



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 16 November 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
P K Jones
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
H Lawson
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
W G Lewis
T M White

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

P R Hood-Williams S M Jones J W Jones

Also Present

Councillor Alyson Pugh Joint Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities
Councillor Louise Gibbard Joint Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities

Officer(s)

Amy Hawkins Interim Head of Adult Services
Kate Jones Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar Scrutiny Team Leader
Anthony Richards Poverty and Prevention Strategy and Development
Manager
Debbie Smith Deputy Chief Legal Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): C E Lloyd

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

60 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:

Councillor Peter Jones – Minute No. 64 – Personal – Assisted in drafting the Well-Being objectives within the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

61 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.

62 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on the 19 October 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

63 Public Question Time.

There were no public questions.

64 Report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.

The Cabinet Members for Supporting Communities, The Interim Head of Adult Social Services, and the Poverty & Prevention Strategy and Development Manager were present for the report on the Delivery of the Corporate Priority of Tackling Poverty.

Further the written report provided the following was highlighted: -

- Definition of Poverty - income below a minimum standard that is acceptable to live on, inadequate opportunities / resources, inadequate access to necessary services
- Various factors of poverty – unemployment, ineffective benefits, high cost of housing, relationships, abuse etc.
- Key goals to improve people's lives
- Holistic approach to tackling poverty
- Good partnership working
- Heavy reliance on grants
- Examples of the great work of the Council's Poverty Team as outlined in the written report

Questions and discussions focused on: -

- Aims and objectives of the Council in respect to poverty – scope of what can be achieved as a single Council
- Good partnership working with the common aim of improving lives
- The Swansea Poverty Truth Commission planned to launch in 2022 - told this is about real input from people who have experienced poverty – based on learning from Leeds Council
- The role of Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and the Resilient Wales goal in helping tackling poverty – access to green spaces, energy efficient houses, employability experience in the green economy
- The potential for One Stop Shops for sources of advice, support and information and potential use of the Community Hub for information – current examples included employability hubs, early help hubs, common access points,

Local Area Co-Ordinators, projects in libraries as well as the development of the Dyfatty shops and city centre community hub

- Food poverty and impact of encouraging 'grow your own' in communities – £450,000 in funding had been distributed to over 100 projects across Swansea since 2019 to help tackle food poverty and food insecurity – They were broken down into 3 main categories of: providing crisis food support, developing cooking skills and encouraging community food growing projects – in terms of impact, it was reported that organisations had said the help was instrumental in dealing with the increased demands that the pandemic brought
- Decrease in the average annual full time earnings in Swansea in comparison to Wales and UK figures which have increased
- Employability and potential barriers to gaining employment – key issue of transport as well as childcare issues which were made worse by the pandemic, gap in receiving wages from starting work and lack of access to opportunities for experience during the pandemic
- Ways of monitoring and measuring the success of the Corporate Tackling Poverty measures and measuring the efforts to mitigate poverty as a barrier to academic success. Measuring the success was essential to ensure the efforts / measures taken were working and having the desired impact

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Members and Offices and looked forward to a further update in the next municipal year.

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

65 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Development & Regeneration (Councillor Jeff Jones, Convener).

Councillor Jeff Jones, Convener, presented the Development and Regeneration Performance Panel Update Report and highlighted the following from recent Panel activities: -

- Panel Visit to the new Arena – noted there had been a few issues with materials, a Covid-19 outbreak on site and labour shortage as a result of the pandemic, but they had been assured that it would be completed by March 2022
- Box Village in SA1 – the University of Wales Trinity St David's were going to meet the costs of the project
- Hearing from Swansea University – about their possible development of mid-tech and sports tech facilities at the Singleton campus and in Morriston
- City Centre Travel Plan – trying to encourage less use of cars in the City Centre, relocation of some park and rides, possibility of extension to free bus travel

The Chair thanked the Convener for the report.

Resolved that the update be noted.

66 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

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

The Membership of Road Safety Working Group as previously agreed was set out in the report.

Resolved that the report be noted.

67 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Chair presented a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme.

It was noted that the work plan of the Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel, has been adjusted, in the same way as the Adult Services Performance Panel, given current pressures within Social Services Officers to cope with the extra demand resulting from the pandemic.

He referred to the Cabinet report, published within the 18 November Cabinet agenda concerning legal agreement on the new regional education partnership 'Partneriaeth'. Within the legal agreement it was confirmed that a joint scrutiny group would be set up in due course to scrutinise the work of the partnership.

The next Scrutiny Programme Committee was scheduled for 14 December 2021. The main items scheduled were: -

- Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities – Parking Policy, Control & Enforcement
- Scrutiny of Public Services Board
- Pre-decision of Scrutiny on the Cabinet Report on 'Leasehold Acquisition and Redevelopment FPR7 – 279 Oxford Street / 25-27 Princess Way'

It was noted that the Scrutiny of the Public Services Board may be re-scheduled for January should the Pre-Decision Scrutiny item go ahead in December.

Resolved that the report be noted.

68 Scrutiny Letters.

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

Resolved that the Scrutiny Letters be noted.

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

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

The Meeting ended at 5.16 pm

Chair