



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Scrutiny Programme Committee

At: Multi-Location Meeting - Lilian Hopkin Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

On: Tuesday, 8 April 2025

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Peter Black CBE

Membership:

Councillors: A Davis, V A Holland, M Jones, W G Lewis, P N May, F D O'Brien, S Pritchard and T M White

Statutory Co-opted Members: Beth Allender and Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, M H Jones, S M Jones and L R Jones

Watch Online: <http://tiny.cc/Scrutiny08-4>

Webcasting: This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to be filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and / or training purposes.

Agenda

	Page No.
1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest. www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests	
3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.	
4 Minutes. To approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 6
5 Public Question Time. Questions can be submitted in writing to Democratic Services democracy@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 within a 10 minute period.	

6	Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership.	7 - 60
7	Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports. a) Education (Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener). b) Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (Councillor Chris Holley, Convener)	61 - 69
8	Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.	70 - 71
9	Scrutiny Work Programme. Discussion on: a) Committee Work Plan. b) Opportunities for Pre-Decision Scrutiny. c) Progress with Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.	72 - 94
10	Scrutiny Letters.	95 - 111
11	Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.	112 - 113

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 13 May 2025 at 4.00 pm

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday, 1 April 2025

Contact: Democratic Services - Tel (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Lilian Hopkin Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 18 March 2025 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
W G Lewis
T M White

Councillor(s)

V A Holland
F D O'Brien

Councillor(s)

M Jones
S Pritchard

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley

Officer(s)

Samantha Jenkins	Democratic Services Officer
Adrian Jeremiah	Lead Lawyer
Sarah Lackenby	Head of Digital and Customer Services
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader

Also present

Councillor A S Lewis – Cabinet Member for Service Transformation.

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P N May

Statutory Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

Councillor Co-opted Members: P R Hood-Williams, M H Jones, S M Jones and L R Jones

85 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

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

86 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.

87 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 18 February 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

88 Public Question Time.

There were no public questions.

89 Follow Up: Scrutiny Working Group - Customer Contact.

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation assisted by the Head of Digital & Customer Services presented a report detailing the progress on improving customer contact since the Customer Contact Scrutiny Working Group meeting on 23rd February 2024.

Members noted there had been significant improvement in performance due to the filling of vacancies in the corporate call centre and a continued shift to online channels.

Calls had reduced by just under 35%, while online forms and emails had increased by just over 90% since 2022-23.

The performance of other call centres had also improved by just over 27% when comparing January performance across years.

The phone access review project, which started in autumn 2024 and was set to complete by the end of March 2025, aimed to assess and improve the usability, accessibility, and effectiveness of current phone access channels. The review covered infrastructure, customer experience, performance metrics, and staff training, with expected benefits including improved customer access and satisfaction, and consistent service standards.

The unified communications project would provide a more reliable and adaptable system for residents to communicate with the council and would complete by the end of March 2026.

The Swansea account project aimed to incorporate more services into the Swansea account by the end of May, with further services to be added by March 2026.

A Customer Contact Target Operating Model (TOM) has been developed. The TOM aimed to improve customer contact channels to make services more accessible, effective, and inclusive. The Y Storfa face-to-face community hub in the city centre was due to open in October. The plan of work would largely be delivered through the phone access review, unified communications and Swansea account project.

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation thanked the Head of Digital & Customer Services for her hard work in transforming the Service.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on:

- Contact Details – it was reported that a significant amount of work had been undertaken with the phone access review strategy to ensure the accuracy of officer contact details. Service representatives had reviewed and checked lists for accuracy and any numbers not reached during mystery shopping would be investigated further.
- Out of Office Messages – Members noted that staff had received comprehensive advice (via a dedicated Staffnet Page) about good practice / consistency regarding the use of 'out of office' messages.
- Telephone Call Handling – the unified communications project developments included the introduction of the callback option and average wait time which was a welcome addition. As reported previously, the decline in phone calls and the full compliment of staff had a positive impact on the call handling function. Piloting of the new system was underway and was anticipated to be fully implemented by March 2026. Call times could be longer due to the complexity of the calls (assisting with completion of on-line applications etc). Members noted the range of services available to the public within libraries and with the greet and meet provision available when Y Storfa opens in October 2025.
- Website – the Officer outlined the improvements to the Council's website over the past year. The customer Swansea Account had gone live and included bookings and case management. Registrars and commercial waste services would follow. A form review was progressing with the aim of creating auto fill forms. Service users could view their query status and case history. New mapping currently included parks, open spaces and food banks and the number of people using those facilities was steadily increasing. Members noted the analytical developments in relation to use of search engines directing users to the exact information they require on the Council's website.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and Head of Digital & Customer Services their informative report.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member reflecting on the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

90 Review of Digital Strategy and Transformation.

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation assisted by the Head of Digital & Customer Services presented a report detailing progress with the Digital Strategy and Digital Transformation Programme and the six strategic goals.

Members noted that the Digital Strategy and Digital Transformation Programme had made significant progress since its approval by Cabinet in April 2023.

The Programme's six strategic goals had seen substantial progress enhancing the Council's digital presence and operational efficiency.

Key achievements included improvements in customer service, the creation of the Swansea Account, the migration of the ERP system to the cloud and the implementation of various automation processes.

Benefits can take many years to be fully realised and were being identified and monitored on an ongoing basis.

There had been some challenges around market testing and procurement which had caused delays. Capacity in very busy services continued to be a risk which was being managed and mitigated through the Digital Transformation Programme.

Key priorities for the upcoming year included completing procurement activities by March 2026, monitoring the benefits tracker and providing monthly progress reports to the Digital Transformation Board. Additionally, an annual review would be conducted and a new project pipeline would be developed to achieve strategic goals by 2028.

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation thanked the Head of Digital & Customer Services for her work in developing the Programme.

Committee questioning and discussion focussed on:

- Microsoft CoPilot – the Officer stated that the pilot had commenced in various different teams across the Authority. She detailed the capabilities in providing automation of routine tasks (research, drafting emails, minutes etc) that would assist Councillors and staff in carrying out their work. There were some issues around ensuring security and training was ongoing within the teams who were engaged in the pilot. Training would be rolled out across the Council in due course.
- Digital Apprenticeships – it was reported that the Council had been working with Gower College since 2017. Four apprentices were recruited and employed permanently, two of which have remained within digital services. In 2022 a further five apprentices were recruited, working across server, desktop support and network services and application development. All five apprenticeships had secured roles within the IT Department. The collaboration between the Council and Gower College had delivered exceptional benefits, not only in enhancing the digital services team, but also providing the apprentices with valuable skills and professional development opportunities. The Council had supported apprentices to complete degrees, in addition to their original qualifications. In February, the recent cohort had the opportunity to meet and discuss the benefits of apprenticeships with the First Minister, and it is anticipated that a further cohort would be recruited in the coming year.
- A Digitally Connected City & County – it was reported that the partnership working and funding as part of the City Deal Partnership had been intrinsic in developing the programme. Attention was focussed on attracting more telecom

providers to improve the digital infrastructure (broadband coverage, broadband speed and congestion across the whole County). A further development included the introduction of sensors which would assist many areas of the Council to improve operation efficiency and the attractiveness and well-being of the City (e.g. sensors in litter bins to determine when it required to be emptied). Officers were examining development of funding to implement and purchase further sensors. It was further noted that free Wi-Fi exists within the City Centre.

- Customer Service Data – the Officer stated that common / repeat customer issues could be seasonal/event related (e.g. a bin lorry breaking down, storms, flooding, pests in the summer months). Data analysis was provided to Cabinet Members and Directors in order to ensure efficient and more targeted services.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and Head of Digital & Customer Services their informative report.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member reflecting on the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

91 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report - Education (Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener).

The Panel Convener had given apologies for the meeting. The item was deferred to the next Committee meeting.

92 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

No changes to report.

93 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Chair introduced the agreed Work Programme to facilitate the Committee's monitoring of all Scrutiny activity. Various information was provided to ensure progress could be reviewed with the agreed Programme.

The main item(s) for the next Committee meeting on 8 April were:

- Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership (Annual Item - Partnership Joint-Chairs / Representatives will attend to report on the performance of the Safer Swansea Partnership).

94 Scrutiny Letters.

Scrutiny Letters were reported reflecting on recent Scrutiny activity:

- Working Group – Agile Working – 20 January 2025 – Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance.

- Committee – Leader Q & A Session – 21 January 2025 – Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy.
- Committee – Draft Tackling Poverty Strategy – 18 February 2025 – Letter to Cabinet Member for Wellbeing.
- Committee – Delivery of Workforce Strategy – 18 February 2025 – Letter to Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance.

The Chair highlighted the findings of the Agile Working Scrutiny Working Group which the Committee will be responsible for following up in the next 12 months.

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

The date and time of upcoming Panel/Working Group/Regional Scrutiny Meetings was provided “For information”.

The meeting ended at 4.41 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8th April 2025

Crime & Disorder Scrutiny – Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership

Purpose	To update the Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee on Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership objectives and priorities, activities and achievements during 2024.
Content	The report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Safer Swansea Partnership with more detailed information attached as Appendices.
Councillors are being asked to	Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary.
Lead Councillor(s)	Cllr Alyson Anthony, Cabinet Member for Wellbeing – Safer Swansea Partnership Representative Cllr Hayley Gwilliam, Cabinet Member for Community Support – Safer Swansea Partnership Representative
Lead Officer(s)	Jane Whitmore, Interim Chief Officer, Commissioning & Resources, Swansea Council Superintendent Mark Kavanagh, Head of Community Safety and Partnerships, South Wales Police
Report Authors	Paul Thomas, Community Integration Partnership Manager, Swansea Council Jessica Williams, Community Safety Manager, South Wales Police
Legal Officer	Adrian Jeremiah
Finance Officer	Chris Davies

1. Context

- 1.1 The Community Safety Partnership was established in 1998 as a result of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In Swansea this is known as the Safer Swansea Partnership
- 1.2 The Partnership consists of key representatives from statutory partners and other organisations with an interest and influence in community safety issues.
- 1.3 The Safer Swansea Steering Group is the management and leadership group for the Safer Swansea Partnership where all key decisions are made on behalf of the Partnership.

2. Overview

- 2.1 Working across the partnership the **Safer Swansea Annual Partnership Review 2024 Report (Appendix 1)** provides an overview of Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership objectives and priorities, and significant partnership activities and achievements during the year.
- 2.2 This report also addresses the Scrutiny Programmes Committee request for further details as identified in the previous session held in April 2024. Details of which can be found in the link under Background Papers.
- 2.3 *The Committee noted that they were keen hear more about the progress around the Tackling Hate Crime, Community Tensions & Extremism objective.*

Response – This is covered within the main annual report (Appendix 1)

- 2.4 *The Committee noted that an independent Drugs Commission, set up by the Western Bay Area Planning Board for Substance Misuse, to explore the high number of drug-related deaths in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot is expected to report later this year with recommendations for action and improvement and would be grateful if the report of the Drugs Commission could be shared with the Committee when available.*

Response - The report is nearing completion, with responsible authorities working with the Commission to finalise details. An outline plan with regards to the Report's release and publication, which is scheduled for the summer, has been drafted and will be shared with key partners in due course.

- 2.4 *The Committee noted that there is a public perception that nothing is being done about drugs and the Police and/or the wider Partnership should do more to put into the public consciousness the work that is being done, whether through social media or other means, to make what you are doing more visible and promote successes. There is also more that can be done to educate young people about the dangers of drug use.*

Response: Western Bay Area Planning Board has just established a Children, Young People & Families Sub-group to lead on the recommendations made by a recent independent review of specialist substance use services for young people that was commissioned by the APB. Part of that work is establishing a coordinated response to prevention and education in schools. The recommendation in the report is around involving key partners in delivering this such as public health, education and specialist service providers and the Sub-group will steer progress on this (and other recommendations). The Sub-group is due to hold its inaugural meeting within the next month.

- 2.5 *The Committee heard that a new system “Right Care Right Person” would be in place by February 2025 which will connect people to the correct services as early as possible to improve outcomes and asked for an update to be provided in due course on the impact, recognising that services for mental health remained a challenge.*

Response: Right Care Right Person has been established by South Wales Police and detail on progress and implementation can be found at the following link [Right Care, Right Person | South Wales Police](#)

3. Main Report

- 3.1 Community Safety Priorities - The Safer Swansea Partnership is focussed on working together to make Swansea a safer, more cohesive and confident place to live, work and to visit and deliver on the Safer Swansea Community Safety Priorities 2023-26.

- 3.2 The current priorities for the Safer Swansea Partnership are:

- Reducing Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Tackling Hate Crime, Community Cohesion and Extremism
- Challenging Substance Use
- Reducing reoffending and tackling the drivers of crime
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
- Safeguarding those at risk of violence and exploitation

These priorities are complemented by two over-arching themes:

- Reassurance Communication - effective reassurance provided at every available opportunity to help change perceptions of crime, reduce fear of crime, and promote positive outcomes of Safer Swansea.
- Community Engagement - improving the way partners engage with members of the public to build relationships based on trust and respect.

- 3.3 The Safer Swansea Partnership Annual Review outlines how local agencies and partners have worked together to make Swansea a safer, more cohesive and confident place to live, work and visit and reduce the fear of crime.

- 3.4 The Safer Swansea Partnership six key priorities provide the focus of its work for 2023 - 2026. The Safer Swansea Partnership Annual Review 2024 report highlights performance and achievements is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.5 The Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook an in-depth inquiry during 2023/24 and presented its final report with conclusions and recommendation to Cabinet on 21 December 2023. The inquiry looked at How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea. Cabinet made a decision on the Scrutiny recommendations at its meeting on 18 April 2024. The Cabinet Member response and action plan were agreed.
- 3.6 In March 2025, as the final stage of the Scrutiny inquiry process, the original Panel reconvened in order to assess the impact of the work to understand;
- What has changed since the report was presented to Cabinet?
 - Have the agreed recommendations been implemented?
 - What has been the impact of the scrutiny inquiry?
- 3.7 The Inquiry Panel thanked Cabinet Members and Officer for providing a detailed report on the progress and impact of the inquiry recommendations and for answering the Panels questions and were pleased with the progress of the recommendations and the ongoing work of the council and wider partners. Details of which can be found in the link under Background Papers.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5. Finance Implications

- 5.1 There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report.

6. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 6.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

6.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.

6.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

6.2 This is an information report, an IIA screening will be completed before taking forward new actions during 2024.

Background papers:

The Committee is required to hold a session, at a minimum, annually, and follows the last meeting on this on 16 April 2024, details of which can be found below

[Agenda for Scrutiny Programme Committee on Tuesday, 16 April 2024, 4.00 pm - Swansea](#)

[Agenda for Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Anti-Social Behaviour on Thursday, 13 March 2025, 2.00 pm - Swansea](#)

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Safer Swansea Partnership Annual Review 2024
-------------------	--



Safer Swansea Partnership Annual Review 2024

This annual review provides evidence, performance and data against the outcomes we want to achieve with contributions from Stakeholders and Partners in the Safer Swansea Partnership.

PRIORITY 1:



Reducing Neighbourhood Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour

Priority Lead: South Wales Police

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Seek to reduce the number of repeat victims to incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and neighbourhood crime
- Comprehensive ASB profile for Swansea to inform operational tactics
- Evening & Nighttime Economy (ENTE) strategy links to Safer Swansea priorities and works to reduce the impact of ASB
- Aim to promote and raise awareness of the correct procedures to report ASB
- Improve the way issues and concerns are and escalated to Problem Solving Groups and outcomes monitored.
- Seek to reduce the number of deliberate fire incidents/ off road biking incidents

SWP has the same policing model as previous year with response officers in all four Swansea sectors as well as neighbourhood officers.

Anti-social behaviour is responsible for the highest volume of all incidents reported to police within the Swansea local authority area and so remains a priority. In the last calendar year there were 4,379 reports made to police which represents a reduction of 24% compared to the calendar year of 2023. This represents 1387 less reports which potentially equates to the same number of fewer victims.

ASB 'nuisance' continues to be the highest category with 2374 incidents.

The four policing sectors have seen the following reductions:

Sector	2023	2024	& change
City	1980	1384	30%
Morrison / Eastside	1532	1192	22%
Gorseinon / Penlan	1278	1062	17%
Townhill / Gower	982	758	13%

There have a number of multi-agency initiatives across the various sectors in the last 12 months and police and partners are well versed in working together to provide a coordinated approach to youth related issues. The city centre has seen the greatest reductions due to a number of partnership initiatives. The city did not experience the same level of issues that were associated with large groups of youths during the summer of 2023. This is partly due to the resources that were drafted into the city centre under 'Op Viscaria' and ongoing partnership initiatives. However, problems still

exist with levels of homelessness, vulnerability and drug use with the latter increasing by 18.9%. This increase is potentially due to increased enforcement rather than increases in users as arrests across Swansea increased by 8% to 4807.

We have embedded a Partnership wide approach to developing bids for future funding opportunities to address ASB and community safety issues. An example being the Home Office Safer Streets grant and the match funding with the local authority street lighting service to improve and install new streetlights in areas identified where levels of ASB are a concern. Funding was secured in 23/24 which enabled the following lighting improvements to be undertaken, particularly in some of the ASB hotspot areas:

Replaced/upgraded 19 columns on High Street/Castle Street with new LED lanterns.

- Due to complete a further 12 lantern replacements on High Street near the station in next two weeks.
- We have installed and re-cabled the street lighting underground cabling network on High Street and Castle Street.
- Paxton Street – two additional lighting columns installed.
- Wyndham Street – removed existing column, replaced with two columns.
- New Cut Road – new length of cable and ducting installed, upgraded seven lanterns around junction with Strand to LED.
- Prince of Wales Road – new underground cable and ducting installed.
- Primrose Street – two new lighting columns installed.
- Page Lane – new street lighting column installed

Partners have an excellent working relationship with the 'BCRP' and 'Swansea Business Improvement District' (Bid) and are working together to tackle acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour. Whilst reference has been an 8% increase in shoplifting offences, we have seen a reduction in commercial burglaries of 21% and residential burglaries by 8.6% and thefts of 8.6% for all of Swansea.

Problem Solving Groups (PSG's) continue to be held in all four sectors on a monthly basis. These are multi agency meetings that are very well attended by partners who continue to provide a cohesive approach to resolving issues with individuals and local hotspots. Repeat victims of ASB are a standing item on the agenda of the meeting.

The partnership recognises that youth related activity is critical to addressing ASB problems and to this end, the ASB coordinators within CSP are joined up with the youth offending services, CMET, local area coordinators and Youth Engagement Officers (formerly schools' officers). A new multi-agency 'youth violence group' has commenced where all partnership work with youths is being mapped to identify any opportunities in the gaps of service provision.

Enforcement continues through the ABO process which is very successful in the vast majority of cases.

Police 'stop searches' are critical to dealing with neighbourhood crime.

The PCC's office has funded a partnership analyst to collate data from all partners to better inform our activities. Due to the 12-month funding of the post the incumbents

are consistently leaving to acquire permanent employment. However, partners continue to share information in the many meetings that we cross over. 'Op Sentinel' data is shared with partners and clearly identifies areas (micro beats) that are a priority. Funding has also been made available throughout the year for joint patrols.

SWP has an excellent information / intelligence system (Sigma) that is live linked to our incidents and occurrences. All neighbourhood Inspectors and community safety & partnerships staff use this system on a daily basis in order to direct resources accordingly.

Whilst our quantitative data is useful, South Wales Listens provide qualitative data to better inform us where communities feel unsafe due to ASB. This is also considered in our deployments and engagements.

The ENTE strategy continues to significantly contribute to each of the six priorities. The multi-agency meetings continue to sit monthly, co-chaired by the police and local authority, providing the link between the day and night-time activities. The meetings are well attended by statutory and 3rd sector partners which is reflected in their activities on the ground. The prevention of violence in general, VAWDASV, ASB and vulnerability are strongly represented in the nighttime economy briefing packs where specific activities are directed to target these areas, as well as the other priorities. New licensing initiatives, door staff training, taxi operations and initiatives are just some of the ongoing work.

In respect of ASB, local officers are well briefed and directed in the use of the PSPO, particularly in respect of confiscating alcohol. SWP have developed an app to streamline the PSPO reporting process.

The 'operation footfall' initiative that was referenced last year was further developed this year with the trial of crowd control barriers to keep numbers to safe levels. This was a resounding success and has provided a model for managing future key dates. The city has retained its 'Purple Flag' status for a number of years and a recent inspection suggests that this will continue to be the case. The city has seen a 27.9% reduction in what is classed as 'serious crime'.

SWP remains accessible through phone lines, QR codes, emails and online reporting. In addition, all officers and PCSO's have personal work mobiles that they should be sharing with partners and members of the public for contact when they are on duty. We have seen an increase in online reporting in the past 12 months. The new PSPO will also assist in integrating breaches with the ASBO process.

The majority of ASB referrals are created by neighbourhood staff, albeit response officers attend the majority of priority ASB incidents. Education sessions are being planned to address this imbalance and increase submissions.

Neighbourhood staff hold engagements and surgeries, often with Safer Swansea partners where they discuss ways to contact SWP to report ASB along with awareness raising around partners who can help tackle ASB depending on what is happening.

South Wales listens is not a reporting mechanism, but key messages are pushed out through the system providing updates on ASB and how to report it.

The PSG is a forum where all issues pertaining to that sector can be discussed. Once brought into the PSG, the matter will remain there until partners and police are happy that it has been satisfactorily resolved. Individual cases are seldom escalated to the CSP as they are generally resolved through a multi-agency approach. The city has a fortnightly '5 star' meeting with partners that sits beneath the PSG. This is a tactical meeting that focuses purely on the top 5 individuals or locations and is seeing great success, hence the reductions. This and the PSG provide two levels of scrutiny (as well as Street Vulnerability MARAC) before the CSP which is probably why there are few escalations. However, there are still recurring issues / individuals that should be escalated. The neighbourhood chief Inspector scrutinises the PSG meetings to provide direction and gain consistency. The '5 star' meeting will shortly be rolled out to other sectors.

Each year, the police and partners embark on 'Operation Berberis' which is an initiative to prevent wild grass fires. In readiness for this operation, the police and fire services share data around previous locations and anticipated future locations. Problem areas are subject to OSARAS and POP's and crime prevention exercises and patrols are instigated to prevent issues. The Morriston, Penlan and Gower sectors in particular have strong links with the MAWWFS Arson Reduction Team and MAWWFS Community Safety Team, holding joint engagements which tackle deliberate fire setting and off-road bike riding as that has been linked previously to grass fires.

Deliberate Grass Fires													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
2023	1	9	15	18	26	66	11	1	2	2	5	10	166
2024	15	5	15	37	18	20	13	8	3	3	4	3	144
All Grass Fires													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
2023	2	11	16	32	38	84	15	1	4	4	5	15	227
2024	17	7	17	42	19	26	17	10	4	4	4	3	170

Where issues present themselves, local neighbourhood officers and Youth Engagement Officers (Previously schools' officers) attend local schools to supplement the ongoing work from the fire service.

