

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3A, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
MONDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
S E Crouch
E W Fitzgerald
J W Jones

Councillor(s)

U C Clay
N J Davies
T J Hennegan
E J King

Councillor(s)

A C S Colburn
C R Evans
C A Holley
G J Tanner

Co-opted Member(s)

P R Hood-Williams

Also Present:

Councillor Andrea Lewis Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services

Officer(s)

Martin Nicholls	Director of Place
Chris Williams	Head of Commercial Services
Wendy Parkin	Senior Lawyer
Matthew Joyce-Brown	Lawyer
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Coordinator
Gareth Borsden	Democratic Services Officer
Kate Jones	Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): F M Gordon

Co-opted Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas

130 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL & PREJUDICIAL INTEREST.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interest was declared:

Councillor G J Tanner - personal - Minute Nos.134- Welsh Quality Housing Standard – I am a Council Tenant.

131 **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.

132 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 9 January 2017 be approved as a correct record.

133 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.**

There were no public questions.

134 **CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR NEXT GENERATION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR ANDREA LEWIS).**

Councillor Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services, provided a verbal address further to the written report circulated and highlighted the following areas:

- The More Council Homes Project and Progress – she referred to the upcoming viability study of housing land; and the need for further affordable housing. She talked about the need to procure a development partner for capacity to extend house building plans beyond the pilot projects
- Progress and improvements in relation to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme
- Commercial Services and their importance in supporting staff and departments in relation to income generation and efficiencies
- Corporate Building and Property Services and her involvement in the Education Capital Programme.

Questions and discussions with the Cabinet Member focussed on the following: -

- More Council Homes Project
 - progress with first development at Milford Way
 - allocation of new homes
 - costs
 - house building capacity
 - learning from others
- Welsh Housing Quality Standard – actions following recent Scrutiny Working Group (including focus on improving engagement with tenants and Local Ward Members)
- Corporate apprenticeships and training – success in achievement of qualified tradespersons, and focus on building local skills
- Housing Voids
- Progress on reducing times for Disabled Facility Grants
- Progress in respect of Gypsy Traveller Site provision.

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Cabinet Member, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

135 **FINAL SCRUTINY INQUIRY REPORT: TACKLING POVERTY (COUNCILLOR SYBIL CROUCH, CONVENER).**

Councillor Sybil Crouch, Convener, presented the final report regarding the work that has been undertaken in relation to the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry. The inquiry focussed on how the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy could be improved. She summarised the key findings, conclusions and recommendations as noted in the circulated final report.

Amongst the recommendations she highlighted the need to:

- involve those experiencing poverty in the strategy and set up a Poverty Truth Commission, following the Leeds model
- develop a new 'whole Council' Action Plan
- include specific Tackling Poverty responsibilities within each Cabinet portfolio

The Chair referred to correspondence she had received from the Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty & Communities about the final inquiry report. A discussion ensued about the contents of the report and whether it should be submitted to Cabinet for decision. In doing so the committee considered whether sufficient evidence has been gathered in order to address the question that the inquiry aimed to answer.

The committee noted a number of areas for future scrutiny had been identified by the Panel. The Chair stated that these suggestions would be fed into the next Scrutiny Work Planning Conference in the new municipal year.

The Chair thanked the Convener and Panel Members for their work.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the report proceeds to Cabinet for decision; and
- 2) a link to the Panel's published 'Evidence Pack' be provided to Committee Members.

136 **SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORTS.**

The Committee was provided with a progress report on the work of the Schools Performance Panel.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

137 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17.**

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/2017 for review.

She indicated that there would be a special meeting of the Committee to be held on 9 March 2017 for the annual session on crime and disorder. She added that in order to manage the Committee's workload the routine standing items in relation to the Work Programme and Committee Business would also be dealt with on 9 March. This will enable the Committee to focus on the items due to be discussed at the

scheduled meeting on 13 March. This was expected to include pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet reports on Castle Square, and City Centre Regeneration.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

138 **MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY PANELS AND WORKING GROUPS.**

The Chair presented a report outlining proposed revisions to the scrutiny panel / working group memberships.

RESOLVED that the following amendments to the panel / groups, as outlined in the report be endorsed:

Digital Inclusion Working Group
Remove Councillor Tony Colburn

139 **SCRUTINY LETTERS.**

The Chair reported the Scrutiny Letters Log.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Letters Log and update be noted.

140 **FEEDBACK FROM RECENT SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

There had been no recent Scrutiny Events.

141 **UPCOMING SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

There were no upcoming Scrutiny Events.

142 **AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PLAN (FOR INFORMATION).**

The Audit Committee Work Plan for 2016/2017 was noted.

The Chair indicated that she was due to attend an upcoming meeting of the Audit Committee.

143 **DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2016/17 MUNICIPAL YEAR (ALL AT 4.30 PM).**

The dates and times of future Committee meetings for the 2016/2017 Municipal Year were noted.

144 **DATE AND TIME OF UPCOMING PANEL / WORKING GROUP MEETINGS.**

The date and time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were provided for information.

The meeting ended at 5.31 pm

CHAIR