City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance

At:　　　　**Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams**

On:　　　　**Tuesday, 9 May 2023**

Time:　　　**10.00 am**

Convenor:　**Councillor Chris Holley OBE**

Membership:
Councillors: P M Black, R Fogarty, P R Hood-Williams, L James, D H Jenkins, M Jones, J W Jones, M W Locke and B J Rowlands

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Agenda

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1	**Apologies for Absence**	
2	**Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests** www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests	
3	**Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**	
4	**Minutes** To receive the minutes of the previous meeting(s) and agree as an accurate record.	1 - 3
5	**Public Questions** Questions can be submitted in writing to Scrutiny scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk up until noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Written questions take precedence. Public may attend and ask questions in person if time allows. Questions must relate to items on the open part of the agenda and will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.	
6	**Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan** *Invited to attend:* Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Service Transformation Sarah Lackenby - Head of Digital and Customer Services Richard Rowlands - Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager Steve King – Research and Information GIS Team Leader	4 - 10

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at 10.00 am

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday, 2 May 2023
Contact: Scrutiny Officer – 01792 636292

Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

Tuesday, 18 April 2023 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)	**Councillor(s)**	**Councillor(s)**
P M Black	R Fogarty	L James
D H Jenkins	M Jones	J W Jones
M W Locke		

Other Attendees
Cllr Rob Stewart	Cabinet Member for Economy Finance and Strategy
Cllr Andrea Lewis	Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Officer(s)
Richard Rowlands	Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Rachel Percival	Scrutiny Officer

Apologies for Absence
Councillor(s): P R Hood-Williams and B J Rowlands

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61   Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

There were no disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

62   Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None.

63   Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

64   Public Questions

There were no public questions received.

65   Annual Review of Wellbeing Objectives and Corporate Plan

Cllrs Rob Stewart and Andrea Lewis attended. The following was discussed.

- The new corporate plan was brought to Council on 30 March 2023.
- Consultation survey responses were low however this is not necessarily reflective of the whole consultation approach that was taken.
- The corporate plan is a high level lengthy document with certain legal requirements however work undertaken within available resources to produce different versions of the plan through different mediums for a variety of audiences is the likely solution.
- There is list of potential measures for monitoring the plans progress. Data provided needs to be reportable, robust, consistent and collectible. Officers are aiming to bring the list of potential measures and any data already gathered to scrutiny in the Quarter 1 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report.
- Previously Welsh Government provided a national framework of public accountability measures which were useful and allowed for benchmarking across Wales, however these measures are no longer in use, officers have raised this with Audit Wales to feedback to Welsh Government.
- The corporate plan will be renewed annually.

66   Q3 2022/23 Performance Monitoring Report

Cllr Stewart and relevant officers reported on this item, the following was reported:

- From 27 key performance indicators, 19 have improved or maintained, 1 has a decline within 5% and 7 show a decline of more than 5%.
- 6 new safeguarding indicators have been introduced based on the National Social Services Performance Framework.
- The number of young people supported by the early help hubs had declined and this was in part due to the recent changes to the way information is recoded on the IT system.
- Any changes to the Climate Change and Nature performance indicators are due to be introduced in the Quarter 1 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report. The Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager noted that developing reliable indicators for this particular well-being objective was proving one of the most challenging. Any further information on these indicators will be brought back to the Panel in Q1.
- Tackling poverty indicators show a decline in the speed of processing housing benefit and council tax reductions. Measures are in place to improve this including training new staff.
- Praise was given to the welfare rights team for the amount of benefits secured through their work.
- The Panel noted the lack of performance data on the Highways team, therefore would like more information on this at a future meeting explaining the process and criteria of road repairs. Highways were previously part of the Welsh Governments national measures before these were removed.
- The introduction of the 48 hour pot hole pledge is under consideration for modification to allow time for more permanent fixtures. The patch repair programme is also under review.

- An additional £5m has been earmarked for road repairs with an additional £500k being brought forward from the 2024/25 budget. No additional money for roads has been received from Welsh or National Government. Swansea Council has lobbied regarding this.

67 Letters

68 Work Programme

The Panel noted the work plan.

The meeting ended at 10.31am.

Chair

Report of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
9 May 2023

Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on local government use of data: Report and Action Plan

Purpose:	To brief the Panel on progress on the Council's Action Plan developed in response to the Wales Audit Office study and report: "The maturity of local government in use of data".
Content:	The report sets out the background to the study, previous Scrutiny reports, and progress on the Action Plan for each of the eleven identified recommendations across the four areas of the original study.
Councillors are being asked to:	Consider the information provided.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation
Lead Officer:	Sarah Lackenby
Report Author:	Steve King
Legal Officer: **Finance Officer:**	Debbie Smith Jeff Dong
For Information	

1. **Introduction**

1.1 In December 2018, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) published the results of a study on how local authorities in Wales were making use of data in order to inform their decision making. Reports were published for Wales and individual local authorities. In June 2019, the Panel received an initial highlight report detailing the key findings of the WAO study for Swansea, followed in March 2020 by an updated report and Action Plan

which responded to each of the eleven identified recommendations across the four areas of the study.

1.2   The initial report to Scrutiny briefed panel members on the key findings of the WAO study, which were divided into four areas as follows:
- Vision, Leadership and Culture;
- Data protection;
- Skills and capacity; and
- Evidence-based decision making.

1.3   Accompanying the second report to Scrutiny (2 March 2020) was an action plan which listed the eleven individual WAO recommendations for Swansea within each of the four above headings and summary information on each.

1.4   The previous Panel report and action plan centred on the WAO's recommendation that Councils should have an overall strategy and vision for the use of data, which would provide a framework for considering subsequent actions. At that time, our intentions were to scope, plan and develop a strategy during the following year (2020-21).

1.5   Unfortunately, progress since was severely impacted by the pandemic (beginning, in effect, very soon after that Panel meeting). Of course, this had profound, far-reaching impacts on all Council services over a long period. However, as we have gradually moved towards a post-pandemic recovery phase, many aspects of the Council's work and projects have been able to resume, albeit subject to review, priorities and resources.

1.6   In terms of the issues raised by the WAO study and the previous report, progress has been made and events have moved on in several respects. All of the eleven specific recommendations are considered closed. This report summarises this, with more specific detail also included within the action plan update (Appendix A).

2.   WAO study recommendations: Vision, Leadership and Culture

2.1   WAO's opening recommendation was that local authorities should *have a clear vision that treats data as a key resource*. The study found that local authorities across Wales are slow to develop a culture that values and uses data effectively to improve services and outcomes. Swansea, in common with most Councils, does not currently have a specific, separate strategy relating to 'data'. Therefore, WAO proposed that an overall strategy and vision for the use of data should be developed which would provide a framework for considering subsequent actions.

2.2   On 20 April Cabinet approved a digital strategy for the council covering the period 2023-28 which contains our strategy for the use of data. Our specific goal is to ensure we have accessible data that supports communities and council performance, recognising the importance of data and business intelligence in understanding needs, informing

decision-making and service design. The strategy sets out what the Council has done to date and what will be done by 2028.

2.4   The three remaining original recommendations in this part of the WAO study are also now considered closed. These recommendations were around *establishing corporate data standards and coding* (to make integration of data across services easier); *auditing data held by services* (to reduce duplication/waste and enable data sharing); and *creating a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services*. The key issues around each were outlined in the previous Panel report.

2.5   Further consideration of corporate data standards and data held by services would follow the development of the data framework outlined previously. This could build on longstanding work on address data standards for the authority's Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and the recent full review of the authority's Information Asset Register as part of the data migration (SharePoint) project during 2022.