Problems with off road motor bikes, E scooters and electric bikes are still an issue, and reports will no doubt increase as spring lands. 'Operation Lorocco' is still in place with SWP and involves off road police officers with drone capability observing culprits from a distance and then engaging them when safe to do so. Due to safety concerns, the police rely heavily on the public informing us who the riders are and where bikes are stored so that we can take enforcement action at a time which is safe for all concerned.



South Wales Listens - Swansea

01.01.2024 – 31.12.2024



4,369
SURVEYED

87% feel safe where they live
Feelings of Safety

3% feel unsafe where they live
Feelings of Safety

Top Issues (that would benefit from joint working between Police, partners & community members to resolve)

ASB – 37%

Nuisance motorbikes / scooters – 18%

Drug Dealing – 17%

28% of residents reported to have no issues

Top reasons why people feel unsafe where they live;

- Neighbour disputes – 15 responses
- ASB – 13 responses
- Crime (general) – 12 responses
- Drugs – 10 responses

CadwDeCymruYnDdiogel

KeepingSouthWalesSafe



PRIORITY 2:

Tackling Hate Crime, Community Tensions & Extremism

Priority Lead: Swansea Council



Outcomes we want to achieve

- Facilitate and improve hate crime reporting and to respond.
- Protection and support for victims of hate crime.
- Regular training and awareness on Hate Crime and PREVENT for front line staff.
- Seek to increase the number of PREVENT referrals through education and training.
- Improved public trust and confidence that support is available and that everybody is treated fairly.
- Ensure people know what to do if concerned about someone who is vulnerable to radicalisation or think are being radicalised.
- Establish a Hate Crime Perpetrator MARAC.
- Produce counter-narrative to assist in deconstructing and delegitimise propaganda/fake news/conspiracy theories around hate crime and extremism.

PREVENT Training for Frontline Staff

The Community Cohesion Team organized training and awareness-raising sessions, which were delivered by the Small Steps Organisation, to council staff and key partners across the Western Bay region on the following topics:

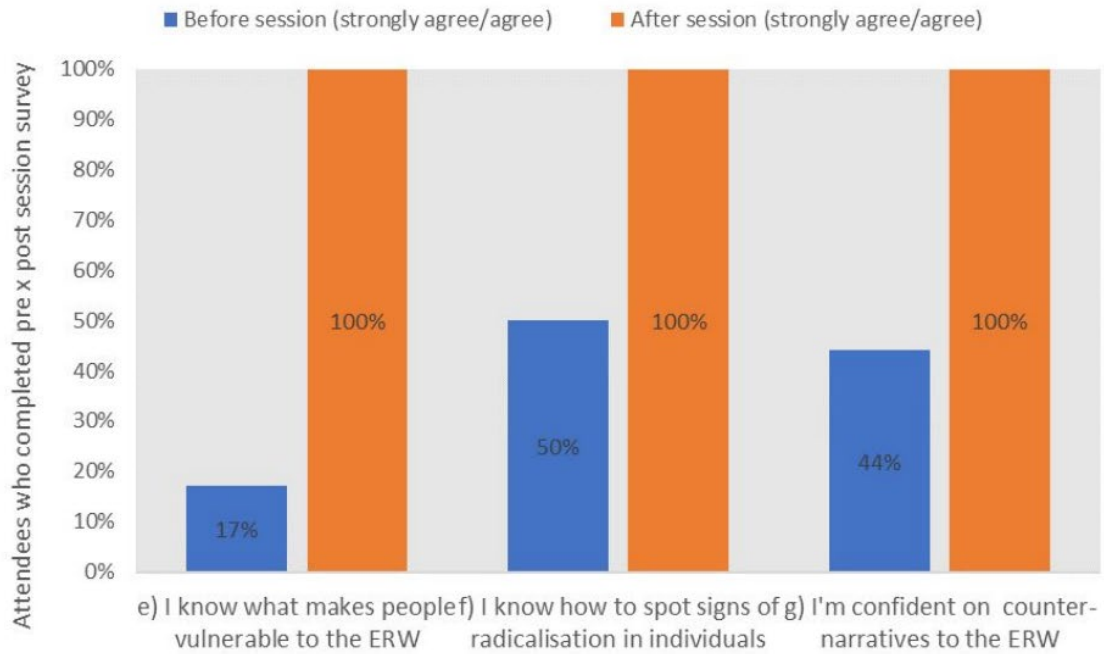
- Extreme Right-Wing Awareness
- Antisemitism & Islamophobia Awareness
- Patriotism & Identity
- Debate Not Hate

Objective:

The purpose of these sessions was to raise awareness about the dangers of extreme right-wing extremism, explore why individuals may be drawn to extremism, and identify the vulnerabilities and signs of radicalisation. The sessions provided alternative viewpoints to empower local people to challenge hate and extremism at both the local and national levels.

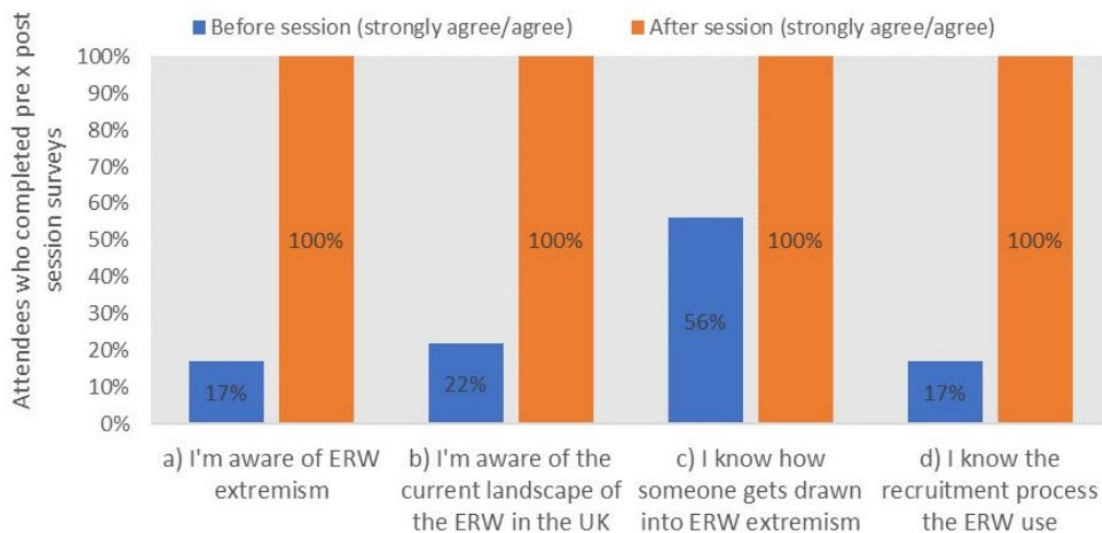
Below is a sample of data from the End of Project Evaluation Report. A full report detailing feedback from each session is available.

How much do you agree with the following statements

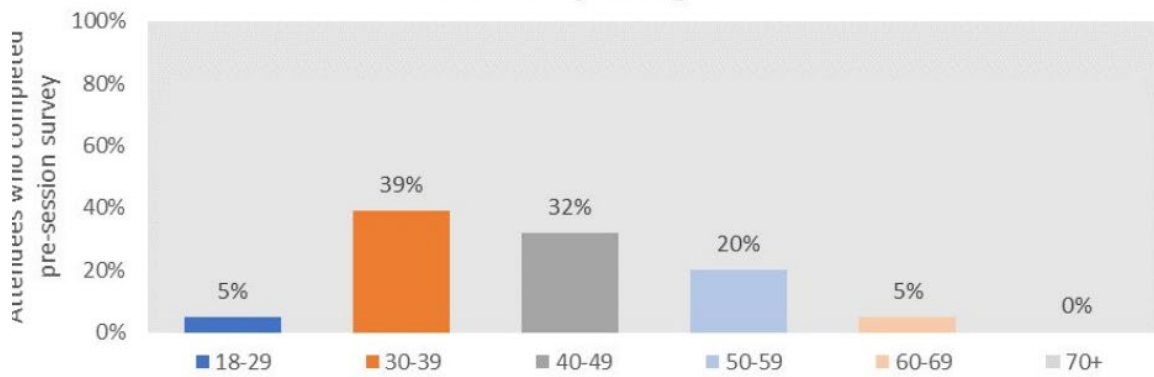


Extreme Right-Wing Explained Pre X Post Session Results

How much do you agree with the following statements

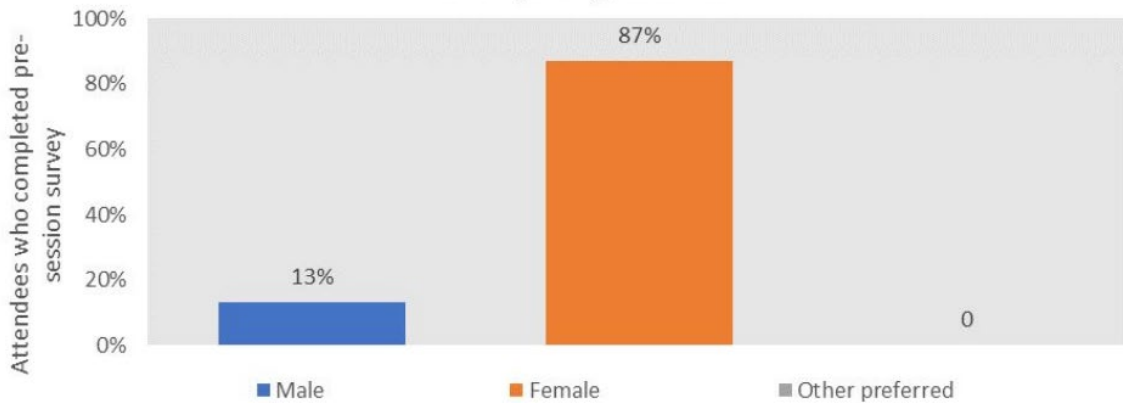


What is your age?

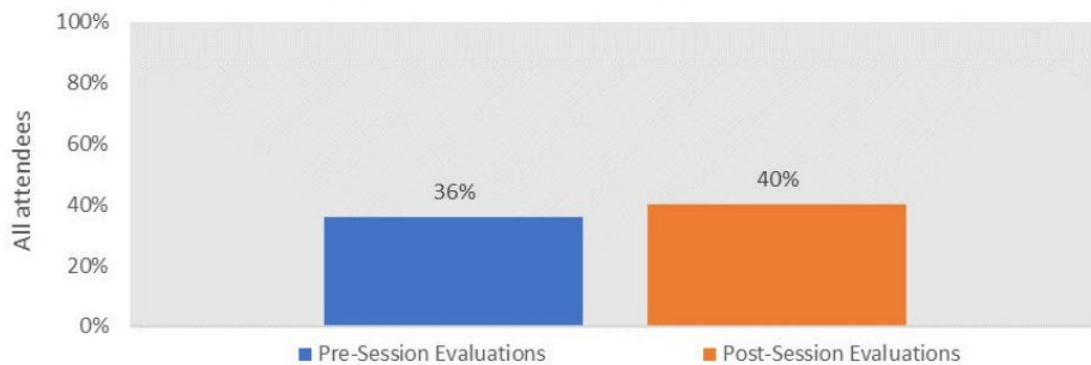


Socio-ethnic questions (all sessions together)

What is your gender?



Attendees x evaluations received



Outcome:

- A total of 115 staff members and key partners across the region received training on critical issues such as extreme right-wing extremism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and patriotism.

- Enhanced understanding of extremism, with attendees gaining insights into the vulnerabilities and signs of radicalisation and learning strategies to challenge hate and extremism.
- All attendees were granted access to the Small Steps Support Hub (www.supporthub.uk) for ongoing support following the training.
- Ongoing support provided through the Small Steps Support Hub, enabling continued education and assistance for attendees beyond the training sessions.
- Empowered local communities, with participants equipped to tackle hate and extremism at both local and national levels.

Prevent and Channel

There have been 27 Prevent referrals made during this period. These have originated from Education, Health, Local Authority, Prison & Probation, Business, Online, South Wales Police, CT Policing.

Examples of referrals have been for Extreme Right Wing, Islamic Extremism, Left Wing Extremism, no ideology but other susceptibilities.

There were 6 cases in Channel.

Hate Crime Awareness Week 2024 – Engagement and Awareness Raising

The Community Cohesion Team delivered three awareness sessions to staff in collaboration with Victim Support’s Wales Hate Support Centre, covering the following topics:

- Online Hate
- LGBTQIA+ Hate Crime
- ‘It Starts with Us’ Allyship Event – How to be an ally and safely intervene when witnessing a hateful incident or crime.

A total of 40 staff members across the Western Bay region participated in these sessions. Additionally, the team organized a Hate Crime Week drop-in session for councillors and cabinet members in Bridgend, providing an opportunity for communities to express concerns, raise awareness of hate crimes and incidents, and discuss the support services available.

Furthermore, the Cohesion Team launched the Western Bay Community Cohesion Small Grant Fund during Hate Crime Awareness Week 2025.

Objective:

To raise awareness about hate crime and its impact on communities, while equipping staff with knowledge and tools to address online hate, LGBTQIA+ hate crime, and how to safely intervene in hate incidents.

Outcome:

- 40 staff members engaged in awareness sessions, enhancing their understanding of hate crime issues, including online hate and LGBTQIA+ hate crime.
- Increased awareness among councillors and cabinet members, with the Hate Crime Week drop-in session serving as a platform for discussing community concerns and support options.
- Empowered staff and community leaders with the knowledge and skills to effectively intervene in hate incidents and provide support to victims.
- Launch of the Western Bay Community Cohesion Small Grant Fund, aimed at funding initiatives that address community cohesion and support victims of hate crimes.

Unconscious Bias and Cultural Competence Training

The Community Cohesion Team commissioned two training sessions for council staff across the Western Bay region on Unconscious Bias and Cultural Competence, with 60 staff members participating in the sessions.

Cultural Competence: The purpose of this session was to enhance staff members' ability to communicate and interact effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. The training aimed to increase awareness of one's own cultural values and the impact these values may have on making respectful, reasoned decisions and choices. Cultural competence provides a framework for ensuring the needs of all individuals and communities are met in a responsive and respectful manner.

Unconscious Bias: As communities become more diverse, it is crucial for organizations to explore various forms of unconscious bias and their impact on decision-making processes and organizational culture. The session encouraged professionals to reflect on their own biases and understand how they might affect their actions and decisions. Participants were prompted to identify actions that could help address barriers created by unconscious bias and commit to personal steps that would help mitigate its impact.

Objective:

To enhance staff understanding of cultural competence and unconscious bias, fostering more inclusive, respectful, and effective communication and decision-making within the council and the wider community.

Outcome:

- 60 council staff members participated in training, increasing their knowledge and awareness of cultural competence and unconscious bias.
- Improved communication skills, as staff gained the ability to interact more effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds, ensuring respectful and reasoned decisions are made.

- Increased awareness of unconscious bias, with participants reflecting on their own biases and identifying actionable steps to address them in their professional practice.
- Strengthened organizational culture, with staff better equipped to navigate cultural differences and contribute to a more inclusive environment for all community members.

Western Bay Community Cohesion Small Grant Fund 2024

The Community Cohesion Small Grant Fund was launched during Hate Crime Awareness Week 2024 to support initiatives that revolves around activities related to supporting ethnic minority communities and activities that bring together people from diverse communities.

A total of £28,099.95 of WG funding was awarded to various community groups, funding a range of projects that align with the below objectives. Please note that the specific names of organisations/community groups are not disclosed for privacy and safeguarding reasons. A separate document with detailed descriptions of each funded project is available.

Objective:

To support initiatives that promote social integration, tackle community tensions, and foster a sense of belonging through activities that bring together diverse communities, with a focus on ethnic minorities, refugees, and marginalized groups.

To deliver activities that support ethnic minority communities, including Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities, refugees and asylum seekers, and actions to address antisemitism and Islamophobia. These activities aim to address community tensions and build community cohesion.

To organize events and activities that bring together people from diverse communities, fostering a broader sense of community and belonging. Proposals were required to consider how activities support integration, combat loneliness and isolation, identify common ground through shared interests and experiences, and celebrate the culture and heritage of the area.

Funded projects include:

- Social Engagement and Integration for Muslim Women
- Unity Through Food Festival
- Free weekly creative workshops for isolated community members
- Queertawe Festival – LGBTQIA+ events
- Weekly Tea Lounge for Muslim Elders
- Creative sessions for families supporting children and young people with additional learning needs
- Culture Connect: Building Unity Through Shared Heritage and Mental Wellbeing

- Empowering Women, Building Community: Over-50s Club for Ethnic Minority Women
- City of Sanctuary “Home from Home” Exhibition
- Integration activities for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children
- Activities and volunteer training for Chinese New Year events
- Workshops for artists from underrepresented and ethnic minority communities
- LGBTQIA+ History Month event
- Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic community group sport and integration activities
- LGBTQIA+ Sports Team equipment and training support
- Fitness Group – delivery of accessible outdoor activities for isolated community members across the region

Outcome:

- £28,099.95 awarded to fund 14 projects, directly benefiting ethnic minority communities, refugees, asylum seekers, and other marginalized groups.
- Increased community cohesion, with activities fostering integration, shared experiences, and cultural celebration across diverse communities.
- Positive impact on isolation, as many projects focused on combating loneliness and creating opportunities for social engagement.
- Strengthened support networks for vulnerable groups such as Muslim women, LGBTQIA+ communities, and individuals with additional learning needs.
- Enhanced cultural awareness and celebration of heritage through events like the Unity Through Food Festival, Chinese New Year events, and the “Home from Home” exhibition.

Flip the Streets Project

- **Inspire Training Centre**

The Community Cohesion Team collaborated with Swansea University to deliver workshops to young people aged 16-21 at the Inspire Training Centre on the topics of Misogyny and Masculinity.

During the workshops, the young people shared their personal experiences of sexism and discussed their views on how masculinity and misogyny are defined, including how these narratives can be transformed to create more equal and safe environments for all students, regardless of sex or gender.

The participants also contributed ideas for an art mural that represents the change they wish to see, challenges stereotypes, and reflects the desired environment and ethos of the Centre. They collaborated closely with a local artist to bring their ideas and conversations to life, culminating in the creation of the mural, which is now displayed at the Centre.

Objective:

To engage young people in discussions on misogyny, masculinity, and gender equality, providing a platform for them to express their ideas and contribute to a collaborative art project that reflects their vision for a more inclusive and respectful environment.

Outcome:

- Active participation of young people, with 16-21-year-olds engaging in discussions about sexism, masculinity, and misogyny.
- Co-creation of an art mural, with young people contributing their ideas and collaborating with a local artist to bring their vision for change to life.
- Increased awareness of gender equality issues, as young people explored how to challenge stereotypes and create more inclusive environments.
- Lasting impact with the art mural displayed at the Inspire Training Centre, serving as a visible representation of the change young people want to see in their community.

Art Mural:



- **Clase Community and Primary School Community Day with Flip the Streets**
Reports of an increase in hateful incidents within the wider community of Clase were submitted to the council by the local primary school. As these issues were affecting both the school environment and the wider community, a wraparound approach was required. Sessions were delivered to pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 focusing on topics such as positive relationships, respect, and healthy communication both within the school and the broader community.

These sessions were delivered in close collaboration with partner agencies specializing in community safety, cohesion, and online safety.

Aligned with the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child), a rights-respecting mascot session was held to help pupils understand that all children in Wales have the same rights and the right to be heard and respected.

The success of the sessions, driven by the exceptional engagement of both pupils and school staff, led to an exciting opportunity with Flip the Streets and Fresh Creative to create a lasting memory that highlights Clase Primary School as a rights-respecting school with a positive community atmosphere.

The pupils were given the opportunity to develop and design a graffiti art piece to represent what matters most to their community. This artwork was unveiled at a community day, where pupils participated in creating their design with a local artist. The project was a full collaboration between partners, including the CMET team, who delivered the core sessions, Community Safety, Community Cohesion, Evolve, South Wales Police, and the Partnerships and Involvement Team.

Objective:

To address rising tensions and hateful incidents in the community of Clase by promoting positive relationships, respect, and healthy communication among pupils, while fostering a sense of rights and community belonging.

Outcome:

- Engagement of pupils, with Year 3 to Year 6 participating in sessions focused on positive relationships, respect, and communication.
- Collaboration between partners, including the CMET team, South Wales Police, and other local agencies, resulting in a comprehensive wraparound approach to addressing community issues.
- Increased awareness of children's rights through the rights-respecting mascot session and the incorporation of the UNCRC principles.
- Creation of a lasting community legacy, with pupils designing a graffiti art piece that represents their community, which was celebrated at the community day.
- Strengthened community ties, with pupils, local artists, and partner agencies working together to build a positive community image.

Pictures/Images:



Interfaith Week

The Community Cohesion Team collaborated with the Interfaith Network and Swansea University to launch a creative competition across the region, centered on the theme of 'Home.' Additionally, the team organized a 'Food on Foot' evening, where 20 members of the faith and student community visited various places of worship to learn about different faiths and experience food that is culturally significant to each faith community.

Objective:

To foster interfaith dialogue and cultural understanding through creative expression and experiential learning, while promoting inclusivity within the community.

Outcome:

- Increased engagement within the community, with 20 participants attending the 'Food on Foot' evening, gaining insights into different faiths and cultural traditions.
- Enhanced cultural awareness, as participants learned about the significance of food and religious practices from diverse communities.

- Promoted creative expression, with the 'Home' themed competition offering participants an opportunity to reflect on and share their perspectives on belonging and community.
- Strengthened interfaith collaboration, with ongoing partnerships between the Community Cohesion Team, the Interfaith Network, and Swansea University.

Ramadan and Eid 2024

The Community Cohesion Team disseminated a series of social media posts to raise awareness about the significance of Ramadan and Eid. These posts provided detailed information on the cultural and religious importance of the holiday and offered guidance on how non-Muslim community members could participate in the celebrations.

Additionally, the team supported the 'Eid in the Park 2024' event by collaborating with local faith representatives and providing cohesion funding to enhance community engagement and inclusivity.

Objective:

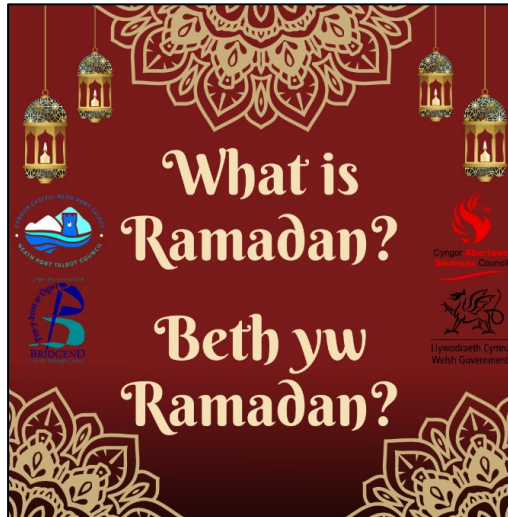
To promote awareness and understanding of Ramadan and Eid among the wider community, fostering inclusivity and strengthening interfaith relations through educational outreach and community support initiatives.

