

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

At: Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Monday, 10 April 2017

Time: 4.30 pm

Chair: Councillor Mary Jones

Membership:

Councillors: C Anderson, U C Clay, S E Crouch, N J Davies, C R Evans, E W Fitzgerald, F M Gordon, T J Hennegan, C A Holley, P R Hood-Williams, J W Jones, E J King, D J Lewis, G Owens and G J Tanner

Co-opted Members: D Anderson-Thomas

The use of Welsh is welcomed. If you wish to use Welsh please inform us by noon on the working day before the meeting.

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.** 1 - 7
To approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.
- 5 **Public Question Time.**
10 Minute Period for Questions to Cabinet Members in attendance or Chair of the Committee in relation to the Scrutiny Work Programme.
- 6 **Final Scrutiny Inquiry Report: School Readiness.** 8 - 40
(Councillor Hazel Morris, convener).
- 7 **Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports.** 41 - 71
(a) Public Services Board (Councillor Mary Jones, convener).
- 8 **Scrutiny Letters.** 72 - 111

- (a) Houses in Multiple Occupation Working Group – 12 January
- (b) Committee (Cabinet Member Q & A) – 13 February
- (c) Local Flood Risk Management Working Group – 1 March
- (d) Digital Inclusion Working Group – 6 March
- (e) Committee (pre-decision scrutiny) – 13 March
- (f) Committee (Cabinet Member Q & A) – 13 March

9 Annual Scrutiny Work Programme Review 2016/17.

112 - 150



Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Monday, 3 April 2017

Contact: Democratic Services - Tel (01792) 636923

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

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

PRESENT: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

S E Crouch
T J Hennegan
E J King

Councillor(s)

N J Davies
C A Holley

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
J W Jones

Also Present

Clive Lloyd
Robert Francis-Davies

Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance
Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration

Officer(s)

Kate Jones
Brij Madahar
Martin Nicholls
Lee Richards
Debbie Smith
Mark Thomas
Alun Thomas
Vicky Thomas

Democratic Services Officer
Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Director of Place
Lead City Centre Development Surveyor
Interim Deputy Head of Legal & Democratic Services.
Group Leader, Highways and Transportation
Team Leader Site Supervision
Sustainable Swansea Programme Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): U C Clay, C R Evans, F M Gordon and P R Hood-Williams
Independent Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas

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

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

160 **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.

161 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 13 February 2017 be approved as a correct record.

162 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.**

The Committee heard from Mr East who raised questions on the following: -

- Item 6 – Cabinet Member Q & A:
 - Whether the Council was receiving any rent from the Head Leaseholder for the former British Home Stores (BHS) unit
 - Whether in-house officers or consultants are used for valuation of assets prior to disposal and whether the public are getting value for money
- Item 8 – Pre-decision scrutiny of report on Castle Square:
 - What thought given to the loss of parking provision around St Mary's Church as part of the proposed integration of Castle Square with St Mary's Square, as shown in the Appendix, and whether there has been discussion with the Church about development plans
- Item 9 – Pre-decision scrutiny of report on City Centre Regeneration:
 - Anticipated decision on the City Deal as report indicated decision expected by the time of cabinet on 16 March
 - Projected costs of demolition of the Civic Centre
- Item 12 – Oceana Building :
 - Availability of information on Oceana Building to the public given increased costs relating to asbestos removal

The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance assured Mr East that the Authority was legally bound to get the best commercial value when disposing of Assets in order to generate the largest capital receipt possible, and would be held to account by auditors.

In respect of the integration of Castle Square and St Mary's Square, the Cabinet Member noted that whilst this was not strictly his domain, the artists impressions were in the very early stages and it was likely that further discussions on parking provision would take place.

The Cabinet Member provided assurance that discussions in respect of the City Deal were at a very advanced stage. It was hoped that the deal would have been announced at the Chancellors budget, but unfortunately, this was not the case. There was significant support from businesses and many had made representations at their disappointment at the lack of announcement. He added that it was unknown whether the deal would now be finalised in time for Cabinet this week, but it was hoped that it would be finalised very soon.

The Cabinet Member would write to Mr East with a full written response in respect of the former BHS unit and the relevant Cabinet Member would provide a written response in respect of the query about demolition costs of the Civic Centre.

The Interim Deputy Head of Legal and Democratic Services clarified the necessity and reasons for Item 12, Oceana Building – Asbestos Survey / Contract Award and Financial Implications being dealt with as a closed item.

