

**Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy to  
Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry Panel on 15 October 2015**

**IMPACT REPORT: SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO  
REGIONAL WORKING**

<b>Purpose</b>	To help the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel to assess the impact of their report into Regional Working
<b>Content</b>	This report deals with three questions related to the impact of the inquiry: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What has changed since the report was presented to Cabinet?</li> <li>2. Have the agreed recommendations been implemented?</li> <li>3. What has been the impact of the scrutiny inquiry?</li> </ol>
<b>The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the contents of the report</li> <li>• Reach conclusions about the impact of the inquiry</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy, Councillor Rob Stewart
<b>Lead Officer(s)</b>	Phil Roberts, Chief Executive
<b>Report Author</b>	Phil Roberts

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook an in-depth inquiry between October 2017 and March 2018. This final report is attached at Appendix A. The Cabinet Member response and action plan are attached at Appendix B.

1.2 The reporting timeline of the inquiry is as follows:

Commenced	2 Oct 17
Agreed by the Scrutiny Programme Committee	9 May 18
Presented to Cabinet	21 Jun 18
Cabinet Response agreed	16 Aug 18

1.3 The final stage of the scrutiny inquiry process is the follow up. It is at this point that the original panel reconvenes in order to assess the impact of the work.

1.4 The purpose of this report is to assist the panel as it seeks to answer the following three questions, each of which will be dealt with as follows:

- What has changed since the report was presented to Cabinet?
- Have the agreed recommendations been implemented?
- What has been the impact of the scrutiny inquiry?

## **2. What has changed since the report was presented to Cabinet?**

2.1 Since the inquiry concluded the following changes have taken place.

- The details of the Welsh Government proposals for improved collaboration and the operation of Joint Committees are becoming clearer
- WLGA have been involved in detailed discussions with Welsh Government
- A Bill is likely to be published in November
- The Chief Executive has held informal discussions with the Minister and with senior civil servants with a view to preparing a regional proposition following discussion with neighbouring councils.

## **3. Have the agreed recommendations been implemented?**

3.1 In responding to the inquiry an action plan was drawn up showing what steps would be taken to implement all of the scrutiny recommendations agreed by Cabinet (Appendix B).

3.2 The table at Appendix C shows progress against each recommendation and specifically:

- the Cabinet decision in respect of each recommendation
- the action taken / proposed to implement the recommendations
- the responsible officer(s)
- timescales involved

## **4. What has been the impact of the scrutiny inquiry?**

4.1 The inquiry has:

- raised the profile of the issue in question
- helped to inform and provide clarity on the Council's approach to regional collaboration

## Scrutiny Inquiry of Regional Working – Cabinet Action Plan Follow up/Impact

Recommendation	Action already being undertaken	New Action Proposed	Timescale	Responsible Officer	
1.	<p><b>We continue to be ahead of the game by looking at positive ways forward for Swansea in Regional Working collaborations by being involved, where possible, in pilots/trials that may ease and prepare the way forward for us.</b></p>	<p>The Council is playing a leading and proactive role in major regional collaborations. The Chief Executive takes the lead role for ERW and Western Bay as well as being an executive member of the City Deal Joint Committee and the Leader of the Council is the City Region Joint Committee Chair</p>	<p>The senior management restructure approved by Council on 21st June strengthens the Council's management capacity to ensure that the regional collaboration agenda can be taken forward proactively by Swansea whilst also allowing the Council to manage its ambitious programmes based around the corporate priorities.</p> <p>Continue to influence the collaboration agenda and decision-making at Welsh Government.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>
<p><b>COMPLETED – PARTIALLY</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> The senior management review has provided additional capacity. The Chief Executive has been re-appointed as CEO of ERW. The Leader and Chief Executive have held informal discussions with the Minister and with senior civil servants with a view to preparing a regional proposition following discussion with neighbouring councils.</p>					
2.	<p><b>Address or mitigate the barriers found in existing regional partnerships and use the lessons learnt to inform our new collaboration activities.</b></p>	<p>The City Deal has a Joint Working Agreement in place and ERW has fully formed governance arrangements. A review of progress has been undertaken by IPC on the Western Bay Health &amp; Social Care collaboration</p>	<p>Undertake a lessons learnt exercise (including learning points identified by the panel) across the three main regional collaborations and develop an action plan/s with resource implications to address any specific and remaining barriers.</p>	<p>2018/19</p>	<p>Director Leads</p>

**COMPLETED – YES**

**Progress:** All three main collaborations (ERW, Swansea Bay City Deal and the West Glamorgan Partnership) have undertaken systematic reviews to ensure that resources are in place and barriers removed.

