



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

### Teams

Tuesday, 14 February 2023 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

#### **Councillor(s)**

E W Fitzgerald  
V A Holland  
W G Lewis  
S Pritchard

#### **Councillor(s)**

R Fogarty  
M Jones  
P N May  
M S Tribe

#### **Councillor(s)**

T J Hennegan  
H Lawson  
F D O'Brien  
T M White

#### **Statutory Co-opted Member(s)**

Beth Allender Elizabeth Lee

#### **Councillor Co-opted Member(s)**

C A Holley S M Jones L R Jones

#### **Officer(s)**

Leanne Ahern	PSB Support Officer
Peter Brace	Senior Environmental Health Officer
Ian Davies	Development Manager
Tom Evans	Strategic Planning Team Leader
Paula Livingstone	Divisional EHO, Pollution Control and Private Sector Housing
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Alice Marks	Senior Environmental Health Officer
Carol Morgan	Head of Housing & Public Health
Suzy Richards	Sustainable Policy Officer
Richard Rowlands	Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer

#### **Also present**

Councillor Andrea Lewis – Chair of PSB Joint Committee  
Councillor David Hopkins - Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance  
Martyn Evans – Natural Resources Wales  
Helen Grey – Natural Resources Wales  
Cherrie Bija – Scrutiny Committee PSB Co-optee

#### **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Co-opted Members: P R Hood-Williams

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**72 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:

Councillors T J Hennegan, L R Jones and S Pritchard declared a Personal Interest in Minute No. 76 – Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board, Draft Local Wellbeing Plan.

Councillor R Fogarty declared a Personal Interest in Minute No. 77 – Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities – Councillor David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance.

**73 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.

**74 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 17 January, 2023 be signed and approved as a correct record.

**75 Public Question Time.**

Question(s) received.

1. From Nor Perrott on the link between Airbnb / Short Term Rental properties and HMOs, and question about regulation / Council action and effects.
2. From Mark Row four questions submitted relating to HMO numbers and the Council's assessment of HMO applications.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance stated that a written response would be provided in respect of the question submitted by Nor Perrott.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance stated that he and his Officers would meet with Mark Row to discuss his questions, as well as respond fully in writing.

**76 Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board - Draft Local Well-being Plan.**

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation (Deputy Leader and Chair of Swansea PSB Joint Committee) and the Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager presented the Draft PSB Well-being Plan and invited views ahead of Plan approval.

The Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager detailed the consultation which had started on 22 November, 2022 and ended on 13 February, 2023. This was preceded by a statutory 14 week engagement period with the Office of Future Generations Commissioner on which Swansea PSB was commended for a collaborative approach to the development of the Plan. He detailed the variety of methods used to engage with and involve different stakeholders.

He referred to the work undertaken by West Glamorgan Your Voice Advocacy in producing an easy read version of the consultation and reaching out to the various groups to ensure the view of neuro-diverse and people with additional learning needs are represented. Consultation was also promoted through partners and their networks, stakeholder groups around people with protective characteristics through media.

He referred to the responses from the Office of Future Generations Commissioner, Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and the Health Board.

It was noted that the response to the online survey was lower than anticipated, although this was not an issue associated solely with Swansea. The initial results suggested overwhelming support for the objectives and steps detailed in Plan. Less support existed around data development, performance arrangements and influencing other organisations.

He detailed the changes to the draft plan during the consultation period which included a summary of the assessment of local well-being and updates to how some of the well-being objectives were defined. He referred to updates to the driver diagrams and the descriptions from the impact from the plan on seven national well-being globes. Changes had also been made to the steps to achieve the objectives and the actions to deliver them.

In conclusion, he referred to the next steps which included finalising the Plan following the end of the consultation and getting approval from the four statutory partners. The Plan would be signed off by the PSB Joint Committee on the 27 April, 2023. Action Plans would be progressed between March and June which would be developed for each objective as well as developing different accessible versions of the plan ready for the launch in May.

The Sustainable Policy Officer stated that the recent changes were more than 90% detailed above and minor tweaks did not change the direction of the plan in any way.

