



City and County of Swansea

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

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

**Teams**

**Tuesday, 14 November 2023 at 4.00 pm**

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

**Councillor(s)**

A Davis  
M Jones  
S Pritchard

**Councillor(s)**

E W Fitzgerald  
W G Lewis  
T M White

**Councillor(s)**

V A Holland  
F D O'Brien

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

Elizabeth Lee

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

C A Holley                      S M Jones

**Officer(s)**

Stuart Davies	Head of Highways & Transportation
Barrie Gilbert	Senior Transport Officer
Julie Gosney	Partnership and Involvement Team Manager
David Howes	Director of Social Services
Simon Jones	Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Mark Wade	Director of Place
Jane Whitmore	Strategic Lead Commissioner
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer

**Also present**

Councillor H Gwilliam - Cabinet Member for Community (Support)  
Councillor A Anthony - Cabinet Member for Well-Being  
Councillor L Gibbard - Cabinet Member for Care Services  
Councillor A S Stevens – Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure  
Councillor T J Hennegan – Convener - Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

**External Participant**

Bev Fowles – Director of South Wales Transport / Vice-Chair of Coach and Bus Association Cymru

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): Robert Smith (Cabinet Member for Education & Learning)  
Statutory Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

Councillor Co-opted Members: L R Jones and S E Keeton

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**35 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.**

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

**36 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.

**37 Minutes.**

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

**38 Public Question Time.**

None.

**39 Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Final Report.**

The Convener of the Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel presented the final report for the Scrutiny Inquiry into Anti-Social Behaviour. The report presented the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Inquiry that sought to answer the following question: *How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?*

The Convener thanked all participants and the Scrutiny Support Officer for their assistance in preparing the report.

The Chair thanked the Convener and Members of the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel for their informative report and referred to the Panel's request to consider adding examination of Youth Provision in Swansea including the provision of current issues like preventative work, funding and the difficulty in recruiting qualified youth workers. The Chair stated that this could be included in discussion of potential Scrutiny Work Programme for 2024/25 perhaps as a possible Working Group.

**Resolved** that the report be proceed to the Cabinet meeting on 21 December 2023.

**40 Children & Young People's Rights Scheme Progress Report 2021-2023.**

The Cabinet Member for Community (Support) assisted by the Director of Social Services (Lead Director), Strategic Lead Commissioner and Partnership & Involvement Team Manager, presented the report on the progress of the Children & Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea 2021-2023.

An overview of the refreshed Children & Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea, a summary of the Countywide priorities identified by Children & Young People, progress via the "Right Way" five principled approach and recommendations were detailed.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on the following:

- Whole Council Approach – there have been successes in embedding a whole-Council approach on CYP Rights, and the use of the 5 principle approach and the matrix ensures that arrangements are in place to benchmark and measure / monitor performance. The development of a training model would ensure that all aspects are captured and embedded.
- UNCRC Training – the Education Department are currently reviewing School Governor Training with a view to ensuring it is mandatory.
- UNCRC Rights Respecting Schools – all schools have signed a contract arrangement with UNICEF which runs with the new curriculum for Wales.
- Youth Service – The Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry has flagged up issues with Youth Provision in Swansea including funding and the difficulty in recruiting qualified youth workers. This has issue has not impacted on work to embed CYP Rights and Children have been involved in how we design our outreach model.

The Chair thanked all concerned for the informative report.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member for Community (Support) reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.
- 2) The Committee were content to receive an update on a two yearly basis.

#### **41 Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2022-23.**

The Cabinet Member for Care Services, assisted by the Director of Social Services and Social Services Strategy & Performance Improvement Officer summarised the work programme of the Corporate Safeguarding Group during 2022-23, and highlight improvements carried out in support of the Council's corporate safeguarding policy and corporate arrangements for safeguarding across the whole Council, covering seven key areas of activity.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on the following:

- Working with Contractors and Suppliers – challenges still existed and was work in progress.
- Mandatory Safeguarding Training – the training is 'live' at the moment and the new Oracle system does now provide us with better management information and more effective oversight of training compliance across the Council. With regard to Councillor Training, a step by step guide was being developed by the Head of Digital & Customer Services.