Outcome:

- Increased engagement with social media posts, with a measurable rise in reach, shares, and interactions compared to previous awareness campaigns.
- Enhanced participation in Eid in the Park 2024, with a noticeable increase in attendance from both Muslim and non-Muslim community members.
- Strengthened interfaith relations, demonstrated by new collaborations with local faith groups and community organizations.
- Improved cultural awareness, assessed through post-event feedback, with most respondents indicating a better understanding of Ramadan and Eid.



Poster:



Refugee Week 2024

The Community Cohesion Team, in collaboration with Displaced People in Action, delivered a training and awareness-raising session for 50 council staff and regional partners as part of Refugee Week 2024. The session aimed to enhance understanding of key topics related to refugees and asylum seekers, including:

- The correct terminology and distinctions between refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants.
- Addressing misinformation and gaining a clearer understanding of the realities of the refugee and asylum process.
- Engaging in discussions with practitioners working in immigration.
- Hearing a first-hand account of the refugee experience from a local community member.

Objective:

To equip council staff and regional partners with accurate knowledge about refugees and asylum seekers, challenge misinformation, and foster empathy through direct engagement with practitioners and lived experiences.

Outcome:

- 50 participants trained, increasing awareness among council staff and regional partners.
- Enhanced understanding, as indicated by participant feedback on their improved knowledge of refugee and asylum-related terminology and processes.
- Strengthened collaboration, with increased engagement between local authorities, refugee support organizations, and community groups.
- Greater awareness impact, reflected in participants expressing interest in further training, discussions, or policy considerations related to refugee support.

Tension Monitoring and Information Sharing

The Community Cohesion Team continuously monitors community tensions through the assessment of social media platforms, news channels, and discussions with partners and community groups.

To enhance their understanding and maintain up-to-date skills, team members participate in training sessions on the safe collection and dissemination of information. Additionally, to facilitate effective information sharing, the team organizes such training events for staff members.

The team also engages in regular collaboration, including attendance at the Weekly Cohesion Meeting with key partners such as Swansea and NPT Police.

A monthly tension monitoring report is produced by the team and submitted to the Welsh Government. Furthermore, the team provides support to local and regional boards, including the Community Safety Partnership Board, CONTEST, and the Regional PREVENT Board.

At a national level, the Community Cohesion Team maintains an extensive network, actively participating in the Special Interest Group within the Counter Extremism Network and national roundtables on Anti-Asylum Activity. This engagement has been invaluable in sharing best practices and gaining insights from local authorities that have encountered heightened community tensions.

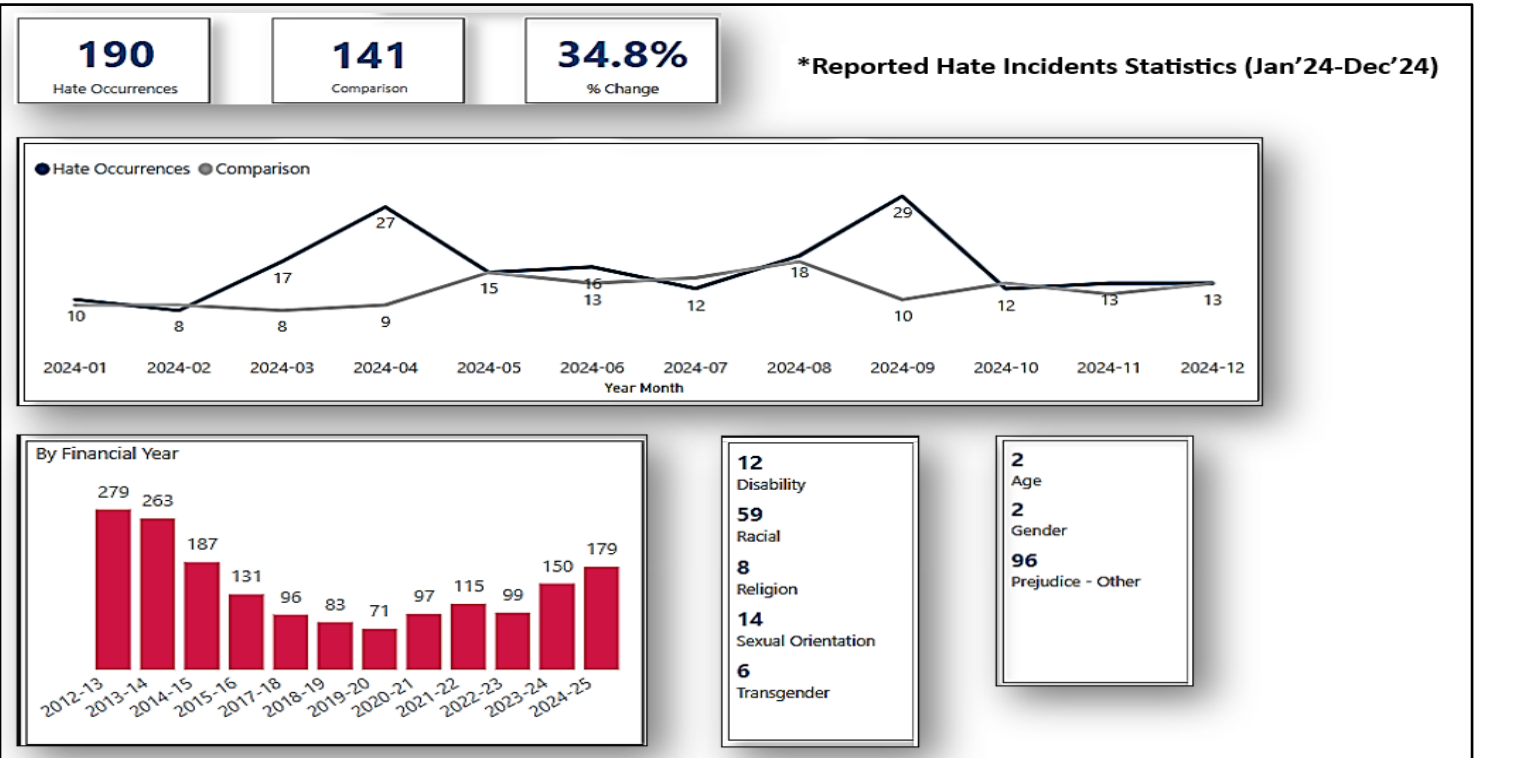
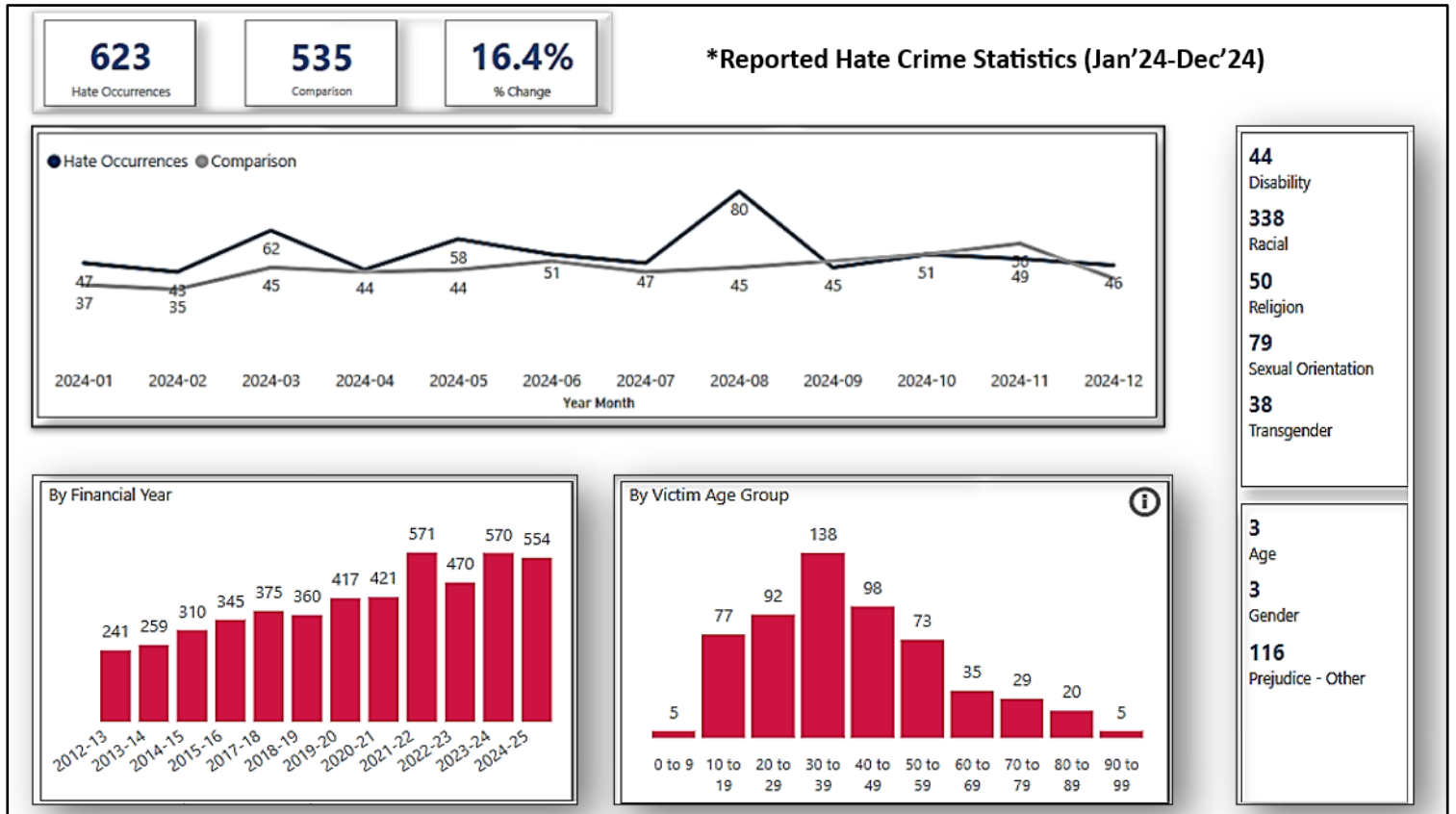
Objective:

To proactively monitor and assess community tensions, enhance staff capability in information gathering and sharing, and strengthen collaboration with local, regional, and national stakeholders to promote community cohesion and safety.

Outcome:

- Improved monitoring and assessment of community tensions through systematic evaluation of social media, news sources, and community discussions.
- Enhanced staff knowledge and expertise through continuous training on data collection and dissemination.
- Strengthened multi-agency collaboration, including regular participation in the Weekly Cohesion Meeting with Swansea and NPT Police.
- Consistent reporting, with a monthly tension monitoring report submitted to the Welsh Government to inform policy and decision-making.
- Active contribution to local and regional boards, supporting discussions on community safety, counter-extremism, and social cohesion initiatives.
- Expanded national engagement, facilitating the exchange of best practices and knowledge through participation in the Counter Extremism Network and national roundtables on Anti-Asylum Activity.

Statistics: The following data is from SWP for the period of January 2024 to December 2024.



PRIORITY 3:

Challenging Substance Use Priority Lead: Western Bay Area Planning Board



Outcomes we want to achieve

- Reducing the number of drug related deaths in Swansea (and Neath Port Talbot).
- Reducing the harms associated with substance use
- Embedding Service User involvement into delivery and planning of services.
- Substance use issues are identified and challenged early through strong partnership working and information sharing.
- Everyone across the region affected by substance use issue can access timely, evidence based, safe and effective quality service

The 2023/24 financial year presented both significant achievements and ongoing challenges for the Western Bay Area Planning Board (APB) in addressing substance use across our communities. Key initiatives and new developments that focussed on improving access, treatment, and community support that have yielded positive outcomes, although we acknowledge critical issues remain.

The APB successfully expanded access to treatment services, resulting in increased engagement and support for individuals. Collaborative efforts across the APB partnership were key in driving forward improvements. The year also highlighted persistent challenges, including financial constraints that further complicated efforts to implement comprehensive solutions.

In conclusion, while progress has been made in several areas, the APB recognises the need to address the rising fatal overdose rates and enhance the effectiveness of its substance use initiatives. Continued collaboration and innovation will be essential in overcoming these challenges and improving outcomes for people and the wider community.

More detail can be found by clicking on the link below which will take you to the Western Bay Area Planning Board Annual Report 23/24

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGRGE029Ck/W-WBAIvxSddX9IMjIT7PEA/view?utm_content=DAGRGE029Ck&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor

PRIORITY 4:

Reducing reoffending and tackling the drivers of crime

Priority Lead: Probation



Outcomes we want to achieve

- Increase in number of CSTR's for appropriate individuals in Swansea
- Reduction of reoffending rates across Fixed, Flex and Free IOM Cohorts within Swansea
- Successful disruption and enforcement of SOC nominals
- Visible drug and alcohol use and dealing reduced • Reduction in the reoffending rate for adults and juveniles.
- Reduce reoffending behaviour through Integrated Offender Management
- Fewer first-time entrants into the criminal justice system

A previous study by Public Health Wales in partnership with HMPPS which undertook a health needs assessment (HNA) for people on probation in the Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot area concluded that people on probation have poorer health than the general population, lower use of health services and higher rates of emergency care (35% visiting A&E in the previous year). The prevalence of mental health disorders was found to be 4.9 times higher than the general population, with 38% of respondents wanting more mental health support.

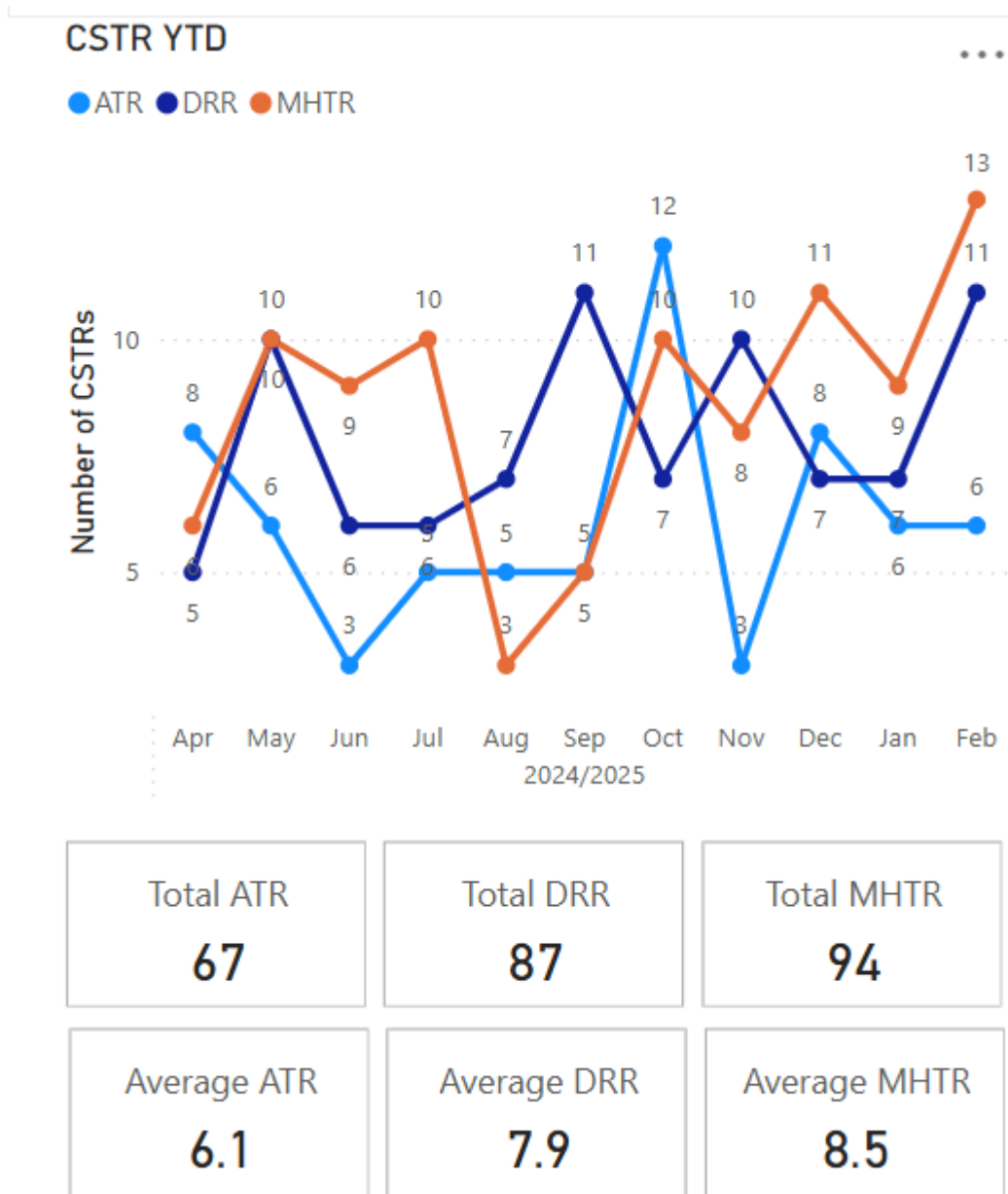
The Community Sentence Treatment Requirements (CSTR) programme supports our key goals in reducing reoffending rates and addressing the poor health outcomes experienced by this group. Further supporting our shared commitment to increase the usage of CSTRs. The CSTR programme ensures swift access to high quality treatment that is tailored to support rehabilitation by addressing the underlying causes of the offending behaviour. For people to receive treatment, and support to ensure those convicted on an offence(s) with a mental health issue/vulnerability including co-occurring substance misuse needs have access to structured treatment and support as an alternative to a short custodial sentence.

The Mental Health Treatment Requirement (MHTR) is one of the three Community Sentence Treatment Requirements (CSTRs) available to the court alongside, Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) and Alcohol Treatment Requirement (ATR).

For people who experience multiple disadvantages with complex and entrenched needs, combined treatment requirements (MHTR/DRR or MHTR/ATR) offer structured support to address the interlinking issues. The Probation complex treatment team drives increased joint working, cross location between Probation and partnership agencies such as alcohol, substance misuse and mental health treatment. This approach ensures more cohesion in terms of appointments being completed jointly in probation and at partner agencies buildings. We also hold bi-monthly meetings with specific focus around quality such as reviewing the current model, court reports etc.

This has led to greater information sharing, joint working towards aims of both services, but also a deeper understanding of both organisations. Which in turn leads to better outcomes and service for the client base.

The data below outlines the delivery of CSTRs year to date 24/25 which reflects an increased usage which is positive:



Integrated Offender Management

The IOM steering group continues to meet, bringing together key IOM partners to continue to drive effective practice. In Swansea we have introduced strategies to engage nominals to support compliance and reduce offending such as a compliance panel. This brings together partners who can support the individual to ensure a collective approach in an attempt to avoid a revolving door return to custody. Targeted work has been undertaken this reporting period in response to the criminogenic needs

outlined below, for example a tailored approach in engaging people on probation subject to IOM to ensure that service user voice informs service delivery, thorough analysis of data provided by IOM nominals as part of the exit survey undertaken as well as a pilot in conjunction with HMP Swansea, focussing on enhanced reach in to custody, given the significant number of nominals currently in custody.

Swansea, Neath & Port Talbot currently have 110 nominals sat within IOM.

Swansea: Have 90 nominals which accounts for 82% of the total cohort.

Fixed: 43 Nominals

Flex: 22 Nominals

Free: 25 Nominals

Order Status:

The distribution of these cases in terms of type of sentence is that 3 cases are subject to a Community Order, 36 are in the community on licence following a custodial sentence and 51 are currently in custody.