2.6   Progress on WAO's integrated customer account recommendation has continued via the upgrade of the Council website (launched in August 2021) and more recent developments in the 'Swansea Account' project. Its recent focus has been on advocating and promoting campaigns related to six key issues: Cost of Living; Business Rates Relief; Free School Meals payments; Uniform Grants; Unpaid Carers and Fuel Support. Further work on the project, including the customer-experience aspects, is continuing.

3.   Data protection

3.1   This part of the WAO report focused on the balance between the benefits and risks of data sharing. The Council's work on data protection issues clearly remains ongoing; however the two specific recommendations in this area are considered closed. Specifically the Council was recommended to *provide refresher training to service managers*. The guidance on the Council's Staffnet pages continues to be reviewed and promoted. Recently, mandatory on-line training around data protection and cyber security has become available as a module within the "Learning" platform on Oracle Fusion – launched in April 2023 (replacing Learning Pool).

3.2   Authorities were also recommend by WAO to *review and update data sharing protocols*. The Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) provides the key framework to enable this. During 2023, WASPI are consulting on a new Code of Conduct – which would set a fixed framework for external data sharing and a model for internal data sharing. In addition, a digital tool is being developed on the WASPI website which would allow each participating member to develop a central register of its WASPI agreements. This would initially require, subject to resources, an audit of the Council's existing Information Sharing Protocols (ISPs).

4. Skills and capacity

4.1 WAO made two recommendations around staff skills and capacity; firstly to *identify staff who have a role in analysing and managing data*, and secondly to *invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills*.

4.2 In the latest Council Workforce Strategy and Plan, Strand 7 focuses on workforce learning and development (L&D), with associated actions proposed including a corporate Development Needs Analyses (DNA) in 2023-24. Skills needs at a post level are identifiable through role profiles and the appraisals process. However, the roll-out of Oracle Fusion, which includes e-learning and analytics elements, may improve our business intelligence on this. This would be subject to further investigation, planning and identification of resources. .

5. Evidence-based decision making

5.1 The fourth area highlighted by the study relates to the use of evidence in decision-making, in order to create a "data-driven decision-making culture". The three WAO recommendations here involved *setting data reporting standards,* to *make more open data available,* and to *review the range of information needed by decision makers*.

5.2 These issues are viewed as on-going, business-as-usual considerations, and the WAO recommendations here are now considered closed. Established systems are in place to work with services to review and improve data reporting standards. The updated council website (since August 2021) was designed to improve accessibility to information for Swansea citizens but will also have helped the Council's own decision-makers. However, further reflection and necessary action on these particular recommendations can follow the data framework when in place.

5.3 WAO see the use of in open data local government as "an important characteristic of data maturity" which can assist the development of new businesses and enable better data sharing. Goal 4 of the draft Digital Strategy 2023-28 includes a commitment to *"Make open data available to communities and involve service users to improve the accuracy of data"*. The agenda around open data in Welsh local government is also being taken forward by Data Cymru via their Open Data Wales Portal, and we will look for suitable opportunities to engage with this process.

6. General Issues

6.1 The WAO reports encompassed a wide range of linked but discrete areas and issues around the use of data within its four broad themes. There remains more to be done across all of these areas in different

ways, and progress on these matters will be reported within the standard frameworks.

6.2   Following this Scrutiny Panel meeting, and subject to the Panel's views, it is proposed that the report be circulated to the Council's Audit Committee for information.

7.   Financial Implications

7.1   There are no specific implications related to this report. Any financial implications arising from the action plan will be assessed on a project by project basis, from within existing budget resources.

8.   Legal Implications

8.1   There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers:
- Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy & Strategy to the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel, 2 March 2020: *Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on local government use of data: Report and Action Plan*.
  https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=591&MId=8619&Ver=4&LLL=0
- Report of the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance to the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel, 24 June 2019: *WAO report on local government use of data: Swansea findings*.
  https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=591&MId=8599&Ver=4&LLL=0
- Wales Audit Office (WAO) report: *The maturity of local government in use of data, December 2018.*
  https://www.audit.wales/publication/maturity-local-government-use-data
- WAO report: *Local government use of data – City and County of Swansea, December 2018.*
  https://www.audit.wales/publication/city-and-county-swansea-use-local-government-data

Appendices:
 Appendix A   WAO Study – Action Plan update.

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Ref	WAO REPORT	Recommendation Reference	Recommendation Report Reason	All Wales Recommendations	Swansea Specific Recommendations	Actions to Achieve Recommendation	What would success look like?	Achievements to date	Achievements to date	Closed (yes/no)
								Jan-20	Apr-23	
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	*R1 Part 1 of the report highlights the importance of creating a strong data culture and clear leadership to make better use of data. We recommend that local authorities*:	• have a clear vision that treats data as a key resource;	• have a clear vision that treats data as a key resource;	Develop a Data Strategy to define what is in scope (as 'data'), provide an overall vision for the Council's use of data and a higher-level framework for actions in response to these recommendations and related issues.	The Council having an overall vision and strategy for its use of data, which is widely accepted and provides a way forward in its work around the various aspects of 'data'.	The Council's current digital Strategy 'Aspiring to a Digital Business 2020' (section 1.3.4) states "Aside from its people, information is a key asset for Swansea Council." A new digital strategy has been prepared and will develop this further (currently progressing through approval process and will be part of pre-decision Scrutiny in the coming months). The Council's Information Management Policy, section 4.1 notes "...all information held by the authority is an asset and... should be used to support the business processes of the whole authority". Other aspects relating to the Council's use of data are addressed in other documents, e.g. the Cyber Security Strategy and service-based strategies.	On 20 April Cabinet approved a digital strategy for the council covering the period 2023-28 which contains our strategy for the use of data. Our specific goal is to ensure we have accessible data that supports communities and council performance recognising the importance of data and business intelligence in understanding needs, informing decision-making and service design. The strategy sets out what the Council has done to date and what will be done by 2028	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	*R1 Part 1 as above ....We recommend that local authorities*:	• establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data;	• establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data;	1. To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of the Data Strategy. 2. To investigate the data and coding standards associated with the key information systems used in Council departments. 3. Continue to embed and promote the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and use of the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) to services using property or address-based information.	1. Council data-handling services adopting a common set of data/coding standards, as far as is feasible and beneficial. 2. Swansea Council continuing to maintain its pledged address-based data improvement standards for NLPG, and having a clear pathway towards integrating the LLPG within all property and address-based systems.	There has already been some success in promoting the LLPG and NLPG (National Land & Property Gazzetteer) standards and UPRNs to those services working with address records, including Electoral Registration, Council Tax / NDR, Highways, Building Control and Housing.	We intend to progress this action as part of the high-level Data Strategy or Framework during 2023-24. The Council continues to maintain its LLPG and follow NLPG addressing standards (currently at 'Gold' level), with services using UPRNs in address records and the Council as a whole benefitting from data sharing and related projects.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	*R1 Part 1 as above ....We recommend that local authorities*:	• undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests;	• undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests;	1. To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of the Data Strategy. 2. Undertake a data audit, primarily based on key Council systems, focusing on information to be collected via the integrated customer account project (the 'Swansea Account').	More integrated Council systems, providing improved customer insight, business intelligence, citizen experience and operational efficiency (e.g. less duplication in customer contact).	The Information Asset Register (IAR) or Register of Processing Activities (RoPA) details the Council's data systems and attributes, with the information maintained by the designated asset 'owner' in each case. Preparations for GDPR improved the accuracy of the Council's IAR / RoPA.	A total review of the IAR was undertaken in February/March 2022 where all the listed Asset owners were contacted to update (or delete) their asset details, with a further review taking place in June 2022. As part of the ongoing data migration project (to SharePoint), Digital Services and Records Management are cross-referencing assets (which hold data) found in departments against the IAR, with any missing assets highlighted and actions taken to add details.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	*R1 Part 1 as above ....We recommend that local authorities*:	• create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services.	• create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services.	Develop a digital platform and upgrade Council website for integration and provide a single digital identity for citizens to access online services.	Development of a single digital identity for citizens, businesses and visitors to access online services.	The Swansea Account project is currently in development. Digital platform is in place and live. Further work is ongoing to finalised the look and feel of the customer account experience and will be part of the upgraded Council Website which is in progress. The Account project has been piloted in the first instance with Passport to Leisure.	The new council website went live in August 2021 which has improved accessibility for citizens. To date, the Swansea Account project has focused on advocating for and promoting campaigns related to six key issues: Cost of Living, Business Rates Relief, Free School Meals payments, Uniform Grants, Unpaid Carers and Fuel Support. Through strategic planning and effective communication, we have been able to achieve significant progress and make a positive impact on the lives of many people. Integration with our mapping services has also commenced with customers now able to locate their local councilor and Local Area Coordinator. Further work to utilise the customer account verification in a Swansea residents' app is in progress.	Yes

