



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Council Chamber - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 12 August 2019 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
P K Jones
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
E T Kirchner

Councillor(s)

T J Hennegan
W G Lewis

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

P R Hood-Williams L R Jones J W Jones

Also Present

Councillor Clive Lloyd Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Business
Transformation & Performance

Officer(s)

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

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): M Durke, E W Fitzgerald, L S Gibbard, J A Hale and W G Thomas
Councillor Co-opted Members: P M Black and C A Holley

30 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

31 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.

32 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 8 July 2019 be approved and signed as correct records, subject to apologies being noted for Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams.

The Deputy Chief Legal Officer provided an update on minute 23 regarding funding for 'Faith in Families'. She reported that funding had been extended until the end of December 2019. Work was ongoing to trying to source continued funding.

33 Public Question Time.

The Committee heard from Mr Perrott who raised a number of questions relating to the Cabinet Member Q & A Session with Councillor Clive Lloyd in respect of progress with the Universal Review of Council land and potential areas of land for disposal. This matter had been referred to in correspondence between the Committee and Cabinet Member following the previous Q & A Session.

Questions focussed on the following: -

- Date of the Universal Review and whether this is accessible to the public?
- How much surplus land in acres was identified in 2016/2017, 2017/2018 and 2018/2019?
- The efforts that have been made to market surplus land?
- What percentage of surplus land that had been sold and amount remaining?

The Deputy Leader provided an update on the Universal Review and would provide a full response in writing to the member of the public. The Deputy Leader also highlighted that revenue was also being generated from acquisitions / investments.

Resolved that a full response would be provided in writing.

34 Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance. (Councillor Clive Lloyd)

The Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance presented a report on the key headlines of his portfolio.

A verbal address was provided further to the written report circulated. He highlighted that he had taken on lead responsibility for Community Safety. He also referred to Swansea Council taking over the chairing of the Public Services Board (PSB) following Andrew Davies stepping down from his role as Chair of the Local Health Board. Councillor Lloyd confirmed that he has been tasked by the Leader to Chair the PSB (having been vice-chair last year) and highlighted that there would now be an over-arching link between the PSB and Community Safety. He also provided an update on the issues relating to High Street and the Critical Incident Task & Group that has been set up to ensure there is strategic oversight in addressing the issues. In contrast to recent negative press reports he informed the Committee that High Street had been nominated / shortlisted for a national award for best High Street in the UK.

Questions and discussions with the Cabinet Member focussed on the following: -

- Pension fund - the reductions and timescales for reducing investment into fossil fuels; progress on investment into low-carbon investment funds and need to assess alternative investments – noted that all businesses carry some carbon footprint
- Progress on measuring, monitoring and assessing performance for the new Council Objective on Natural Resources and Biodiversity
- Commissioning Reviews – costs and benefits
- Community Safety – Safer Swansea Partnership; National Serious Violence Strategy; High Street; CCTV review; Safety of Children around schools – reference to Swansea Pupils Voice forum and engagement with young people for tackling issues
- Agile Working
- Strategic Estates & Property Management - progress with Public Interest Notices on Seafront Development (West Cross Inn site now removed following public feedback);
- Singleton Park Working Group (Committee assured no progress would be made on the Home Farm Site before the Group had been established and had provided its findings); low rate borrowing has enabled the Council to borrow for acquisitions / investments that will generate significant returns.
- Financial Services – delivery of Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement Review and Borrowing – short, medium and long term effects
- Loss of community banking services

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member reflecting the discussions and sharing the views of the Committee.

35 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Service Improvement & Finance. (Councillor Chris Holley, Convener)

In the absence of the Convenor, Councillor Chris Holley, the Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel update was noted.

36 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

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

The Chair noted a request had been received from Councillor Philip Downing to join the Development & Regeneration Performance Panel. This would take the number of members to 16 and it was noted that no further members would be added given the size of the Panel. The Committee noted the re-appointment of Councillor Jeff Jones as Convener of this Panel.

The Chair addressed the Committee to agree membership and appoint Conveners for the new Inquiry Panel and Working Groups, based on expressions of interest received.

In respect of the Brexit Scrutiny Working Group Councillor Mary Jones and Councillor Peter Jones addressed the Committee in support of their interest to act as Convenor which resulted in a vote to appointed Convener.

Brexit Scrutiny Working Group – Three expressions of interest had been received. Councillor Chris Holley was withdrawn as newly appointed Convener of the Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – Councillor Mary Jones and Councillor Peter Jones addressed the Committee in support of their interest to act as Convenor – following a vote Councillor Peter Jones was appointed as Convener.

Resolved that:

- 1) Development & Regeneration Performance Panel – add Councillor Philip Downing;
- 2) The proposed membership of the new Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel be approved as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report;
- 3) The proposed membership of the new scrutiny working groups on Brexit, Staff Health & Well-being and Road Safety be approved as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, with Councillor Terry Hennegan also being added to the Road Safety Working Group;
- 4) Councillor Chris Holley be appointed Convener of the Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel;
- 5) Councillor Peter Jones be appointed Convenor of the Brexit Scrutiny Working Group;
- 6) Councillor Cyril Anderson be appointed as Convenor of the Staff Health & Well-being Scrutiny Working Group; and
- 7) Councillor Steve Gallagher be invited to act as Convenor of the Road Safety Working Group.

37 Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/20.

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019/20.

She reported that a public request for scrutiny had been received relating to concerns about nuisance from seagulls and anti-social behaviour of people feeding the gulls within communities and urban areas, and asking the Council to take action.

She also referred to the Cabinet Member Question Session for the next Scrutiny Programme Committee, which would be with the Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy, and invited discussion on the key topics of focus for that session. The Committee identified a number of areas that they wished to explore with the Cabinet Member: -

- Housing Commissioning Review progress
- Homelessness – Strategy / Action Plan progress
- Housing Voids / Empty Properties
- Council House Management
- Green Energy
- Green Transport

Resolved that the public request for scrutiny be included in the work programme and referred to the new Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel to deal with.

38 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Letters Log.

The log and letters were noted.

39 Audit Committee Work Plan (For Information).

The Work Plan for the Audit Committee was provided for information.

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

The dates and times of upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were provided for information.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm

Chair