



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 April 2019

### Cabinet Member Question Session

<b>Purpose:</b>	To enable the Committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to areas of responsibility.
<b>Content:</b>	The following Cabinet Members will appear before the Committee to participate in a question and answer session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Councillor June Burtonshaw, Cabinet Member for Better Communities (Place)</li><li>• Councillor Mary Sherwood, Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People)</li></ul>
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question the Cabinet Member on relevant matters</li><li>• Make comments and recommendations as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
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<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Cridland

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the Council's Cabinet to account. The Cabinet (also known as the Executive) is made up of the Leader and other councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific portfolio responsibilities:

Cllr Rob Stewart	- Economy & Strategy (Leader)
Cllr Clive Lloyd	- Business Transformation & Performance (Deputy Leader)
Cllr Mary Sherwood & Cllr June Burtonshaw	- Better Communities - People
	- Better Communities - Place

Cllr Mark Child	- Care, Health & Ageing Well
Cllr Elliot King	- Children Services - Early Years
Cllr Will Evans	- Children Services - Young People
Cllr David Hopkins	- Delivery
Cllr Jennifer Raynor	- Education Improvement, Learning & Skills
Cllr Mark Thomas	- Environment & Infrastructure Management
Cllr Andrea Lewis	- Homes & Energy
Cllr Robert Francis-Davies	- Investment, Regeneration & Tourism

1.2 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the Cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.

1.3 Cabinet Member Question Sessions have become a main feature of Committee meetings. At least one cabinet member is scheduled to appear at each monthly Committee meeting, ensuring all Cabinet Members appear before the Committee over the course of a year, in order to ask questions on their work. Questions will focus on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

## 2. Cabinet Member Question Session

2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:

- a) Councillor June Burtonshaw, Cabinet Member for Better Communities (Place)
- b) Councillor Mary Sherwood, Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People)

This Cabinet Portfolio is split between the two Cabinet Members as follows:

People (Cllr Mary Sherwood)	Place (Cllr June Burtonshaw)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3rd Sector Engagement</li> <li>• Access to Services</li> <li>• Community Cohesion</li> <li>• Community Engagement</li> <li>• Communities First</li> <li>• Communities for Work</li> <li>• Digital Inclusion</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse</li> <li>• Drugs / Alcohol</li> <li>• Equalities &amp; Diversity</li> <li>• Food Banks</li> <li>• Future Generations lead</li> <li>• Localised Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allotments</li> <li>• Community Building Rationalisation</li> <li>• Community Centres</li> <li>• Community Cohesion</li> <li>• Community Development</li> <li>• Community Grass Cutting Services</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Litter &amp; Community Cleansing</li> <li>• Members Community Budget Scheme</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Working</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty Reduction lead</li> <li>• Safer Swansea Partnership (non city centre)</li> <li>• Social Inclusion</li> <li>• Welfare Reform</li> <li>• Welfare Rights</li> <li>• Lead elements of Sustainable Swansea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty Reduction</li> <li>• Public Space Protection Orders</li> <li>• Tend &amp; Mend</li> <li>• Weed Spraying Programme</li> <li>• Lead elements of Sustainable Swansea</li> </ul>
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### 3. Approach to Questions

3.1 At each Cabinet Member Question Session the Committee will generally ask Cabinet Members about:

- relevant priorities / objectives, notable activities and achievements, improvement / impact made, and service user / public engagement.
- what they hope to achieve over the coming months and challenges, including any key decisions they plan take to Cabinet over the next year.
- reflections on their engagement with scrutiny and whether there is any issue relevant to their portfolio that they would suggest for scrutiny, not otherwise covered in the work programme – to ensure scrutiny activity is aligned to priorities and focussed on the right things.

3.2 In terms of themes that cut across all cabinet portfolios, the Committee is interested in asking Cabinet Members about:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act – impact on their work / decisions e.g. what they are doing to achieve the well-being goals and ways of working, e.g. focus on long-term thinking, collaboration / involvement etc. (NB: Cllr Sherwood is the lead Cabinet Member for Future Generations)
- Public Services Board (PSB) – their relationship with the work of the PSB; how the PSB impacts on their portfolio and how it is making a difference etc.

3.3 Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee. The Cabinet Members have provided a report on ‘headlines’ in relation to the portfolio to help the Committee focus on priorities, actions, achievements and impact - see **Appendix 1**.

3.4 Amongst questions from the Committee is the intention to ask about:

- the transition from Communities First (for Cllr Sherwood)
- steps being taken by the Council to minimise its use of potentially carcinogenic glyphosate/Roundup in weed-spraying, whether on roadside grass verges or in Council-managed parks and gardens,

given health risks to humans and to other species. (for Cllr Burtonshaw)

With reference to agreed Scrutiny Improvement Objectives the Committee should ensure the Q & A Session also enables it to:

- Follow up, where necessary, on progress with relevant Scrutiny Working Group recommendations to assess impact / outcomes
- Raise any outstanding actions in respect of any other scrutiny activities / recommendations.
- Ask about future key decisions so the Committee can identify any issues which they may want to discuss at an earlier stage than cabinet reporting.
- Encourage Cabinet Members to consider reporting to scrutiny / consulting on significant issues and planned decisions at an early stage to enable views of scrutiny to be taken.

3.5 Following each session the chair will write to Cabinet Members in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for them to consider.

3.6 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during this item then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

#### **4. Previous Scrutiny**

4.1 The correspondence with Cllrs. June Burtonshaw & Mary Sherwood following last year's Q & A session (April 2018) is attached. Taking account there have been portfolio changes since last year, the following issues still relevant to the current portfolio were discussed, and Committee Members may wish to follow up:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Community Hubs
- Members Community Budget Scheme

4.2 Members may also wish to follow up, as necessary, on the Cabinet Member's engagement with relevant Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups over the past year.

Scrutiny involving the Cabinet Members over the past year:

The Cabinet Members were written to over the past year about the following issues:

- Performance Panels:
  - Equality Review Report (Service Improvement & Finance - Jul 2018)

- Community Groups and Friends of Parks (Service Improvement & Finance – Mar 2019)
- Library Annual Report 2017/18 (Service Improvement & Finance – Mar 2019)
- Working Groups:
  - Community Cohesion & Hate Crime Working Group (Jul 2018)
  - Welfare Reform Working Group. (Feb 2019)
- Inquiry Panels:
  - Tackling Poverty Inquiry Follow Up (Oct 2018)

In addition the Committee will be aware that a Scrutiny Inquiry is currently looking at Equalities. Cllr Mary Sherwood has provided input into this work.

## **5. Future Scrutiny**

- 5.1 The Committee should note that the Cabinet Members will be engaged in the following planned / future activity:
- Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group (15 April 2019)
  - Equalities Inquiry Panel – response to inquiry recommendations following presentation of Panel's report to Cabinet. Recommendations which are agreed by Cabinet will be subject to a follow up process around 9-12 months after cabinet decision.

## **6. Other Questions**

- 6.1 For each Cabinet Member Q & A Session the Committee invites members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions. It is up to the Committee how to deal with any suggested questions within the Session.
- 6.2 On this occasion no questions have been received.

## **7. Next Session**

- 7.1 The next scheduled Cabinet Member Question Session, on 13 May, is with the Cabinet Member for Delivery, Councillor David Hopkins.
- 7.2 The question session with the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism, Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, that was planned for 11 March was cancelled as the Cabinet Member was unable to attend. This has also been re-arranged for 13 May Committee meeting.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

## **9. Financial Implications**

9.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1:** Key Headlines: Cabinet Members for Better Communities

**Appendix 2:** Previous Correspondence