Mr East also expressed his concerns generally over the use of abbreviations and jargon in council reports making them difficult to understand.

163 **CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION & PERFORMANCE (COUNCILLOR CLIVE LLOYD).**

Councillor Clive Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance, provided a verbal address further to the written report circulated and highlighted the following areas:

- The Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future transformation programme:
 - Delivery of Savings
 - Impact and Outcomes of Commissioning Reviews with 12 Commissioning Reviews completed
 - Reflection on the Commissioning Review process and new Cross Cutting Proposals
 - The Development and Success of the Programme which was now becoming embedded in the culture of the Council
 - The valuable contribution made by Scrutiny (e.g. pre-decision scrutiny of commissioning reviews)

- Progress on Digital Strategy (now going into its second year) and ICT
 - ICT had been brought back in-house
 - Savings achieved
 - Infrastructure upgraded to improved resilience
 - Development of a Unified Communication System (collaboration with ABMU Health Board on telephony)
 - Projects such as roll out of Office 365 and Skype for Business
 - Upgrades to systems for services e.g. Development of Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)
 - Increased Support for Agile Working
 - Customer Contact Centre Improvements

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

- The need to develop Commissioning Reviews to make them more meaningful with greater external stakeholder input and challenge
- Spending on Corporate ICT improvement and savings made
- Responsibility for the Risk Management Framework
- Accommodation Strategy and interim plans for civic office accommodation whilst development is taking place
- Improving the corporate culture; Improving the workplace in order to recruit and retain staff
- The relationship between cabinet and scrutiny – members noted the Cabinet Member's comments about the crucial role of played by scrutiny, as a critical friend, in improvement, development and transformation
- Training and awareness of safeguarding responsibilities across the Council

- Take up and continuing development of the Councillors Casework System
- Penllergaer Civic Site disposal – whether there had been sufficient return from the site and the merit of potential development of the land for housing.
- Provision and funding of suitable ICT for agile working

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

164 **SUSTAINABLE SWANSEA - CROSS CUTTING PROPOSALS (MARTIN NICHOLLS, DIRECTOR - PLACE).**

A presentation on 'Sustainable Swansea – Cross Cutting Proposals' was provided by Martin Nicholls, Director of Place and Vicky Thomas, Sustainable Swansea Programme Manager.

The presentation comprised of the following: -

- Reshaped – Sustainable Swansea Programme
- Commissioning Reviews – Final Phase Lessons Leant
- Why Cross Cutting?
- Cross Cutting Proposals
- What do we need today?
- Next Steps

In developing a new approach there was acknowledgement that some Commissioning Reviews were narrow in focus and prepared in isolation, thereby missing cross-cutting opportunities and linkages with other services. There was also recognition of the need to maximise consultation and engagement with external stakeholders, including service users. This was something highlighted by scrutiny having considered a number of commissioning reviews. The new emphasis on co-production was welcomed, which would enable stakeholders to be involved in shaping future service design and delivery.

The committee was provided with information about potential cross-cutting areas identified for review and initial thinking about those pieces of work.

Questions and discussions focussed on: -

- The draft cross-cutting proposals and scope of each area
- Prioritisation of areas
- Meaning of co-production in the context of cross-cutting reviews
- Delivery of normal business alongside reviews
- Appropriate stages for scrutiny involvement
- Governance arrangements
- The need for get the scope right at the outset
- Outcomes from reviews
- Potential trial run with one review
- Jargon and technical knowledge which restricts understanding and participation

Committee members were invited to comment on the new cross cutting proposals and feedback directly to the Director by the end of March.

Members considered the engagement of scrutiny in the process. The committee confirmed that it would be appropriate for scrutiny to be involved at the initial scoping stage, and then the final reporting stage (for pre-decision scrutiny).

The committee suggested that if councillors are to be invited to workshops, relating to the scoping of cross-cutting proposals, it would be helpful to introduce additional councillor specific sessions to such arrangements. The Director undertook to pilot this approach for the first cross-cutting review.

Members also highlighted the need for information about future cross-cutting reviews to be communicated and explained in a way so that they are easily understood, avoiding the use of acronyms, jargon and complex language which restricts understanding and participation.

RESOLVED that the contents of the presentation be noted

165 **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: CASTLE SQUARE - DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES (REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION).**

Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Regeneration and Lee Richards, Lead City Centre Development Surveyor were present for the committee's consideration of the cabinet report on 'Castle Square Development & Public Realm Opportunities'.