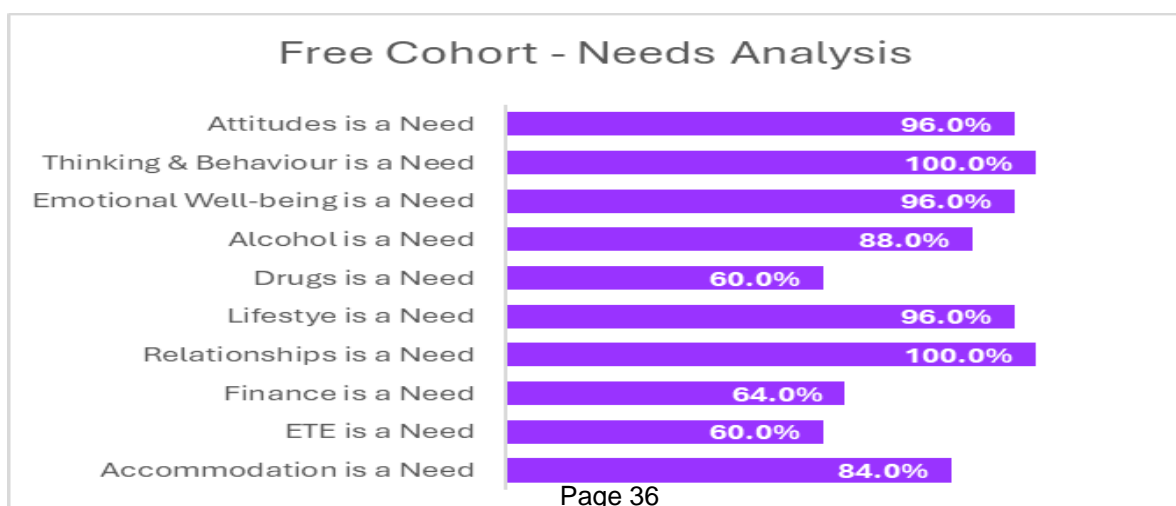
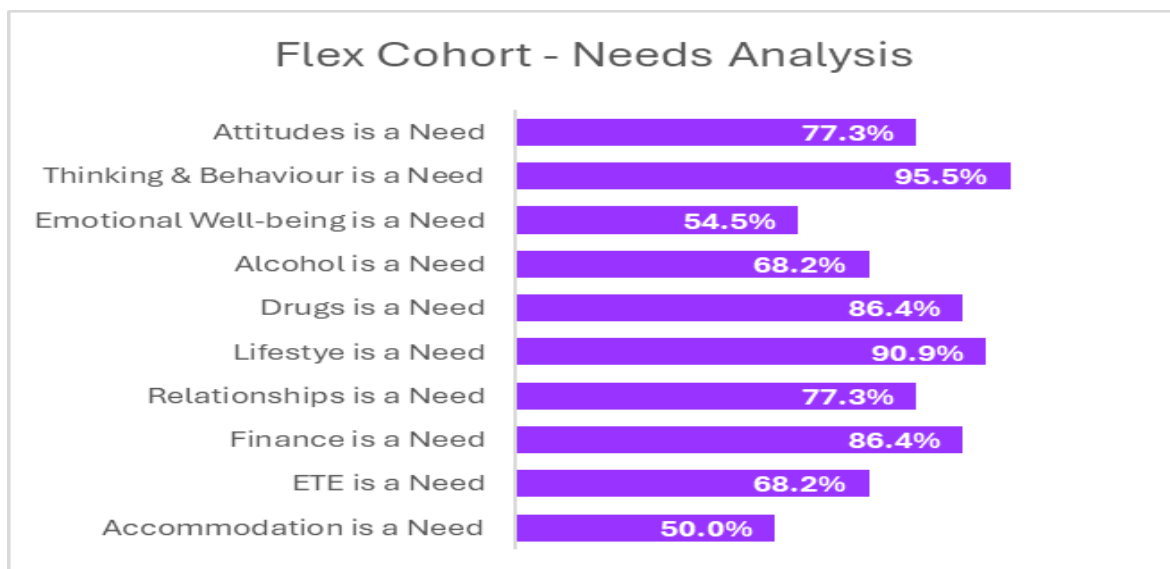
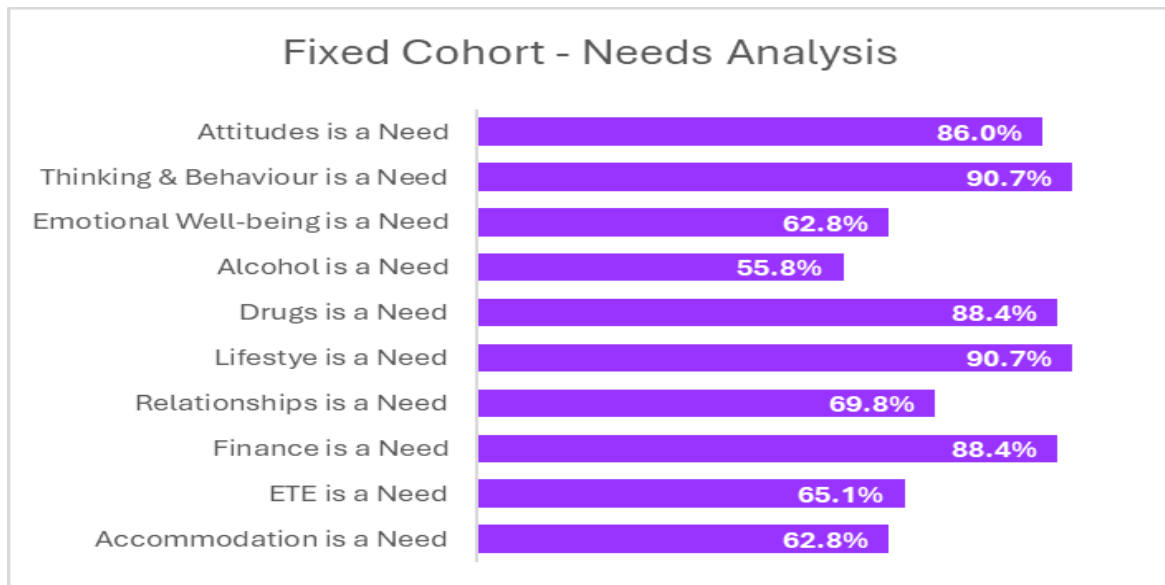
Age – There are 7 (8%) Young adult nominals aged 18 – 25. The 39 – 45 age group holds the largest volume of nominals with a count of 32 (36%)

Ethnicity – 2 (2%) nominals are from a Black, Asian or Minority ethnic heritage. 1 nominal is in the Flex cohort (Drug Possession & Supply) and the other in the Free cohort (Violence).

Crime Patterns:

Fixed Cohort	Flex Cohort	Free Cohort
1. Robbery (34.88%) 2. Burglary Domestic (30.23%) 3. Burglary (Other) (9.30%) 4. Violence & Public Order (4.65%)	1. Robbery (36.36%) 2. Burglary (Domestic) (31.82%) 3. Drug Possession / Supply (9.09%) 4. Drug import / export / production (9.09%)	1. Violence (40%) 2. Sexual offences (against a child) (24%) 3. Robbery (16%) 4. Public Order (12%)

Needs Analysis by Cohort:



A recent survey of People on Probation subject to IOM resulted in the following comments being made:

"I have been supported to go into rehab and have had full support."

"It made me think about my behaviour and actions more clearly. I started to slow down and think first as I was aware I had more people keeping an eye on me, as in in police and probation."

"It has helped me a lot. I don't think I would be out of jail without the support I have had. The kids can see I am trying and how much I have changed. Home visits have been a good as they have been a deterrent from me letting people come to my flat to use the place as somewhere to go to take drugs and other negative things."

In relation to **Serious Organised Crime**, from a Probation perspective, we have seen an increase in the referrals to the Multi Agency Case Conference (MACC) meetings. The meetings provide an opportunity to share information in relation to change of address/new mobile numbers and new relationships has been shared, thus feeding into any ongoing police intelligence.

In terms of individuals sentenced to lengthy custodial sentences for offences of Possession with Intent to Supply (PWITS), Probation liaises closely with partners via the Joint Intelligence Project (JIP) at the stage when individuals are considered for release from prison on temporary licence (ROTL). On a number of occasions, addresses being brought forward have been unsuitable due to associates with the drug culture. The Joint Intelligence Project also supports with sharing intelligence of ongoing county lines concerns which can result in the transfer of cases between areas being stopped due to risk concerns.

PRIORITY 5:

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

Priority Lead: Swansea Council



Outcomes we want to achieve

- Ensure the voice of the service user is heard and listened to.
- To stop 'victim blaming'.
- Prevent and reduce VAWDASV.
- Increase in referrals to DV specialist agencies and Police and Health.
- All victims to have equal access to appropriate services
- Negative attitudes are challenged and communities are educated and better informed of the issues around VAWDASV.
- There is a multiagency approach to ending VAWDASV.
- VAWDASV is 'everyone's business'.
- Victims and perpetrators are offered support at the earliest possible time and to prevent cases reaching a point of crisis.
- There is a regional and national collaborative approach to VAWDASV.
- Perpetrators are held accountable.
- Victims are fully informed and supported through the Civil and Criminal justice system.
- Professionals are more informed and confident in reporting incidents of abuse.
- A decrease in the fear of this type of criminality.
- A positive increase in the perception of Swansea as a safe space

Language Toolkit: In collaboration with Swansea Women's Aid Co-production Centre, we developed a Language Toolkit to address victim-blaming language. This toolkit was designed with input from victims-survivors and has been shared with partners for integration into policies and training frameworks. It directly empowers survivors by ensuring their voices are prioritised in all discussions. This ensures that the voice of service users is heard, respected, and reflected in how services and support are provided. In addition, our Contextual Safeguarding Team worked with children and young people to develop language flash cards. These offers suggestions for alternative language which replaces unhelpful and labelling language that professional continue to use, which reinforces stereo types and feeds into unconscious biases.

Implementation: The toolkit challenges the negative language that often blames victims for the abuse they experience. By working closely with service providers and local partners, we have embedded this into the framework of training and policies. This directly combats victim-blaming by promoting language and attitudes that hold perpetrators accountable and provide support to survivors without judgment.

Regional Campaign on Misogynistic Behaviours in Young People: A regional campaign was launched to address the rise in misogynistic attitudes and behaviours in young males within Swansea schools. This was designed by children and young people from Media Academy and focused on increasing awareness among young people of the importance of healthy relationships and respectful behaviour. These educational campaigns and the social media campaign with Media Academy are key to challenging harmful societal attitudes. This directly challenges negative attitudes and fosters a community-wide understanding of VAWDASV, encouraging collective responsibility in addressing these issues.

Public Awareness Campaigns: In addition to launching our CYP Campaign on White Ribbon Day staff from the IDVA service and the Health Board attended Swansea Hospital and Morriston Hospital. They raised awareness by hosting information stalls that provided valuable resources, advice, and safety guidance to both staff and members of the public. These events were well-attended, demonstrating strong community engagement. Furthermore, to mark White Ribbon Day, the Guildhall was illuminated in purple as a visible sign of support for the campaign. Continuing awareness campaigns to educate the community on VAWDASV, emphasising prevention and early intervention. These initiatives aim to reduce future instances of abuse by addressing root causes and increasing awareness early on.

Regional Communication and Engagements Group: Through this group we have promoted Local and National Campaigns supporting the Welsh Government 'Sound' Campaign which encourages men aged 18-34 in Wales to learn about gender-based violence.

Increase in Referrals: Over the last year we have seen a substantial increase to all DA partner agencies. This is evidenced through our new data set which we have developed to ensure that we are capturing local need, identifying trends and gaps in service. This is presented every 6 months at the VAWDASV Leadership Group for discussion and further analyses. In Q1 alone, over 500 referrals were made to the IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Adviser) service. This increase underscores the importance of early intervention, but it also highlights the growing demand for services.

Housing Support Grant (HSG) Services Review: We are in the initial stages of the review for VAWDASV housing and support services. Our primary aim is for victims have access to the right services at the right time ensuring the voice of the victim /survivor is heard and listened to and that the options available meet current and future needs.

Development of a HBA forum: We recognised that victims from diverse communities are often marginalised and have additional barriers to accessing services. Consequently, we have developed a Honour Based Abuse (HBA) and Harmful Cultural Practices forum to map trends, barriers, prevalence, share good practice and opportunities to support agencies to ensure they can provide support to all victims of VAWDASV.

Commissioning: We have commissioned CALAN DVS to deliver the Myriad programme across the region, ensuring that victims/survivors of domestic abuse from the LGBTQ+ Community have access to a specialist support service. In addition, we commissioned a post to support Swansea Women's Aid SWAN project who support those of the most vulnerable harder to reach victims/ survivors with our community.

Regional MARAC Steering Group: The merging of local MARAC Steering Groups into a Regional Group with oversight of the MARAC ensures a cohesive, multi-agency approach to VAWDASV, allowing better tracking of cases, themes, and data. The introduction of the MANTA case management system has improved engagement and accountability within MARAC arena ensuring that those that are at serious risk of harm of death have a collective, multiagency response to reduce risks and offered the right support at the right time. This ensures a collective and coordinated response to VAWDASV, ensuring that all sectors work together towards common goals.

MARAC Development Day: We commissioned a Regional MARAC Development Day to ensure that we continue to have buy in from all VAWDASV Partners. Ensuring all MARAC Reps are trained, knowledgeable and committed to the process and for strategic leads to have a renewed commitment to the MARAC process and accountability for engagement and delivery. This was a great success with a high number of VAWDASV partners attending and reaffirming their commitment to a multiagency approach to ending VAWDASV.

Workplace Sexual Harassment Conference: We attended the Welsh Government Workplace Sexual Harassment Conference aimed at public sector leaders helped raise awareness and provided tools for creating safe working environments, promoting the message that VAWDASV is a societal issue that affects everyone. By engaging employers and public sector leaders, we are spreading the message that VAWDASV is not isolated to certain spaces but affects all sectors of society.

SDS40 Legislation Response: Coordination with HMPPS and other partners to manage the early release of offenders and safeguard victims shows regional cooperation. By working regionally and nationally, we are aligning local efforts with broader VAWDASV strategies to ensure a coordinated, holistic approach.

Welsh Government Blueprint: The WG Blueprint is a new shared governance structure reflecting the joint ownership of this shared priority, tackling VAWDASV. We are actively engaging with the work stream disseminating information, gathering and feeding back material and data ensuring that we have a regional and national lens on VAWDASV.

International exposure: Our practice Lead from the Equilibrium service presented at a conference in San Francisco promoting the work of our bespoke Respect accredited service. The programme is designed to hold those that displaying harmful behaviours

to account whilst offering opportunities for behaviour change. This provided opportunities for collaborative working on an international level.

Early Interventions: Continued provision of support services for victims/survivors and the Swan Project's outreach services for sexually exploited women in Swansea is a proactive attempt to address issues before they escalate into crises. Early interventions help prevent cases from escalating, ensuring support is given before abuse reaches critical points.

Equilibrium: We offer opportunities for those displaying negative behaviours to take accountability and to make positive changes through the Equilibrium service.

DA HUB: We have strengthened our DA Hub offering a whole family approach to domestic abuse ensuring that victims/survivors are offered the right support at the earliest opportunities.

IDVA: We've expanded the provision of IDVA service to victim /survivors who are high risk of harm or death now including a child IDVA, and an additional DRIVE IDVA .This vital support not only gives victim /survivor a voice but provide an opportunity to get advice and support at the earliest opportunity to reduce the risks significantly and prevent re-victimisation.

DVDS: We have promoted the Clare's Law disclosure scheme having leaflets printed and distributing them across services. This provides an opportunity for victims/survivors to apply for information or be informed by Police about your current or ex-partner because they worried, they may have a history of abuse and are a risk them preventing harm/abuse. We have seen an over 100% increase in Q1-Q2 reporting period of requests for Clare's Law.

Workplace Sexual Harassment Legal Framework: The legal guidance provided at the Workplace Sexual Harassment Conference ensured that employers understand their duties to hold perpetrators accountable through internal governance framework Holding perpetrators accountable is fundamental to reducing VAWDASV and ensuring justice for victims.

DRIVE: we have continued to work closely with Drive Case managers and prison ensuring through our IDVA provision that victims are safe and supported and perpetrators are held to account. The prison pilot has developed and continued to offer behaviour change work and accountability for those that commit domestic abuse whilst ensuring the safety of the victim.

Equilibrium: this service has continued to offer those that use harmful behaviour opportunities to change whilst holding accountability and reducing the risks of harm.

Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC): We have been able to continue to provide a specialist Court IDVA at the SDVC to ensure that the victims voice is heard and that

perpetrators are held to account. Consequently, ensuring that victims have justice and are protected from further abuse and harm.

Specialist Domestic Violence Court IDVA: We have been able to continue to provide a specialist Court IDVA at the SDVC to ensure that the victims voice is heard and is supported through the Criminal Justice System with our team of IDVA's.

Remote Evidence Site: We have developed and promoted the Remote Evidence Site which was introduced to support victims/ survivors to give evidence away from Magistrates and Crown Courts. This special measure can be reducing the barriers to providing evidence and going to Court. Our Team of IDVA's support victim's survivors through Civil and Criminal Justice system, ensuring that they are fully aware of the process, their rights and to advocate for them. This ensures that victims are not only informed but also receive timely, appropriate support through the complex systems of law and justice.

Training: The newly adapted DASH Risk Assessment training helps social workers, support staff to recognise domestic abuse risks and increases their confidence in reporting incidents and making appropriate referrals. This has empowered professionals to better identify domestic abuse, improve referral processes, and support victims through the justice system.

National Training Framework: We continue to promote and ensure that all staff in Swansea council complete the VAWDASV mandatory training level 1 and offer Ask & Act 2 & 3 to those who are front facing with service users. We will be delivering in the last quarter an Ask and Act Development Day for trainers to ensure that they are aware of all services, fully confident in delivering the training aware of all the update to date legalisation upskilling the trainers.

Bystander Training: We have promoted the Welsh Government funded bystander training across the council which provides professionals the skills and confidence to have conversations with friends and colleagues on recognising abuse and how to intervene and report.

Public Awareness Campaigns and Community Engagement: Through the regional campaigns and school outreach programs, we aim to normalise conversations about VAWDASV, challenge stigmas, and reduce fear within the community. As awareness grows, we aim to reduce fear and create an environment where individuals feel supported in coming forward.

Communications and engagement: Through our Regional Communications and Engagement forum we are developing ways to share positive news and good practice to counterbalance the constant rhetoric from social media news etc. This is an ongoing piece of work which we hope will provide insight to the excellence work that services in this area are providing given the current climate and increase in referrals across all services.

PRIORITY 6:



Safeguarding those at risk of violence & exploitation

Priority Lead: South Wales Police

Outcomes we want to achieve

- Strategic Needs Assessment to be completed for the South Wales Police force area relating to the Serious Violence Duty.
- Serious Violence Problem Profile completed for Swansea.
- Development of a Serious Violence action plan to address issues and provide partnership solutions to tackling the issues.
- Development of prevention and intervention initiatives.
- A holistic safeguarding approach offered to all young people who experience significant Extra Familial harm.
- Operational and Strategic approach to disrupting those that exploit young people.
- A multi-agency approach to recognising and preventing early indicators of youth violence and child exploitation.
- Effective multi agency information sharing that supports the disruption of youth violence and exploitation.
- Identification and disruption of Exploitation by organised crime groups (OCG).
- Development of safety within the places and spaces young people spend time

A SWP Strategic Needs Assessment and Problem profile has been completed via the Violence Prevention Unit, and next steps will involve the development of a local problem profile and action plan with support from the Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) and key Partners. The SNPT Serious Violence Prevention Board will undertake this action alongside the VPU. Links are developed with the VPU to establish a problem profile specific for Swansea. This work will be undertaken by a newly formed Serious Violence Prevention Board covering Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

A Serious Violence Prevention Board has been established in SNPT, which will in turn will develop a serious violence action plan with partners to address the local problem profile and develop solutions to tackling them.

The Contextual, Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Panel (CMET) is a multiagency group consisting of partners such as South Wales Police, Child & Family Services, Community Safety, Youth Justice Service, and third-sector organisations. The CMET panel work within a contextual safeguarding framework to recognise and respond to the individual needs of young people that have been identified by partners.

CMET team have piloted a project which provides 2 community teams who consider extra familial harm including violence and how we tackle this with a community based approach. These teams are multi agency, which focus on prevention, early

intervention and reducing the impact of those that are or have experienced harm. The team works closely with the schools in the area to provide support to reduce incidents of violence.

Swansea Youth Justice Service have embedded the Turnaround project into the community, to provide prevention and bail support. The offer has expanded to now include the Turnaround project, as well as the traditional Prevention intervention. As part of this the offer has also extended to support more young people when they are on police bail or have been released under investigation.

Swansea Bay University Health Board has a Violence Prevention Team based in Morriston Emergency Department; the service began in April 2022 funded by the Youth Endowment Fund via the PCC. The Team consists of 2 full time Violence Prevention Nurses, working from 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday. The aim of the service is to break the cycle of crime in relation to injuries from violence. The Nurses see patients who have attended the Department, with injury through violence including from the use of weapons. The intended focus is the age group 10 -25 years, however children as young as 8 years old have been seen and supported as well as adults over 25 years of age. Referrals are received by different means and if individuals are not seen by the Violence Prevention Nurses in the Department, they are contacted within 72hours of attending.

Partners work together with the Violence Prevention Unit on several of their funded prevention and intervention projects which are detailed below –

- Teachable Moments (South Wales Police and Media Academy Cymru (MAC)) - Teachable Moments aims to intervene and prevent young people from becoming further involved in violence by treating the point a young person comes into custody as a 'teachable moment'. The model employs caseworkers from Media Academy Cymru (MAC) to deliver motivational interviews, involving a needs assessment and exploration of life goals.
- St Giles Trust (St Giles Trust) - St Giles offers a targeted secondary intervention to support young people who are at risk of or involved in violence and exploitation e.g., county lines, criminal activity, child sexual exploitation, trafficking, and exploitation. The service helps young people overcome barriers to allow them to get the support they need to move forward with their lives.
- Fearless (Crimestoppers) - Fearless delivers educational workshops to empower children and young people to make positive, informed decisions about reporting crime. The primary aim of the service is to educate young people about crime issues that may affect them and encourage them to report crimes they have witnessed.
- Braver Choices (Media Academy Cymru (MAC)) - Braver Choices works with children and young people who engage in risky behaviours, such as carrying weapons. They deliver evidence-based programmes around weapons, violence, and sexual exploitation to enable children and young people to make informed decisions, develop coping strategies, and understand the implications of their actions.

- NHS Violence Prevention Team (VPT) (NHS and Media Academy Cymru (MAC)) - The VPT work to identify and respond to patients with violence-related injuries. The team engage with these patients whilst they are in hospital and deliver advice, support, and guidance to encourage young people away from lifestyles encased in violence by encouraging engagement with services.
- Serious violence between Jan 2024 and December 2024 (Homicide, Personal Robbery, Violence with Injury) has reduced slightly (-6.7%) in comparison with the SPLY (3304 v 3540). 1186 in Neath Port Talbot and 2118 in Swansea respectively.
- SNPT recorded 148 knife crimes between Jan 2024 and December 2024, a - 8.6% decrease on the 162 recorded in the previous year. 108 in Swansea and 40 in NPT respectively.

SWP safeguarding officers engage in discussions and meetings, working closely with the relevant partners in their efforts to protect and prevent further harm (abuse & exploitation) to the children of SNPT. SNPT CSE officers make efforts to speak to the young persons identified at most significant risk and likewise the exploitation distribution team engage in undertaking face to face visits with those individual children at greatest risk of criminal exploitation with a view to gathering further evidence / intelligence to enable disruption to perpetrator activities.

We continue to develop our contextual safeguarding approach to create a safeguarding response to places and spaces where harm may occur. We have developed a training package for local businesses raising the awareness of child exploitation and changing the narrative around the negative language used towards exploited young people. We have a strong multi agency partnership that sit around CMET panel, the panel has around 25-35 professionals that attend on a fortnightly basis.

Children and young people (CYP), who attend Morriston Children's Emergency Unit (CEU), Paediatric wards and the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) in Neath Port Talbot are assessed for Safeguarding concerns during their admission. A system is in place in CEU and MIU where all CYP are asked if they have a Social Worker on admission. Staff are trained to Level 3 Safeguarding as per Intercollegiate documents and Health Board mandatory training, to ensure that staff can recognise the signs of extra familial harm, undertake an assessment and make the appropriate Safeguarding reports/referrals to support the individual and the family.

Organised crime groups are identified, mapped and scored with those posing the greatest threat to exploitation of adults and young persons being prioritised. The intelligence cell is now present in strategy meetings where there is suspected to be an organised crime element to exploitation.

The Violence Prevention Nurses attend multiagency Contextual Safeguarding meetings both in Swansea (CMET) and Neath Port Talbot (Contextual Strategy Meeting). The arrangements for these are different, however cases are discussed at operational level and each agency shares responsibility of actions to be completed to help disrupt exploitation. For Health a 'key note' can be added to the electronic record systems, which in turn highlights concerns to nursing and medical staff, who are then

able ask more pertinent questions as to how the injury has been obtained or contact other services e.g. social services or police, depending on the agreement at the meeting. The Violence Prevention Nurses also feedback to nursing and medical staff, any specific injuries to look out for in relation to exploitation, which have been highlighted at the meeting attended. Any specific issues highlighted at operational level, are then escalated to strategic meetings as and when necessary.

