

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

### MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON  
THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 2.00 PM

**PRESENT:** Councillor R A Clay (Chair) Presided

<b>Councillor(s)</b>	<b>Councillor(s)</b>	<b>Councillor(s)</b>
J E Burtonshaw	U C Clay	A M Cook
N J Davies	T J Hennegan	Y V Jardine
M B Lewis	R D Lewis	G J Tanner

**Also present:**

Councillor W Evans – Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty and Communities  
Councillor A S Lewis – Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services  
Councillor S E Crouch – Chair of Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel  
Councillor Paul Meara  
Mr K Ross – Swansea Community Energy & Enterprise Scheme (SCEES)

**Officer(s)**

T Shaw	Energy Manager
S Woon	Democratic Services Officer

26 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

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

27 **MINUTES:**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Communities Cabinet Advisory Committee held on 20 October, 2016, be approved and signed as a correct record.

28 **ENERGY STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE.**

The Chair introduced the Energy Strategy Action Plan and circulated the latest version. He referred to the update document provided by Officers contained with the agenda pack.

He suggested that a Task and Finish Group be established to undertake all the work the Committee had been requested to undertake on the recommendation of the Director of Place concerning the Council's Energy Strategy. Members noted that no designated Officer support had been allocated to support Cabinet Advisory Committee Task and Finish Groups.

Members noted that the Task and Finish Group's recommendations would need to be reported back to the Committee at the appropriate time. The use of a Task and

Finish Group would ensure that Members can give these topics the full attention that their importance deserves. It would also make it easier to informally co-opt expertise and ensure that those participating had chosen to give this work some priority.

The Task and Finish Group could be sub-divided into more than one Group if that seemed useful at some future point.

He stated that it was his understanding that both the Cabinet Member and the key Officers were happy with this approach.

Members noted that the matters that the Committee had been asked to look at could be cross referenced to the 'Energy Strategy Action Plan'. The specific items are as follows:

1. **ES 1.7:** although the budget referred to is fully committed for the 16/17 year, it could be available to pursue further some of the ideas that the Committee recommends. The estimate at the moment is about £60K, which is small but not insignificant.
2. **ES 2.1:** What role might Solar, Wind, Hydrogen & other renewables play in the overall strategy ? (See also ES 3.5a)
3. **ES 2.1a:** We will investigate and discuss "storage" as a key element of the overall strategy.
4. **ES 2.2:** We are invited to tackle the whole question of biomass and potential installation in Council owned assets.
5. **ES 3.2:** concerns the merit of District heating schemes with one particular project to be explained by the officers.
6. **ES 3.5a:** This is an enormous challenge, and arguably the most important single strand of our work. For "Barrage Capacity" read "Tidal Lagoon." We will need some assistance from external expertise.
7. **ES 4.1:** It is difficult to see how the various strands that we are investigating can be divorced from the key issue of our own Energy Company and it is an issue that we are bound to address in the course of our work.
8. **ES 5.4 & 5:** These might be regarded as fundamental questions that should be considered alongside all the other work. With all due respect to the time-lines (already exceeded) there is a danger of speculating theoretically without taking evidence of viability into account.

Members discussions included the development of biomass; capturing of methane gas at Tir John; district heating schemes; development of a business plan in respect of food waste; the need for tenancy agreements and tenancy training in respect of living in a passiv haus; floating power stations; clarification regarding the definition of 'an energy self-sufficient City'ed the areas of work detailed and it was noted that

areas of a cross cutting nature could be extended to other Cabinet Advisory Committees to participate in.

In response to a Member question, the Energy Manager stated that she would seek clarification regarding the £60k identified in ES1.7 and whether this money could be spent on obtaining technical and professional expertise.

**RESOLVED** that the:

1. Matters relating to item **ES 2.3a**: (Concerning methane and other potential products of landfill and is referenced specifically to the Tir Jon site) be **DEFERRED** to a later date as the development of collaborative working with neighbouring local authorities was ongoing;
2. **ES2.4b** (exploring future opportunities on a case by case basis depending upon infrastructure and government subsidies) be **INCLUDED** on the work plan for a progress update in the future as Officers were in the process of working on this issue;
3. The Energy Manager provide an appropriate Officer to be available to assist the Task and Finish Group;
4. Keith Ross (Frack Free Wales) produce a note regarding the choices available in relation to the Authority being fossil fuels free by 2025;
5. Committee Members to advise the Democratic Services Officer if they wish to participate in the Task and Finish Group

29 **JRF DOCUMENT 'WE CAN SOLVE POVERTY IN THE UK'.**

The Chair referred to discussions at previous meetings and reiterated the need to avoid duplication when examining issues that other Council bodies were looking at.

The Welsh version of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) document 'Prosperity without Poverty: Framework for Action in Wales' was circulated to Members.

The Chair welcomed Councillor S E Crouch to the meeting and advised that the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel had been tasked with examining the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy. In order to avoid duplication, the Overview and Scrutiny Manager had suggested that the Committee examine the recommendations of the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel following Cabinet's consideration in order to examine the implications of taking the findings forward.

Councillor S E Crouch agreed to the action proposed and stated that the Panel had not spent time looking at the existing strategy to determine whether the strategy is working. Members noted that the Panel had been presented with lots of evidence and were looking at what might be done in the future.

The Chair sought Member comments in respect of the JRF document:

1. The document contains recommendations that are not within the control of the local authority;
2. The case study relating to Leeds City Council is worthy of consideration;
3. The Council is leading in respect of affordable housing;

4. The recent change of direction of the Welsh Government with poverty enshrined in three targets around employment, early years and empowerment and the changes to Communities First need to be reflected in the document;
5. The current strategy looks like a strategy for the Poverty and Prevention Team. Renewable scheme in Sandfields; NEETS; Apprenticeships, the document should look like what every part of the Council is doing. Align with Public Services Board. Education, good employment, good housing, developing skills and developing capacity;
6. Need to look at wider poverty strategy and partnership working. Income cause of poverty, need well paid jobs;
7. Like emphasis on employment, but nothing about generating employment, nothing about what the obstacles are to setting up a small business (government legislation, human resources issues etc);
8. Need to examine the implications of a citizens wage in order to break away from the benefits system;
9. The Council need to ensure that they are a genuine 'living wage employer' and ensure this practice is adhered to when tendering services out to the private sector;
10. The JRF document contains a lot of global and national policy. The Council could do the living wage but it would come at a cost and this would need to be balanced against existing budgetary constraints;

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The recommendations arising from the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel be included in the work plan following consideration by Cabinet; and
2. The Chair write to the Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty and Housing detailing the Committee's views regarding the JRF document.

30 **WORK PLAN 2016-2017.**

The Chair requested that a site visit to Housing Options and lettings contracts for new Council houses be discussed at the meeting on 8 December, 2016.

The meeting ended at 3.39 pm

**CHAIR**