Councillor Lewis thanked Officers and highlighted that the four local well-being objectives remain from the previous Plan however they had been updated in their definitions to be more relevant. A decision had been made to ensure climate change and nature recovery would remain together as an objective as both were intrinsically linked. She stated that the Plan would have a far more robust way of recording outcomes and measures. The Plan makes a concerted effort to focus on one or two particular priorities that the PSB have under those objectives in order that they can be measurable and to ensure they do not crossover any other boards.

Committee questioning and discussion regarding the performance of the PSB focussed on the following:

- 1) Performance measures and targets – noted that these would be determined on specific action plans resulting in clearer links between national well-being indicators and each of the PSB Well-being Plan objectives.
- 2) Financial implications - whilst there was no dedicated budget for the delivery of the of the well-being plan, there was a close synergy between the Council's Corporate Plan (e.g., the achievement of the net zero target by 2030, which was included within the PSB well-being plan). As an example, it was noted that the NRW were developing their Corporate Plan which has three well-being objectives with the intention of aligning with the PSB Well-being Plan, e.g., nature emergency, climate emergency and the pollution prevention. The corporate plans of all the constituent members of the PSB would be aligned, with key leads for each objective delivery group.
- 3) Public engagement - the volume and nature of consultation responses were discussed.

The Chair thanked all Members, Officers and Board Members.

**Resolved** that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Public Services Board, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee on the Draft PSB Well-being Plan.

**77 Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Houses in Multiple Occupation - Councillor David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance.**

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance, accompanied by the Head of Housing & Public Health, Divisional Environmental Health Officer, Senior Environmental Health Officers, Placemaking & Strategic Planning Manager and Development Manager, reported on the portfolio responsibilities relating to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance referred to the two service areas within the Directorate of Place with key statutory roles to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Although the Committee asked to review the work of the Housing and Public Health Service with regards to HMOs it was important that the role of planning and City Regeneration Service was also covered with regards to planning policy to provide context for issues that cannot be dealt without HMO licensing and housing legislation.

He specifically referred to performance and the issues related to the Covid Pandemic which impacted on the work of the Environmental Health and Housing team and challenges staffing.

Committee questioning and discussions focussed on the following:

- Current performance and trends in relation to processing of HMO Licenses.

- Relevant legislation and challenges associated with managing three different regimes associated with HMO Licensing.
- Activities relating to the health and safety of HMOs and implications of the new Renting Homes Act.
- Budgets and income generation.
- Planning process / identification of HMOs when dealing with applications.
- LDP calculations regarding class order and the categorization of properties in accordance with the Planning Act. (Officers to provide examples of percentage thresholds in relation to the concentration of HMOs being overridden against other relevant factors).
- LDP guidance regarding the 'six-month rule' and its current use (where a property is required to be marketed as a 'family' home for a period before it can be considered for HMO use).
- LDP successes in discouraging planning applications for HMOs where the policy indicates they will not be permitted.
- HMO Licensing in Uplands, Castle, Waterfront and St Thomas.
- Pending HMO licence applications (breakdown by ward to be provided to the Committee).
- Current position regarding addressing the detrimental impact of the proliferation of letting boards in areas with high proportion of rental properties.

The Chair thanked all the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance and Officers.

**Resolved** that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service and Performance reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

**78 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Adult Services (Councillor Sue Jones, Convener)**

**Resolved** that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress report in respect of Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel be noted.

**79 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.**

**Resolved** that the membership of the Panels and Working Groups as reported, be agreed.

**80 Scrutiny Work Programme.**

The Chair presented the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2022/23 which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.

As per Committee work plan, the main items scheduled for the next meeting on 14 March:

- Follow Up: Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group.
- Audit / Scrutiny Relationship

It was noted that a Special Scrutiny Programme Committee had been scheduled for Monday, 20 March at 4pm to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on a Cabinet report on the National 20 Mph Default Speed Limit.

**81 Scrutiny Letters.**

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

**82 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.**

The Chair referred to the date and time of upcoming Scrutiny Panel/Working Group Meetings, for information.

The meeting ended at 17:26

**Chair**