Ref	WAO REPORT	Recommendation Reference	Recommendation Report Reason	All Wales Recommendations	Swansea Specific Recommendations	Actions to Achieve Recommendation	What would success look like?	Achievements to date Jan-20	Achievements to date Apr-23	Closed (yes/no)
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R2	*R2 Part 2 of the report notes that whilst it is important that authorities comply with relevant data protection legislation, they also need to share data with partners to ensure citizens receive efficient and effective services. Whilst these two things are not mutually exclusive, uncertainty on data protection responsibilities is resulting in some officers not sharing data, even where there is agreement to provide partners with information. We recommend that authorities:*	• provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share;	• provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share;	Prepare revised guidance around data sharing, based on the consultation draft Code of Practice published by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), and the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI).	Well-informed managers, confident in their knowledge of the opportunities of (and limits to) data sharing.	General advice on data sharing via Staffnet has been developed over several years. Mandatory on-line training around data protection and cyber security has been provided via the Council's 'Learning Pool' portal.	Advice on data or information sharing is provided on Staffnet and regularly reviewed. Following the introduction of Oracle Fusion in April 2023, mandatory on-line training around data protection and cyber security is now included in 'Learning', the Council's new e-learning platform (replacing Learning Pool). A consultation on a proposed new WASPI Code of Conduct is underway - which would set a fixed framework for external data sharing and a model for internal data sharing.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R2	*R2 Part 2 as above….. We recommend that authorities:*	• review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities.	• review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities.	Undertake an initial audit of protocols and schedule any necessary reviews; to be undertaken by the Information Governance Unit (IGU) and service areas involved, in light of ICO guidelines.	An effective corporate 'baseline' data sharing protocol, supplemented by service-specific protocols for users, developed over time in accordance with best practice guidelines.	There is a facility for services to upload protocols to the IAR, or to use WASPI for external protocols.	A digital tool is being developed on the WASPI website which would allow each participating member to develop a central register of its WASPIs. This would initially require an audit of existing ISPs, subject to resources being identified.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R3	*R3 In Part 3 of our report, we conclude that adequate resources and sufficient capacity are ongoing challenges. However, without upskilling staff to make better use of data, authorities are missing opportunities to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. We recommend that authorities:*	• identify staff who have a role in analysing and managing data to remove duplication and free up resources to build and develop capacity in data usage;	• identify staff who have a role in analysing and managing data to remove duplication and free up resources to build and develop capacity in data usage;	1. To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of a Data Strategy. 2. Subject to 1, undertake a focussed skills audit to identify Council staff whose key role relates to data analysis and management, and to draw out gaps and other issues. 3. Subject to 1, identify actions (via skills audit) that can be taken to identify and develop these specialist data skills.	A network of staff with the skills to effectively work with data, and increased awareness of expertise within services.	Ongoing sharing of experience and knowledge currently occurs as required between officers in services working with data.	In the latest Council Workforce Strategy and Plan, Strand 7 focuses on workforce learning and development (L&D), with associated actions proposed including a corporate Development Needs Analyses (DNA) in 2023-24. Skills needs at a post level are identifiable through role profiles and the appraisals process. However, the roll-out of Oracle Fusion, which includes e-learning and analytics elements, may improve our business intelligence on this.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R3	*R3 In Part 3 as above…..We recommend that authorities:*	• invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills.	• invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills.	See proposed actions in row above.			Any additional investment in staff data skills would be subject to research and resources.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R4	*R4 Part 4 of our report highlights that authorities have more to do to create a data-driven decision-making culture and to unlock the potential of the data they hold. We recommend that local authorities:*	• set data reporting standards to ensure minimum data standards underpin decision making;	• set data reporting standards to ensure minimum data standards underpin decision making;	1. Scope and undertake a review of good practice and case studies in data reporting in the performance review process. 2. Corporate team and services to continue to implement improvements to data quality and reporting standards.	The Council adopting a common set of data reporting standards, as far as is possible and beneficial.	Despite staff departures, there remains expertise and experience among Council staff working with data and the reporting standards attached to specific service areas.	Further consideration will follow the preparation of a high-level Data Strategy or Framework, which would set the parameters for scoping subsequent work on this.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R4	*R4 Part 4 as above…..We recommend that local authorities:*	• make more open data available.	• make more open data available.	1. To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of the Data Strategy. 2. Subject to 1, explore and promote opportunities to make open data available, where possible and beneficial, in conjunction with services. 3. Continue to work with other local authorities and public bodies on the emerging agenda around open data.	A Council which recognises and values open data, and supports the innovative use of open data to affect positive change and improve local decision making.	A small number of examples of providing open data have been progressed, mostly linked to legislative requirements, e.g. Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) data via Equality Act 2010 regulations, public toilets data via Public Health (Wales) Act 2017.	The Council continues to explore opportunities to make open data available, and the draft Digital Strategy 2023-28 goal 4. includes a commitment to "Make open data available to communities and involve service users to improve the accuracy of data". The agenda around open data in local government is also being taken forward by Data Cymru via their Open Data Wales Portal - www.opendata.wales/.	Yes
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R4	*R4 Part 4 as above…..We recommend that local authorities:*	*Local recommendation: Evidence-based decisions (Swansea report, p.12)*	• review the range and quality of the information needed by decision makers and the format it is presented	Information providers in the Council continually need to be mindful of data accuracy and quality, its purpose, and the expectations of the target audience.	To be reviewed in light of the Data Strategy.	The 'Performance and Statistics' section of the Council website includes information on the performance of Council services and local, contextual statistical information / links for staff and other users. It is kept under review.	This represents ongoing, business-as-usual activity, which can be reviewed in light of the proposed Data Strategy or Framework. From August 2021, the new council website has improved accessibility to information for both the Council's decision-makers and its citizens.	Yes

2

Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

Report of the Cabinet Members for Education and Learning and Culture and Equalities

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel- 9th May, 2023

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/22

Purpose	To present the Welsh Language Standards Annual report 2021/22.
Content	The report provides a summary of the activities relating to Welsh Standards within the financial year ending 31st March 2022; including new projects and activities during the year.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided and give views
Lead Councillor	Councillors Robert Smith and Elliott King, Cabinet Members for Education and Learning and Culture and Equalities
Lead Officer **Report Author**	Lisa De Benedictis Lisa De Benedictis
Legal Officer **Finance Officer**	Tracey Meredith Ben Smith

1. **Background**

1.1 Since 30th March 2016 all local authorities in Wales have had a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) and with the Welsh Language Standards imposed by the Measure through sub-legislation (Welsh Language Regulation Standards), commonly referred to as the 'Standards'.

1.2 Swansea Council is required to comply with 163 standards across 5 categories, which is run corporately through the Standards Officer via the Heads of Service.

