



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 16 January 2024 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
W G Lewis
T M White

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P N May

Councillor(s)

V A Holland
S Pritchard

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley
P R Hood-Williams

S M Jones
L R Jones

Officer(s)

Matthew Bowyer
Stuart Davies
Alan Ferris
Brij Madahar
Debbie Smith
Mark Wade
Samantha Woon

Group Leader, Highways & Transportation
Head of Highways & Transportation
Road Safety Manager
Scrutiny Team Leader
Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Director of Place
Democratic Services Officer

Also present

Councillor R C Stewart - Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy

Councillor A S Stevens – Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): M Jones and F D O'Brien

Statutory Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

59 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

60 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.

61 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 19 December 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

62 Public Question Time.

None.

63 Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities: Q & A Session with Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy (Councillor Rob Stewart).

The Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy attended for Q & A session on his portfolio responsibilities.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on the following:

- Progress on Major Projects: Copr Bay – Willmot Dixon had taken over from the former contractor and progress was being made in regard to prioritising the outstanding work. Discussion regarding proposed new hotel next to the Arena ongoing.
- Swansea Arena Events / Ticket Sales – Question asked around performance against business plan, and relative numbers visiting for commercial performances vs events such as conferences where tickets may be free. Noted the Arena is a multi-use venue and a breakdown between conferences and commercial shows and other events such as rental of the arena for graduation ceremonies can be provided.
- City Centre Parking – Disabled Bay Provision – Concern expressed around temporary loss of spaces for development works and impact. Highways Officers had made visits to the City Centre to look at opportunities to relocate displaced disabled parking. Park Street, Pell Street and the rear of the Quadrant were being examined to mitigate the loss of disabled parking spaces.
- Innovative Living Building Development at Picton Yard – following a query about the proposed name for this building, noted that a naming policy report was being submitted to Council to consider a formal mechanism for naming and re-naming.
- Major Projects/New Projects for Swansea from 2024 onwards – focus would remain on completing the outstanding projects, however, opportunities existed in relation to the Albert hall, former Burtons, Mamma Mia's and the McDonald's building on the corner of Castle Square. The second phase of Copr Bay and progress in relation to Urban Splash, a National Gallery for Wales, the Aquarium and Skyline was detailed.

- Blue Eden – discussion around progress and concurrent developments in technology. Noted that the project comprised an integrated energy project and a number of elements had fallen into place. The Council were close to commencing work.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points– a written response would be provided to the Councillor further to their question at Council.
- Archive Service relocation to the former BHS building – the building would be state of the art and large enough to accommodate the Archives Service.
- Drainage Service – vast investment had been made in relation to the Service.
- Transformation Programme – Question around response to Audit Wales comments made in October 2023. Noted these were made a 'point in time' and feedback was largely positive. Recommendations have been taken on board and the Transformation Delivery Board was focussed on outcomes and impact.

The Chair thanked the Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy for his input.

Resolved that the Chair write to the Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy reflecting discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

64 Follow Up: Scrutiny Working Group - Road Safety.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure provided a report which updated Members on Road Safety issues of concern, following a Scrutiny Working Group on Road Safety in December 2022, and set out the approach being taken to build on road safety improvements achieved in recent years.

The Road Safety Manager took the Committee through the report highlighting certain aspects, including the Council's success in reducing the level and intensity of collisions.

Committee questioning and discussions focussed on the following:

- School Crossing Patrols – Concern around future provision. The Council remain committed to School Crossing Patrols. Noted that whilst there were no discontinued patrols, challenges existed with regard to recruitment.
- Signage/Banners Outside Schools – There has been no progress in increasing signage and banners outside schools on road safety.
- Kerbcraft & Road Safety Education Programmes - the Kerbcraft Programme required updating and representations had been made to the Welsh Government.

- Kerbcraft & Road Safety Education Programmes – 50 out of the 74 Primary Schools participate. The size of the Welsh Government grant does impact on the provision of the programme. Parents were encouraged to be involved via the website and literature provided to children for their parents.
- Road Safety Grant – it was difficult to quantify the impacts from the loss of Road Safety Grant. Evaluation takes a number of years and the increased workload to highways staff from the 20mph speed reduction scheme has compacted this challenge.
- Shared Use Paths – any issues with safety, e.g., provision of signage, should be directed to the Highways Help Desk.
- Coordination between planning, design and delivery of Active Travel Routes and the Road Safety Team – whilst challenges exist in terms of balancing different considerations, both services are integrated to ensure any safety issues are raised regarding Active Travel routes.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure and Officers for their input and expressed thanks to the Road Safety Team for their work.

Resolved that the Chair write to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure reflecting discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

65 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Child & Family Services (Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener).

Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams provided the Committee with a progress report on the work / activities of the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Child & Family Services.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Child & Family Services be noted.

66 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

No changes reported.

67 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Chair presented the regular report on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24 which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.

The Chair referred to the final session of the Scrutiny Training & Development Programme:

- Self-Assessment of Scrutiny (two parts) – to be held on 17 January (online) /23 January (Lord Mayor's Reception Room, Guildhall)

The main items for the next Committee on 13 February comprised:

- Delivery against Workforce Development Strategy.

68 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair referred to the following letters, reflecting on recent Committee Scrutiny activity:

- Scrutiny Working Group – Public Rights of Way - Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure.

69 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.

The Chair referred upcoming Panel/Working Group/Regional Scrutiny meetings, for awareness.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm

Chair