



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Council Chamber - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 8 July 2019 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

M Durke
D W Helliwell
E T Kirchner
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
W G Lewis

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
P K Jones
G J Tanner

Also Present

Paula O'Connor Chair of Audit Committee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

P M Black J W Jones

Officer(s)

Kate Jones Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar Scrutiny Team Leader
Debbie Smith Deputy Chief Legal Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): C Anderson

Statutory Co-opted Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas

Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley and L R Jones

15 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

Paula O'Connor – Agenda as a whole – Head of Internal Audit at Swansea Bay University Health Board.

16 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

17 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committees held on 9 May 2019 and 13 May 2019 be approved and signed as correct records.

18 Public Question Time.

There were no public questions.

19 Role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

The Chair presented a report on the 'Role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee'.

The Chair welcomed new Members to Scrutiny Programme Committee and also welcomed Paula O'Connor, Chair of Audit Committee, to this meeting.

20 Final Scrutiny Inquiry Report: Equalities (Councillor Louise Gibbard, Convener).

Councillor Louise Gibbard, Convener, presented the final report of the scrutiny inquiry into Equalities.

She thanked the members of the Inquiry Panel for their time, commitment and support to this topic and for the assistance and input from Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer in supporting the inquiry. She stated that leading this inquiry has been a very rewarding experience as an elected councillor, and was pleased that the inquiry was able to take wide-ranging evidence and reach out to many different people and groups.

The inquiry focused mainly on whether the Council was meeting its obligation under the Equalities Act 2010. The report set out recommendations, broken down as quick wins, medium term actions and longer term goals. Consideration had been given to resource implications of the recommendations made.

Discussions and questions centred around: -

- Improvement of contact and engagement across the whole Council
- Improvement of accessibility of council services for all
- Input from groups affected by issues of racism and religious intolerance

It was noted that different versions of the report would be produced to ensure it was accessible, for example, an infographic version for young people and easy read versions. The report would be presented to Cabinet in September to allow time for this work to be completed.

The Chair and Committee Members commended the comprehensive report and praised the Inquiry Panel for their work.

Resolved that the report be agreed for submission to Cabinet.

21 Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/20.

The Chair presented a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/20 for consideration and noted the papers from the Work Planning Conference held on the 10 June 2019, which were attached to the report.

The Committee held a discussion on the draft Work Programme that centred around the following: -

Inquiry Panels

Procurement – this would be a new Inquiry for this municipal year.

The Regional Working and Equalities inquiry panels would need to be followed up this municipal year.

Performance Panels

Natural Environment – a new performance panel would be set up on the Natural Environment and the terms of reference were set out at Appendix 6 of the report.

Working Groups

There was a debate about the list of suggested topics and priority order. It was agreed that Brexit would be the first topic. Working groups would also be arranged to look at: Employee Health & Well Being; Road Safety and Digital Inclusions.

It was noted that Rural Economy would be looked at under the Development & Regeneration Performance Panel.

There was a discussion regarding further work relating to the Equalities Act 2010 not covered by the Inquiry, namely socio-economic inequality and poverty and implications and pressure across all areas of the Council. The need for the Council to be mindful of and respond to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission report 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' was stressed, and should feed into the Council's Equality Plan. It was suggested that this topic could be discussed, as a key theme, with relevant Cabinet Members when they attend for question and answer sessions.

The Committee noted that a Special Scrutiny Programme Committee was scheduled for 1 August 2019 for consideration of the Housing Commissioning Review.

The next Cabinet Member Q & A session would be with the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance on 12 August 2019.

Agreed that:

- 1) the draft work programme for 2019/20 be agreed.
- 2) a new Performance Panel be set up on Natural Environment with the terms of reference as set out in Appendix 6 of the report.

3) expressions of interest be invited from non-executive councillors to participate in the new inquiry / working groups.

22 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

The Chair presented a report on 'Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups'.

The Performance Panels had been asked to appoint their conveners for the 2019/20 municipal year and the Committee noted the following: -

- Councillor Lyndon Jones be appointed as Convener of the Education Performance Panel
- Councillor Peter Black be re-appointed as Convener of the Adult Services Performance Panel
- Councillor Chris Holley be re-appointed as Convenor of Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel
- Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams be re-appointed as Convenor of the Child & Family Services Performance Panel

Resolved that the following be agreed: -

- 1) Child & Family Services Performance Panel – Add Councillors Erika Kirchner and Wendy Lewis.
- 2) Development & Regeneration Performance Panel – Add Councillor Will Thomas
- 3) Education Performance Panel – Remove Councillor Fiona Gordon.
- 4) Natural Environment Performance Panel – the membership, as outlined at Paragraph 4 of the report, be noted. The Convener would be appointment at the first meeting of the new panel.

23 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair presented a report on 'Scrutiny Letters' for information.

There was a discussion further to the Letter to the Cabinet Members for Better Communities dated 3 June 2019. The discussions focused on the Weed Spraying Programme, and Council funding of organisations to support projects such as 'Faith in Families' beneficiaries of Welsh Government Legacy Fund which is being phased out.

The Deputy Chief Legal Officer stated she would look at the funding streams for 'Faith in Families' and report back at the next Scrutiny Programme Committee.

Resolved that the scrutiny letters log be noted.

24 Audit Committee Work Plan (For Information).

The Audit Committee Work Plan was **noted**. The importance of Committee's awareness and close working was highlighted to avoid duplication / gaps in activity.

25 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.

The dates and times of the upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were **noted**.

A Special Scrutiny Programme Committee which was originally scheduled for the 29 July 2019 had been rearranged to 1 August 2019.

The meeting ended at 5.10 pm

Chair