CMET meetings are well established and attended by partners, Neighbourhood Insp's and SWP public protection staff. Individuals are discussed in detail to explore intervention opportunities and diversionary activities. The relationship between local inspectors and CMET Local authority staff is so well established that officers engage CMET staff very early when they identify emerging youth related issues. Examples of this are joint proactive plans to target seasonal issues in the marina and the city centre. Schools police officers also play a vital part in having a relationship with young persons that transcends from the school environment into the community. SPO's are responsible for submitting high numbers of safeguarding referrals.

The Violence Prevention Nurses (VPN) alongside other agencies can refer and report any contextual safeguarding issues to the Local Authority, to highlight the need for intervention in a multiagency approach. The VPNs maintain a database and amongst other information, can highlight specific geographical areas of concern or venues e.g. schools. To date the VPN's have highlighted schools and interventions from other agencies have been put in place.

Dedicated staff with the SWP Community safety department work closely with local authority staff processing ASB referrals. This information is shared with the youth offending team who engage with youths who are repeat offenders. The Youth Offending Service work closely with these individuals, supporting them and finding diversionary activities. The intelligence cell is now present in strategy meetings where there is suspected to be an organised crime element to exploitation. CMET and Triangulation meetings along with strategy scoping meetings have been used to bring all partners together to share information and coordinate responses where exploitation of young persons is suspected. Vulnerability report now gets shared with SS. The ASB Case review process has been refreshed for 2024 to ensure that YOS and the Early Help Team have a place on the review panel to provide a full range of support, intervention and

We continue to have multi agency meetings for individuals, peer networks and places that seek to disrupt any exploitation and we have developed partnerships with policing teams that are in the best positions to support this disruption. We are looking at joint ways of tackling significant issues and seeking support from areas across the UK that have achieved this.

Violence Prevention Nurses (VPNs) attend contextual safeguarding meetings as described above and attend individual young persons strategy & review meetings to support with any extra information that needs to be shared, or if any other recommendations can be suggested. VPNs refer all safeguarding concerns as per Safeguarding Policy to the appropriate Local Authority Peer group mapping and contextual safeguarding lends itself to identification of OCG's, Children services sit on

the SOC board and take part in Extra Ordinary SOC board meetings. Extra Ordinary CMET meetings are arranged where there is an incident that links to SOC.

SWP utilises markers on an individual within our systems to identify that a young person is potentially subject to exploitation. These are often young individuals being drawn into the world of county lines and are not aware of the dangers. They are vulnerable and as such, when they go missing, the marker encourages officers to increase the risk assessment resulting in greater focus on promptly locating them.

Visibility on council estates and high-rise blocks using the resources available including housing CCTV.

Children services sit on the Serious organised crime board, we feed in concerns on a quarterly basis and have feedback from police on OCG threats, we have staff that can identify potential links to OCG and map out peers and associate's safeguard. Our team understand what can be achieved by multi agency partnership to increase safety for those that are exploited.

The local Serious Organised Crime Board has oversight on how Partners respond to the threat of organised crime groups.

SWP utilises markers on an individual within our systems to identify that a young person is potentially subject to exploitation. These are often young individuals being drawn into the world of county lines and are not aware of the dangers. They are vulnerable and as such, when they go missing, the marker encourages officers to increase the risk assessment resulting in greater focus on promptly locating them.

Serious Organised Crime Groups (OCGs)

Swansea Neath Port Talbot have 26 recorded county lines within PND as of today.

34 Lines closed since June 2024

128 have been arrested since June 2024 with 81 being charged

28 NRM's submitted and 34 safeguarded.

The number of unmapped OCGs is difficult to quantify as police may be unaware of their criminal activity or they are operating below the radar - this statement remains true with recent drug seizures from subject with little or no intelligence footprint, and the transient nature of County Lines drugs supply.

Safety plans are developed in areas that are open contextually. There is work in conjunction with community safety team to upskill community members in recognising exploitation. There is also a business pack that is in development helping local businesses to understand safeguarding vulnerable people in the community. Training has begun to be rolled out in the city.

Work around developing Safe Spaces for young people, within the Swansea area has been commenced by CMET staff in the city centre with the aim of raising awareness of child exploitation and increasing guardianship from local business premises. This

has included face to face engagement and information sharing e.g. how to report concerns to Police and Partners.

We continue to work with places and spaces to create safety and to disrupt attendance if safety cannot be achieved. We have a number of examples of creating safe spaces amongst peers and within areas that can be shared.

Young people who attend health departments are in a safe place to disclose any issues related to their safety, if they so wish and are not being watched or intimidated by anyone whilst in the department. If young people are accompanied and staff have concerns, there are options that can be undertaken to determine a safe space to speak individually with the patient and action plans can be put in place, to ensure their safety whilst on Health Board premises. Staff are then able to contact Police or Social Services to ensure that the young person has a safety plan in place when they leave.

CMET Case Study

At the end of the last academic year there was a reported assault upon another pupil in during lunch break in school. This was a violent assault, such that the other pupil was knocked unconscious. In the words of numerous eyewitnesses: the other pupil posed no threat to them; however, they approached the pupil with a group of other pupils, hitting and kicking him numerous times. After this shocking and extremely dangerous attack, a number of the boys were witnessed laughing with each other, "even congratulating each other" for participating in the attack - this despite the other pupil being unconscious by this point and requiring an emergency medical response. A number of the pupils have shown remorse, and all have been sanctioned by the school. Police arrived on the scene and have followed up the incident. Following this the group were referred to CMET and received group intervention.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims were to help the peer group understand the dangers and consequences of youth violence, help the boys develop coping strategies and react differently when faced with adversity. school hoped that the peer group could continue their positive school journey and hope that the boys could process some of the trauma and emotions from past experiences, which led to this incident. The hope is for them to improve their self-esteem and maximise their potential while in education.

Challenges to achieving change:

After working with the peer group, it became apparent that the boys had endured racism in school and that this was sadly part of their everyday lives, this showed that the work being done had to be taken from a different angle and viewpoint.

Due to the boys themselves being victims of prolonged abuse and being involved in "blacks against whites" football matches, it was a matter of time before there was such an incident.

The complexities of this case meant that the peer groups were both victims and aggressors in this incident and that there were many grey areas to work in.

Although the young people were remorseful, they did feel let down that the racial abuse they had faced for so long and had not been acted upon by school.

Outcomes:

- The young people were so inspiring and open in their sessions that we felt we had learnt as much as they did. They did some excellent work with Bright that highlighted the difficulties they go through daily that white people would not even consider. The group put together a presentation around racism and specifically around racism in football as this is something they have all been passionate about.
- The group worked on their anger management, coping strategies and built strong relationships with school and external agencies such as Swansea City Safeguarding Team.
- Feedback from professionals/family/young people: The peer group received amazing feedback from every person or agency they encountered. This has strengthened their relationships with members of staff at school who did not realise the boys had this sort of ability.
- Swansea City Safeguarding team said they were the most polite, informative and inspirational group of young people that they have ever worked with and asked the boys if they would go back and perform their presentation in the Suite used for pre match tactics by the team. They were also offered the opportunity to play a match against some of the academy players in the future.
- Maes Derw Pupil Referral Unit asked if CMET could do some work around racism with some of their primary pupils and when we explained what the peer group had created, they asked if they could tailor it and present to the pupils there, the boys have agreed.

Most importantly, the families have said how proud they are of their children, that they have used adversity as a channel for positive change. They have rarely had positive feedback from their children and only ever get calls and emails when there is negativity so to get such feedback from a positive point of view gives them a great sense of pride.

Glossary of Terms

ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
PSPO	Public Space Protection Order
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
BCRP	Business Crime Reduction Partnership
PSG	Problem Solving Group
YJS	Youth Justice Service
CMET	Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked
SNPT	Swansea Neath Port Talbot
BCU	Basic Command Unit
ENTE	Evening Night Time Economy
MAWWFS	Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service
EDI	Equality Diversity Inclusion
NSU	Neighbourhood Support Unit
CT	Counter Terrorism
IAG	Incident Advisory Group
APB	Area Planning Board
BAME	Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic
ERW	Extreme Right Wing
BRAG	Black, Red, Amber, Green
NPCC	Nation Police Chiefs Council
CTPHQ	Counter Terrorism Police Headquarters
DRDs	Drug Related Deaths
WASPI	Wales Accord on Sharing Personal Information
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
CSTR	Community Sentence Treatment Requirement
HNA	Health Needs Assessment
MHTR	Mental Health Treatment Requirement
DRR	Drug Rehabilitation Requirement
ATR	Alcohol Treatment Requirement
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
MACC	Mult Agency Case Conference
PWITS	Possession with Intent to Supply
JIP	Joint Intelligence Project
ROTL	Release on Temporary License
SPLY	Same Period Last Year
CBO	Community Behaviour Order
PPT	Public Protection Teams
DWP	Department for Work & Pensions
VAWDASV	Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence
HBA	Honor Based Abuse
EFH	Extra Familial Harm
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
RASSO	Rape and Serious Sexual Offences
DaPG	Demand and Performance Group
SOC	Serious Organised Crime
PND	Police National Database
OCG	Organised Crime Groups
VPU	Violence Prevention Unit
VPN	Violence Prevention Nurses



**To/
Jane Whitmore, Swansea Council &
Superintendent Mark Kavanagh,
South Wales Police**

**Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea
Community Safety Partnership
BY EMAIL**

cc: Cllrs. Rob Stewart, Andrea Lewis,
Alyson Pugh & Hayley Gwilliam

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637257

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

SPC/2023-24/16

04 July 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Joint Chairs of the Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership following the meeting of the Committee on 16 April 2024. It is about Crime & Disorder and the performance of the Safer Swansea Partnership. A formal written response is not required however issues raised and recommendations made will be followed up by the Committee.

Dear Jane / Mark,

Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Session – 16 April

As the Council's designated Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee, we are writing to you following our recent session, looking at the performance of the Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership (SSP), with our views, reflecting on information presented, questions, and discussion. This follows on from our previous session in April 2023.

We thank you for attending the meeting and appreciated the written report and various papers reflecting on the performance of the SSP provided by attendees in support of the discussion, which also addressed the issues arising from last year's session. You provided a comprehensive Safer Swansea Annual Partnership Review 2023 Report; a progress report on Learning from the Mayhill Disturbance, and actions in response to the Independent Learning Review recommendations and the findings of the internal Police Review; examples of the Partnership's approach to Co-production; and an evaluation of Operation Viscaria, a response to incidents of anti-social behaviour and crime within the City Centre.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

www.swansea.gov.uk / www.abertawe.gov.uk

Together with contributions from Swansea Council Cabinet Members and Paul Thomas, the Council's Community Integration Partnership Manager, and from South Wales Police, also represented by Chief Superintendent Chris Truscott, Chief Inspector James Ratti, and Jessica Williams, Community Safety Manager, the Committee was able to discuss the partnership working and activities, progress / achievements against priorities and objectives, challenges over the past year, and focus for the future. We appreciate all the work being done. It was another engaging and useful Scrutiny session, helping to ensure understanding, and to drive improvement and development. We noted there have been some changes in personnel in terms of leadership of the SSP but were assured about everybody's commitment to an effective SSP.

The Safer Swansea Partnership Six Priorities:

- Reducing Neighbourhood Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour
- Tackling Hate Crime, Community Tensions & Extremism
- Challenging Substance Use
- Reducing Reoffending & Tackling the Drivers of Crime
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
- Safeguarding those at risk of Violence & Exploitation

Key outcome linked to all priorities: Improve public confidence & trust to feel safe

We noted that the Crime & Disorder Statistics provided, in relation to demand and occurrences / incidents relevant to SSP priorities, compared 2023 performance data against the 2019/20 financial year, rather than 2022. It was explained to the Committee that for more reliable comparison purposes it was deemed appropriate to compare performance data with the year prior to lockdown as data obtained during the period of COVID will have been unusual.

Through questioning we were able to explore several issues at the meeting, including the following:

Reducing Neighbourhood Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry

Our meeting was timely as Cabinet was meeting on 18 April to agree its response to the Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry report after the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel had completed a detailed inquiry. We appreciate your participation in that Inquiry. We are happy to see that Cabinet has agreed almost all of the recommendations made and you reported that the SSP will be taking action on two key areas:

- undertake a feasibility study to identify a space and explore the benefits to co-location of statutory partners (Council Community Safety and South Wales Police in the first instance)
- review of the current membership and purpose of the Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership to ensure we are all clear on the function, the right people are around the table and that the governance arrangements of all the groups that feed into the Community Safety Partnership are fit for purpose, current and relevant.

The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel will be following up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and assessing the impact of its work during the next year.

Learning from the Mayhill Disturbance

The Committee was keen to gain a detailed understanding of the policing response to the public disorder which took place in May 2021 to address areas for improvement and ensure operational learning from the experience, to prevent this sort of disorder happening again. As well as, making sure recommendations from the Independent Learning Review (published in January 2022) have improved partnership arrangements, multi-agency working, and community engagement.

You reported that following the publication of the external independent learning review South Wales Police commissioned Operation Kendall Phase 2, to undertake a detailed review of the issues and identify lessons as well as any successes of the response and management of the incident. The purpose was to identify areas of learning or issues that could be addressed with the intention of implementing recommendations that would inform a response to similar incidents that may occur in the future. The findings of this Stage 2 review have received scrutiny and oversight by the College of Policing (the professional body for policing in England and Wales whose role is to support improvement and drive change across the service). In total, 44 actions were identified (covering aspects including: Training, Resource Management, Equipment, Force Control Room, and Command & Control) to be progressed and we were told that nearly all of these have now been completed.

Assurances were provided regarding the deployment of resources should a similar situation arise in the future. We heard that there have been a number of testing incidents and experiences gained, not least from the disorder in Ely, Cardiff in 2023, which demonstrated the progress, learning and improvement that has been made in the planning for, mobilisation of resources, and response to major and critical incidents. You assured the Committee that whilst South Wales Police were now far better prepared and were satisfied with the procedures in place, they were not complacent and were working with communities to manage tensions.

Crime & Disorder Statistics

The statistics provided showed a significant drop (52%) in the number of burglary offences. The Committee was interested in what was behind this, e.g. whether we are seeing less burglary or are there issues around reporting. You provided us with an overview of the process for dealing with a burglary in progress and burglaries subsequently discovered and reported. We noted that a joint scientific unit had been developed with detectives assigned to both types of incidents, and South Wales Police were ranked third nationally in securing prosecutions, detecting 17.3% of burglary (compared with around 7% in 2020), helped by the forensic capability within the Force. We noted a concerted effort to improve the Police response to dwelling burglaries and a partnership emphasis on crime prevention, with leaflet drops, door-to-door campaigns, with advice to households about home security, etc.

We noted that whilst car crimes had significantly decreased in Swansea (including theft from motor vehicles), a dedicated team had been established to manage an increase in theft of motorcycles, with a range of tactics employed to tackle this.

We noted however, there has been a significant nationwide increase in both shoplifting and on-line crimes.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

The Committee was concerned about implications on local Crime & Disorder from announced cuts to PCSO budgets / workforce, given their work in communities and support to neighbourhood policing. As well as dealing with issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour, we know that PCSOs have played an important role in schools and asked how this will be affected.

You shared our concerns, acknowledging PCSOs (numbering around 130 in the local area) as a valuable resource, and the effect any loss may have on neighbourhood policing. We noted that a detailed analysis of ward data was being undertaken around the impact. You told us that PCSO cuts will be modest and less impactful than originally feared. We heard that it was not envisaged that there would be redundancies however it was acknowledged that any PCSO's leaving their posts would be difficult to replace, but the situation will be under review to ensure good visibility and coverage across Swansea.

The service provided by PCSO's to schools as part of an all Wales Schools Programme was invaluable however funding had now ceased but we were told that staff would continue their roles until the conclusion of the academic year. We noted there were 5 officers across the BCU whose work focused on delivery of the Schools Programme. You told us that the issue was being discussed with other Welsh forces in terms of a way forward, in conjunction with the Partnership, to find some way of continuing this valuable work.

Relationship Between Neighbourhood Policing, 101, and 999

We discussed concerns around the inter-connectivity between the different forms of reporting and Councillors not being kept in the loop on issues affecting their areas / residents. There was also concern that there may be reporting gaps between each service leading to some issues not being investigated. Councillors were encouraged to raise any concerns about the reporting system directly with you so that these can be addressed, particularly any issues that suggest there has been blockages in the flow of information and intelligence between Councillors, the Control Room, and neighbourhood policing. Some Committee Members reflected positively on their current relationship, communication and engagement with local Police officers, which they felt has improved over the last few years.

The Committee heard about the Force Control Room, and that significant improvements have been made with 92% of calls being answered with the average waiting time of 2.5 minutes. By way of comparison we were told that 3 years ago around 30% of calls were being lost due to capacity issues. An online live chat facility was also available. It is good that there are now different ways in which the public can contact the Police. We felt it was important for the Police to have a good social media presence, which can enable faster reporting and can help engagement with young people, and commended efforts. We noted that up to 2500 calls are received each day, which are then risk assessed / prioritised to determine the appropriate response. The process for dealing with calls, and range of responses was outlined. Even if no Police deployment is the outcome, we noted that there would be contact by the Control Room with neighbourhood policing teams to share any information / intelligence gained from the call, as appropriate, for them to review and take any local action, as necessary.

An invitation was extended to the Committee to visit the control room in Bridgend, where both 101 and 999 calls are handled, which we were happy to take up. A small group of Committee Members were pleased to be able to visit on 1 July, and we thank the Police colleagues for showing us how things work in practice and enabling us to better understand processes.

Off Road Bikes

You reported that Operation Greyla was launched in March 2023 to tackle the illegal use of off road motorcycles and e-bikes, which has been an issue of community concern. We noted that this operation will continue throughout 2024 and asked whether this would focus on particular areas. You welcomed Councillor intelligence on the hotspots that will guide the use of resources to help deal with this problem.

As part of the partnership approach, we noted that the SSP have been looking at viable options to provide diversional activities to encourage the use of organised off road vehicle sites across Swansea.

Tackling Hate Crime, Community Tensions & Extremism

There was a discussion about efforts to tackle hate crime and extremism, and develop community cohesion, including:

- activities during Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Islamophobia Awareness Month
- proactive work in relation to tension monitoring, e.g., when far-right / extremist groups rally in the area
- work with the Evolve Youth Service and schools, delivering engagement events to work with young people and families
- Flip the Streets Project (led by Swansea University with the support of Swansea Council) - removing graffiti and stickering with extremist language as part of a 'Positive Messages Project' and placing positive counter-narrative messages in areas of heavy footfall across Swansea, designed to be uplifting and create unity and engagement

The Partnership was commended for its proactive work, which has generated positive feedback. There was, however, some concern at the numbers who have engaged with some of the awareness activities and discussion around the challenge of improving engagement with various communities and groups and growing community cohesion.

Your report stated that between the April 2023 and March 2024 Swansea had 571 hate crimes reported, however the reality was that it was probably larger due to under reporting, and we should focus on providing confidence to people to come forward. We noted that discrimination based on race accounted for over half of the reported hate crimes. We noted that the number of hate crimes reported was an 11% increase, largely due to increased tensions from the Israel / Palestine conflict. We were told that the Partnership was aware of the challenge, and has been working to understand and break down the barriers to reporting, that can include language and trust, and working with communities to improve things. This included a new multi-agency project on St. Helen's Road to look at this and change the mindset. Your report stated that the Community Safety Hate Crime and Cohesion Team is currently in the process of finalising a pilot for a third-party Reporting Scheme to help increase hate crime reporting across Swansea. The aim was to place a trusted person in each corner of the community and train them to assist in the reporting process, e.g. for incidents such as verbal abuse, damage, graffiti, neighbour issues etc. The objective being to provide an approachable and accessible source for members of the community to report hate crimes and/or incidents. **The Committee will be keen to ask about progress on this at the next session.**

We discussed PREVENT and CHANNEL referrals in Swansea, part of the UK Government's Prevent Strategy and multi-agency approach to identify and support individuals at risk of radicalisation and extremism. You reported that there were 17 referrals in Swansea between April 2023 and February 2024. We noted that there was a Partnership focus on children and seeking to increase the number of Prevent Referrals through education and training. We also heard that the Cohesion Team have commissioned Small Steps to deliver a series of training sessions across the region. We noted that Small Steps is at the forefront of using education, engagement, mentoring and grassroots activity to combat the ideology, activity, and influence of the extreme right-wing, and a strong advocate of developing local answers and upskilling local people to be able to challenge the influence and activity of extreme right-wing organisations and their operations. Staff and key partners have benefited from these sessions. Overall, you assured the Committee that the Partnership was well sighted on the issues and had good systems in place to reduce the threat and manage the risk, and get the right interventions in place. It was pleasing to hear that Swansea has been held up as an area of good practice by the Home Office, dealing with what is a very difficult and challenging issue. We need to remain vigilant to radicalisation.

Challenging Substance Use

Substance Misuse remains a big ongoing challenge with resources struggling to cope with the demand, and issues including long waiting lists to get into Drug Rehabilitation Programmes. The Committee heard about ongoing efforts to disrupt the large supply of drugs in the area, and you talked about the Force's Organised Crime Team which you felt was punching above their weight, in view of resources, to disrupt organised County Lines gangs with a high success rate. There was also a good awareness of trends that may affect the city. However, there was some concern amongst the Committee about the severity of the problem in Swansea. You acknowledged the importance of whole system approach, looking at the root causes of drug use, but lamented the sufficiency of current resources and investment. One of the issues is the availability of support at the time people need it, outside of criminal justice system. You acknowledged that when people leave prison it also leads to support going and people can fall off the edge. Nevertheless you told the Committee that the Police would be robust with drug dealers and will support users, who are often themselves the victims, to help them address their drug use, and communities. We heard that substance use issues are identified and challenged early through strong partnership working and information sharing.

We noted that an independent Drugs Commission, set up by the Western Bay Area Planning Board for Substance Misuse, to explore the high number of drug-related deaths in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot is expected to report later this year with recommendations for action and improvement. We noted that the Safer Swansea Partnership have participated in the Western Bay Drug Commission consultation / evidence gathering. **We would be grateful if the report of the Drugs Commission could be shared with the Committee when available.**

Last year we discussed substance misuse initiatives and in particular the impact that Project ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement & Recovery) has had, and how funding has been used. We noted that Project ADDER was now in its final year of a 4-year programme, with funding due to end in March 2025. We noted your concern about this and your efforts to lobby for a continuation of Home Office funding.

We felt that there is a public perception that nothing is being done about drugs and the Police and/or the wider Partnership should do more to put into the public consciousness the work that is being done, whether through social media or other means, to make what you are doing more visible and promote successes, etc. You undertook to review this. There is also more that can be done to educate young people about the dangers of drug use.

