



Report of the Convener

Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel – 15 March 2022

Annual Work Plan Review

Purpose:	As the municipal year ends, it is good practice to reflect on the Panel's work, experience, and effectiveness.
Content:	A summary of the year's activities is provided.
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect on the year's work; and• Share ideas to improve the effectiveness of scrutiny
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Jones, Convener of the Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel
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1. Background

- 1.1 As this is the final meeting of this municipal year, the Panel is invited to reflect on the year's scrutiny work, experience and effectiveness. Any ideas that will improve the effectiveness of the scrutiny of Natural Environment, and scrutiny generally, are welcome.
- 1.2 To aid Panel members, a summary of the year's work is attached (appendix 1).
- 1.3 Some of the questions the Panel may want to consider:
 - Have things worked well?
 - Has the Panel's work focused on the right things?
 - What, if anything, could be done better?
 - What have we learnt that will help us to improve and develop future scrutiny?

2. Panel Overview

- 2.1 The Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel is responsible for ongoing monitoring of Council performance in relation to the natural environment. The Panel monitors delivery of the Council's work, commitments and implementation of agreed plans, and assesses progress.

- 2.2 The development of this Panel followed a scrutiny inquiry, which looked at how the Council manages its responsibilities in relation to the natural environment in Swansea, including statutory requirements under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and subsequent introduction of a new Corporate Priority of Maintaining and Enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity. This also links with the Climate Emergency, declared by the Council in June 2019, and the recent declaration by the Council in November 2021 of a Nature Emergency.
- 2.2 The Panel has a membership of 14 councillors. Overall Councillor attendance at the Panel for the year has been 73% to end of February 2022.
- 2.3 In accordance with the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme, the Panel has met every two months. During the 2021/22 municipal year, 6 meetings were held. Meeting discussions have regularly been reported on by the local press, indicating the Panel has been focussed on issues of public interest.
- 2.5 The Panel has written to relevant Cabinet Members, to convey its views including suggested action, arising from meeting discussions. Letters, and responses where requested, were reported back to the Panel for comments and discussion as necessary.

3. Future Scrutiny Work Programme

- 3.1 The future work programme will be discussed at the first Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel in the new municipal year, or otherwise other arrangement, following the Council elections in May.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Completed Work Plan 2021-2022

Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel Work Plan 2021-22

22 nd March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Convener • Nature Conservation – Project updates <i>Invited to attend:</i> Deborah Hill – Nature Conservation Team Leader Paul Meller – Natural Environment Section Manager Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Delivery and Operations • Agree Work Plan topics 2021-22 • For information only - Climate Change Action Plan consultation (link to papers)
2021-22	
19 th May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Action Plan consultation feedback • Climate Emergency Declaration – Council Action Plan Progress <i>Invited to attend:</i> Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Homes, Energy and Service Transformation Martin Nicholls – Director of Place Rachel Lewis – Directorate Project Manager Suzy Richards – Sustainable Policy Officer
29 th June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality Management <i>Invited to attend:</i> Cllr Mark Thomas – Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management Tom Price – Team Leader, Pollution Control Victoria Seller - Swansea University, Research Officer
26 th August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash Dieback <i>Invited to attend:</i> Jeremy Davies – Group Leader Parks and Cleansing Cllr Mark Thomas – Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management
6 th October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Flood Risk Management <i>Invited to attend:</i> Stuart Davies – Head of Highways and Transportation Bob Fenwick – Group Leader Highways Maintenance Mike Sweeney – Team Leader, Highways and Transportation Cllr Mark Thomas – Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management • Water Pollution <i>Invited to attend:</i> Tom Price – Team Leader, Pollution Control Paula Livingstone – Divisional EHO Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations

12 th January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Green Space / Weed & Verge Management <i>Invited to attend:</i> Cllr Mark Thomas – Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management Jeremy Davies – Group Leader Parks and Cleansing Mark Barber – Biodiversity Natural Environment Officer Chris Howell – Head of Waste Parks and Cleansing
15 th March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature Conservation Team – Project Updates <i>Invited to attend:</i> Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Service Transformation Paul Meller – Natural Environment Manager Deborah Hill – Nature Conservation Team Leader