

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 9 May 2016

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION

Purpose	To enable the committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The committee's questions will broadly explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to areas of responsibility.
Content	The following Cabinet Member will appear before the committee to participate in a question and answer session: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question the Cabinet Member on relevant matters• Make comments and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the council's cabinet to account. The cabinet is made up of the Leader and 9 additional councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific responsibilities.
- 1.2 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and monitor performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.
- 1.3 Cabinet Member Question Sessions have become a feature of committee meetings over the past 3 years. At least one cabinet member is scheduled to appear at each committee meeting, ensuring all 10 Cabinet Members appear before the committee over the course of a year, in order to ask questions on their work. Questions will focus on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

2. Cabinet Member Question Session

2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the committee:

- a) Councillor David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation

Within this Cabinet portfolio, Councillor Hopkins is responsible for:

- Transport Policy
- Highways & Engineering
- Waste Management
- Marina
- Streetscene
- Repairs and Capital
- Sustainable Transport
- Lead elements of Sustainable Swansea

2.2 The Cabinet Member has provided some 'headlines' in relation to portfolio objectives to help the committee focus on priorities, actions, achievements and impact (*see Appendix 1*).

3. Approach to Questions

3.1 At the Cabinet Member Question Sessions the committee will generally ask cabinet members about:

- priorities / objectives
- specific activities and achievements, progress against policy commitments, key decisions taken, and impact / difference made
- headlines on the performance of services and the key targets monitored to measure improvement and success
- their engagement with service users / public and what influence this has had
- what they hope to achieve over the next 12 months and challenges (e.g. resources / budget)
- key decisions they are expecting to take to Cabinet over the next year
- interactions with scrutiny over the last year, and whether there is any specific scrutiny activity they would welcome

3.2 Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the committee. Following the session the chair will write to the Cabinet Member in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the committee, and any actions for the Cabinet Member to consider.

- 3.3 If the committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during this item then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

4. Previous Correspondence

- 4.1 The committee last had a Q & A regarding the Environment & Transportation portfolio in February 2015, and met with the then Cabinet Member, Councillor Mark Thomas. Amongst the issues discussed then included:

- Recycling Performance (incl. Civic Amenity Sites, Commercial Recycling)
- Waste Management and Street Cleaning
- Highways Planning & Maintenance
- Safe Routes to Communities
- Transport

The actual correspondence relating to the February meeting is attached as the committee may wish to follow up on these issues, as necessary.

- 4.2 Other contact with by scrutiny over the last year:

- Local Flood Risk Management Flood Risk Management – Working Group discussion in December 2015 on the Flood Risk Management Plan, including joint working across departments. A further meeting will take place in the new municipal year in order to provide on-going scrutiny involvement in the annual review of the Flood Risk Management Plan.
- Service Improvement & Finance – Performance Panel discussion on Recycling & Landfill Annual Performance Report (Jan 2016).
- Streetscene - Inquiry Panel (follow up) meeting in Jan 2016. Report provided on the impact of the scrutiny inquiry and implementation of agreed recommendations / cabinet action plan. The Panel has now concluded monitoring of this work. However it asked the Committee to keep an eye on the ongoing budget situation and how it might affect the quality of streetscene services. The Committee will have the opportunity during the Q & A to ask the Cabinet Member questions on this.

- 4.3 The Committee has also indicated that it wishes to talk to the Cabinet Member about current issues relating to public transport, some of which is prompted by the previous scrutiny inquiry.

5. Other Questions

- 5.1 For each Cabinet Member Q & A Sessions the committee invites members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the committee) to suggest questions.
- 5.2 On this occasion no questions were received.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Paul Cridland