



Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 July 2021

Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

Purpose:	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 specific areas of responsibility.
Content:	<p>The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:</p> <p>a) Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>The specific areas of responsibility being discussed are:</p> <p>a) Highways & Engineering b) Infrastructure Repairs & Maintenance</p>
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question the Cabinet Member on the specific portfolio responsibilities• Make comments and recommendations as necessary
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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.

1.2 There are 10 Cabinet portfolios:

	Cabinet Portfolio	Cabinet Member
1	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader of the Council)	Cllr Rob Stewart
2	Delivery & Operations (Joint Deputy Leader)	Cllr David Hopkins
3	Climate Change & Service Transformation (Joint Deputy Leader)	Cllr Andrea Lewis
4	Adult Social Care & Community Health Services	Cllr Mark Child
5	Business Improvement & Performance	Cllr Andrew Stevens
6	Children Services	Cllr Elliott King
7	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	Cllr Robert Smith
8	Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management	Cllr Mark Thomas
9	Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
10	Supporting Communities	Cllr Alyson Pugh Cllr Louise Gibbard

NOTE:

- All Cabinet Members have responsibility for Poverty Reduction
- Supporting Communities Portfolios operate under a job share system with two named Councillors sharing the responsibility, rotated on a regular basis; however, formally they remain as one cabinet portfolio.
- Detailed Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility listing is attached to this report.

1.3 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.

1.4 The Committee has moved away from general Cabinet Member Question Sessions, looking at overall responsibilities, in favour of focusing on specific areas of interest / concern, taking into account any gaps in the overall scrutiny work programme and ensuring good coverage of scrutiny across all cabinet portfolios.

1.5 The Committee should be mindful to avoid duplication of any issue(s) which are being examined elsewhere in the scrutiny work programme e.g. within Performance Panels.

2. Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

- 2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:
- a) Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management
- 2.2 The Cabinet portfolio responsibilities that the Committee will focus on are:
- Highways & Engineering
 - Infrastructure Repairs & Maintenance
- 2.3 The Cabinet Member, will attend, along with lead officers who can assist the Committee, to report on aims / objectives, plans, and the delivery of work related to these portfolio objectives. Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee.
- 2.4 The Cabinet Member has provided a report on the portfolio responsibilities under discussion to help the Committee focus the discussion and questions - see **Appendix 1**.

3. Approach to Questions

- 3.1 The session should provide Committee members with a greater understanding of what these specific responsibilities entail, resources, priorities / objectives / commitments, key activities / headlines / achievements, performance measures, and overall assessment of service health (including, for example, how we compare with others, challenges / risks) and improvement / impact / difference made. This will give the Committee the chance to ask focused questions and provide challenge on actions and performance in relation to these areas of responsibility, as well as future thinking.
- 3.2 In terms of themes that cut across all cabinet portfolios, the Committee can ask 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 (including regional / collaborative working, service user / public engagement)
 - Links to Poverty Reduction
 - Reducing inequalities, including socio-economic disadvantage
 - Links to the Council's Recovery and Transformation Plan
 - Links to the Public Services Board (PSB)

- 3.3 The Committee has also invited members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions that the Committee should ask. It is up to the Committee how to deal with any suggested questions within the session.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during the session 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.
- 3.6 The Committee should note that Councillor Mark Thomas has already been engaged in scrutiny, or is planned, of the following:
 - Air Quality & Pollution (Natural Environment Performance Panel)
 - Local Flood Risk Management (Natural Environment Performance Panel)
 - Green Space Management (incl. grass cutting, weed spraying) (Natural Environment Performance Panel)
 - Ash Dieback (Natural Environment Performance Panel)
 - Waste Management & Recycling (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
 - Transport / City Centre Travel Plan (Development & Regeneration Performance Panel)
 - Active Travel (Scrutiny Programme Committee)
 - Bus Services (Working Group)

4. Next Session

- 4.1 The next scheduled Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities, on 17 August, is with the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism, Councillor Robert Francis-Davies. The Cabinet Member has been asked to specifically report on:
 - Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing
 - Business and City Promotion

Within the discussion, the Committee can also follow up, as necessary, on the previous Tourism Scrutiny Working Group, which met and subsequently reported to Cabinet during 2019. A Cabinet response / action plan was agreed in November 2019.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

6. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Cabinet Member Report

Appendix 2: Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility Listing