

**Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups**

**1. Inquiry Panels:**

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis, and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers).

**a) Natural Environment** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

Key Question: What should Swansea Council be doing to maintain, enhance and promote its natural environment and biodiversity, and in doing so promote the resilience of eco-systems?

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Panel met with volunteers of green spaces in July to hear how they are managing Council land in relation to biodiversity issues. It highlighted the extensive voluntary work and the vast amount of green space managed by the groups. The next evidence gathering meeting on the 29 August will be with Corporate Building Services and Corporate Property Services ahead of the final evidence meeting on 21 September. This meeting will focus on the legislative requirements and will hear from Welsh Local Government Association, Natural Resources Wales, the Future Generations Commissioners Office and Welsh Government. There will be a findings report meeting and then a review with the Chief Executive and Leader on 31 October ending the inquiry. The draft report will then be written.

Projected End Date: November 2018

**b) Equalities** (convener: Cllr Louise Gibbard)

Key Question: tbc

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The first stage will be for a ‘pre-inquiry’ meeting which has been scheduled for the 11 October 2018. This will involve an overview / briefing on the subject matter, with advice from relevant cabinet members / officers and existing research & information. This will help inform decisions about how scrutiny can contribute to improvement and the focus, scale and direction of any inquiry. If the Panel agrees an

inquiry should be undertaken then it will then need to put together appropriate Terms of Reference for this work.

## 2. 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	
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1	(i) 15 Nov 2017 (ii) 21 Nov 2018
Tackling Poverty	15 Jun 2017	12	1	2	Oct 2018 tbc
Regional Working	16 Aug 2018	11	0	0	May 2019

## 3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

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

The Panel had the Annual Performance Monitoring Report on 14 August and produced a letter highlighting some performance indicators which did not meet target. The next meeting in September will see the Recycling and Landfill Annual Report return to the Panel along with some financial monitoring items.

### b) **Schools Performance** (convener: Cllr Mo Sykes)

The Panel will next meet in September when they will speak to the Director of Education about the School Improvement Service, the Education through Regional Working Business Plan priorities focussing on Swansea aspects. In October the Panel plan to visit a school, speaking to the Headteacher and Chair of Governors about performance and their prospects for improvement.

### c) **Public Services Board** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The Panel had a session on the 18 July looking at Governance of the Public Services Board as a whole. The Panel received a report which provided details around governance arrangements, including the Terms of Reference and the Partnership Manual. Councillor Clive Lloyd attended to answer questions and update the Panel on the work of the

Board. The next meeting in October will feature the Future Generations Commissioner coming to speak to the Panel about the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Public Services Boards in general.

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

The Panel met on 28 August and discussed the performance of the regional Adoption Service including the recent inspection. They also discussed the Bright Spots Survey results and received an update on Advocacy. The next meeting on 29 October will monitor the performance of the Service and discuss 16 Plus and the Youth Offending Service.

e) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Peter Black)

A progress report appears separately in the agenda as Item No. 7

f) **Development & Regeneration** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

The Panel met on 19 July to discuss the report on Swansea Regeneration Projects Update which went to Cabinet on 21 June. The financial implications of this were reviewed with the Section 151 Officer. In terms of developing the work of the Panel and structured monitoring the Convener of the Panel recently met with Martin Nicholls, Director-Place to discuss this and was informed that a monitoring report is being developed. Future Panel meetings will include regular monitoring around development and regeneration activity and progress, as well as a one-off focus on specific items, as identified and agreed by the Panel.

#### **4. Regional Scrutiny:**

This is collaborative scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

a) **Education Through Regional Working**

A regional scrutiny councillors group meets to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach across the six councils participating in ERW. At present this involves two meetings per year. Swansea is represented by the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Convener of the Schools Performance Panel.

The Group will next meet on the 10 September 2018 and will be hosted by Neath Port Talbot Council. The Group will discuss the national model for education consortia, the ERW review and reform programme, the Measuring Impact Report and Pupil Performance at Key Stage 4 across the region. The meeting following this will take place on the 25 March 2019 and will be hosted by Swansea Council.

Swansea's Scrutiny Team is providing the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

**b) Swansea Bay City Deal**

A Joint Scrutiny Committee has recently been established which will involve three councillor representatives from each of the four Councils involved in the City Deal meeting to scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal Programme. Swansea Councillor representatives are: Jan Curtice, Phil Downing & Mary Jones. The Joint Scrutiny Committee will be serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council, who are making arrangements for the first meeting.

**5. Working Groups:**

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting primarily involving discussion with relevant cabinet member(s) / officer(s) (and any other persons called) to gather information, ask questions, and raise any concerns.

**a) Community Cohesion & Hate Crime** (convener: Meeting 1 Cllr Elliot King and Meeting 2 Cllr Louise Gibbard)

This Working Group met on 14 November which enabled information and discussion / questions about the council's work and effectiveness to support and promote community cohesion and tackle hate crime, and consider the current situation.

A second meeting to look in more detail at the Community Cohesion aspect took place on the 20 June 2018 which looked at concerns concern raised about the lack of an overarching direction, or strategy, for this aspect. The Working Group has written to the Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People) and a response is awaited. Both letters will then be reported to the Committee.

**b) Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

This is an annual recurring item in the work programme. The Working Group met on 20 February to receive an annual update to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The Scrutiny Programme Committee has agreed an additional meeting to monitor progress on the recommendations made by the Group. This will take place on 8 October.

Further Working Groups to be convened in the next six months, in the order of priority (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

**1. Residents Parking**

This will enable information, questions and discussion about concerns that have been raised about the new electronic permit issuing process, as well as other relevant issues e.g. members of the public have raised issues about the adequacy of parking provision, and whether there is potential for charging given financial pressures has / is being explored.

**2. Air / Noise Pollution**

This will enable information, questions and discussion on the situation in Swansea and effects, how pollution is measured / monitored, and efforts to tackle problems and reduce.

**3. Welfare Reform**

This will enable information, questions and discussion on the impact of welfare reform in Swansea, e.g. Universal Credit, and work / measures in place to support citizens and mitigate problems.

**4. Environmental Enforcement**

This will enable information, questions and discussion about what is being done in relation to the enforcement / prevention of environmental issues such as fly tipping, dog fouling, litter, pavement parking etc., concerns about which seem to be regularly raised by the public.

Further Working Groups to be convened in the second half of 2018/19 (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

• **Tourism**

This will enable assessment of current activities taking into account previous scrutiny inquiry, and include discussion on issue raised about the maintenance / development of coastal path.

• **Anti-Social Behaviour**

This will enable information, questions and discussion on current approaches to tackle anti-social behaviour in our communities and their effectiveness.

• **Digital Inclusion**

This will enable councillors to follow up on the Working Group meeting held in March 2017. At that meeting the Working Group detailed a number of issues to be considered as part of a review of the Council's digital inclusion strategy. Councillors will be able to consider how well prepared both the Council itself and the public is to use and communicate / engage via digital technology.

- **Archive Service**

This would enable discussion about current service delivery, performance, and challenges. There is particular concern about accommodation issues and their effect on the service.