2.   Briefing

2.1   The Council has continued to be make improvements on implementing the Welsh Language Standards during the year despite the pandemic, with the priority being on Service Delivery Standards as they are greatest in number and are the most visible to the public.

2.2   Service delivery Standards have been maintained and there was a significant increase in Welsh language calls due to TTP and Swansea Council managing the pan-Wales, Welsh Vaccine Certification Service (WVCS) telephone service.

2.3   Work continues to develop a new system for the public to complain to the Council, including around compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

2.4   The Welsh Language Standards have strengthened the provision of bilingual services in Health and Social Care, and across the Council as a whole.

2.5   As part of the 'More than Just Words' active offer the Council has extended the offer to social care staff to learn Welsh through work.

2.6   There have been over 2,156,156 total page views on Staffnet in 2021-2022; 19,003 of these were related to Welsh.

2.7   The Microsoft Teams virtual 'Cwtsh- Ysgrifennu yn Cymraeg' was available throughout the year for Officers to use virtually.

2.8   Six Welsh Language complaints were received directly to the Council during the reporting period April 2021 – March 2022.

3.   Conclusions

3.1   Welsh Language Standards and the promotion of the Welsh language continues to be a priority for Swansea Council through providing additional Welsh lessons and through activities such as 'Cwtsh- Ysgrifennu yn Cymraeg' virtual space and the promotion of Welsh Language Rights Day.

3.2   The new Standards Officer is now in post to liaise with various Commissioners' offices, including the Welsh Language Commissioner. Implementation of the Welsh Language Standards on a day-to-day basis is run corporately through the Standards Officer via Heads of Service.

3.4   Impact on the Welsh Language is now fully embedded in the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA).

4.   Legal implications

4.1   There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

5. **Finance Implications**

5.1   There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Glossary of terms: Not applicable

Background papers: None

Appendices: Welsh Language Annual Report 2021-22

Welsh Language Annual Report 2021-22

June 2022

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1. **Introduction**

2. **Background**

3. **Matters Arising During the Reporting Period - Operation of the Standards:**

    3.1 Service Delivery standards
    3.2 Policy Making standards
    3.3 Operational standards
    3.4 Record Keeping standards

4. **Welsh Medium Education**

5. **Conclusions and Recommendations**

3

1. Introduction

This is the sixth Annual Report since the standards became effective and provides an overview of the activity within the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

Swansea Council remains committed to the Welsh Language Standards. This report contains examples and highlights of new projects and activities during the year to meet the standards. The report also includes work or actions as a result of any feedback, investigations, or montoring work by the Commissioner, or as a result of complaints received directly from the public. It concludes with recommendations going forward.

2. Background

Since 30th March 2016 all local authorities in Wales have had a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) and with the Welsh Language Standards imposed by the Measure through sub-legislation (Welsh Language Regulation Standards).

The intention of the standards is:

- to ensure that organisations treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.
- to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use in their day-to-day-life).

The Standards aim to:

- make it clear to organisations what their duties are in relation to the Welsh language.
- make it clearer to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh.
- make Welsh language services more consistent and improve their quality.

2.1 Swansea Council Standards

The standards issued to the City and County of Swansea are listed in a Compliance Notice - Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. A copy of these standards is available on the council's public website at: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/cymraeg https://www.abertawe.gov.uk/cymraeg

This notice, agreed with the Office of the Welsh Language Commissioner, is the current document governing our compliance.

Swansea Council is required to comply with **163 standards across 5 categories** as shown in table 1, below:

Table 1: Standards for compliance by Swansea Council

Swansea Council		
	Categories	**Number of Standards**
1	Service Delivery standards	86
2	Policy Making standards	16
3	Operational standards	51

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4	Promotional standards	2
5	Record Keeping standards	8
	Total	**163**

2.2 Accountability

Strategic leadership for the Welsh Language continues to rest with the Corporate Management Team. Implementation of the Standards on a day-to-day is corporately through the Standards Officer down to services through Heads of Service. Each service area has a Welsh Language Champion as the main channel for information (inward and outward) relevant to their work areas and practices. The Standards Officer also manages the Welsh Translation Unit.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Learning champions Welsh Language Standards at a Political level.

This Annual Report will be presented to the Corporate Management Team (senior management) and the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel (Scrutiny Committee).

The Corporate Complaints Policy sets out the Council's process for dealing with complaints about compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, and training staff.

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3. Matters Arising During the Reporting Period - The Operation of Standards

3.1 General Arrangements

In general, the Council has continued to be make improvements on implementing the Welsh language standards during the year despite the pandemic. General feedback indicates that officers are more educated in relation to the requirements of the Standards.

The priority continues to be concentrating on Service Delivery standards as they are greatest in number (86), are the most visible to the public, and attracted the areas of complaint during the year. Work also continues to progress on the Operational Standards particularly as they apply to the requirements in relation to the authority's workforce.

Specific compliance activity during the year is highlighted below and in the later sections:

Standards Group	Action taken during 2021-22	Action to be taken in the coming year
Service Delivery Standards	- e-Democracy project completed - Standards Officer in post - Automation project continued - Complaints system continued	- Continue with automation - Complete the complaints system
Policy Making Standards	All reports through Cabinet/Council assessed for impact on the Welsh Language through the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process	Monitor and embed
Operational Standards	- The Council is looking to introduce a breach panel process and Welsh Language Board. This mirrors a very successful approach already in place in the Council for data breaches and information governance - Continue the promotion of Welsh Language courses on the homepage of the Council's intranet and in news stories	- Breach panel process live - Welsh Language Board convened - Continue to explore mandatory Welsh when recruiting unless specific shortage in the market for a particular skill - Review of the five year strategy - Explore ways of attracting Welsh speakers to work for the Council from Welsh medium schools, universities, and further education colleges
Promotional Standards	- External website refresh has been completed. Easier to find information and search - Currently refreshing the intranet for staff. Planning to highlight the Welsh Language section to the homepage	Review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

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Standards Group	Action taken during 2021-22	Action to be taken in the coming year
	▪ Already a banner space for Welsh Language promotional activity and links to Welsh Language news stories ▪ Welsh Language Rights Day and Dydd Santes Dwynwen ▪ Reviewed emergency procedures and experiences from the pandemic with regard provision in Welsh and English	
Record-keeping Standards	▪ Complaints system continued	▪ Complete the complaints system

3.1 Service Delivery Standards

3.1.1. Email addresses
All individual and departmental email addresses are available in English and Welsh so that Welsh speaking residents and businesses can make contact via the Welsh address. Staff are expected to place their @swansea.gov.uk and their @abertawe.gov.uk address in their email signature. In addition, all external emails have an automated bilingual footnote which includes:

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymdrin â gohebiaeth Gymraeg a Saesneg i'r un safonau ac amserlenni.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and will deal with Welsh and English correspondence to the same standards and timescales.

3.1.2 Telephone
During the reporting period 7,575 callers to the Council's main lines chose the option to speak to the Council in Welsh. This is a significant increase to the 2,771 callers in 2020-21 due to TTP and the National Covid Vaccination line hosted by Swansea Council, which accounts for 5,986 of those calls.

3.1.3 Staffing Arrangements
With regards the Welsh Translation Unit, further new ways of working continue to be implemented. Along with using a mix of internal and external translators.

Translation timescales have improved as a result of:
▪ Raising awareness at Corporate Management Team regarding Complaints received
▪ Better forward planning and communication; and
▪ Working with services in relation to annual translation requirements.

During 2021-22, the Council translated just over 3.1 million words (an increase from the 2.4 million words in 2020-21). In addition, 751,068 words were translated externally.

Prior to the pandemic in 2019-20 "Cwtsh Cymraeg" areas were created for staff to practice Welsh when in the office. The virtual 'Cwtsh – Ysgrifennu yn Cymraeg' was still available thoughout 2021-22 for Officers to use virtually.

