



**To/
Councillor Mary Sherwood
Cabinet Member for Better
Communities (People)**

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Date:

24 October 2018

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel to the Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People) on 15 October 2018. It is about the impact and progress made after the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Review.

Dear Councillor Sherwood,

Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - 15 October 2018

We thank you and officers Rachel Moxey and Anthony Richards for attending the Panel to update us on the impact and progress being made with the agreed recommendations resulting from the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry.

You told us that the main impact of the inquiry had been to generate and bring a clear focus to tackling poverty activity and that you are particularly pleased with progress made in relation to cross departmental/cutting working. You also said that you believe the real positive difference will come out of the Poverty Truth Commission work and this will help us set directions for the future. We were pleased to hear that the scrutiny process was helpful in developing a good starting position.

We heard that good progress has been made with most of the scrutiny recommendations contained within the action plan, some of the issues we discussed included:

Consultation Tackling Poverty Strategy - a consultation summary report has been produced that has put together 11 key items from the consultation which will address the issues raised. An action plan to deliver on these has been developed. We would like to see a copy of the consultation summary. Councillors were also interested in seeing the different perspectives expressed by those whose responded.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

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We heard that the consultation exercise received 128 responses, some of which were single responses from organisations on behalf of users. An easy read version was made available and a large number of responses were received through that (82 of the 128). Children and young people were consulted via Big Conversation and Pupil Voice.

Poverty Truth Commission – we heard that this has not been completed but good progress has been made. That in July, it was agreed that the participation study for Swansea will be taken forward using the poverty commission model, after looking at good practice elsewhere. Moving forward will include working with others like Leeds Poverty Commission to develop the important next steps. We must get good buy in from stakeholders. We felt it important that ward councillors be involved. We also would like more information on what is happening in relation to tackling poverty would be useful and would like to see the minutes of the Poverty Partnership Forum put online for Councillors to access. We heard that the next steps for the Poverty Commission will include involving the following three groups of people:

1. Leader/Deputy Leader, senior business leaders, Public Service Board (PSB), faith leaders etc.
2. Range of stakeholder organisations
3. People who have direct experience of poverty

We would like to see good buy in from those organisations on the Public Services Board. We also feel that those involved from the organisations represented on the PSB must have the appropriate level of knowledge and ability to commit to be able to take things forward in those organisations.

Delivery Plan – We heard about the new whole Council Delivery Plan which every Cabinet Member has actions in and that progress is reported quarterly. We would like to see this published online giving it visibility and councillors can also see progress made. We would also like to see full strategy action plans for Poverty and for Prevention available online and these kept up to date as progress is made as Cabinet members and Directors actively contribute to the plan. This would provide improved visibility for Councillors and others. The Panel recognise and were pleased to hear that it is a living document.

European Funding and impact of Brexit – We heard that there are a number of European funded streams. We did express our concern and were pleased to hear that this will not change the concept behind the schemes we are involved in.

Procurement – You told us about the work by Preston Council to maximise the use of social procurements in its activities and through its partnerships. We were very interested in this concept. We recognise that some work is done in relation to this within Swansea in the Beyond Bricks and Mortar but this way of working could be expanded much further here; believing it as in Preston could be a key driver to regenerating the local economy. We agreed to refer this issue to the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to consider further.

In summary, we welcome your thoughts on any issues within this letter but would particularly like you to take action on the follow points:

1. Circulate with a copy of the summary of the consultation to the Panel.
Councillors were also interested in seeing, if possible, some of the different perspectives expressed by those whose responded.
2. Ensure Ward Councillors are involved in the development of the Truth Commission work.
3. That the minutes of the Poverty Partnership Forum are put online for Councillors to access.
4. That the full strategy action plans for both Poverty and for Prevention are put online and these kept up to date as progress is made or changes happen.

We welcome your thoughts on any issues within this letter but do not require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

COUNCILLOR SYBIL CROUCH

Convener, Tackling Poverty Inquiry Panel

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