

**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 final report has now been agreed by the Inquiry Panel. The report is being presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 11 February for approval to submit the report to cabinet for decision.

Projected End Date: January 2019

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

Key Question: How effectively is the Council meeting and embedding the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Duty for Wales)?

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The inquiry’s evidence gathering is moving at a pace, with discussion being had with a wide variety of people including 50+ Network, young people, LGBT Forum, Disability Liaison Group, carers, BME Forum and veterans group. The Panel will also be speaking to all Directors, Human Resources and the new staff equality champions.

Projected End Date: April 2019

## 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	
Tackling Poverty	15 Jun 2017	12	1	2	15 Oct 2018 COMPLETE
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1	(i) 15 Nov 2017 (ii) 21 Nov 2018 COMPLETE
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 have recently looked at the Q2 Performance Monitoring Report and had the opportunity to review the draft budget proposals ahead of the formal budget meeting in February. Along with the regular budget and performance monitoring, the work plan will look at the Library Standards Annual Report, the Complaints Annual Report and a review of Community Buildings and Groups. There is also an additional meeting in place to undertake scrutiny of progress against the Welsh Housing Quality Standard in March.

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

The Panel have an extra meeting on 11 February to discuss the Annual Budget proposals as they relate to education matters. The Panel's next scheduled meeting is on 20 March where they will be visiting Morryston Primary School to see the improvements that have been made and embedded since they met with them in March 2018.

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

The next meeting on 6 February will look at progress with the Public Services Board as well as a focus on the Live Well, Age Well objective. The meeting will also include discussion regarding the role and involvement of the Council, as Statutory Member of the Public Services Board, with appropriate representatives. In addition, the Panel will receive a governance update.

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

The Panel met in December and received an update on the Corporate Parenting Board and discussed the Performance Monitoring Report for the Service for November 2018. The next meeting on 11 February will discuss the draft budget proposals for Child and Family Services and there will be a question and answer session with the Cabinet Members for Children Services. The meeting on 25 February will receive an update on the impact of Prevention and Early Intervention on Child and Family Services; discuss Safeguarding in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation and receive an update on Child Disability.

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

A progress report appears separately in the agenda as Item No. 8.

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

The next meeting on 11 February will be the Panel's opportunity to contribute to the budget process. The following meeting on 28 February will have the regular dashboard report and an in depth look at the Skyline project.

#### 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 next scheduled meeting is 25 March 2019 and will be hosted in Swansea.

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

b) **Swansea Bay City Region**

The Committee, which will scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal Programme, is serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Councillor representatives are: Jan Curtice, Phil Downing & Jeff Jones.

The Committee held an extra meeting on 31 January for update on internal and external reviews of the City Deal Programme, and developments in light of recent events surrounding the Wellness Village / Delta Lakes project and impact on the overall City Deal Programme.

The next scheduled meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee are being held on 1 March 2019 and 16 May 2019, with meetings rotated around the four authorities. The meeting in February will enable the Committee to learn more about the City Deal Programme and regional projects.

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

This is an annual recurring item in the work programme. The next meeting will be held on 14 March to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan.

### **b) Residents Parking** (convener: Cllr Peter May)

This meeting was scheduled for 8 November but has been delayed due to resource issues within the department, to allow time for information required to be provided. It will focus on concerns that have been raised about the new electronic permit issuing process and enable relevant information to be discussed and questions to be asked.

### **c) Welfare Reform** (convener: Cllr Louise Gibbard)

A meeting of the Working Group was held on 14 January 2019 which enabled 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. The Citizens Advice Bureau participated in this Working Group. A letter will now be sent to the Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People) with the views and recommendations of the Working Group.

d) **Environmental Enforcement** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

A meeting of the Working Group has been arranged for 5 February and 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 and branches and undergrowth overhanging public footpaths and highways etc., concerns about which seem to be regularly raised by the public.

e) **Tourism** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

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.

f) **Anti-Social Behaviour** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

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

g) **Digital Inclusion** (convener: Cllr Lesley Walton)

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.

Further Working Groups to be convened (membership / convener to be appointed in due course):

- **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.