



**To/
Councillor Andrea Lewis,
Chair of Swansea Public Services
Board**

BY EMAIL

cc: Vice-Chair of Swansea PSB

*Please ask for:
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Scrutiny

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SPC/2023-24/4

09 November 2023

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Chair of Swansea Public Services Board following the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 17 October 2023. It contains feedback on the performance of the Public Services Board. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

**Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 October
Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board**

We are writing to you following our Scrutiny session with our views, reflecting on information presented, questions and discussion, on the performance of Swansea Public Services Board (PSB), and difference that it is making. This follows on from the previous Scrutiny session held in February, as part of ongoing Scrutiny of Swansea PSB, when we commented on the PSB's Draft Local Well-being Plan, which was subsequently published by the PSB in May.

At the end of that meeting in February, the Committee looked forward to seeing detail on the performance framework and measurable outcomes, i.e., action plans for each Well-being Objective alongside the identification of responsibilities, outputs, and performance arrangements, with clarity about leads and actions for individual partners, etc. The Committee appreciates the written information that was provided on this, at the meeting in October.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU
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We thank you and the Vice-Chair for attending the meeting, and appreciated the input provided by Richard Rowlands, Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager, Swansea Council, along with other participants, to help the Committee understand progress and developments on the PSB's performance framework and action plan to deliver Local Well-being Plan Objectives / Steps. There was quite a lot of material to digest which you explained, and helpfully clarified the purpose of the draft population measures that were shown.

You told us that the Action Plan is being reviewed and monitored for progress at the Swansea PSB Committee, which meets quarterly. We note your encouragement to Committee members to observe these discussions. We'll make sure the recordings of future PSB meeting are circulated.

Scrutiny Views

From our discussion, the Committee would highlight the following:

1) New Performance Framework

The Committee was pleased to see the progress that has been made by the PSB in developing a framework, taking on board our views from previous sessions, which will improve our ability to measure and monitor performance, and evidencing the tangible difference the PSB is making and added value. We thanked all concerned for this work.

We welcomed sight of the Action Plan for 2023/24 following agreement earlier this year of a new PSB Well-being Plan. This is important in countering anyone who thinks the PSB is just being a 'talking shop'. That said, we acknowledged the challenges you face with this work, where outcomes are delivered collectively by partnerships to whole populations over a longer period, as well as resource demands associated with the development, collection, processing and reporting of data that must come from the public bodies that make up the PSB.

We noted that whilst the Well-being Plan is a plan for 2023-28, with objectives taking us up to 2040, the Action Plan is for 2023/24 and contains actions for each of the 8 Well-being Steps, intended outcomes, milestones, and success measures, with named strategic and operational leads from across the partnership, not just the Council. In addition, the framework will consist of population level outcome measures, and work to research and map potential population measures against well-being objectives and drivers has commenced, with a view to being in place ready for 2024/25.

The Action Plan provided showed progress / status at Quarter 2 of this year. We noted that most of the actions for 2023/24 are mostly 'Green' for each of the 8 Well-being Plan Steps, in terms of progress / performance – mindful that 'Green' does not necessarily mean 'complete' but shows progress as 'on track'. We sought assurance that actions are sufficiently challenging, inviting your comments on areas which present the most challenge, which we noted as actions around Early Years and Climate Change Strategy activities, which had far-reaching implications around culture and practice, and required significant long-term commitment from partners, working within existing resources. You told us that the Action Plan featured a mix of actions, some focussed on things that could make an immediate impact, some about starting bigger pieces of work that will go beyond this year, with all contributing to the PSBs long term objectives.

2) Developments In Partnership / Collaborative Working

The Scrutiny Committee has previously urged the PSB to reflect on its visibility and increase efforts on public / community engagement, and we were pleased to hear about initiatives that have been taken, for example work under Well-being Step 4 – Making Swansea Safer, More Cohesive, and Prosperous, which is led by the Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service. These included events arranged to broaden the awareness of partners' work and improve networks, particularly amongst those who engage directly with our communities, providing opportunities for collaborative working. One of these, a 'Walking in Our Shoes' Event, arranged by the Fire & Rescue Service, was held on 17 October. We noted a further event on 17 November will focus on 'Safeguarding Swansea - Building safer and stronger communities, together', to bring together a diverse range of organisations to discuss ways to improve safeguarding across Swansea. Thank you for including Scrutiny Committee Members in invitations.

We asked about the success of the pop-up Community Village held in June in Castle Square, which you reported was very well attended by members of the public, and the future development of this type of initiative across Swansea, including the potential for utilisation of community buildings. We noted that this community safety village event was 'piggy-backed' on the Welsh Firefighters Fitness Challenge, which helped to attract footfall. It was good to hear that many partner organisations were represented at the event, and that it resulted in the referral of around 55 Home Fire Safety visit requests, and around 130 engagements with families on the day, with positive feedback received from both partners and the public. We welcome efforts being made to find ways to promote this and other future events. We acknowledged that increasing public engagement is challenging. You felt the City Centre was suited for this event, but the model could be replicated elsewhere to support community engagement across other parts of Swansea.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful and would welcome any comments, however we do not expect you to provide a formal response. However, we do expect the PSB to be aware of and consider our views. Please report our letter to the next available PSB meeting. The Committee will follow up on progress / developments in six months. We have currently scheduled this for Committee meeting on 19 March 2024.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Black', written in a cursive style.

COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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