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Welsh Language Champions are in place across services supporting and promoting the Welsh Language Standards.

A Standards Officer post was created to bolster corporate capacity around compliance. The Welsh Translation Unit is a joint service with Neath & Port Talbot Council (NPT) and further work will be done in 2022-23 following discussions with NPT.

3.1.4.Technical Systems
New complaints system
Work continues to develop a new system for the public to complain to the Council, including around compliance with the Welsh language standards. This includes functionality for a member of the public to log and track progress of their complaint as well as receive secure communications from Council staff instead of receiving emails. The second phase of development for later in the year will then incorporate Freedom of Information requests and Subject Access Requests around the Welsh language standards. The system will improve the breadth of reporting and enable data-led decision-making and targeted training around Welsh Language Standards and compliance.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) upgrade
The Council's core integrated finance, HR, training, purchasing and payables system is being upgraded to the cloud version. Record keeping standards are being followed in the production of reports from the new system.

3.1.5 Social Services
The Welsh Language Standards Act has strengthened the provision of bilingual services in Health and Social Care, and across the Council as a whole.

Swansea Council promotes best practice approaches in using the Welsh language to improve the service offer to both citizens and amongst staff involved in delivering health and social care.

Swansea social services have continued to improve quality of services, practice and to enhance the lives of those people whose preferred language is Welsh.

Here are some of the areas of development in Adult Service Provision:

- Reflecting Welsh culture within all our services
- Capturing information on how we promote Welsh culture in our services through our quarterly quality observations
- Identifying Welsh Language Champions within care services (Adult Services)
- Welsh Dementia Friends Champions who make an 'active offer' in care homes/ day services
- Delivering a bilingual Dementia Friends Awareness session at our staff event
- Capturing magic moments poster and Welsh speaking individuals feedback through the medium of Welsh - Maseglas
- Inclusive communication board in Welsh – Alexandra road
- Intergenerational work with school children (The Hollies / Pontardulais)

Here is some of the Welsh artwork and poetry that was drawn/written by people staying at Maesglas.

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This artwork was shared by a group of the service users who designed – this was sent to CIW for a Welsh celebration

One Service user wrote this poem:

Dechreuodd Cofid
Stopiodd ein bywyd
Ond ddim I ni
Gofalwyr yw'r Gorau
Mae pobl yn marw
Dagrau yn cwympo
O gwmpas celwyddau
Ond nid y gofalwyr!
Colomen wen, heddwch a chariad
Swnio'n ddamatig
Mae'n wir, welesi
Tra'n segur trwy'r ffyrlo
Netfflics a'r radio
Yn gofalu am y gorau tra'n gwisgo PPE
Mae'n wir, weles i
Dechreuodd Cofid a chariwn ymlaen
Wnath bywyd dim stopio
Gofalwyr yw'r Gorau!.

3.1.6 "Mwy Na Geriau", "More than Just Words"

Mwy Na Geriau "More than Just Words – Swansea social services are working across all services and team to continue to implement Health and Social Care framework, Swansea remains committed to the Fforwm Mwy Na Geiriau, the regional partnerships.

Swansea contributed a number of examples of good practice to the recent Welsh Government commissioned national evaluation of the Mwy Na Geriau strategy.

Swansea Council have extended the offer to social care staff to learn Welsh through work. Courses now run up to foundation level, and these opportunities are advertised widely on the staff intranet and through #TrainingTuesday. In addition, there is support for Welsh speakers new learners across the organisation. There is a corporate Welsh Language training group which meets to coordinate opportunities, to support each other and to share good practice.

The 'Active Offer' is being promoted within social services front doors (IAA) backed by contingency plans to ensure that there is access to suitably informed, Welsh speaking

social worker or staff trained to provide advice and assistance. The 'Active Offer' is promoted within frontline services, in the context of the pandemic.

Bonymaen House
A Welsh speakering resident who asked to have her Multi -Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting, and review of her care and support plan to be carried out in Welsh and a Welsh Language Social Worker was appointed to ensure her wishes were carried out. The lady was very happy the meeting was carried out in her language of choice.

3.2 Policy Making Standards

3.2.1 Equality Impact Assessments

All Policy Making decisions are subject to the authority's corporate Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process, which considers the potential effect which the initiative may have on Equality issues.

While based on the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (under the Equality Act (2010) our particular EIA process has broadened the set of parameters to include specific mention of the Welsh Language Standards and our requirements to meet them. Associated guidance reinforces these requirements. Whilst understanding of the standards has increased generally, officers often require explanation and support when completing the Welsh language element of an EIA. One common issue is a failure to discuss proposals with Welsh speakers in the community.

During 2021-22 all reports through Cabinet/Council were screened / assessed for impact on the Welsh Language through the EIA process.

3.2.2 The Welsh Language Standards across Strategic Plans

Swansea Council has embedded its work on the Welsh Language Standards across its corporate strategic plans including:

- **The Council's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)** both through the use of the EIA process and as a step to implement one of the equality objectives. In the SEP the Council has included a consideration of the Welsh Language alongside the wider protected characteristics in terms of our approach to equality
- **Swansea's Annual Review of Performance** – Welsh Language is highlighted as a priority for Education, describes how the Council is contributing to the national well-being goals, and how the Council is training staff
- **Swansea's Corporate Plan** – Welsh Language as steps in both the Education & Skills and Transformation & Future Council Development well-being objectives.

3.3 Operational standards

3.3.1 Resources for Staff

Operational Standards relate to the use of Welsh within the internal functions of the Council including the relationship between the Authority and its employees (including during recruitment and appointment), through:

- Encouraging and assisting staff to use their Welsh language skills as part of their normal day-to-day work
- Providing a supportive framework for staff to improve and develop their Welsh language skills.

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The Human Resources department commissioned the translation of policies and procedures as directed under the standards and these are available to any member of staff as well as on the Council's website.

Access to software to assist staff in the use of Welsh (e.g. MSOffice spell checking and grammar checking; and automatic translation) is available as a standard add-on. StaffNet has a 'Welsh Language' section http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/welsh which contains supporting resources for staff using the Welsh language in their work, which includes:

- An overview of the Standards, including information on the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner
- An on-line Welsh language awareness course developed to provide some social and historical context to the Welsh language and its place in modern society
- Handy Guides, each giving a quick guide to a specific area of the standards, e.g:
  - telephone calls
  - emails
  - organising meetings
  - design of signs
- Welsh Translation Services - Standard Translations that are searchable on Staffnet to assist with production of standard information with small amounts of variable data, for example:
  - dates, times, venues
  - automatic (out of office) messages
  - standard ad hoc signs
- Guide to bilingual social media - rules for publicising events and other information on Twitter, Facebook and other social media.
- Details of Welsh language tuition and practice sessions, including external courses listed on the http://www.swansea.ac.uk/learnwelsh/ website
- Regular external social events via the Menter Iaith Abertawe website
- Welsh language training for staff - initially targeted towards front-line staff in areas with an identified insufficiency of Welsh-speakers
- Details of service area Welsh Language Champions.

