



**To/
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy and
Strategy**

BY EMAIL

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*Our Ref
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Overview & Scrutiny

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9th January 2018

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy following the meeting of the Panel on 12th December 2017. It concerns the Annual Review of Performance 2016/17 and the Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2017/18.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

On 12th December 2017, the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel met to consider the Annual Review of Performance and the Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2017/18.

We are grateful to all Officers for providing information and answering questions.

We would like to thank Ben Smith and Richard Rowlands for their valuable contribution throughout the year.

We have made a number of observations that we wish to share with you and have some questions we would be grateful to receive responses to.

Annual Review of Performance 2016/17

We were pleased that the summary assessment is mainly successful and that there were no major barriers perceived relating to prospects.

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We do have some observations and questions we would like to make in relation to the report.

1. We were pleased to see that the 'Safeguarding' priority encompasses a range of issues including physical, emotional and mental well-being, protection from harm and neglect, education training and leisure and contribution to society and the economy. This wider concept of safeguarding which still focuses on the protection of children is more appropriate.
2. We feel that 'Improving Pupil Attainment' has been marked more generously than it should have been. We feel that ERW, ESTYN and Schools need to contribute more than they currently do to ensure this is done better.
3. In relation to 'Creating a Vibrant and Viable City', the Panel feels the service may be underscoring itself. The Council have been successful in getting the City Deal so maybe it should be scored 1 for 'prospects' with a 3 for 'potential' to account for the financial barriers in this area of work.
4. 'Tackling Poverty' is hard to score. We feel that because poverty means different things to different people, trying to score against specific tasks in the Corporate Plan is difficult. There are so many variations in Swansea alone.
5. 'Building Sustainable Communities' seems to be a difficult area of work to score against. We feel this is more of a service than a measurable activity.

Following on from this, we wonder whether a scoring system is appropriate for issues such as Tackling Poverty and Building Sustainable Communities. Because these are such broad and subjective wider issues. Are the targets being set in these areas really relevant to the issues?

Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2017/18

We understand that difficult decisions need to be made in respect to the budget.

We will be looking at the proposals in greater depth and feeding back on these in a later letter.

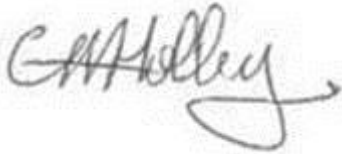
One area we feel the need to comment on is Adult Social Services. We understand that Social Services is an expensive and unpredictable area of work.

We believe investing in the future will eventually bring down the cost of adult services. For example, should we be exploring more options such as funding sheltered housing to support those people who need some, but not substantial support? This may then prevent the need for more intensive and expensive support and intervention at a later date. This is particularly

applicable for those adults who are alone, as loneliness is incredibly detrimental to physical and mental health.

I would be grateful if you could reply to this letter by 30th January 2018.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHolley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance
Panel

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