

Report of the Convener

PLANNING THE REGIONAL WORKING SCRUTINY INQUIRY

2 October 2017

Purpose	This report proposes a plan for the Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry
Content	The report sets out proposals for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intended impact and contribution of the inquiry• The key inquiry question• Lines of inquiry• Evidence gathering
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the proposals in the report and agree a plan for the inquiry.
Lead Councillor	Councillor Lyndon Jones (Convener)
Lead Cabinet Member / Officer(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Rob Stewart, Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy• Phil Roberts, Chief Executive• Sarah Caulkin, Director - Resources
Report Author	Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer 01792 637256 michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 It has been proposed that a scrutiny inquiry should be held into Regional Working and this was agreed by the Scrutiny Programme Committee in July. The committee suggested that the primary focus for the inquiry to be Swansea Council's involvement in regional working (working together across local authority boundaries).

1.2 The purpose of this report is to set out a draft plan for the inquiry.

2. Intended Impact and Contribution

2.1 This inquiry intends to support the work of the council by:

- Drawing together some general principles for development
- Offering proposals for improvement in the long, medium and short term
- Providing a councillor perspective on how well the aspect is working
- Evidenced proposals that will lead to regional working being more effective and ultimately services to residents improved
- Consideration of the conclusions and recommendations from regional and national reports and an assessment of the implications for Swansea
- Increased councillor understanding about regional working and how it contributes to the work of the Council in Swansea

- Pointing to good practice examples and sharing views of different people involved in this aspect

3. Key Question

- 3.1 The key question for this piece of work will therefore be to consider '***How the Council, with its partners, can develop and improve regional working for the benefit of Swansea and its residents?***'

4. Lines of Inquiry

- 4.1 The following lines of inquiry flow from the key question and reflect the discussion in the pre inquiry working group.
- The Swansea Picture:** What is the regional picture as it affects Swansea currently? What are the proposals for the future? Where do we want to be?
 - Financial Picture:** what are we financially contributing to currently? How is it envisaged to change in future?
 - Regional Partners:** The current relationship between Swansea and regional partners? The barriers to improving this?
 - Impact:** What has been the impact for Swansea and its residents of regional working so far?
 - Scrutiny:** What Scrutiny mechanisms have been built into regional partnership governance arrangement?
 - Legislation and Directives:** What are the influences on regional working by national and local directives/policy/legislation?
 - Good practice:** Are there good examples of effective practice in regional working and how are we/partners using this to improve?
- 4.2 These lines of inquiry will form the basis for evidence gathering and for questioning strategies in panel meetings.

5. Evidence Gathering

- 5.1 Evidence gathering should typically involve panel members having conversations with those close to a particular topic. In seeking evidence councillors should be looking to hear a range of different perspectives and from those people they would not normally speak to.
- 5.2 In thinking about what evidence to collect councillors should consider questions:
- *Who would you like to submit evidence in writing? (Written submissions)*
 - *Who do you want to invite in to speak to the Panel at a meeting, where you will be able to ask questions? (Panel meetings)*
- 5.3 The following two sections consider each question in the context of this inquiry.

6. Invitations to Provide Written Submissions

6.1 Written submissions will be invited in two ways:

- **Call for Evidence:** This will be published on the council website and advertised to public partners and staff. A press release will also be produced. A draft call for Evidence can be found at **APPENDIX A**.
- **Email:** To all Cabinet Members, Directors and Heads of Service. Plus Desk based research with other Councils in UK looking at good practice examples.

7. Invitations to attend a Panel meeting

7.1 The following panel meetings are proposed for evidence gathering:

Meeting	Purpose	Proposed Invitees
1. Corporate perspective	To understand corporate view and policy priorities for Swansea in regional working activities	Leader/Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy, Director Resources
2. Financial Perspective	To understand the financial input being made towards regional working activities	Leader/Head of Financial Services
3. Directorate Perspective	To hear from individual council directorate areas about their regional working pictures, relationships and barriers to improvement	Chief Education Officer, Chief Social Services Officer and Director Place
4. Regional Perspective	To understand the views of regional partners	Partners from participating regional bodies
5. National Perspective	To understand Welsh Government views and to look at any good practice learning available	Welsh Government and other local authorities

8. Next Steps

8.1 Once proposals have been agreed the inquiry timetable will be circulated to panel members and the work of the inquiry can start.

