



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 19 September 2023

Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

Purpose:	To enable the Committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to specific areas of responsibility.
Content:	<p>The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:</p> <p>a) Councillor Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>The specific areas of responsibility being discussed are:</p> <p>a) Active Travel</p>
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question the relevant Cabinet Member on the specific portfolio responsibilities.• Make comments and recommendations as necessary.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
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1. Introduction

1.1 One of the most important roles that Scrutiny carries out is holding the Council's Cabinet to account. The Cabinet (also known as the Executive) is made up of the Leader and other Councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific portfolio responsibilities.

1.2 There are 10 Cabinet portfolios:

	Cabinet Portfolio	Cabinet Member
1	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader of the Council)	Cllr Rob Stewart
2	Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cllr Andrea Lewis
3	Corporate Services & Performance (Deputy Leader)	Cllr David Hopkins
4	Education & Learning	Cllr Robert Smith
5	Care Services	Cllr Louise Gibbard
6	Wellbeing	Cllr Alyson Pugh
7	Environment & Infrastructure	Cllr Andrew Stevens
8	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
9	Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	Cllr Elliott King
10	Community (Services) Community (Support)	Cllr Cyril Anderson Cllr Hayley Gwilliam

NOTE:

- The Community Portfolio operates under a job-sharing arrangement
- Detailed breakdown of Cabinet Portfolio Responsibilities are **attached** to this report.

1.3 By acting as a 'critical friend' Scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members on their actions and performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.

1.4 Rather than a look at overall responsibilities, the Committee has agreed to focus on specific areas of interest / concern, taking into account any gaps in the overall Scrutiny Work Programme and ensuring good coverage of Scrutiny across all Cabinet portfolios.

1.5 The Committee should be mindful to avoid duplication of any issue(s) which are being examined elsewhere in the Scrutiny Work Programme e.g., within Performance Panels.

2. Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:

- a) Councillor Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

2.2 The Cabinet portfolio responsibilities that the Committee will focus on are:

- a) Active Travel

- 2.3 The Cabinet Member, will attend, along with lead officers who can assist the Committee, to report on aims / objectives, plans, and the delivery of work related to this portfolio responsibility. Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee.
- 2.4 The Cabinet Member has provided a report on the portfolio responsibility under discussion to help the Committee focus the discussion and questions - see **Appendix 1**.

3. Approach to Questions

- 3.1 The session should provide Committee members with a greater understanding of what the specific responsibilities and work entails and why we do this, priorities / objectives / commitments, resources (incl. budget), key activities & headlines / achievements (incl. notable practice), relevant performance measures, data / trends, and overall assessment of service health (including, for example, how we compare with others, current or future pressures or issues, challenges / opportunities, risks) and improvement/impact/difference made. This will give the Committee the chance to ask focused questions and provide challenge on actions and performance and the delivery of work in relation to these areas of responsibility, as well as future thinking.
- 3.2 In essence, the Scrutiny session should help the Committee to understand the Council's Active Travel Plans and outcomes; current & future developments; how well we are meeting obligations of Welsh Government Active Travel Act; improvements to community consultation / engagement; usage - impact on numbers cycling / walking; costs / benefits, and relevant issues.
- 3.3 In terms of themes that cut across all Cabinet portfolios, the Committee can ask Cabinet Members about:
- Well-being of Future Generations Act – impact on their work / decisions e.g., what they are doing to achieve the well-being goals and ways of working, e.g., focus on long-term thinking, collaboration / involvement etc. (including regional / collaborative working, service user / public engagement)
 - Links to poverty reduction, reducing inequalities, including socio-economic disadvantage
 - Links to the Council's Recovery and Transformation Plan, 'Swansea Achieving Better Together'
 - Links to the Public Services Board (PSB)
- 3.4 Previous Scrutiny - the Committee previously held a discussion on Active Travel, specifically the consultation process, in February 2021, following concerns flagged up to the Committee by members of the public. The Committee letter, sent to the Cabinet Member following

this meeting, and Cabinet Member response letter are attached for information and any follow up as necessary.

Link to Feb 2021 meeting:

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=188&MIId=9178&Ver=4&LLL=0>

- 3.5 The Committee also invites members of the public and other Scrutiny Councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions that the Committee should ask. It is up to the Committee how to deal with any suggested questions within the session.
- 3.6 Following each session the Chair will write to Cabinet Members in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for the Cabinet Member to consider.
- 3.7 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed Scrutiny of any of the issues raised during the session, then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.
- 3.8 The Committee should note that Councillor Andrew Stevens has already been engaged in Scrutiny, or is planned, of the following other matters:
 - Highways / Infrastructure Maintenance (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
 - Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel
 - Public Rights of Way Working Group
 - Bus Services Working Group (follow up)
 - Road Safety Working Group (follow up)
 - SWW Corporate Joint Committee (regional scrutiny)

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Cabinet Member Report – Active Travel

Appendix 2: Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility Listing