The Cabinet Member spoke about: -

- The site history, including benefits and issues of the previous green space of Castle Gardens
- Architectural awards won for current Square, but it's now tired and dated appearance (now 25 years old)
- Improvements that could be made to the area, e.g. lighting of prominent / historic buildings, better use of the Castle
- Increase in events held in City Centre to help with regeneration and the economy

The committee considered the proposed recommendations in the report and raised any issues and concerns that should be brought to the attention of Cabinet ahead of its decision on 16 March.

The committee indicated no objection to the recommendation and support for the redevelopment and improvement of Castle Square. However, members asked for their concerns about the following to be shared with Cabinet:

- Securing future public access and extent of public open space
- Potential conflict between the council and businesses on the site over use e.g. licensing issues

- Satisfying those who regard the Square as a place of quiet and rest
- The need for consultations with St Mary's Church relating to the integration of Castle Square and St Mary's Square
- Clarification over the proposed removal of a cycle lane around the site

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Cabinet Member on the views of the Committee, for Cabinet's consideration.

166 **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: SWANSEA CITY CENTRE REGENERATION - DELIVERY AND FUNDING STRATEGY. (REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION).**

Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Regeneration and Lee Richards, Lead City Centre Development Surveyor were present for the committee's consideration of the cabinet report on 'Swansea City Centre Regeneration – Delivery and Funding Strategy'.

The Chair explained to the Cabinet Member that the report had been called for pre-decision scrutiny as it was indicated to the committee that it would contain information on the accommodation strategy, e.g. concerning the relocation of staff from the Civic Centre, and for the Central Library and Archives Service.

The Committee noted very little within the report about the accommodation strategy, except reference to the need (and associated cost) to undertake feasibility and flood mitigation assessment of the Civic Centre site post relocation of the Civic Centre to the City Centre.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that no decisions were being made at this stage on those matters however would be happy for relevant reports to come to the committee for pre-decision scrutiny in the future.

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Cabinet Member on the views of the Committee, for Cabinet's consideration.

167 **DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2016/2017 MUNICIPAL YEAR (ALL AT 4.30 PM).**

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

168 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC.**

The Committee was requested to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business identified in the recommendations to the report on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph 14 of 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation)(Wales) Order 2007, relevant to the item of business as set out in the report.

The Committee considered the Public Interest Test in deciding to exclude the public from the meeting for the items of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant, as set out in the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the public be excluded for the following item of business.

169 **OCEANA BUILDING - ASBESTOS SURVEY / CONTRACT AWARD AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.**

The Committee discussed issues relating to the asbestos survey / contract award and financial implications regarding the Oceana Building. A number of questions were asked of officers present who responded accordingly.

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member, reflecting on the discussion and views of the Committee on this matter.

The meeting ended at 6.45 pm

CHAIR

Agenda Item 6

Report of the Convener of the School Readiness Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 10 April 2017

SCHOOL READINESS SCRUTINY INQUIRY FINAL REPORT

Purpose	To present the final report for the scrutiny inquiry into school readiness
Content	The final report is attached which concludes the inquiry.
Councillors are being asked to	a) Agree the report for submission to Cabinet b) Identify any issues that might be emphasised as the report is presented to Cabinet c) Consider whether any issues arising merit inclusion in the future scrutiny work programme
Lead Councillor	Councillor Hazel Morris, Convener
Lead Officer and Report Author	Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer

1. Details

- 1.1 The final report arising from the Scrutiny Panel's inquiry into school readiness is presented to the Committee for agreement. The attached report presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from the inquiry that sought to answer the following question:

'How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?'

- 1.2 The report is structured in the following way:

- Foreword: Why This Matters
- Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations
- Why We Produced this Report
- Evidence Considered
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Acknowledgements
- About the Inquiry Panel

- 1.3 The Scrutiny Programme Committee are asked to agree the report for submission to Cabinet. In considering the report the Committee should satisfy themselves that:

- Sufficient evidence has been gathered in order to address the question that the inquiry aimed to answer;

- The conclusions of the panel are supported by the evidence gathered by the Panel;
- The recommendations of the Panel follow from their conclusions and are reasonable, achievable and capable of being actioned and monitored.

