

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis, and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers).

a) **Procurement** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

Key Question: What is the Council doing to ensure it procures locally, ethically, and greenly while being cost effective and transparent in its practices?

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Inquiry Panel resumed with a meeting on 24 June to discuss an update strategic overview. The Panel then reviewed and agreed their Terms of Reference and Project Plan (appended). On the 27 July the Panel will start their evidence gathering by meeting with Internal Audit.

The inquiry may take up to six months to complete, as it will call for wide ranging evidence, and will lead to a report with conclusions and recommendations that will be presented to Cabinet.

2. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

Follow-ups of inquiries will consider both the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and wider impact / difference made. Inquiry Panels are reconvened between 6-12 months after cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Equalities	21 Nov 2019	18	0	0	28 Jan 2021 Further follow up tba Nov 2021

3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

a) **Service Improvement & Finance** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

This Panel meets every month. The Panel last met on 11 June to receive an overview from the Chief Finance Officer (understanding financial reporting) and to discuss the Capital Outturn and Financing report 2020-21.

The Panel also met on 23 June to receive an update regarding the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report. The Panel also received an overview from the legal department regarding Byelaws.

b) **Education** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Panel meets every month. A progress report appears separately under Agenda Item 7.

c) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its next meeting on 14 July the Panel will discuss the latest Performance Monitoring Report, receive an update on progress with Assistive Technology and Community Alarms and receive initial feedback on the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Visit in relation to Adult Services.

d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. The Panel last met on 22 June and received an update on the Regional Adoption Service, discussed initial feedback on the CIW Assurance Visit and agreed its work programme for 2021-22.

At its next meeting on 11 August the Panel will discuss the latest Performance Monitoring Report, receive a briefing on the CIW Assurance Visit Full Report in relation to Child and Family Services and a briefing on the Outcomes from the Ty Nant CIW Inspection.

e) **Development & Regeneration** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

This Panel meets every two months. The Panel met on 1 July to discuss the monitoring Dashboard Report and updates across all major projects. The Panel will also undertake an annual review of this year's work.

At the next meeting on 7 September, the Panel will receive a presentation from Swansea University in relation to their involvement with the City Deal investment projects.

f) **Natural Environment** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

This Panel meets every two months. The Panel last met on 29 June, holding discussions surrounding the Council's Air Quality Management

strategies. The Panel also heard from Swansea University regarding research into the human-health impacts of Air Quality.

The Panel will next meet on 31 August to hear updates regarding Ash Die Back and Local Flood Risk Management.

4. Regional Scrutiny:

This is collaborative scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

a) Education Through Regional Working

The Scrutiny Councillor Group met remotely on the 28 June 2021. They met with the Lead Director and the ERW Chief Officers to discuss ERW and the move to the new Education Regional Partnership. They also discussed progress with the Business Plan and how they would like to see Scrutiny operate under the new Partnership.

b) Swansea Bay City Region City

The Joint Scrutiny Committee continues to monitor the City Deal programme. A meeting planned for 25 May is being re-arranged with the next meeting expected to focus on the Pentre Awel project, as well as overall programme and financial monitoring.

5. Working Groups:

A number of new topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting (in the order shown below) primarily involving discussion with relevant cabinet member(s) / officer(s), and any other persons called, to gather information, ask questions, and give views / raise any concerns.

a) Workforce (convener: Cllr Cyril Anderson)

This Working Group met on 29 March 2021 and asked about the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of staff; how the Council is supporting this; issues around home working; staff sickness; staff turnover; use of agency staff and pressures. A range of information was considered by the Working Group, with input from relevant Cabinet Member(s) and officer(s). A letter with the Working Group's conclusions and recommendations was sent to the relevant Cabinet Members and this letter together with the Cabinet Members response was reported to the Committee in June.

With the Committee's agreement, the Working Group will meet again in the next six months in order to revisit the topic and consider the latest position, information and experience including the results of the further

staff survey that will be carried out by the Council in the coming months.

b) **Digital Inclusion** (convener: Cllr Lesley Walton)

This Working Group met on the 11 May where they congratulated officers for the good work done so far in relation this, especially through the difficult Covid period. Overall the Working Group were of the view that the Council is on the right track with its Digital Inclusion Strategy and do recognise that the Council is keen to make the right improvements moving forward. The Digital Inclusion Framework/Strategy and the Council Website is currently being reviewed and members of the Working Group asked to be included in this process. The letter from the Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Business Improvement & Performance was reported to the Committee in June.

The Working Group felt that further oversight of work on Digital Inclusion is necessary as things develop, perhaps annually, whether through Working Group or other method of scrutiny. This will be factored into future work planning discussion.

c) **Bus Services** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Working Group will meet on 7 July. This will enable information, questions and discussion about bus network coverage and levels of service; community transport provision; integration with other forms of transport, etc. Representatives of First Cymru and Cardiff Bus will also be participating in the meeting.

d) **Healthy City** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

This will enable information, questions and discussion on Swansea as a healthy city, exploring in particular the provision, and promotion of, outdoor sport and activities and opportunities for young people, etc.

Reserve Working Group List:

- Road Safety
- Active Travel
- Accessibility for the Disabled / Elderly