Reducing Reoffending & Tackling the Drivers of Crime

Mental Health

We asked about the local response where there is a mental health issue evident, in light of press reporting that the Police no longer engage and expect a health service response. We were curious whether this had anything to do with the reported 17.8% drop in offences recorded. We were told this data related to the S.136 Mental Health Act powers – removal of persons to a place of safety. It was stated that the reduction was part of efforts to exhaust all avenues of support that are more appropriate than the use of policing powers.

You provided an overview regarding the approach and process for prioritising and managing calls relating to mental health. We noted that all calls into the Police Control Room were triaged, and you assured the Committee that any immediate threats to life / critical mental health incidents will always be attended by the Police but may also involve signposting or referral to the right services. The Police had employed mental health professionals in the past but now mental health care would need to be provided by the Health Service. We are aware that there is a dedicated ‘111 option 2’ service in Wales to connect to a mental health profession. **We heard that a new system will also be in place by February 2025 which will connect people to the correct services as early as possible to improve outcomes and an update can**

be provided to the Committee in due course on the impact. It was recognised that services for mental health remained a challenge.

There was also a discussion around joint working with agencies to manage mental health links with substance misuse, and access to support.

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

The statistics showed a 21.6% increase in the number of rape and other serious sexual offences. The Committee has previously expressed concern about the relative low number of convictions. With the increase in the number of offences we asked whether we were seeing a proportionate increase in the number of charges being brought against offenders and prosecutions.

Whilst recognising there are challenges you have told us that work is in progress to improve this, changing the way the Police investigates rape, with new approaches which has included a dedicated Rape Investigation Team being set up, and other additional resources for victim support, increasing access points, encouraging victims to come forward, and following up. Also, a 'One Stop Shop', which involved joint working with third sector organisations, has helped to try to make things easier for victims. You told us that South Wales Police had the highest number of charges being brought against offenders and prosecutions in Wales and the second best performance across the UK. You felt this was a result of proactive efforts to find perpetrators. We noted that there have also been improvements in the detection of sexual offences in the online space. We were told that decision-making on cases following investigations is reviewed and checked robustly to ensure the right outcomes, and whether any lessons that can be learned. Last year we heard there has been an improvement within Swansea, Neath & Port Talbot BCU, with 12.5% of complaints leading to charges. We noted that positive outcome / detection rates for rape were low, around 3% in 2021, but currently figures were around 11%. The figure for serious sexual offences has seen a slight improvement but remain around 9%.

It was recognised that there were still lots to do and this area of work required continual progression and development. The Committee felt it was important to improve the victim experience so that victims have the confidence to come forward and part of that was around the Police and SSP identifying and removing any barriers to that, and have the necessary support through what would be a difficult process. Whilst performance locally may compare well with other areas, there remains a worrying picture for the UK as a whole.

Safeguarding those at risk of Violence & Exploitation

We discussed the ongoing challenges in the High Street area along with the investment in the area. It was noted that a recent news article had reported historic issues associated with the area and was not a reflection of the current situation and ongoing transformation of the area, both in terms of the look of the place and people's experience. We acknowledged that it has been a priority area for the Safer Swansea Partnership to tackle issues around crime, County Lines / drugs and sexual exploitation in that location, working with the 3rd Sector, which has led to improvements, to protect vulnerable women and lift people out of the crime and drugs circle. The City Centre Rangers have been working with the Police to ensure there is a visible presence in the area and we were told that new CCTV was going live there soon to assist with crime detection and prevention.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any comments, however we do not expect you to provide a formal response. However, we do expect our views to be considered by the Partnership and the Committee will follow up on progress in addressing these issues.

We would appreciate sight of the report of the Western Bay Drugs Commission as soon as available.

We expect that our next Crime & Disorder Scrutiny session will take place on 15 April 2025, but will be in touch with you about this in due course. Currently the Committee looks at the performance of the Safer Swansea Partnership on an annual basis, however we will keep this under review to ensure arrangements are effective.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.peter.black@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 April 2025

Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report

Purpose	The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of Scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panel Conveners will regularly provide a progress report, updating the Committee on headlines from their Panel's work and impact.
Content	This report focuses on the following Performance Panels: a) Education b) Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure awareness and understanding of the work of the Panels• Consider their effectiveness and impact• Consider any issues arising and action required
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Lyndon Jones (Education Panel Convener) Councillor Chris Holley (Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Panel Convener)
Lead Officer & Report Author	Michelle Roberts / Rachel Percival E-mail: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Adrian Jeremiah
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

1.1 There are five Performance Panels which have been established by the Committee:

- Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (meets monthly)
- Education (meets monthly)
- Adult Services (meets every six weeks)
- Child & Family Services (meets every six weeks)
- Climate Change & Nature (meets every two months)

- 1.2 Whilst the work of an Inquiry Panel leads to the production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet based on evidence gathered on a specific issue, the work of a Performance Panel represents regular monitoring of, and challenge to, particular services / service areas and issues.
- 1.3 Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant Cabinet / lead members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about the performance of services and service delivery.
- 1.4 The Committee is responsible for managing the overall work of Scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panel Conveners will therefore provide a regular progress report to the Committee to enable:
- a discussion on the work of each Panel, achievements, effectiveness and impact
 - the Committee to consider any issues arising from Panel activities which may have an impact on the overall Scrutiny Work Programme
 - awareness amongst the Committee as well as visibility across the Council and public.
- 1.5 This report is about the following Performance Panels:
- Education
 - Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance

To focus the discussion a short, written report has been provided by respective Conveners and is **attached**. This includes a summary of Panel activities, correspondence between the Panel and relevant Cabinet Members, recommendations and impact.

- 1.6 The Education Panel involves the following 12 Members:

Labour Councillors: 4

Adam Davis	Beverley Hopkins
Fiona Gordon	Yvonne Jardine

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 3

Mike Day	James McGettrick
Susan Jones	

Conservative Councillors: 2

Lyndon Jones (CONVENER)	Angela O'Connor
--------------------------------	-----------------

Uplands Councillor: 1

Sandra Joy	
------------	--

Statutory Co-opted Members: 2

Beth Allender	Parent Governor Representative
Dr. Elizabeth Lee	Parent Governor Representative

- 1.7 The Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Panel involves the following 14 Members:

Labour Councillors: 3

Dai Jenkins	Mike White
Matthew Jones	

Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 8

Peter Black	Mary Jones
Chris Holley (CONVENER)	Susan Jones
Lynda James	Michael Locke
Jeff Jones	Mark Tribe

Conservative Councillors: 2

Paxton Hood-Williams	Will Thomas
----------------------	-------------

Green Councillor: 1

Chris Evans	
-------------	--

2. Legal Implications

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

3. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Education Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

Appendix 2 – Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – SPC Update March 2025

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the Panel is to provide ongoing challenge to school's performance to ensure that *pupils in Swansea are receiving high quality education and the authority is meeting its objectives in relation to improving school standards and pupil attainment.*

2. Key Activities

The Panel is currently meeting on a monthly basis and the work completed since October 2024 includes:

Meeting 3 17 Oct 24	Schools Session and possible Visit (2) – Gwyrosydd Primary School (Pre-meeting with School Improvement Advisor)
Meeting 4 14 Nov 24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Strategy for Poverty Proofing the school day given the cost-of-living crisis and progress with the Inclusion Strategy approved by Cabinet in 2023 including progress with regard to the Behaviour Strategy. 2. Briefing on School Admissions Policy. 3. Briefing on Career Advice in Swansea Schools
Meeting 5 12 Dec 24	Annual Education Performance against identified priorities RAG include Estyn progress against recommendations and Cabinet Member Q&A. Include an update on Post 16, Welsh in Education Strategy progress and an update on Elective Home Education
Meeting 6 23 Jan 25	Curriculum for Wales: Bishop Gore Comprehensive cluster of schools
Meeting 7 17 Feb 25	Annual Budget as it relates to education matters
Meeting 8 20 Feb 25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing/improving school attendance and exclusions 2. How schools improve the quality of teaching and learning – cluster and regional work.

3. Achievements / Impacts

Five letters to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning have been sent since the last update in October.

Find below some of the views and issues raised following on from the previous update in October 2024.

School Visits and Scrutiny Sessions

The Panel welcomed the progress that has been made by Gwyrosydd Primary School with the School Improvement Plan and were particularly keen to hear about the progress being made in relation to the three recommendations made by Estyn in 2023. It was evident that the school is clearly now on a path to improvement. The school, the governing body and local authority are working to continue to build upon this. The Panel praised the progress made at the school and look forward to those improvements bedding in. The developments in relation to pupil voice at the school should be applauded. The Panel look forward to seeing continued improvement in the stability at the school, particularly with the appointment of a permanent Headteacher, the continued reduction in staff sickness levels and a full and functioning Governing Body.

Cluster Working and the Curriculum for Wales

The Panel were keen to hear from the Bishop Gore cluster of schools on how the Curriculum for Wales was being implemented on the ground and how the work being done within each primary school in the cluster was being brought together, as pupils made the transition from primary to comprehensive school. We heard that so far the cluster has been on a bespoke journey and that there is a shared vision and a commitment to regular dialogue, support and unity.

The Panel particularly enjoyed hearing from the pupils via video and in person giving their personal experiences of taking part in transition activities and their first experiences of Bishop Gore. We were encouraged by our visit and shared our thanks to all the schools and praised the way the cluster has addressed its unique challenges. We also noted the nurturing environment, team effort and genuine collaboration that was evidenced by the cluster. Overall it was evident to see the work that has gone on to make this cluster a success.

Elective Home Education

The Panel did feel that schooling is about the all-round experience not just exam results. They believe it is also about mixing with friends and others. By being educated at home people can lose that and it could mean they are more nervous later on in life. The Panel asked if home visits were announced or unannounced, hearing that visits tended to be planned in advance but on some occasions they are unannounced. We also asked how exam results compare in relation to home-educated children. We heard that this is not currently measured.

Managing School Attendance and Exclusions

The Panel were interested to find out how the local authority and schools are sharing the good practice learned from those schools that are improving their pupil attendance. We heard the strategies used are bespoke to schools and what would work in one school might not necessarily work in another, but given this, schools and Education Department do our best to share. All good practice that is happening in schools goes through to school improvement team through each School Action Plan.

The Panel were pleased to hear about the detailed work that is being carried out by schools and the local authority in relation to both school attendance and exclusions, with particular reference to the development of an education welfare officers action plan and the new behaviour policy.

Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group

The Panel heard that Cabinet has approved a plan to move from a legal agreement (in terms of our collaboration as three local authorities) to a less formal collaboration agreement. This means that the levels of governance that were in the legal agreement will disappear. The governance arrangements will now be on one tier rather than a three tier system. The Joint Committee and the Scrutiny Councillor Group will no longer be required. There will be a reduced level of running costs involved and this reflects a change in how the workforce has reduced. Local Authorities now commission to the level they want, so Swansea Council has chosen to continue to work with its partners in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, but on a much reduced scale. We note that moving forward scrutiny of the work undertaken by Partneriaeth, in relation to Swansea, will be undertaken by this Panel.

4. Education Scrutiny Performance Panel - Future Work Programme 2024/25

Date	Items to be discussed
Meeting 9 26 Mar 25	Schools Session and visit (3) – Dylan Thomas Community Secondary School (Pre-meeting with School Improvement Advisor 11 Mar)
Meeting 10 10 Apr 25	1. Additional Learning Needs Reform Update 2. Education Other Than at School services 3. Pupil Voice Manifesto and the pupil voice in education
Meeting 11 8 May 25	1. Swansea Skills Partnership Annual update 2. Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning 3. Religion, Values and Ethics education update 4. End of Year review in Education Scrutiny

Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Update – April 2025

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching remit of the Panel is to ensure that the Council's budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient, acting as a critical friend for the Cabinet and helping to ensure accountability. In addition, this Panel is responsible for ongoing monitoring of Council performance in relation to development and regeneration, including the 'health' of the city centre, wider economic development across Swansea and discussion about progress on the Swansea Bay City Deal. The Panel meets monthly.

2. Key Activities

The last update to Committee for the Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance Panel was November 2024. The below table updates on all meetings since the last update. From these 4 meetings, 7 letters were sent to Cabinet.

Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance	
Meeting	Topic(s)
5 November 2024	1. Review of Revenue Reserves 2. Regeneration Project(s) Summary report
10 December 2024	1. Mid Term Budget Statement 2024/25 2. Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring 3. Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report
14 January 2025	1. Budget Proposals 2025/26 – 2028/29 2. Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 3. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2024/25
18 February 2025	1. Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Reports: Annual Budget incl Q3 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25

3. Achievements / Impact

Financial Monitoring

- During this period the Panel looked at the Review of Revenue Reserves, Mid Term Budget statement 2024/25, Budget Proposals 2025/26-2028/29, Quarters 2 and 3 of the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25 and pre decision scrutiny of the annual budget.
- At outturn the officer recommended to add £2m to general reserves bringing general reserves to £12m and an additional £6m to HRA reserves which was approved by Cabinet. With this addition when compared to other authorities in Wales, general reserves are now mid table and HRA reserves are towards the top of the table.
- The Panel were informed that earmarked reserves remain adequate and sufficient for the risks, size and scale of the Authority.

Appendix 2

- During budget discussions, the Panel noted the net investment of around £50m into services. The current pressures in social services, housing and homelessness were highlighted.
- The Panel requested more details on several budget saving proposals which were provided.
- The Panel raised several points as part of its pre scrutiny of the annual budget. It acknowledged the lack of detail on National Insurance contributions and an expected further settlement. It noted that the Capital Equalisation Reserve is now being used to support the budget and that commercial sensitivities and a lack of background information make scrutiny of budgets challenging.

Performance Monitoring

- During this period the Panel looked at the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 2.
- The report was noted and several questions relating to Social Services performance were passed to the Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel.

Development and Regeneration Monitoring

- The Panel were given an update on several city centre developments.
- The target opening for Debenhams was given as October 2026. This was later than the Panel expected however they heard that long lead in times are common in the retail industry.
- Y Storfa is estimated for practical completion at the end of 2025. The Panel asked about slippage and heard that delays were caused by the challenges of reconfiguring the site to meet the mix of uses the site will have.
- The Panel have asked for Felindre to be included on their next summary report.
- The Panel have asked for several financial updates on current city centre developments, this is planned for April 2025.

Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring

- The Panel were pleased to hear that in 2023/24 the Council exceeded the current statutory recycling target of 64% by achieving 70.5%.
- It asked several questions relating to encouraging more residents to recycle, and heard some reassurance that promotion was taking place and resources at this time were appropriate.
- Discussion was held on maximising the amounts recycled. Packaging extended producer responsibility is due to come in 2026. This may discourage producers from difficult to recycle materials and the Council plans to carry out a trial recycling flexible plastics.
- The Panel has requested a report on the bailing plant, this is planned for June 2025.

Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report

- The Panel were given an update on how well the Council is providing this legislative service. They heard that there are 16 quality indicators, seven of which have targets. Of these seven quality indicators, four were met in full, one in part and two were not met.
- It was noted that Swansea Libraries continue to perform well and compares well with other Authorities on virtual usage, significant increases in event attendance and in general use support.

Appendix 2

- It performs less well in terms of acquisitions including Welsh language books, the number of qualified staff and the amount of time staff devote to training.
- The Panel heard about an ongoing community hub project review looking at the future model of Community hubs. The Cabinet Member reassured members there were no plans to close any libraries. The Panel would like to see the community hubs report when comes out to have an input in any actions taken, based on its findings.
- It asked to be provided with footfall/usage of the individual libraries and their estimated stock levels to help Councillors answer any potential questions on the value for money of libraries. This was subsequently provided.

4. Future Work Programme

The programme for the remainder of this municipal year is as follows:

Meeting	Topic(s)
8 April 2025	1. Achievements against Corporate Priorities / Objectives / Policy Commitments for Development and Regeneration 2. Update on City Centre Development Project Costs 3. Campuses Project
6 May 2025	1. Planning Annual Performance Report 2. Freedom Leisure

5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.

Agenda Item 8



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 April 2025

Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

Purpose:	The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups that are established. This report advises of relevant matters that need to be considered.
Content:	This report is provided to facilitate any changes that need to be made.
Councillors are being asked to:	agree the membership of Panels and Working Groups reported, and any other changes necessary.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer & Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Adrian Jeremiah
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with Council report 18 October 2012, when current Scrutiny arrangements were agreed, the Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups that it establishes.

2. Revision to Existing Scrutiny Panel / Working Group Membership

- 2.1 None.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 When determining membership / conveners or agreeing any changes there are some key considerations for the Committee:

- It is necessary for more than one political group to be represented on each Panel / Working Group.
- These bodies also need to be of a manageable size in terms of team working and effective questioning.
- To ensure that all political groups have opportunities and are engaged.
- Good scrutiny practice places emphasis on respect for minority party wishes around both chairing of such bodies and the work programme.
- Being fair and balanced in the appointment of conveners, when there is interest from more than one councillor, e.g., giving opportunity to those who have not acted as convener previously.
- The Committee should reflect on the existing 'balance' of conveners to help inform future appointments.
- A minimum of three members should be present at all Panel / Working Group meetings.

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 9



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 April 2025

Scrutiny Work Programme

Purpose	This report shows the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2024/25, which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.
Content	The agreed work programme is attached, which shows the topics being examined by Scrutiny through various Panels and Working Groups. A plan for future Committee meetings is also attached.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• plan for the Committee meetings ahead• consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny• review the Scrutiny Work Programme (including progress of current Panels and Working Groups)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer	Debbie Smith, Chief Legal Officer & Monitoring Officer
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Adrian Jeremiah
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's Scrutiny Work Programme and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.

1.2 A report is provided to each meeting to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of agreed Scrutiny activities, monitor progress, and coordinate work as necessary.

1.3 The broad aim of the Scrutiny function is to engage non-executive councillors in activities to:

- provide an effective challenge to the executive
- help improve services, policies, and performance

- engage the public in its work
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of Scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of time and resources.

It also needs to be:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
 - relevant to Council priorities
 - adding value and having maximum impact
 - coordinated and avoids duplication
- 1.5 The work of Scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the Committee itself, by establishing informal Panels (for in-depth activities) or via one-off Working Groups. Panels and Working Groups would be open to all non-executive Councillors - the Committee will determine membership and conveners following expressions of interest.
- 1.6 Scrutiny will regularly send letters to Cabinet Members communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, by producing reports. Inquiry panels will always produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered. Inquiry panels will reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and the impact of their work – usually 6-12 months following cabinet decision.
- 1.7 Although much of the work of Scrutiny is carried out by informal Panels and Working Groups these meetings are accessible to the public. Agendas, reports and letters relating to all such scrutiny activities are published, in the same manner as the committee, on the Council's modern.gov online platform:
<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

2. Scrutiny Work Programme 2024/25

- 2.1.1 The Committee agreed the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2024/25 on 16 July 2024. This is shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.1.2. The following paragraphs break down the Work Programme by specific ways of working to provide a brief overview.
- 2.2 Scrutiny Programme Committee:
- 2.2.1 The Committee work plan for the year / remaining meetings is attached in **Appendix 2**. This should be kept under constant review to ensure it represents a robust, manageable, and effective plan.

2.2.2 Committee members should always review and confirm items for the next and future meetings considering who should attend and confirm expectations so that meetings are always well planned and prepared for, e.g., information required and key questions that the Committee wishes to ask.

2.2.3 The main item(s) scheduled for the next Committee meeting are:

13 May:

- **Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board**
Ongoing Scrutiny Topic. Discussion with PSB Chair, Cllr Andrea Lewis, and other PSB member / officer leads on the performance of the PSB and progress in delivery of partnership objectives – this follows on from last Committee PSB Scrutiny Session on 19 November 2024.
- **Compliance with Welsh Language Standards**
Annual Item – Lead Cabinet Members (Cllrs Robert Smith and Elliott King) will attend along with lead officer(s) to present the Annual Report for 2024/25 on compliance with national Welsh Language Standards and activity over the past year. They will also provide update on the implementation of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2024-2029 which was approved by Council in October 2024.
- **Committee End of Year Review**
(including invite to Chair of Governance & Audit Committee for input on the Audit / Scrutiny relationship)

2.2.4 The Committee will have the opportunity to review priorities and introduce issues of concern as and when they arise, e.g., Pre-decision Scrutiny or Call-In which may require extra meetings.

2.2.5 Pre-decision Scrutiny – this is carried out by the Committee unless delegated elsewhere. The Committee is invited to consider the available information on future Cabinet business and any opportunities for pre-decision Scrutiny, taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications (see Cabinet Forward Plan attached in **Appendix 3**). Any requests will require discussion with relevant Cabinet Member(s) to confirm timescales and window of opportunity for scrutiny involvement. Pre-decision Scrutiny enables Scrutiny to develop understanding about and ask questions on proposed Cabinet reports to provide ‘critical friend’ challenge and influence decision-making.

2.3 Inquiry Panels:

2.3.1 Once membership and a convener have been appointed the first task of an Inquiry Panel will be to have a briefing on the issue and then determine the key question and terms of reference for the inquiry. Once the planning stage is complete, the inquiry will be evidence gathering, with the last stage being to develop the final report.

In Progress / Planned	Completed (follow up stage)
<p>1. Community Assets (Cabinet Decision stage. Final Report was presented to Cabinet on 12 December. Cabinet Decision was made on 20 March 2025. The Inquiry Panel will arrange a follow up meeting in 9-12 months)</p> <p>2. Grants (initial meeting held on 27 Jan 2025 to agree focus of the inquiry – evidence gathering sessions being arranged)</p>	<p>1. Anti-Social Behaviour (Follow up meeting took place on 13 March 2025. Monitoring now complete. Letter from Inquiry Panel summarising the discussion will be reported to the Committee when available)</p>

2.3.2 The Committee should note that Cabinet made a [decision](#) on the Community Assets Scrutiny Inquiry final report on 20 March. Of the 14 recommendations made by the Panel 11 were agreed and 3 were not agreed. The Panel will reconvene in the next 9-12 months to check on progress with agreed action arising from the recommendations that were agreed and assess the inquiry's impact.

2.4 Performance Panels:

2.4.1 The following Performance Panels, which enable regular and structured monitoring of performance within these key areas, have been agreed and will meet on an ongoing basis until otherwise agreed by the Committee (frequency of meetings in brackets):

Performance Panel	Convener
1. Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly)	Cllr. Chris Holley
2. Education (monthly)	Cllr. Lyndon Jones
3. Adult Services (every six weeks)	Cllr. Susan Jones
4. Child & Family Services (every six weeks)	Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams
5. Climate Change & Nature (every two months)	Cllr. Mary Jones

2.4.2 Performance Panel conveners are scheduled to provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact.

2.5 Working Groups:

2.5.1 The following Working Groups will be convened during the year ahead, (date where known in brackets):

1. Agile Working (20 Jan 2025) COMPLETED	3. Empty Properties (25 Mar 2025)
2. Public Engagement (5 Feb 2025) COMPLETED	4. Tree Services (19 May 2025)

2.5.2 The Scrutiny Letter sent by the Public Engagement Working Group and the Cabinet Member's response is now available and included in the Item 10 of the agenda (Scrutiny Letters), along with a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The Committee will be responsible for following up on this activity during the next year.