If the Committee have any issues with regard to the content of the report, these will need to be referred back to the Panel for further consideration prior to the report being re-presented to the Committee.

- 1.4 In considering the report the Committee may wish to emphasise aspects of the Inquiry to Cabinet. Points of this type can be included on the covering report that goes to Cabinet and will be attributed to the Committee.

2. Legal Implications

- 2.1 There are no specific legal implications at this stage.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to this report. Any potential implications will be outlined in the Cabinet response.

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 Equality and engagement issues were formally considered at the scoping stage of this inquiry and borne in mind by the panel throughout evidence gathering. The Cabinet Member will need to ensure that implications are considered via application of the corporate Equality Impact Assessment process when considering the response to the recommendations. This is of particular importance for this inquiry as schools are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) in their own right.

Background Papers: *see attached report*

Contact: Michelle Roberts, *Scrutiny Officer, 01792 637256*

Date: *28/03/2017*

Legal Officer: *Wendy Parkin*

Finance Officer: *Carl Billingsley*

Access to Services: *Phil Couch*

School Readiness Scrutiny Inquiry

How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?



The School Readiness Scrutiny Inquiry Panel
City and County of Swansea - Dinas a Sir Abertawe



March 2017

Why This Matters

Foreword by **Councillor Hazel Morris**



We found there to be a wealth of evidence that suggests investment in early years services, including children's school readiness, is hugely beneficial, not only to children and their families, but society as a whole. There is evidence that this investment can help to break the cycle of disadvantage in our communities by changing children's life chances.

We were interested to explore the many examples of good practice being shown that helps make children and parents school ready. This included for example a visit to St Helens Primary School and Flying Start where they are aspiring to be a school that is at the heart of the community, and the parents we spoke to said that they had achieved this aim. We also visited Stepping Stones and the Swansea Children Centre where they are working to develop children's physical and emotional school readiness and preparing children and their parents for the transition to school.

However, a key finding from our inquiry was that it is not only children and parents that need to become more school ready but schools themselves need to be more 'child ready'. We felt that there could be more robust challenge for schools on this aspect.

We also found gaps in service provision for families in Swansea. In particular, the coverage of multi-agency support via Flying Start is only available to one quarter of children and their families in Swansea. We recognised that this is based upon the areas identified as having most need but we know that there are children requiring this type of support across other parts of Swansea. All children would benefit from this type of provision, so we would like to see the excellent practice and the ethos found in Flying Start replicated in other areas.

We hope that Cabinet will find this report useful and that our recommendations go some way in helping to improve school readiness in Swansea.

The Panel met nine times over a four month period in order to complete this inquiry. I would like to thank the members of the Inquiry Panel who gave their time and commitment and all of those people who gave evidence and information to the Panel.

Contents

1.	Why we produced this report	1
1.1.1	Overview	1
1.1.2	Selecting the topic	1
1.1.3	Context of the inquiry and intended contribution	2
2.	Evidence collected	4
3.	Conclusions	4
3.1	Understand the cause and effect of the issues faced by children and their families in Swansea	4
3.2	Protect investment in early years services	7
3.3	Support those initiatives that are having a clear impact on children having the best start in life	8
3.4	Measure impact	13
3.5	Ensure that schools are child ready	15
3.6	Organisations must work closely together to address gaps identified in the delivery of early years services	16
3.7	Keep early years issues high on the agenda	18
3.8	Engage with parents, families and the wider community	18
3.9	Raise public awareness of school readiness and encourage use of key messages across Swansea	24
4.	Recommendations	25
5.	Acknowledgements	27
6	About the Inquiry	27

1 WHY WE PRODUCED THIS REPORT

Overview

1.1.1 This report focusses on the following question:

How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?

Selecting a topic

1.1.2 The inquiry into school readiness was proposed at the Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference in May 2016 and was subsequently included in the scrutiny work programme by the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

1.1.3 This topic was chosen because:

There is considerable international evidence from a wide spectrum of leading academics and practitioners that investment in the early years will break the cycle of disadvantage by changing children's life chances. They are better able to make a positive contribution to society and at the same time reduce the need for very costly remedial services across the public sector.

'Action to reduce health inequalities must start before birth and be followed through the life of a child. Only then can the close links between early disadvantage and poor outcomes throughout life be broken'.