- DBS Checks – have been re-examined across a range of staff and categories have changed over time. The Council is compliant with Welsh Government guidance.

The Chair thanked all concerned for the informative report.

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

#### **42 Follow Up: Scrutiny Working Group - Bus Services.**

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure, assisted by the Director of Place, Head of Highways & Transportation and Team Leader, Public & School Transport, provided an update on issues raised in the previous meetings of the Working Group in July 2021 and March 2022.

Detailed updates were provided in respect of cleaner fuel buses, bus service network and bus emergency schemes, bus and rail links and bus shelters.

Mr B Fowles, Director of South Wales Transport / Vice-Chair of Coach and Bus Association Cymru (he is also Vice-Chair of Coach and Bus Association Cymru which is a trade association representing the interest of smaller bus operators in Wales and a long standing local bus service contractor for the Council) provided a useful perspective from a local SME bus service operator, particularly in terms of Welsh Government proposed legislation to franchise local bus services. He referred to issues surrounding the continual reorganisation coupled with decreased budgets and the Welsh Governments efforts to re-create a franchise similar to Transport for London.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on the following:

- Communication & Engagement - progress made on fostering effective dialogue between the Council and First Cymru (as well as other bus operators) has been frustrated with the constant changes in First Cymru, however, attempts have still be made.
- Bus Cuts – service providers are able to provide a six week notice for change, which provides a real challenge. Despite this, dialogue is was continuing.
- Transport Integration & cross ticketing – cross ticketing will be part of the franchise and will be rolled out in zones from April 2026. It was anticipated that in 3-5 years there would be improvements in connectivity. Transport for Wales are looking at integration to bring busses into railways stations.
- Travel Initiatives – will be operational on weekends between now and Christmas and free travel would be available between Christmas and the New Year.
- Transport for London – the success of this network were discussed.

The Chair thanked all concerned for the informative report.

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

**43 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (Councillor Chris Holley, Convener).**

Councillor Chris Holley provided the Committee with a progress report on the work / activities of the Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel. He thanked all Panel members for their participation and 'teamwork' in carrying out this Scrutiny.

**Resolved** that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress report in respect of Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance be noted.

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

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

**45 Scrutiny Work Programme.**

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

The main items for the Committee on 19 December comprised:

- Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities – Support for Businesses.
- Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty.

Members noted that the Scrutiny Training & Development Programme for Swansea Scrutiny Councillors was underway, which was being facilitated by the Improvement Team at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

Upcoming Sessions:

- Scrutiny of Performance – to be held on 4 December / 6 December
- Self-Assessment of Scrutiny (two parts) – to be held on 17 January / 23 January

The Chair encouraged all to attend. All Sessions were being held online via MS Teams, with the exception of the final 'Self-Assessment' part 2 session which will be in-person only. As well as benefitting individual Councillors, the Programme will help to inform Scrutiny Improvement Objectives and actions going forward.

**46 Scrutiny Letters.**

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

- Committee - Scrutiny of Active Travel – Letter to Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure.

- Committee - Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operating Model – Letter to Cabinet Member for Service Transformation.
- Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry – Follow Up – Letter to Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance.

The Procurement Scrutiny Inquiry was recently followed up by Councillors, looking at progress with implementation of Scrutiny recommendations and impact of the inquiry. Cabinet decision on the Inquiry recommendations was made in October 2022. All 14 recommendations had been agreed by Cabinet with an action plan. Having received a report to support the follow up and following discussion with the lead Cabinet Member / officers, the Inquiry Panel decided to conclude formal monitoring of the inquiry recommendations. The Panel were happy with the progress made to date and were pleased to hear about the positive impact that the Inquiry has made).

#### **47 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 5.27 pm

**Chair**