3.3.2 Staffnet – Staff usage and promotion of Welsh

There have been over 2,156,156 total pageviews on Staffnet in the past year. 19,003 of these were related to Welsh. The top 10 pages about Welsh on Staffnet from 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 are:

Page Title	Pageviews
Swansea Staffnet - Get something translated into Welsh	10,564
Swansea Staffnet - Welsh language lessons for staff	971
Swansea Staffnet - Welsh language	400
Swansea Staffnet - 'Do not use Google Translate for Welsh translations' our in-house translation service urge (stori newyddion)	349
Swansea Staffnet – Staff and schools say Shwmae (stori newyddion)	196
Swansea Staffnet - Welsh language handy guides and useful information	195

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Page Title	Pageviews
Swansea Staffnet - Welsh learners recognised in virtual ceremony (stori newyddion)	186
Swansea Staffnet - Welsh translation reminder (stori newyddion)	175
Swansea Staffnet - Had a query in Welsh? Please answer in Welsh (stori newyddion)	175
Swansea Staffnet - Welsh phrases and words	132

3.3.4 Staff and Welsh Language Skills

The latest data supplied by staff can be seen in the following tables:

Total number of staff with Welsh Skills (excluding schools) = 662 (increase from 416 in 2020-21)

% with Welsh skills against number of employees in the Council (excluding schools) = 10.24% (increase from 6.8% in 2020-21)

	Understand spoken welsh	Speak Welsh	Read Welsh	Write Welsh	Learning Welsh	Willing to use in course of your work
Yes	257	194	206	168	192	454
No	72	65	67	67	71	294
Not Stated	1379	1449	1435	1473	1445	898
Preferred not to say	0	0	0	0	0	62

Breakdown by Directorate:

Department	Number of Staff with Welsh Language Skills	Number of Staff without Welsh Language Skills	Percentage of Staff with Welsh Language Skills
Place	275	436	38.7%
Corporate Services	61	93	39.6%
Finance	13	33	28.3%
Education excluding schools	60	132	31.3%
Social Services	253	352	41.8%

Breakdown by Grade (excluding schools):

Grade	Number of Staff
Chief Officer 1-5|01-05|	1
GRADE_01|01|	4
GRADE_02|03|	68
GRADE_02A|03A|	26

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Grade	Number of Staff
GRADE_03|04|	91
GRADE_03A|04A|	1
GRADE_04|05-06|	101
GRADE_04A|05A-06A|	23
GRADE_05|07-09|	290
GRADE_05A|07A-09A|	3
GRADE_06|11-17|	267
GRADE_07|19-24|	231
GRADE_08|25-29|	175
GRADE_09|30-34|	132
GRADE_10|35-39|	72
GRADE_10A|35-37|	31
GRADE_10B|38-39|	11
GRADE_11|40-44|	38
GRADE_12|45-49|	18
HOS Band_1|07-13|	2
HOS Band_2|03-09|	3
HOS Band_3|01-05|	1
Minimum Wage 025|025|	2
Minimum Wage APP|APP|	12
Minimum Wage|016-022|	3

Schools Workforce

The schools workforce census is reported to Welsh Government in this specific format:

School Workforce Census 2021 : Ability in Welsh

All schools	Headcount			Percentage of Headcount		
Level	Teachers	Support	Total	Teachers	Support	Total
Proficient Level	402	237	639	19.2%	9.1%	13.6%
Advanced Level	74	37	111	3.5%	1.4%	2.4%
Intermediate Level	181	54	235	8.6%	2.1%	5.0%
Foundation Level	442	203	645	21.1%	7.8%	13.7%
Entry Level	557	910	1467	26.6%	35.0%	31.2%
No language skills	437	1152	1589	20.9%	44.3%	33.8%
Information not yet obtained	2	9	11	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%
Grand Total	**2095**	**2602**	**4697**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

English medium only	Headcount			Percentage of Headcount		
Level	Teachers	Support	Total	Teachers	Support	Total
Proficient Level	125	46	171	6.9%	1.9%	4.1%
Advanced Level	68	23	91	3.8%	1.0%	2.2%

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Intermediate Level	181	51	232	10.0%	2.1%	5.5%
Foundation Level	442	203	645	24.4%	8.5%	15.3%
Entry Level	557	910	1467	30.7%	38.1%	34.9%
No language skills	437	1148	1585	24.1%	48.0%	37.7%
Information not yet obtained	2	9	11	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%
Grand Total	**1812**	**2390**	**4202**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Welsh medium only	Headcount			Percentage of Headcount		
Level	Teachers	Support	Total	Teachers	Support	Total
Proficient Level	277	191	468	97.9%	90.1%	94.5%
Advanced Level	6	14	20	2.1%	6.6%	4.0%
Intermediate Level		3	3	0.0%	1.4%	0.6%
Foundation Level				0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Entry Level				0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
No language skills		4	4	0.0%	1.9%	0.8%
Information not yet obtained				0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Grand Total	**283**	**212**	**495**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

3.3.5 New and Vacant Posts

The table below gives a summary of the number of new or vacant posts advertised by the authority and indicates the levels of Welsh Language Skill required for the role. Level 1 being the most basic level of understanding and Level 5 the most advanced. The request for Welsh language skills as desirable has significantly increased from 316 last year to 511 in 2021-22. In the coming year the Council will explore:

a) Ways of attracting Welsh speakers to work for the Council from Welsh medium schools, universities, and further education colleges

b) Mandatory Welsh when recruiting unless there is a specific shortage in the market for a particular skill.

Welsh Language skill level required	Number of new and vacant posts advertised
Level 1	463
Level 2	3
Level 3	0
Level 4	0
Level 5	0
Not Required	557
Desirable	511
To be Learned	0
Essential	2

3.3.6 Staff Training

A Welsh Language Training Support Group is established, meeting monthly for the purpose of improving opportunites to learn or improve Welsh Language skills.

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A Welsh Language Skills Framework document, setting out proposals for the development of the Welsh language in the Council is in the process of consultation

With regard to formal training, in 2021/22 there were courses run for staff at Myndeiad Levels 1 and 2 and Syfaen Levels 1 and 2.

- 12 participants on Mynediad Level 1 (Down 15 from last year)
- 16 participants on Mynediad Level 2 (Up from 4 last year)
- 5 on Sylfaen Level 1 (Up from 1 last year)
- 6 Sylfaen Level 2.

3.3.7 Cwtsh Cymraeg
The Microsoft Teams virtual 'Cwtsh – Ysgrifennu yn Cymraeg' was available thoughout the year for Officers to use virtually.

3.3.8 Staff Communication
Communication issued centrally and sent to groups of staff is in English (as is permissible under the standards).

3.3.9 Meetings
Hybrid meetings are now the main model for meetings, with the aim of encouraging greater participation in the democratic process including from Welsh speakers. Although the corporate tool remains Teams, Zoom licences have also been procured for facilitators to enable simultaneous translation.

3.4 Record Keeping Standards

Complaints
Complaints in relation to the Welsh Language and /or complaints received in the Welsh Language about any aspect of service delivery are dealt with according to the Council's corporate complaints policy. The Complaints Policy was reviewed and updated.

Section 13 of the revised Complaints Policy deals exclusively with Welsh Language complaints so as to comply with the Standards. The Policy identifies the process, timescales, responsible officers, and staff training and communication around Welsh Language complaints.

As highlighted earlier in section 3.1.4, both the new complaints system and upgraded ERP system will improve the breadth of reporting. This will enable data-led decision-making and targeted training around Welsh Language Standards and compliance.