2.6 Joint / Regional Scrutiny:

2.6.1 **Swansea Bay City Region City Deal** – Swansea Scrutiny is also involved in the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee, approved by Council in July 2018. This arrangement involves three councillor representatives from each of the four Councils involved in the City Region, meeting to scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal programme. As per the Joint Committee Agreement, the Scrutiny Committee is serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Scrutiny Councillor representatives are currently: Jan Curtice, Victoria Holland & Chris Holley.

2.6.2 **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee** – The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) involves Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Councils, as well as Brecon Beacons and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities, and will exercise functions relating to strategic land use planning, regional transport planning and the exercise of economic well-being powers. The Committee has set up a CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee which consists of three elected members from each Council and will meet at least quarterly. The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee will scrutinise the decisions / actions of the CJC as it discharges its functions and performance in relation to policy objectives and targets. The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee is being serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Scrutiny Councillor representatives are currently: Peter Black, Wendy Lewis & Mike White.

2.6.3 The Scrutiny Programme Committee will need to ensure that there is no duplication between local and regional scrutiny. A regular update on regional Scrutiny activity will be provided to Committee members to ensure awareness (**see Appendix 4b**). Regional Scrutiny arrangements will not, however, preclude Councillors within constituent Councils discussing the impact of the regional body on their Council and locality, and holding Cabinet Members to account for their

involvement / Council's involvement and engagement in regional bodies, and relevant local decision-making.

3. Monitoring the Work Programme

- 3.1 The Committee is responsible for monitoring progress against the agreed Work Programme, and this includes work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings, to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility.
- 3.2 A timetable of all Scrutiny activities (projected or actual where dates are known) is attached in **Appendix 4a**. Lead Councillors and officers are also noted within. **Appendix 4b** provides the Committee with a snapshot of progress with all Panels and Working Groups established by the Committee, as well as Regional Scrutiny, and their current position. This will be updated and provided to every Committee meeting.
- 3.3 The Scrutiny Work Programme will be kept under constant review by the Committee, with changes made as necessary. The Committee will always retain the flexibility to adapt and re-prioritise the work of scrutiny in response to changing circumstances and/or urgent issues which may arise in-year, to ensure the continued relevance of the programme.
- 3.4 The Committee should be mindful of the work plans of other Council bodies, such as the Governance & Audit Committee and the Council's Service Transformation Committees. Any issues regarding possible overlap / duplication will be discussed between the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and relevant Chairs.

4. Public Requests for Scrutiny / Councillor Calls for Action

- 4.1 Members of the public are able to make requests for Scrutiny by contacting the Chair or Scrutiny Team in writing detailing the issue of concern, its impact, and suggested action. This can be via the Council's website: www.swansea.gov.uk/raiseanissuetoscrutiny or email to scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk. In accordance with agreed protocol the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee will consider any requests received. Taking into account relevant advice, any such issues may merit inclusion in the work programme, referral elsewhere, or no action.
- 4.2 Since the last Committee meeting, no requests have been received.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Any costs that arise out of work plan activities, for example expenses for witnesses or transport costs, are not envisaged to be significant and will be contained within the existing Scrutiny Budget.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2024/25

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Programme Committee Work Plan 2024/25

Appendix 3: Cabinet Forward Plan

Appendix 4a: Scrutiny Work Programme – Projected Timetable of Activity

Appendix 4b: Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels, Working Groups,
Regional Scrutiny

AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2024/25

Appendix 1

Inquiry Panel (time-limited in-depth scrutiny – six months)	Working Groups (light-touch scrutiny / one-off meetings)	Performance Panels (ongoing in-depth performance / financial monitoring & challenge)	Issues for Scrutiny Programme Committee (overall work programme management; discussion of broad range of policy and service issues)
<p>1. Community Assets (to complete)</p> <p>2. Grants (Terms of Reference / Key Question to be agreed – but concerns about visibility of Grants as part of overall Council budget / desire to shine a light on significance of Grants, what they are, processes, and how well they are being used, etc.)</p> <p>Reserve / Alternate Topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substance Misuse (significant issue; inquiry could look into drug and alcohol abuse / link to physical and mental health issues; services that support and tackle this issue, opportunity to discuss remedies; concerns about increasing number of abuse related crime 	<p>1. Empty Properties (enabling focussed questioning & discussion on what's being done to help bring back into use / repurpose; enforcement; given housing needs what steps are being taken to bring empty properties back into use, etc.)</p> <p>2. Public Engagement (enabling focussed questioning & discussion, examination / evaluation of existing approaches to public engagement and how we can improve so that we reach all parts of society; evaluation of Council's resident's survey etc.)</p> <p>3. Agile Working (enabling focussed questioning & discussion on evaluation of 'success' of agile working policy incl. working from home; how the council is managing its staff post pandemic; impact on Council performance / efficiency; implications on Council's accommodation strategy; impact on staff well-being / morale; permanence of situation / future direction, etc.)</p> <p>4. Tree Services (enabling focussed questioning & discussion on tree services, management and development;</p>	<p>1. Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly)</p> <p>2. Education (monthly)</p> <p>3. Adult Services (every six weeks)</p> <p>4. Child & Family Services (every six weeks)</p> <p>5. Climate Change & Nature (every two months)</p> <p>Specific issues to cover within wider Panel work plans, where possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance Measurement & Management (Council's overall approach to performance management, standards / PIs / target setting; and measurement) - Recycling and Landfill (annual performance monitoring report) - Library Services (annual report on performance against library standards; discussion on service provision; usage; sustainability, etc.) - Planning Services (annual performance report) - Swansea Bay Strategy - Swansea Airport - Traffic Management (discussion on traffic calming schemes, issues regarding implementation time / cost, etc.) Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post 16 Education (concern whether services are joined up; students falling through gaps between organisations and struggling post Covid; NEET partnership working) - Schools Attendance (incl. lateness) - Schools Admissions Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific annual reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Safeguarding - Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities (consider Poverty Truth Commission report being published) - Welsh Housing Quality Standard / More Homes Delivery Leader Q & A Session Other Cabinet Member Q & As (portfolio issues to pick up): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Strategy / Transformation (incl. Oracle Fusion Project Post-implementation Review (achievements / improvements / benefits realised; issues, e.g. interface with other systems) - HR / Workforce Strategy (workforce transformation programme; resources to deliver; impact and difference being made from actions; workforce / recruitment challenges) - Homelessness - Streetscene Improvements

AGREED Scrutiny Work Programme 2024/25

<p>and anti-social behaviour, etc)</p> <p>Follow Up of Previous Inquiries:</p> <p>1. Anti-Social Behaviour</p>	<p>tree planting strategy; tree protection orders; tree inspection programme; role and responsibility of the Council and landowners; tree maintenance – capacity to look after the many trees the Council has planted; opportunities / spaces for rewilding / tree planting, ash dieback issue, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home Schooling - checks - School Meals Service (quality / sourcing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child & Family Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Services (examination of objectives, service provision, funding / resources, achievements, preventative work, areas for improvement that will enable more engagement with the youth; issues around recruitment / retention of Youth Workers) - Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (progress; access points; referral system; use of the NYTH/NEST assessment) • Climate Change & Nature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renewable Energy / Local Area Energy Plan - Planning Enforcement (clarity around powers to deal with rogue developers, when we can act, and what remedies are available) - Flood Risk Prevention & Management (wetter climate – what are our areas of focus and what are we doing to alleviate the risk of flooding; implications of TAN 15 Guidance) - Drainage Management (drain and gully maintenance programme; impact of more frequent / heaving rainfall; response to blocked drains) - Waste Strategy (arrangements, recycling system / processing / issues) - Electric Vehicle Charging Point Provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Services Board • Crime & Disorder (Community Safety) • Follow Up on Previous Working Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-production - Public Rights of Way - Customer Contact - Community Growing
<p>Joint / Regional Scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partneriaeth (Education / School Improvement – Joint Scrutiny Councillor Group) • City Deal (Development / Regeneration - Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee) • South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (Land Use Planning; Regional Transport; Economic Well-being – Joint Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee) 			

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan 2024/25

ACTIVITY	16 Jul 2024	17 Sep 2024	15 Oct 2024	19 Nov 2024	10 Dec 2024	21 Jan 2025
Scrutiny Work Programme	Agreement of Scrutiny Work Programme	Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24				
Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q & A Sessions	Recycling / Waste Collection Service (CM for Community – Services)	Homelessness (CM for Service Transformation)	Streetscene Improvements: Street Cleansing Operations (CM for Community – Services)		More Homes Delivery (CM for Service Transformation)	Leader / Economy, Finance & Strategy
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports Page 81				- Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (1) (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis) - Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2023-24 (CM for Care Services / Director of Social Services)	- Delivery of Corporate Priority – Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities (annual item) (Leader / CM for Wellbeing) - Welsh Housing Quality Standards Annual Update (CM for Service Transformation) - Annual Complaints & Compliments Reports 2023-24 (CM for Service Transformation)	Oracle Fusion Project Post-Implementation Review Update (CM for Service Transformation)
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports			Education	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance	Adult Services	
Pre-decision Scrutiny / Call In						
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.	Follow Up on Co-production Working Group (CM for Community - Support)		Follow Up on Public Rights of Way Working Group (CM for Environment & Infrastructure)	Community Assets Inquiry Final Report		

ACTIVITY	18 Feb 2025	18 Mar 2025	8 Apr 2025	13 May 2025		
Scrutiny Work Programme				- End of Year Review - Audit / Scrutiny Relationship – Discussion w/ Chair of Governance & Audit Committee		
Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibility Q & A Sessions	Delivery of Workforce Strategy (CM for Corporate Services & Performance)	Review of Digital Strategy and Transformation (CM for Service Transformation)				
Other Cabinet Member / Officer Reports Page 82	Draft Tackling Poverty Strategy (CM for Well-being)		Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership (Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership)	- Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (2) (PSB Chair – Cllr Andrea Lewis) - Compliance with Welsh Language Standards (incl. Annual Report 2024/25) (CMs for Education & Learning / Culture, Human Rights & Equalities)		
Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports	Child & Family Services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance 	Climate Change & Nature		
Pre-decision Scrutiny / Call In						
Final Scrutiny Inquiry Reports / Follow Up on Scrutiny Recs.		Follow Up on Customer Contact Working Group (CM for Service Transformation)				

To schedule: Follow Up on Community Growing Working Group (CMs for Wellbeing and Community - Services) – July 2025

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2024-25

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Building Capital Maintenance Programme 2025/26.	This report sets out the way in which the Capital Maintenance resources for 2025/26 will be deployed.	Martin Ridgeway	Cabinet Member - Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)	Cabinet	10 Apr 2025	Open
Leisure Partnership Annual Report 2023/2024.	To advise Cabinet of the partnership operations of key facilities within the Cultural Services portfolio.	Richard Dando	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cabinet	10 Apr 2025	Open
Respect, Rights and Relationships Policy (Draft Local Authority Learner Behaviour Policy).	Report from the Education & Skills Service Transformation Committee.	Kate Phillips	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning, Mike Durke	Cabinet	10 Apr 2025	Open
Parking Tariffs.	The report seeks approval for proposed car parking tariffs for Swansea Council. The report explains the financial impact of the existing car parking offers and sets out proposals to meet the increase in income targets set within the Medium-Term Financial Plan.	Alison Willingale	Cabinet Member - Environment & Infrastructure	Cabinet	15 May 2025	Open

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Forward Plan 2024-25

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision	Exempt Details
Successful and Sustainable Swansea Corporate Transformation Plan Annual Report 2024-25.	To provide Cabinet with a report on the second year of the Corporate Transformation Plan 2023-28.	Ness Young	Cabinet Member - Service Transformation (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	15 May 2025	Open
Commitment of Capital Funding for the Contractor Appointment and Design Development of the New Build Special School.	The report is seeking authorisation to appoint a first stage contractor to progress the project through RIBA stage 2-4 design and secure Planning and Sustainable Drainage Approval Body approvals.	Louise Herbert-Evans	Cabinet Member - Education & Learning	Cabinet	15 May 2025	Open
Swansea Central Block B - FPR 7 Report.	Provide the estimated construction and total project cost of Block B, and request delegated authority to enter into forthcoming relevant contract(s), subject to costs remaining within the budgetary limits agreed by this report.	Emma Dakin	Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	Cabinet	15 May 2025	Fully exempt

Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25 – Projected Timetable of Meetings (actual dates shown)

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2024	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2025	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Brij Madahar Lead Cabinet Member: cross-cutting Lead CMT: cross-cutting Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	18 June Work Planning Conf.	16		17	15	19	10	21	18	18	8	13
INQUIRY PANELS:												
	Evidence		Findings	Draft Final report		Final Report	Cabinet			Cabinet resp.		
Community Assets Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Stuart Rice Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Hayley Gwilliam / Elliot King Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Geoff Bacon	20 May 17 Jun		5	23		4	12			20		
								Planning	Evidence gathering			
Grants Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Joe Hale Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Ben Smith Lead Head of Service: Jeff Dong								27				19
Anti-Social Behaviour FOLLOW-UP (Cabinet decision: 18 Apr 2024) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Terry Hennegan Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: cross-cutting Lead CMT: cross-cutting Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting										13		

Appendix 4a

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2024	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2025	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
PERFORMANCE PANELS:												
Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / David Hopkins / Robert Francis Davies Lead CMT: Ness Young / Ben Smith / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phillip Holmes / Lee Wenham	11 June		6	10	8	5	10	14	18 (budget)	11	8	6
Education (monthly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting	20 June			19	17	14	12	23	17 (budget) 20	26	10	8
Adult Services (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Sue Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Amy Hawkins / Helen St John		9		10	29		11	28	17 (Budget - Joint Social Services Panel)			7
Child & Family Services (every 6 weeks) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Paxton Hood-Williams Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Louise Gibbard Lead CMT: Dave Howes Lead Head of Service: Julie Davies	24 June			12		12		7	17 (Budget - Joint Social Services Panel) 25		1	6

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2024	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2025	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Climate Change & Nature (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Mary Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan Lead Cabinet Member: Andrea Lewis Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting		16		17		19		21		18		13
WORKING GROUPS:												
Agile Working Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Stuart Rice Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: David Hopkins Lead CMT: Ness Young Lead Head of Service: Rachael Davies								20				
Public Engagement Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Lyndon Jones Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / Hayley Gwilliam Lead CMT: Ness Young Lead Head of Service: Lee Wenham									5			
Empty Properties Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Francesca O'Brien Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart / Andrea Lewis Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: cross-cutting										25		

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2024	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2025	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Tree Services Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Peter May Lead Scrutiny Officer: Rachel Percival Lead Cabinet Member: Cyril Anderson Lead CMT: Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Tracey McNulty												19
REGIONAL SCRUTINY:												
Partneriaeth Regional Scrutiny Councillor Group (Education / School Improvement) (quarterly) *NOW ENDED* Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Lyndon Jones (chair) / Peter Black Lead Scrutiny Officer: Michelle Roberts Lead Partneriaeth: Ian Altman / Gareth Morgans Lead Cabinet Member: Robert Smith Lead CMT: Helen Morgan-Rees Regional Lead: Martin Nicholls (Lead Director for Partneriaeth)	24 June					18				3		
Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee (every 2 months) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Tim Bowen (Neath Port Talbot Council) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Jan Curtice, Victoria Holland, Chris Holley Lead Scrutiny Officer: Charlotte John, Neath Port Talbot Council Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes		25			8			13		18		

Appendix 4a

Activity / Month	MAY /JUN 2024	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 2025	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee (quarterly) Lead Scrutiny Councillor: Russell Sparks (Carmarthenshire Council) Swansea Scrutiny Councillors: Peter Black, Wendy Lewis, Mike White Lead Scrutiny Officer: Charlotte John, Neath Port Talbot Council Lead Cabinet Member: Rob Stewart Lead CMT: Martin Nicholls / Mark Wade Lead Head of Service: Phil Holmes		16		3	14*	21		15		11		

* denotes extra meeting

Information correct as of 01/04/25 09:46

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups / Regional Scrutiny

1. Inquiry Panels:

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations that will be presented to Cabinet (and / or other decision-makers).

a) **Community Assets** (convener: Cllr Stuart Rice)

Key Question: *How can the Council ensure that its community assets are working to provide the best outcomes for the people of Swansea?*

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The response of Cabinet to the recommendations resulting from the inquiry were presented to the Cabinet meeting on the 20 March 2025. 11 of the 14 recommendations were agreed by Cabinet and an action plan to take these forward will be developed and progress on that will be discussed at an Inquiry Panel meeting in 9-12 months.

b) **Grants** (convener: Cllr Joe Hale)

Key Question: *How can the Council ensure that the grants it receives are working to provide the best outcomes for the people of Swansea?*

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Committee agreed the membership / convener of the new Inquiry Panel in September. An initial meeting took place 27 January where Councillors had a briefing on the topic, helping the Panel to consider the focus for the Scrutiny Inquiry and Terms of Reference / Key Question that the Inquiry will explore. Based on the discussion, agreed Terms of Reference and the plan for evidence gathering will be reported to the next Panel meeting.

The first evidence gathering session on the 19 May will be looking at those grants received by the Education Directorate.

2. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

Follow-ups of inquiries will consider both the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and wider impact / difference made. Inquiry Panels are reconvened between 9-12 months after Cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Not Agreed	
Anti-Social Behaviour	18 Apr 2024	21	1	2	13 March 2025 *MONITORING COMPLETE*

3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

- a) **Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

This Panel meets every month. A detailed progress report on the Panel's work appears in the agenda under Item 7.

- b) **Education** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Panel meets every month. A detailed progress report on the Panel's work appears in the agenda under Item 7.

- c) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At the next meeting on 7 May the Panel will receive an update on West Glamorgan Transformation Programme and discuss the latest Performance Monitoring Report. The Panel will also look at delivery of corporate priorities/policy commitments in relation to Adult Services.

- d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its next meeting on 1 April the Panel will receive an update on CAMHS from the Health Board, discuss the latest Performance Monitoring Report and look at delivery of Corporate Priorities / Policy Commitments in relation to Child and Family Services.

e) **Climate Change & Nature** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

This Panel meets every two months. The meeting on 18 March looked at the Asset Management Strategy in terms of Decarbonisation, received an annual update on Local Flood Risk Management and discussed Air Quality Management.

The meeting on 13 May will receive an update on Climate Change, discuss the Local Nature Recovery Section 6 Action Plan and receive an update on achievement against Corporate Priorities and Policy Commitments.

4. **Regional Scrutiny:**

This is collaborative Scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

a) **Swansea Bay City Region City Deal**

The Joint Scrutiny Committee usually meets every two months. As well as overall programme / project monitoring including the latest financial position, the meeting on 18 March 2025 included an update on the review of the Construction Impact Assessment Report; an update on the current situation with City Deal portfolio private sector investment and contributions; and discussion on the future role of the Programme/Portfolio Management Office.

Meetings for the 2025/26 municipal year are to be confirmed.

The Joint Scrutiny Committee is supported by Scrutiny Officers in Neath Port Talbot Council and agendas / minutes of meetings can be found on-line:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=417>

b) **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee**

The CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee will meet at least quarterly.

The last meeting on 11 March included: Sub-Committee Update – Economic Wellbeing and Economic Development; General Progress Report on the Corporate Joint Committee for 2024-25; and Draft Corporate Plan 2023-2028.

Meetings for the 2025/26 municipal year are to be confirmed.

The Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee is supported by Scrutiny Officers in Neath Port Talbot Council and agendas / minutes of meetings can be found on-line:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=499>

5. Working Groups:

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting, progressed one at a time, primarily involving discussion with relevant Cabinet Member(s) / officer(s), and any other persons called, to gather information, ask questions, and give views / raise any concerns.

a) **Agile Working** (convener: Councillor Stuart Rice)

This Working Group took place on 20 January 2025 looking at the evaluation of the 'success' of agile working policy incl. working from home; how the council is managing its staff post pandemic; impact on Council performance / efficiency; implications on Council's accommodation strategy; impact on staff well-being / morale; permanence of situation / future direction, etc. It considered the impact on costs, any impacts on productivity including contacting Council staff; the effect on building occupancy (currently and in the future). Also, data from the staff feedback survey, that gives any indication to the impact of agile working on staff, or and available data that gives an indication to the impact on the public.

The Working Group wrote to the Cabinet Member following the meeting with its findings, conclusions and recommendations and received a response to their letter on 24 February. A summary was provided to the Scrutiny Programme Committee in March. The Committee will follow up on this Working Group during 2025/26.

b) **Public Engagement** (convener: Councillor Lyndon Jones)

This Working Group took place on 5 February 2025 looking at focussed questioning & discussion, examination / evaluation of existing approaches to public engagement and how we can improve so that we reach all parts of society; evaluation of Council's resident's survey etc. A representative from Mid and West Wales Fire Service also attended to discuss their recent experience with engaging the public.

The Working Group wrote to the Cabinet Member following the meeting with its findings, conclusions and recommendations and received a response to their letter on 19 March. A summary has been provided for this meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee including items for follow up (see Item 10 – Scrutiny Letters).

c) **Empty Properties** (convener: Councillor Francesca O'Brien)

This Working Group took place on 25 March 2025. It enabled focussed questioning & discussion on what's being done to help bring empty properties back into use / repurposed; enforcement; given housing needs what steps are being taken to bring empty properties back into

use, etc. Findings, conclusions and recommendations arising from this activity will be reported to the Committee in due course.

d) **Tree Services** (convener: Councillor Peter May)

This Working Group will take place on 19 May 2025. This will enable focussed questioning & discussion on the Councils roles and responsibilities to tree maintenance and the tree planting strategy.

Agenda Item 10



Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 April 2025

Scrutiny Letters

Purpose:	To ensure the Committee is aware of the Scrutiny Letters produced following various Scrutiny activities, and to track responses to date.
Content:	The report includes a log of Scrutiny Letters produced this municipal year and provides a copy of correspondence between Scrutiny and Cabinet Members for discussion as required.
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the Scrutiny Letters and responses• Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer:	Debbie Smith, Chief Legal Officer & Monitoring Officer
Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Adrian Jeremiah
Finance Officer:	Amanda Thomas

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The production of Scrutiny Letters has become an established part of the way Scrutiny operates in Swansea. Letters from the Chair (or Conveners) allow Scrutiny to communicate directly and quickly with relevant Cabinet Members.
- 1.2 These letters are used to convey views and conclusions about particular issues discussed, and provide the opportunity to raise concerns, ask for further information, and make recommendations. This enables Scrutiny to engage with Cabinet Members on a regular and structured basis.