8.2 It is expected that the evidence gathering or the inquiry will take place between November 2017 and March 2018. The final report of the panel can then be discussed and agreed in time to be presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee in April 2018 prior to being presented to Cabinet.

Report Author

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Appendices

- A. Call for Evidence – Scrutiny Inquiry into School Governance
- B. Emerging Project Plan/Timetable of Work
- C. Informal Equality Impact Assessment for the Inquiry

Call for Evidence: Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry

A new scrutiny inquiry panel has started which will look at regional working. Over the next few months the Panel will be looking into many aspects regional working and will look to answer the question “*How the Council, with its partners, can develop and improve regional working for the benefit of Swansea and its residents?*”

Councillors have chosen to look at this subject because:

- The Welsh Government has long seen collaboration between public services – and particularly within local government – as a means of providing more efficient and effective services
- *Collaboration has a higher profile than ever before. It is a central plank of the Wales’ public service reform agenda in order to respond to the challenges presented by the tightening public service finances. WLGA*
- Councillors have wanted to carry out this piece of work in order to build a picture and gain better understanding of progresses being made in this area.
- Councillors wanted to look at the scrutiny processes that are being developed within regional partnerships

Lines of Inquiry

The panel will specifically be looking at the following questions:

- a) **The Swansea Picture:** What is the regional picture as it affects Swansea currently? What are the proposals for the future? Where do we want to be?
- b) **Financial Picture:** what are we financially contributing to currently? How is it envisaged to change in future?
- c) **Regional Partners:** The current relationship between Swansea and regional partners? The barriers to improving this?
- d) **Impact:** What has been the impact for Swansea and its residents of regional working so far?
- e) **Scrutiny:** What Scrutiny mechanisms have been built into regional partnership governance arrangements?
- f) **Legislation and Directives:** What are the influences on regional working by national and local directives/policy/legislation?
- g) **Good practice:** Are there good examples of effective practice in regional working and how are we/partners using this to improve?

How to provide your views...

Interested groups or individuals are encouraged to submit written evidence to the inquiry by email to scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk. The Panel may contact you to discuss your evidence. All evidence that is submitted will usually be published as part of the inquiry, if you do not wish your evidence to be published please state clearly.

Emerging Draft Project Plan/Timetable of work
Scrutiny Inquiry into Regional Working

When / Where	What / Who
Pre Inquiry Working Group 2 October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview/strategic picture (Cabinet member and lead officers) • The Corporate landscape with regards to regional working / partnerships • Agreeing the inquiry project plan: discuss the key question, lines of inquiry, evidence gathering and work programme.
Background information to be sent to the panel throughout inquiry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation and relevant directives/announcements • Good practice examples • Useful relevant information 	
<i>Evidence gathering phase</i>	
Session 1 30 Oct at 2pm CR4 Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial picture of Swansea Councils part in regional working. (Details of what are we contributing to and how much)
Session 2 13 Nov at 2pm CR4 Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place Directorate – Consider the picture of regional working/partnerships within this Directorate
Session 3 1 Dec at 10.30am CR4 Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Directorate – Consider the picture of regional working/partnerships within this Directorate
Session 4 26 Jan at 10.30am CR4 Guildhall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services Directorate – Consider the picture of regional working/partnerships within this Directorate?
Session 5 Jan/Feb 2018 TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roundtable meeting 1 - with representatives from regional working partnerships including Western Bay, ERW and Learning & Skills Partnership ...
Session 6 Feb 2018 TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roundtable meeting 2 - with representatives from regional working partnerships including Swansea Bay City Region, Public Protection, waste ...
Session 7 Feb 2018 TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak to Welsh Government representative about current and future regional working
<i>Finalising Inquiry phase</i>	
Session 8 Mar 2018 TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start to draw together evidence and discuss emerging themes arising from the inquiry. (Start to put together final report for SPC and then Cabinet)
Session 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Final report

Equality considerations when planning a scrutiny inquiry

This is being completed at the planning stage of the scrutiny inquiry into ‘Regional Working’

The inquiry title will be ‘*How the Council, with its partners, can develop and improve regional working for the benefit of Swansea and its residents*’.