Six Welsh Language complaints were received directly to the Council during the reporting period April 2021 – March 2022. Further staff awareness will be undertaken, particularly around the Service Delivery Standards as all the complaints during the year relate to that category. These include:

Standards Group	Complaint Details	Action Taken
Service Delivery Standards	Extra signage, paperwork, money etc that is being spent by the Council on delivering services in accordance with the	Response: Welsh Government law requires Welsh to be treated no less favourably than English and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards laws means that it is mandatory that the

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Standards Group	Complaint Details	Action Taken
	Welsh Language Standards.	Council follows this guidance which we endeavour to do so. I note your comments but the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards is mandatory so your comments should be directed to the Welsh Government.
Service Delivery Standards	Welsh translation of sign in park incorrect	Text was not submitted to the translation unit for translation. Department has been made aware that all documents which require translation must be sent the Welsh Translation Unit.
Service Delivery Standards	Welsh first on car park payment machines	Response: Swansea Council adheres to the legislation and guidance from the Welsh Language Commissioner, who states all local authorities in Wales should facilitate the Welsh language within the function of the pay and display machine. In all automated machines, such as parking payment machines, Welsh is the primary language with an option for English.
Service Delivery Standards	'No Cycle's signs translated incorrectly	Response: Thank you for your report and highlighting the error. The signs at Blackpill were being refreshed but it was noted that these signs were originally English only therefore a bi-lingual version with a circle to emphasise the signage was instructed. The contractor provided the wording which was taken to be a standard sign. This was obviously a mistake but the Contractor has recognised the error and the signs are being corrected today
Service Delivery Standards	Lack of a "^" above the "o" in Mor. Lack of a Welsh translation for "privately maintained road".	Roads are unadopted and not the responsibility of the Council. Complainant directed to Bellway Homes
Service Delivery Standards	Welsh first on car park payment machines	Response: Swansea Council adheres to the legislation and guidance from the Welsh Language Commissioner, who states all local authorities in Wales, should facilitate the Welsh language within the function of the pay and display machine. In all automated machines, such as parking payment machines, Welsh is the primary language with an option for English.

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4. Welsh Medium Education

The future development of the Welsh language across Swansea and beyond is fundamentally linked with Welsh-medium education and this aspect is dealt with specifically in the council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. This was consulted upon in autumn 2021 and approved by the council's Cabinet in January 2022. It was subsequently submitted to the Minister for Welsh Language and Education and following feedback from the Minister has now been submitted for final approval. The plan will go live in September 2022.

There are 10 Welsh medium primary schools feeding into the two secondary schools – Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe.

Currently the number of students attending Welsh-medium education in the three age ranges and the overall percentage of each range is outlined in the tables below.

2021-2022

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	21394	3133	**14.64%**
Y7-11	12871	1720	**13.36%**
Y12-Y13	1420	294	**20.70%**
Total	**35,685**	**5,147**	**14.42%**

2020-2021

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	21159	3157	**14.92%**
Y7-11	12859	1674	**13.02%**
Y12-Y13	1507	315	**20.90%**
Total	**35,525**	**5,146**	**14.49%**

2019-2020

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams

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Primary	22190	3519	**15.9%**
Y7-11	12331	1503	**12.2%**
Y12-Y13	1358	273	**20.1%**
Total	**35,879**	**5,295**	**14.8%**

2018-2019

School Rolls	Total Welsh and English streams	Number of students in Welsh medium provision	Percentage of students in Welsh language streams
Primary	22147	3306	**14.9%**
Y7-11	12246	1503	**12.3%**
Y12-Y13	1318	273	**20.7%**
Total	**35,711**	**5,082**	**14.2%**

In GCSE Welsh First Language, 88.0% in 2021 of students attain grades A*- C, and numbers entering this subject (292 entries) were the highest we've seen in the last five years.

In the GCSE Welsh Second Language 74.8% in 2021 attain grades A*- C with 1736 entries, however the 2021 cohort was slightly smaller than 2020.

Performance in Welsh is also strong in key stages 2 and 3, but no data was collected in 2020 or 2021 due to the pandemic.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Last year's report made several recommendations. The following have been completed:

a) With regard to promotional materials, emergency procedures and experiences from the pandemic were reviewed with regard to provision in English and Welsh
b) The e-democracy project was completed – improving participation in public meetings
c) The new Standards Officer is now in post
d) Impact on the Welsh Language is now fully embedded in the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA).

Areas of work that are underway and continuing include:

a) Improve staff awareness of the service delivery standards – this was the main category of complaint during the year
b) Training / awareness sessions to Policy makers on the code of practice guidance to ensure the impact on the Welsh language is thoroughly assessed and meaningful
c) Establishing a Welsh Language Board
d) Completing the automation project in the Welsh Translation Unit
e) Completing the new online complaints system
f) Reviewing and updating the five year strategy and plan
g) As part of the strategy work, explore ways of attracting Welsh speakers to work for the Council from Welsh medium schools, universities, and further education colleges

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h) Piloting the breach panel process – this already works well for data protection and it is hoped the process can be mirrored for the Welsh Language Standards compliance work

i) Reviewing the joint Welsh Translation Service with Neath & Port Talbot Council to ensure adequate provision of translation services

j) Explore mandatory Welsh when recruiting unless specific shortage in the market for a particular skill.

Report of the Convener

Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

Annual Review of Work 2022-23

Purpose:	As the municipal year ends, it is good practice to reflect on the Panel's work, experience, and effectiveness.
Content:	A summary of the year's activities and achievements is provided.
Councillors are being asked to:	• Reflect on the year's work; and • Share ideas to improve the effectiveness of Service Improvement and Finance scrutiny
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Chris Holley Chair / Convener of the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel.
Lead Officer & Report Author:	Rachel Percival, Scrutiny Officer E-mail: rachel.percival@swansea.gov.uk

1.   Background

1.1   As this is the final meeting of this municipal year, the Panel is invited to reflect on the year's scrutiny work, experience and effectiveness. Any ideas that will improve the effectiveness of the scrutiny of Service Improvement and Finance are welcome.

1.2   To aid panel members, a summary of the year's work is attached.

1.3   Some of the questions the Panel may want to consider:

• What went well?
• What did not go so well?
• Has the Panel's work focused on the right things?
• What have we learnt that will help us with future scrutiny?

2.   Overview

2.1   The Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel monitors the Council's budget and performance measures. It also completes pre-decision scrutiny on a number of Commissioning Reviews where required.

2.2   The Panel has a membership of 10 councillors.

3.   Remit of the Panel

3.1   To ensure that the Council's budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient.

3.2   In practical terms this means:

- Consider quarterly and annual corporate finance reports
- Consider proposals for the Council's annual revenue and capital budgets including savings proposals
- Look at medium and long-term planning arrangements
- Look at whether financial and policy objectives are aligned
- Consider quarterly and annual performance reports and whether any issues need to be looked at further
- Consider the Council's overall improvement processes
- Look at the fitness of the Council to discharge the general duty to improve
- Look at the processes that the Council has gone through in the selection of its improvement objectives, including engagement with stakeholders
- Look at how the delivery of improvement objectives are monitored
- Provide challenge and new ideas

4.   Supporting Data

4.1   There have been 9 Panel Meetings with 18 Conveners letters sent to Cabinet Members. Average attendance from the Panel over the year has been 80%.

5.   Future Work Programme

5.1   Next year's plan will include most of the same performance and finance items it has received in the previous year and include a number of annual reports. The future work programme will be discussed at the first Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel in the new municipal year 2023/2024.