3.	<b>Ensure that we learn particularly from previous large collaborations both positive and negative aspects to help ease our way into new partnership arrangements.</b>	The Council meets up regionally with 5 other local authorities to discuss collaboration projects. The Council has a clear rationale in place when collaborating and it is clear on the anticipated benefits and costs.	Undertake a lessons learnt exercise (including learning points identified by the panel) across the three main regional collaborations and develop an action plan/s with resource implications to address any specific and remaining barriers.	2018/19	Director Leads
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**COMPLETED – PARTIALLY**

**Progress:** the reviews of the existing arrangements have informed the developing strategy for collaboration and the preference for a four council footprint in South West Wales as a basis for future partnership arrangements

4.	<b>Ensure all partnerships have an effective governance structure that has a suitable amount of elected member challenge built in, particularly scrutiny in those larger most impactful partnerships like Swansea Bay City Region, Western Bay and ERW.</b>	ERW has fully formed Governance Arrangements, which includes a Joint committee, an ERW Service Committee and an informal scrutiny mechanism. <i>A Joint Committee Agreement and joint scrutiny arrangements were agreed for the City Deal at Council on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018.</i> Western Bay has a Joint Committee in place. There are scrutiny arrangements in place for all three partnerships	Review governance arrangements of the 3 main partnerships – ERW, Western bay and City Deal - to ensure they remain fit for purpose.	2018/20	Director Leads and Monitoring Officer
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**COMPLETED – YES**

**Progress:** all partnerships have been reviewed and improved governance arrangements are in place

5.	<b>That each partnership has one clear structured lead that can</b>	The Council is playing a leading and proactive role in major regional	The new senior management structure agreed at Council on	Complete	Chief Executive
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	<b>facilitate communication between the partnership and scrutiny.</b>	collaborations. The Chief Executive takes the lead role for ERW and Western Bay as well as being an executive member of the City Deal Joint Committee and the Leader of the Council is the City Region Joint Committee Chair.	21st June 2018 has director leads in place for each partnership.		
<b>COMPLETED – YES</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> The Leader and Chief Executive are taking the lead in all partnerships and in the communication with scrutiny					
6.	<b>That we ensure that the current financial and resource implications for Swansea (including quantifying officer time) are clearly and continually understood.</b>	The Council has a clear rationale in place when collaborating and it is clear on the anticipated benefits and costs. The Council understands what it currently contributes directly to ERW, Western Bay and City Region and how much it contributes to all other partnerships. The Council is able to estimate how much officer time is committed to partnership working.	Continue to assess the value to the Council from being involved in existing or new partnerships, including an analysis of costs and benefits.	Ongoing	Corporate Management Team
<b>COMPLETED – PARTIALLY</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> All partnerships have been reviewed but there remain some anomalies in the administration arrangements between them					
7.	<b>That a review is undertaken of the regional bodies that we work with, to see if any can be rationalised or amalgamated. We must be SMART about the partnerships which we are involved in to ensure we are adding value for time spent.</b>	A mapping exercise has been undertaken that identified the key local, regional and national partnerships. The Council has a clear rationale in place when collaborating and it is clear on the anticipated benefits and costs.	Continue to assess the value to the Council from being involved in existing or new partnerships, including an analysis of costs and benefits.	Ongoing	Corporate Management Team

<b>COMPLETED – PARTIALLY</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> separate reviews have been undertaken on all partnerships but with common themes on governance, management and value for money. Any regional proposition will need to address the need for rationalisation or amalgamation.					
8.	<b>That modern technology is used for meetings to reduce travel time, including, for example skype, video conferencing. Ensuring the right facilities are available for Councillors and staff and that they are encouraged and trained to use them.</b>	Rolling out and promoting the use of Skype as part of the wider roll out of Office 365 resulting from the Council's Digital Strategy and modernisation agenda.	Review how Skype could be used amongst partners to reduce travelling and officer and Councillor time and further encourage participation in partnership working.	2018/20	Chief Transformation Officer
<b>COMPLETED – NO</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> whilst the use of Skype is increasing the level of technological capability and capacity varies between councils. A regional collaboration proposition will aim to address this and seek funding from Welsh Government to do so					
9.	<b>Make more use of the third and private sector bodies in our collaboration activities.</b>	The delivery of the City Deal will not be possible without the involvement of the private sector. The Western Bay Programme supports collaborative working between four statutory partner organisations, together with the third and independent sectors. ERW has independent members involved in the Executive Board.	Continue to engage the third sector in existing partnerships.	Ongoing	Director Leads
<b>COMPLETED – PARTIALLY</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> third sector and private bodies are included in social care and economic development collaborations					
10.	<b>Make representations to Welsh Government through our</b>	Representations made to Welsh Government on reforming the grant	Continue to press Welsh Government for a more	Ongoing	Chief Executive and Section 151

	<b>different working partnerships about streamlining and simplifying the business case and grant application process.</b>	regime; for example through the Council's response to the recent Green Paper on Local Government Reorganisation.	streamlined grant process		Officer
<b>COMPLETED – YES</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> extensive and regular representations have been made on all three partnership areas.					
11	<b>Partnerships regularly review their governance, membership and impact. This should include the publishing of an annual report.</b>	ERW produces audited and published accounts and are inspected by Estyn and has produced a document called Democratic Accountability and Scrutiny, which recognises the role of scrutiny in, amongst other things, monitoring performance and budgets. The City Deal is in the development stages of practical formation.	Produce an annual report to Council on the progress made across the main regional collaborations; ERW, Western Bay and City Deal	2019/20 and annually	Chief Executive
<b>COMPLETED – YES</b>					
<b>Progress:</b> All partnerships have undertaken detailed reviews. A progress report was agreed at Council on 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2019					