



Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 15 March 2022

Scrutiny Letters

Purpose:	To ensure the Committee is aware of the scrutiny letters produced following various scrutiny activities, and to track responses to date.
Content:	The report includes a log of scrutiny letters produced this municipal year and provides a copy of correspondence between scrutiny and cabinet members where discussion is required.
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the scrutiny letters and responses• Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer:	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
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Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The production of scrutiny letters has become an established part of the way scrutiny operates in Swansea. Letters from the chair (or conveners) allow scrutiny to communicate directly and quickly with relevant cabinet members.
- 1.2 These letters are used to convey views and conclusions about particular issues discussed, and provide the opportunity to raise concerns, ask for further information, and make recommendations. This enables scrutiny to engage with Cabinet Members on a regular and structured basis.

2. Reporting of Letters

- 2.1 All scrutiny letters, whether they are written by the Scrutiny Programme Committee or conveners of Panels / Working Groups, are published to ensure visibility, of the outcomes from meetings, across the council and public.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee agenda also includes a copy of letters to/from Cabinet Members where specific discussion is required, e.g. letters relating to the Committee, Working Groups, and Inquiry Panel follow ups. Letters are included when cabinet member responses that were awaited are received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response.
- 2.3 Where requested Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to scrutiny letters within 21 calendar days. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take as a result of the views and recommendations made.
- 2.4 Letters relating to the work of Performance Panels are part of an ongoing dialogue with Cabinet Members and are therefore reported back and monitored by each Panel. However, all Performance Panel conveners will provide a progress report to the Committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes.

3. Letters Log

- 3.1 This report contains a log of scrutiny letters produced to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of letters activity over the current municipal year – see **Appendix 1**. The letters log will show the average time taken by Cabinet Members to respond to scrutiny letters, and the percentage of letters responded to within timescale.
- 3.2 The following letter(s), not already reported to the Committee, are **attached** for discussion:

	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a	Committee (Scrutiny of the Public Services Board)	18 Jan	Letter to Chair of the Public Services Board
b	Committee (Q & A Session with the Leader of the Council)	18 Jan	Letter to Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Letters Log – 2021-22

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Letters / Responses