Appended:

A. Completed Work Plan 2022-2023

Service Improvement and Finance – Scrutiny Performance Panel
Work Plan 2022/23

Meeting 1 6 Sep 2022 10am	1. **Role of the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Panel** 2. **Overview:** *Understanding Financial Reporting* Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer 3. **Overview:** *Understanding Performance Monitoring* Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager 4. **Work Plan 2022/23** Panel to discuss/agree work plan topics for the coming year.
Meeting 2 4 Oct 2022 10am	1. **Q1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – 2022/23** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer 2. **Annual Performance Monitoring Report for 2021/2022** Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Meeting 3 8 Nov 2022 10am	1. **Review of Revenue Reserves** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer 2. **Annual Review of Performance 2021/2022** Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager 3. **Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report** Cllr Elliott King – Cabinet Member Equalities and Culture Karen Gibbins – Library Services Manager Karen Davies – Principal Librarian 4. **Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update** Cllr Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation Carol Morgan – Head of Housing and Public Health
Meeting 4 6 Dec 2022 10am	1. **Mid Term Budget Statement 2022/23** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer 2. **Quarter 1 2022/23 Performance Monitoring Report** Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager 3. **Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring 2021/22 and Recycling of Business Waste Briefing** Cllr Cyril Anderson– Cabinet Member Community Services Chris Howell – Head of Waste Management and Parks Matthew Perkins – Group Leader, Waste

	4. **Audit Wales Report – "Making Equality Impact Assessments more than just a tick box exercise"** Cllr Elliott King - Cabinet Member Culture and Equalities Rhian Millar – Consultation Coordinator Lee Wenham – Head of Communications and Marketing
Meeting 5 17 Jan 2023 10am	1. **Budget Proposals 2023/24 – 2026/27** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer 2. **Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer 3. **Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23** Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager 4. **Sustainable Swansea Update -** Transformational delivery aspects Cllr Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation Martin Nicholls – Chief Executive Sarah Lackenby – Head of Digital and Customer Services Marlyn Dickson – Strategic Change Programme Manager
Meeting 6 14 Feb 2023 10am	1. **Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan: Pre-Decision Scrutiny** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Ben Smith – Director of Finance / S.151 Officer
Meeting 7 14 Mar 2023 10am	1. **Planning Annual Performance Report 2021/22** Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance Phil Holmes – Head of Planning and City Regeneration Ian Davies - Development Manager Tom Evans – Place making and Strategic Planning Manager 2. **Annual Complaints Report 2021/22** Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Service Transformation Sarah Lackenby – Head of Digital and Customer Services
Meeting 8 18 April 2023 10am	1. **Annual Review of Wellbeing Objectives and Corporate Plan 2023/8** Cllr Rob Stewart - Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Cllr Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager 2. **Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23** Cllr David Hopkins - Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance Richard Rowlands – Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Meeting 9 9 May 2023 10am	1. **Progress update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan** (delayed due to pandemic impacts / diversion of resources) Cllr Andrea Lewis - Cabinet Member for Service Transformation Sarah Lackenby - Head of Digital and Customer Services Steve King – Research and Information GIS Team Leader

		2. **Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021/2022** Cllr Elliott King – Cabinet Member Culture and Equalities Cllr Robert Smith – Cabinet Member for Education and Learning Lisa DeBenedictis - Standards Officer

Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

To:	*Please ask for:* *Gofynnwch am:*	Scrutiny
Councillor Rob Stewart **Cabinet Member for Economy,** **Finance & Strategy**	*Direct Line:* *Llinell Uniongyrochol:*	01792 636292
Councillor Andrea Lewis **Cabinet Member for Service** **Transformation**	*e-Mail* *e-Bost:*	scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
	Date *Dyddiad:*	2 May 2023

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Members for Economy, Finance and Strategy and Service Transformation. The letter concerns the meeting held on 18 April 2023 and the review of the Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives. This letter does not require a response.

Dear Councillors Stewart and Lewis,

On the 18 April, the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel met to discuss the Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives. The Panel are grateful to you and Richard Rowlands, Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager for attending to discuss and answer our questions.

Further to points raised at the Council meeting on 30 March we discussed the readability of the new corporate plan, with concern regarding the length of the document and how this may have affected the consultation survey response, however we are also aware that the survey was part of wider approach of involvement. The officer informed us that with the available resources, work is being undertaken to develop different versions of the plan through different mediums. We were made aware of the challenging balance between a plan that is user friendly but also a document that meets legislative responsibilities and fulfils statutory guidance.

We commented on the number of sections and queried the progress measurements as some are still to be confirmed. Although we know this is a draft plan we asked when a plan containing confirmed measures will be produced so that targets met can be recorded. The officer informed is that there are many different ways to measure a plan which often starts with a large list of potential measures and is reduced down over time focussing on data that is collectable, robust, consistent and reportable. This sifting process then produces a shortlist of reportable measures. The officer reported that this work is underway, the results of which will be brought to the Panel. We asked for a time scale on this and were informed officers are aiming to report on new measures

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in next year's first quarter report. This will also include the data development list which is a list of measures that can't collect at the moment but has an aim for collection in the future.

We also asked about data collection on behalf of Welsh Government and were informed that previously Swansea Council had used a national framework of public accountability measures which were useful and provided a consistent way to measure performance and a means of benchmarking across Wales. Those measures were removed by the Welsh Government which officers have raised with Audit Wales, who are who are undertaking the review of performance management across Wales and work carried out on the corporate plan.

We asked whether the measures would be included in the corporate plan or the quarterly performance monitoring report and were informed that they will be in both as they will be included in the yearly refresh of the corporate plan as well as the quarterly performance report. We will therefore await further developments on the measures in the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/34.

Your Response

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter but in this instance, we require no formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk

To: **Councillor David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance**	*Please ask for:* *Gofynnwch am:*	Scrutiny
	Direct Line: *Llinell Uniongyrochol:*	01792 636292
	e-Mail *e-Bost:*	scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
BY EMAIL	*Date* *Dyddiad:*	2 May 2023

> Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance concerning the meeting held on 18 April 2023 and the Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23. This letter does not require a response.

Dear Councillor Hopkins,

On the 18 April, the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel met to discuss the Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23. The Panel are grateful to the Leader and Richard Rowlands, Corporate Performance Manager, for attending to discuss and answer questions.

We noted that overall performance shows improvement and that for Quarter 3, 19 of the 27 comparable indicators show improving or maintaining trends. 1 indicator demonstrates a decline that was within 5% of the previous result and 7 which show a drop in performance. We were informed that performance indicators are being reviewed in line with the development of the corporate plan and any changes around that would be brought back to the Panel.

Safeguarding

We noted the 6 new indicators which were mainly introduced as a result of the National Social Services Performance Framework introduced by the Welsh Government. We also commented on the decline in the number of children and young people supported by the Early Help Hubs. It is indicated that this is in part due to the way in which information is recorded on the IT system although how this effect has occurred was unclear.

Education and Skills

The decline in training and employment weeks was noted however the report informed us that this was due to the Copper Bae project being near completion so the explanation for the decline is well documented.

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Economy and Infrastructure

We raised our concern regarding the lack of performance information in the report relating to highways. The officer told us that some data was previously contained within the corporate suite some years ago as they were part of the national framework of public accountability measures from Welsh Government however these have now been removed.

The Leader explained that the pothole pledge is being considered for modification to allow more time for a more substantial repair and alongside it the patch repair programme which looks at wider surface defects, is also being reviewed. He reminded us of the additional £5m funding for roads repairs and the further half a million by bringing forward some of the programme funding for 24/25 into this year. The Leader also informed us that they have lobbied both UK and Welsh Governments for additional funds for road repairs.

We felt that some of the issues with potholes relate to the lack resources and not a reflection of the work of the highways team, as they are dealing with a backlog of road repairs as well as an increase in the number of cars on roads and an increased weight of vehicles and agree that additional funds are required to reduce the backlog.

We will invite Councillor Andrew Stevens and relevant officers to attend a future Panel meeting, we are aware this team are very busy and therefore wish to focus the conversation on the process and criteria for pot holes and road repairs as this is an important issue.

Tackling Poverty

We noted that the speed of processing Housing Benefits and Council Tax reduction claims has declined. We asked if measures were in place to improve this and the officer informed us measures were but one of the key contributors to the decline is the training of replacement staff which is currently taking place meaning time is required to increase productivity levels.

We also wanted to highlight this quarter's performance of the welfare rights team and the amount of benefits secured through their work which we felt merits recognition in the public domain regarding the difference this service makes.

Nature Recovery and Climate Change

We queried the time scales for the new climate emergency and nature recovery indicators and the officer informed us of the aim to introduce these in Quarter 1 23/24 although the officer expressed this area of performance was one of the more challenging areas and these are in development at the moment. Once more information is available on these indicators the officer has agreed to bring it to the Panels attention.

Your Response

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter but in this instance, we require no formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

2

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
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