It is found to be relevant to...

Children/young people (0-18).....y	Religion or (non-)belief.....y
Any other age group (18+)y	Sex.....y
Disabilityy	Sexual orientationy
Gender reassignment.....y	Welsh languagey
Marriage & civil partnership.....y	Poverty/social exclusion.....y
Pregnancy and maternityy	Carers (inc. young carers)y
Race.....y	Community cohesiony

Briefly describe the aims of the scrutiny inquiry:

<p>What are the aims? To develop and improve regional working as it relates to Swansea</p>
<p>Who has responsibility? Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy</p>
<p>Who are the stakeholders? Other local authorities and partner organisations</p>

Impact on Protected Characteristics

Please consider the possible impact on the different protected characteristics.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Needs further investigation
Children/young people (0-18)	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group (18+)	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Race	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh language	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>

Thinking about your answers above, please explain in detail why this is the case.

Regional Working ultimately affects everyone and the inquiry will be at a governance level but the inquiry panel will need to keep an eye on whether it affects those with protected characteristics as the inquiry progresses.

It was recognised at the beginning of this piece of work that different partners and local authorities have different processes and compliance levels in relation to equalities matters.

Recommendations made arising from this work will be put to Cabinet for consideration.

What consultation and engagement will be undertaken. Please provide details below.

Consultation and engagement is planned as part of the inquiry with other local authorities and partners organisations. This will be done through roundtable meetings.

Impacts:

Please consider how the initiative might address the following issues.

You could base this on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience (e.g. comments and complaints).

Foster good relations between different groups	Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
Elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Reduction of social exclusion and poverty

Please explain any possible impact on each of the above.

It is envisaged that the inquiry will have a positive impact on stakeholders and the people of Swansea although this cannot be known until evidence is gathered and analysed and the piece of work is complete with recommendations made to the Cabinet Member.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

Will the initiative have any impact (direct or indirect) on children and young people? If not, please briefly explain your answer and proceed to Section 6.

Other partners and LAs may not be signed up to this.

Monitoring arrangements:

Please explain the arrangements in place (or those which will be put in place) to monitor this initiative:

Monitoring arrangements: This inquiry is time limited and will be finalised in March 2018. It will then go to the Scrutiny Programme Committee for agreement and then onto Cabinet where decision is made on whether to take forward recommendations. Impact of this inquiry will be considered by the panel within a year of Cabinet agreeing recommendations.

This document will be published with the agenda papers for the Regional Working Scrutiny Panel on 2 October 2017.

EIA Action Plan:

Objective - What are we going to do and why?	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	Outcome - How will we know we have achieved our objective?
Stakeholder engagement in scrutiny inquiry. Make every effort to include representation in evidence gathering from all appropriate stakeholder groups	Michelle Roberts, scrutiny officer and Cllr Lyndon Jones, Panel Convener	March 2018	Scrutiny panel will meet with a selection of partner organisations who are directly related to this piece of work
Welsh Language Ensure all communication with stakeholders is available in both English and Welsh.	Michelle Roberts, scrutiny officer and Cllr Lyndon Jones, Panel Convener	March 2018	Availability and accessibility of welsh speakers to inquiry activities
Accessibility Ensure all public activities of the panel are accessible to all those people who would like to participate (accessible venues, information available in alternative formats as requested).	Michelle Roberts, scrutiny officer and Cllr Lyndon Jones, Panel Convener.	March 2018	Availability and accessibility of all to inquiry activities