2. Reporting of Letters

- 2.1 All Scrutiny Letters, whether they are written by the Scrutiny Programme Committee or conveners of Panels / Working Groups, are published to ensure visibility, of the outcomes from meetings, across the Council and public.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee agenda also includes a copy of letters to/from Cabinet Members for its attention and discussion as required, e.g., letters relating to the work of the Committee, Working Groups, and Inquiry Panel follow ups. Letters are included when Cabinet Member responses that were awaited are received or where a Scrutiny Letter did not require a response.
- 2.3 Where requested Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to Scrutiny Letters within 21 calendar days. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take, or have taken, as a result of the views and recommendations made.
- 2.4 Letters relating to the work of Performance Panels are part of an ongoing dialogue with Cabinet Members and are therefore reported back and monitored by each Panel. However, all Performance Panel Conveners will provide a progress report to the Committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes.

3. Letters Log

- 3.1 This report contains a log of Scrutiny Letters produced to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of letters activity over the current 2024-25 municipal year – see **Appendix 1**. The Letters Log will show the average time taken by Cabinet Members to respond to Scrutiny letters, and the percentage of letters responded to within timescale. For comparison, during the previous year (2023/24) 68 letters were sent to Cabinet Members, of which 20 required a written response. The average time taken to respond was 22 days, with 55% responded to within the 21 days target.
- 3.2 The following letter(s) from previous Scrutiny meetings, not already reported back to the Committee, are **attached** for discussion, as necessary:

	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a	Public Engagement Scrutiny Working Group	5 February 2025	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)

3.3 Public Engagement Working Group

3.3.1 In order to assist future Committee follow up, which will be planned for around 9-12 months' time, a summary is provided below:

3.3.2 The Public Engagement Scrutiny Working Group, convened by Councillor Lyndon Jones, met on the 5 February 2025 for a focussed discussion and questioning around the Council's role and responsibilities on examination / evaluation of existing approaches to public engagement and how we can improve so that we reach all parts of society; evaluation of Council's resident's survey etc. Cllr Rob Stewart, Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader) and Lee Wenham, Head of Communications, Corporate Planning and Performance and Amy Richmond-Jones from Mid and West Wales Fire Service attended to assist the Working Group.

3.3.3 The Working Group received an update of the Council's current work in this area which included the increase in social media, recent Audit Wales reports, feeding back, plans for 2025 and working with other departments. The Working Group asked several questions on hearing the views of young people, social media, online surveys, increasing response rates and gathering in person responses. It also heard how the Mid and West Wales Fire Service engage with the public.

3.3.4 Overall:

- The Working Group was pleased that there will be a focus this year on consulting with underrepresented groups.
- It requested to see the results of the Data Cymru Wales-wide survey, referred to.
- It made a number of recommendations, including:
 - using pupil forums as a way of gathering views of young people;
 - reducing the preamble in surveys;
 - the reintroduction of focus groups; and
 - the use of Councillor networks to advertise surveys.

3.3.5 The Cabinet Member responded to the recommendations and conclusions made by the Working Group, with several actions being taken. When the Committee arranges the follow up meeting it will need to check progress on these as well as wider developments in public engagement, including:

- Whether the results of the Data Cymru survey have been shared
- Improvements that have been made in the design of surveys
- Developments in relation to the plan to focus on targeting underrepresented groups in the coming year
- Efforts to promote surveys to increase awareness, through Councillors or otherwise, e.g. social media, community notices
- Examples of focus groups and pupil forums being used as part of Council consultation processes

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Letters Log – 2024-25

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Letters / Responses

Scrutiny Letters Log (2024-2025)

Ave. Response Time (days):

19 (target within 21 days)

% responses within target:

70

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Meeting Date	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received
1	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	07-May	Audit Wales Report "Springing Forward" – Workforce and the Planning Annual Performance Report 2022/23.	Corporate Services & Performance	20-May	11-Jun
2	Education Performance Panel	09-May	Sustainable Communities for Learning and Swansea Skills Partnership	Education & Learning	23-May	n/a
3	Working Group	13-May	Community Growing	Community (Services)	28-May	18-Jun
4	Adult Services Performance Panel	07-May	Llais Cymru, Policy Commitments	Care Services	28-May	n/a
5	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	14-May	Climate Change Update; Nature and Biodiversity Update	Service Transformation	11-Jun	27-Jun
6	Education Performance Panel	20-Jun	Curriculum for Wales	Education & Learning	01-Jul	n/a
7	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	11-Jun	Audit Wales Reports on brownfield sites and performance information	Corporate Services & Performance	01-Jul	09-Jul
8	Committee	16-Apr	Crime & Disorder Scrutiny (Safer Swansea Partnership)	Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership	04-Jul	n/a
9	Committee	14-May	Public Services Board	Chair of Public Services Board	10-Jul	n/a

10	Committee	14-May	Welsh Language Standards Annual Report / Review of Welsh Language Strategy	Joint Education & Learning and Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	10-Jul	n/a
11	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	24-Jun	Sustainable Communities for Learning and Swansea Skills Partnership	Care Services	25-Jul	n/a
12	Adult Services Performance Panel	09-Jul	Inspection of Adult Services; Performance Monitoring	Care Services	01-Aug	21-Aug
13	Committee	16-Jul	Recycling & Waste Collection Service	Community (Services)	02-Aug	23-Aug
14	Committee	16-Jul	Follow Up - Co-production Working Group	Community (Support)	02-Aug	n/a
15	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	06-Aug	City Centre Retail	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	27-Aug	n/a
16	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	06-Aug	Financial Outturns 2023/24	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	27-Aug	12-Sep
17	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	10-Sep	Audit Report - Assets	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	19-Sep	n/a
18	Adult Services Performance Panel	10-Sep	Audit Report - Social Enterprises; CIW Inspection of Adult Services; Residential Care	Care Services	04-Oct	28-Oct
19	Education Performance Panel	19-Sep	Visit - Bishopston Comprehensive	Education & Learning	07-Oct	n/a
20	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	12-Sep	Annual Performance Report; Respite and Short Breaks Provision	Care Services	11-Oct	05-Nov

21	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	17-Sep	Planning Enforcement	Corporate Services & Performance	14-Oct	28-Oct
22	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	08-Oct	Q1 Budget Report	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	21-Oct	11-Nov
23	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	08-Oct	Q1 Performance Report and Draft Annual Review	Corporate Services & Performance	21-Oct	n/a
24	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	08-Oct	71-72 The Kingsway	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	21-Oct	n/a
25	Committee	17-Sep	Homelessness	Service Transformation	24-Oct	n/a
26	Education Performance Panel	17-Oct	Gwyrosydd Primary School-School Improvement Plan	Education & Learning	25-Oct	n/a
27	Committee	15-Oct	Follow Up - Public Rights of Way Working Group	Environment & Infrastructure	06-Nov	n/a
28	Committee	15-Oct	Streetscene Improvements - Cleansing Operations	Community (Services)	08-Nov	18-Nov
29	Adult Services Performance Panel	29-Oct	Regional Mental Health Strategy; LAC Impact Report; Performance Monitoring	Care Services	14-Nov	n/a
30	Education Performance Panel	14-Nov	School Admissions Policy, Careers Advice and Poverty Proofing the school day	Education & Learning	25-Nov	n/a
31	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	05-Nov	Review of Revenue Reserves	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	25-Nov	n/a
32	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	05-Nov	Summary of Regeneration Projects	Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism	25-Nov	08-Jan

33	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	12-Nov	Regional Safeguarding Board; Service Quality Unit	Care Services	04-Dec	n/a
34	Partnersiaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group	18-Nov	Update on two priorities and risk profile	Education & Learning	06-Dec	n/a
35	Committee	19-Nov	Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board	Chair of Public Services Board	17-Dec	n/a
36	Committee	19-Nov	Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2023/24	Care Services	17-Dec	n/a
37	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	19-Nov	Future Waste Strategy	Community (Services)	23-Dec	n/a
38	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	19-Nov	Water Quality and Pollution Control	Corporate Services & Performance	23-Dec	14-Jan
39	Adult Services Performance Panel	11-Dec	Social Services Complaints; DOLS	Care Services	23-Dec	n/a
40	Education Performance Panel	12-Dec	Annual Education Performance and Cabinet Member Q&A	Education & Learning	03-Jan	n/a
41	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	10-Dec	Mid Term Budget Statement	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	08-Jan	n/a
42	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	10-Dec	Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring Report	Community (Services)	08-Jan	n/a
43	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	10-Dec	Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report	Culture, Human Rights & Equalities	08-Jan	20-Jan
44	Committee	10-Dec	Welsh Housing Quality Standard and More Homes Delivery Programme	Service Transformation	23-Jan	n/a
45	Committee	10-Dec	Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities	Wellbeing	24-Jan	n/a

46	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	07-Jan	CFS Improvement Programme; Performance Monitoring	Care Services	26-Jan	n/a
47	Committee	10-Dec	Annual Complaints & Compliments Report	Service Transformation	27-Jan	n/a
48	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	14-Jan	Budget 25/26 and Q2 Budget Monitoring report 24/25	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	30-Jan	20-Feb
49	Working Group	20-Jan	Agile Working	Corporate Services & Performance	06-Feb	24-Feb
50	Committee	21-Jan	Leader Q & A Session	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	10-Feb	10-Mar
51	Committee	21-Jan	Oracle Project Closure Review and Future Developments	Service Transformation	10-Feb	n/a
52	Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel	21-Jan	Public EV Charging Provision; Local Area Energy Plan	Service Transformation	13-Feb	07-Mar
53	Education Performance Panel	23-Jan	Visit to Bishop Gore Comprehensive (cluster)	Education & Learning	13-Feb	n/a
54	Adult Services Performance Panel	28-Jan	Performance Monitoring; Transformation Programme	Care Services	17-Feb	10-Mar
55	Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel	18-Feb	Pre-decision Scrutiny - Budget	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	19-Feb	21-Feb
56	Working Group	05-Feb	Public Engagement	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader)	04-Mar	19-Mar
57	Education Performance Panel	20-Feb	School Attendance and Exclusions. Teaching and learning.	Education & Learning	07-Mar	n/a
58	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	25-Feb	Supported Living for YP Leaving Care; Corporate Parenting Board	Care Services	07-Mar	14-Mar

59	Committee	18-Feb	Draft Tackling Poverty Strategy	Wellbeing	11-Mar	n/a
60	Committee	18-Feb	Delivery of Workforce Strategy	Corporate Services & Performance	11-Mar	n/a
61	Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group	03-Mar	Business Plan/Action Plan/fiancial and risk management and Scrutiny moving forward	Education & Learning	27-Mar	n/a
62						
63						
64						
65						
66						
67						
68						
69						
70						
71						
72						
73						
74						



To:
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy,
Finance and Strategy (Leader)

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Scrutiny

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

01792 636292

e-Mail
e-Bost:

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

BY EMAIL

Date
Dyddiad:

4 March 2025

Summary: This is a letter from the Public Engagement Scrutiny Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy. The letter concerns the meeting held on 5 February 2025. A response is requested by 25 March.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

On the 5 February a Scrutiny Working Group met to discuss Public Engagement. We are grateful to you, Lee Wenham and Amy Richmond-Jones from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service for attending. We received an overview of the work being carried out by the Council in this area and a summary of the engagement approaches used by the Fire Service.

The following work is currently being conducted by the Council -

- Their work with the public targets four areas, providing information, consultation, participation and coproduction covering the spectrum of engagement opportunities.
- The biggest single change has been the demise of traditional media and the growth of social media.
- The team hold a series of events and surveys throughout the year and support individual services with their own engagement.
- There will be a focus in the upcoming municipal year on how to target hard to reach and underrepresented groups.
- Feeding back to the public is important to demonstrate action.
- Audit Wales have produced a Wales wide and Swansea specific report focussing on the perspective of service users so this information will also be reviewed over the next 12 months.

Views of young people

We heard that the views of young people are mainly carried out by the children's rights team which has 5 events planned for 2025 called Big Conversations. Regarding school pupil forums we heard that they deal primarily with school related issues, and that most

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

www.swansea.gov.uk / www.abertawe.gov.uk

I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall neu yn Gymraeg, cysylltwch â'r person uchod
To receive this information in alternative format, or in Welsh please contact the above

engagement is through the Big Conversations. Overall, we feel this is an important group to hear from and we did feel pupil forums could provide an opportunity to utilise existing groups of young people for Council consultation.

Social Media

We understand that social media is a changeable landscape and when asking about plans to use Bluesky heard that user numbers are still relatively low. The Council's use of Tik Tok is currently increasing due to the increase in adult users but other forms of social media are being constantly monitored and if felt appropriate, Bluesky could be used in future.

Online Surveys

We were informed that online polls are not always a reliable representative response and can be manipulated, which affects their accuracy. Whilst we understand this point, they can often give a quick snapshot. We asked if using polls through YouGov would help to provide structure and security. Currently the Council don't use YouGov mainly due to resource challenges but again officers gave assurance that they are open to the changing landscape. You added that opportunities to increase engagement will always be considered if they add value and costs are reasonable. We heard that there is a large amount of control over SNAP surveys.

We asked for more information on the Data Cymru survey and heard that this was a free opportunity to brand and promote a Wales wide survey. The data is currently being compiled and we will be interested in seeing the localised and benchmarked results. We asked if these 1344 responses were considered a good response, Officers informed us that just over 1000 is usual. Overall, the survey was viewed to be worth the time and resources and the Council would want to take part again in future. We asked if the responses were representative of Swansea as a whole and we heard that the survey will include a breakdown based on categories like protected characteristics and geography. This will be explored further with Data Cymru.

Gathering in person responses

We were interested in how the Council carry out face to face consultation. We heard that for specific topics, localised meetings or groups can be held as was the case for consultation on the Mumbles sea defences. There are also several forums and Big Conversations, so face to face consultation can be carried out if deemed the most appropriate mechanism. Focus groups have not been held since before the pandemic, this appears to mainly be a resource issue but will hopefully form future coproduction work which is suited to this style of engagement. There may also be examples of focus groups elsewhere in the Council not covered in the report. We feel that there is a place for focus groups as these provide an opportunity to give context and meaning as there is a place for qualitative as well as quantitative data.

Increasing response rates

We were interested to find out if the Council research new methods of engagement. Officers highlighted some learning regarding topics that engage and topics that don't, timings and using networks and groups including Councillors. We agreed that using Councillors networks and social media presence can help to boost survey responses.

We felt that some surveys contain a lengthy preamble which can be off putting. The budget survey was highlighted as an example of this. We also received confirmation that surveys do include a “don’t know” option and comments boxes when appropriate.

Regarding the promotion of surveys, officers highlighted the use of the website, social media, known networks and the use of libraries. Community noticeboards are not currently used to promote surveys, but the officer did take this on board as a potential opportunity to consider community centres or district housing offices as locations to target.

We asked if there were any specific targets or efforts related to gathering feedback from the Welsh speaking community and heard about the new Welsh language promotion strategy and work with Menter Iaith Abertawe. It is hoped that through implanting the strategy, engagement with Welsh speakers would increase.

We were interested in how other departments are supported with their own engagement and if there is a cross cutting process/approach to consultation. Departments do generally approach the central team for support so there is a general awareness of engagement across the Council. There is also the opportunity to share ideas. We asked if Council resources are an issue for gathering qualitative data. We heard that this mainly falls on the individual services to provide resources. The analysis would also fall on individual departments.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service

We heard from Amy Richmond-Jones how the Fire Service are engaging with the public as an example of how other agencies tackle public engagement. They highlighted the following.

- Use of social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
- Using incentives like competitions.
- Boosting social media posts to target certain demographics and areas with lower response rates.
- Using their external website, internal intranet, internal forums and attending internal meetings to utilise other staff networks.
- Public services boards were identified as extremely helpful in promoting key messages and encouraging information sharing.
- Attending external events including road shows.
- Paid promotion via Wales online.
- Using internal staff groups such as community safety teams and fire crews, to distribute leaflets and raise awareness of any consultation and engagement events within their local areas.
- A stakeholder group who are kept informed.
- A network of community ambassadors, to act as a critical friend.
- Fire cadets and the young persons parliament.
- Advice via the Consultation Institute.
- Evaluation reflection after engagement to identify lessons learnt.

We heard that consultations have not been hugely successful with response rates of around 500 therefore the Fire Service are finding face to face engagement more

fruitful. We felt that this does illustrate the advantages of having multiple approaches, using existing networks internally and externally and the advantages of face to face engagement.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the briefing received and questions asked we held a discussion on progress and made the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. We were pleased to hear that there will be further work on consulting with underrepresented groups and will be interested in this being followed up by the Scrutiny Programme Committee in due course.
2. We recommend the Council consider using pupil forums to circulate questionnaires or for consultation.
3. We encourage the Council to use the asset of Councillor networks for encouraging and sharing Council consultations. Councillors attend many groups and have their own social media presence which could be utilised.
4. We would be keen to see the results of the Data Cymru survey and benchmarking once analysed.
5. We request some current examples of coproduction within the Council.
6. We suggest the reintroduction of focus groups to feed into larger consultations.
7. We understand the advantages of digital consultation and the reliance on this, however digital exclusion is an issue, so thought is needed on how best to provide opportunities for those affected. Are paper copies still provided in community buildings and if so what is the uptake on this and how is this advertised?
8. We would like to know if ward profiles are known and considered when advertising consultation opportunities. For instance, targeting more face to face opportunities in areas of high digital exclusion.
9. We feel the preamble at the start of surveys needs to be simplified, particularly for the budget survey.

Your Response

We are interested in hearing your thoughts about the issues raised in this letter and would ask that you respond to the points in our conclusions and recommendations by 25 March.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Lyndon Jones

Convener, Scrutiny Working Group – Public Engagement

✉ cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk

Councillor Lyndon Jones
Convener
Scrutiny Working Group – Public
Engagement

SENT BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor Rob Stewart
Direct Line: 01792 63 6366
E-Mail: cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: RS/JW
Your Ref:
Date: 18 March 2025

Dear Councillor Jones

Thank you for your detailed letter regarding the Scrutiny Working Group's discussion on Public Engagement. We appreciate your insights and recommendations. Below, please find our responses to each of the nine recommendations:

1. Consulting with Underrepresented Groups

We fully recognise the importance of consulting with underrepresented groups and are actively exploring methods to enhance our consultation outreach at a corporate level. Councillors play a pivotal role in these efforts; as community leaders, we will be writing out to all Councillors requesting contact details for any relevant groups within their constituencies. Our Integrated Impact Assessment process identifies which communities are affected by proposals or policy decisions, informing the engagement process and approach. We provide comprehensive guidance to officers to enhance the consultation process across the Council. We will keep the Committee updated on our progress in this area at a corporate level.

2. Utilisation of Pupil Forums

We agree that pupil forums could be an effective avenue for circulating questionnaires and conducting consultations. We will explore this possibility further with Education and if we are able establish a framework for integrating pupil forums into our consultation processes.

3. Leveraging Councillor Networks

The suggestion to utilise the networks of Councillors for sharing and encouraging Council consultations is highly valuable. We will develop a strategy to better engage Councillors in our consultation efforts, leveraging their extensive networks and social media presence.

4. Data Cymru Survey Results

We acknowledge your interest in the results of the Data Cymru survey. Once the analysis is complete, we will share the findings appropriately. Currently, we are unable to provide benchmarking data as it remains confidential to the other Councils that have taken part. We are collaborating with Data Cymru to find ways to share these significant figures.

5. Examples of Coproduction

Our Coproduction Strategy has been established, accompanied by a toolkit designed to assist staff in adopting co-productive approaches. Service areas independently chose where to implement this strategy. Recent examples which the panel may wish to examine by speaking to the relevant officers include:

Domestic Abuse Strategy – Janine Evans

Tackling Poverty Strategy – Lee Cambule

6. Reintroduction of Focus Groups

The suggestion to reintroduce focus groups is noted. Focus groups serve as effective instruments for in-depth discussions on particular matters. Focus groups are usually more suited at a service level, particularly when there are changes in service delivery. It is recommended that services conduct face-to-face engagement whenever resources and time permit.

Furthermore, within the Council, there are existing mechanisms that support face-to-face engagement opportunities. These mechanisms ensure that community members and stakeholders have chances to participate actively and provide feedback on various issues. We will work to promote established mechanisms internally so service can utilise these opportunities.

7. Digital Exclusion and Paper Copies

Digital exclusion is a matter we take very seriously. Currently, we provide paper copies of our key surveys in our libraries. We promote the availability of these paper copies when advertising the surveys through various methods detailed within the report. There has been a notable reduction in the number of paper copies returned, as the vast majority of respondents participate online. We continuously seek ways to improve and will explore enhanced advertising strategies to ensure that individuals affected by digital exclusion have opportunities to engage.

8. Ward Profiles and Face-to-Face Opportunities

This would apply more to service specific consultations. Ward profiles are available and used within the IIA process to help shape the engagement. We will write out to all departments to ensure these profiles are considered when planning engagement activity.

9. Simplifying Survey Preambles

We recognise the need for simplifying the preamble at the beginning of surveys, especially for the budget survey. Our team will work on refining these introductions to make them more concise and user-friendly.

Thank you once again for your invaluable recommendations. We look forward to continued collaboration to enhance public engagement and ensure the voices of our community are heard and valued.

Yours sincerely



**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
ARWEINYDD/LEADER**



Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 April 2025

Date and Time of Upcoming Scrutiny Panel / Working Group / Regional Meetings

a) 10 April at 4.30pm – Education Performance Panel

- Additional Learning Needs Reform Update
- Education Other Than at School Services
- Pupil Voice Manifesto and the Pupil Voice in Education

b) 6 May at 10.00am – Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance Performance Panel

- Planning Annual Performance Report
- Freedom Leisure

c) 6 May at 4.30pm – Child & Family Services Performance Panel

- Performance Monitoring Report
- Delivery of Corporate Priorities / Policy Commitments in relation to Child and Family Services

d) 7 May at 4.00pm – Adult Services Performance Panel

- Update on West Glamorgan Transformation Programme
- Performance Monitoring Report
- Delivery of Corporate Priorities / Policy Commitments in relation to Adult Services

e) 8 May at 4.30pm – Education Performance Panel

- Swansea Skills Partnership Annual Update
- Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning

f) 13 May at 10.30am – Climate Change & Nature Performance Panel

- Climate Change Update
- Local Nature Recovery Section 6 Action Plan (Progress of Work across the County as a Council and with Partners)
- Achievement Against Corporate Priorities / Policy Commitments

g) 13 May at 4.00pm – Scrutiny Programme Committee

- Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board
- Compliance with Welsh Language Standards
 - Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2024/25
 - Progress with Welsh Language Promotions Strategy 2024-29

h) 19 May at 2.00pm – Grants Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

- Evidence Session: Grants in the Education Directorate

i) 19 May at 4.30pm – Scrutiny Working Group

- Tree Services

Swansea Scrutiny Meetings are multi-location meetings, held in the Lilian Hopkin Room, Guildhall as well as accessed remotely via MS Teams, unless otherwise stated.