challenge to the proposed changes. This process has now ended and the panel met on 7 March to consider all the evidence it had received and to identify conclusions which it agreed to present to the Cabinet Member for consideration during relevant commissioning reviews and future developments in adult services.

The panel agreed a set of conclusions and the final version will be agreed at the last meeting of the TASS panel to be held on 4 April.

b) Education Through Regional Working (regional scrutiny group)

A meeting for scrutiny councillors and officers from the six councils participating in ERW was hosted by Swansea on 11 March. Swansea was represented by Cllr Fiona Gordon. It was agreed that a scrutiny councillors group will be set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and

ensure a consistent approach. The group agreed its terms of reference, discussed individual Councils scrutiny education work programmes, looked at the ERW Business Plan for 2016-19, shared good practice in relation to individual schools scrutiny and looked at the data for school standards and categorisation. The next meeting will be hosted by Pembrokeshire Council and is being arranged for September 2016. Swansea Scrutiny Team will provide the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

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

The Committee agreed at its last meeting that the Local Flood Risk Management Working Group can continue to meet on an annual basis in order to provide an on-going scrutiny involvement in the annual review of the Local Flood Risk Management Plan. The Head of Highways and Transportation has been contacted and asked to provide a timescale for future scrutiny involvement.

d) **Civic Events** (convener: Cllr Anthony Colburn)

The Convener of the Civic Events Working Group requested a follow-up meeting to address a number of issues that the Working Group felt needed further consideration. This will take place in April.

e) **Welsh Housing Quality Standard** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

The Working Group met on 3 February and made a number of recommendations in a letter to Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services. A response has been received and the letters are on the Committee's agenda.

f) **Tethered Horses** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

The Working Group met on 24 March to reflect on the evidence gathered and discuss conclusions and possible recommendations looking at the issue of horses tethered on council land. The Working Group has been asked to consider the petition from Friends of Swansea Horses calling for a ban on this practice to be enforced by the Council. The Working Group has also considered the overall approach to this issue. A letter to relevant Cabinet Members is being prepared.

g) **Tree Preservation** (convener: Cllr David Cole)

The Working Group will meet on 21 April. The Cabinet Member has been invited (Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration), along with the relevant offices, to provide an assessment of current service and information on objectives, procedures/practice, challenges, and improvement plans etc. This will enable scrutiny councillors to ask questions about the Council's work in relation to the tree preservation process, including the making, monitoring and enforcement of Tree Preservation Orders

(TPOs). Following discussion the views of the Working Group and any recommendations will be presented in a letter to the Cabinet Member.

Further Working Groups to be convened in the future as time and resources allow, in the order of priority shown:

1. Corporate Building Services

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering assessment of current service (objectives and achievements, procedures and practice, value for money, challenges, improvement plans etc) for questions and discussion. Some issues raised in relation to procurement, costs / competitiveness, joined up working across the Council.

2. Roads / Highway Maintenance

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.