The Marmot Review Fair Society, Healthy Lives

The Panel agreed to investigate the following aspects:

1. **What is meant by improving children school readiness in practice?**
What is involved in developing children's school readiness including for example: self-care, literacy, language and socialisation.
2. **Cause and effect:** What is the effect of children's school readiness on their longer-term educational performance? What are the reasons for children not being ready for school? How do the council and its partners engage with parents/carers currently and what are we doing to improve this?
3. **Partners/professional relationships:** Who is involved in improving children's school readiness in Swansea and do they work together effectively to achieve this aim, particularly in relation to engaging parents?
4. **Working with families:** How does the council and its partners work with families to help improve children's school readiness?
5. **Impact:** What has been the impact of those initiatives that help develop school readiness with particular reference to parental engagement?
6. **Good Practice:** Look at guidance and examples of good practice in improving school readiness particularly parental engagement.

The Context of the inquiry

1.1.4 *Population*

There are approximately 13,200 0-4 year olds living in the City and County of Swansea which accounts for 5.5% of the overall population. An overview of recent trends over the ten-year period 2004-2014 reflects a growth of around 1,000 0-4 year olds (+7.8%), mainly attributable to an increasing number of births, particularly since the late 2000s. The number of live births in Swansea between January 2015 and December 2015 (inclusive) was 2,344. (1179 male and 1165 female).

1.1.5 *Services*

Funding for early years services is provided through a variety of sources including the Health Board, the Local Authority, the Welsh Government, generated income and grants. Services are provided on a multi-agency basis across the Local Authority, Health Board, Schools, Private Sector and 3rd Sector. Given the diversity of the sector it is very difficult to ascertain a clear and accurate picture of investment Swansea wide in early years provision across universal, targeted and specialist services.

1.1.6 *One Swansea Plan*

The purpose of this plan is to improve the wellbeing of people in Swansea by ensuring that professionals and the public work together. It was developed by Swansea Local Service Board which included the main public service agencies for the area and representatives of the voluntary and business sectors. The two key aspects relating to early years in this plan include:

A. Children Have a Good Start in Life

A good start in life for our children is the key to community wellbeing for all. The pre-school years are the time when the biggest difference can be made. If children have a good start in life they are likely to be healthier, likely to be better learners and less likely to experience deprivation. These factors lead in turn to a greater likelihood of a good job and of gaining a better standard of living. All of these factors mean that people are more able to look after the environment and contribute to safe and prosperous communities.

B. People Learn Successfully

Learning is critical for individual and community wellbeing. School age learning is of course our main focus but learning needs to be lifelong with generations supporting each other. Education helps to lift people out of poverty and protects those at risk of poverty and disadvantage. Skills increase employability and benefit the economy. Opportunities for lifelong learning and skills development need to be available in the workplace and in communities as well as in formal setting. Informal education and training has an important role to play.

1.1.7 *Corporate Plan – Corporate Priority 4*

There are a number of key areas which the Council are working to address relating to early years including:

- Children having the best start in life and being able to achieve in their early years enabling them to learn and thrive.

- Families are supported to live healthy lives

What needs improving?

- We need more accessible high quality services for all children aged between 0 – 7 years of age.
- We need to ensure all children are able to be ready for school and therefore able to play, communicate, move and problem solve.
- We need to ensure that children of all ages maximise their learning potential.

What are we going to do?

Implement Swansea's Early Years Strategy which is working with Health to ensure all children that live in Swansea are supported to develop and be the best they can be. This is going to be done by:

- Raising standards in child development within all childcare settings.
- Using the Swansea statement to raise awareness of child development.
- Running Flying Start Plus and our Early Years language pathway.

What Outcomes are we seeking to achieve?

- Children have a good start in life; 2 and 3 year old children in the Flying Start are helped to achieve their expected language, emotional, social and cognitive development.
- Children who are not disadvantaged by poverty when achieving and attaining standards and wellbeing in education.

Intended Contribution of Inquiry

- 1.1.8 As a Panel we believe that we can make a valuable contribution to this topic. We recognise that, while there are no easy answers, success will only come from a conversation that everyone is able to contribute to. It is in this spirit that our conclusions and recommendations are offered.
- 1.1.9 Specifically this report aims to contribute to this vital debate by:
- Offering proposals for improvement
 - Providing a councillor perspective
 - Drawing together some general principles addressing gaps in development of early years services
 - Pointing to good practice examples
 - Sharing the views of different people involved
- 1.1.10 We are happy to recognise the limitations of the inquiry. Given the complexity of the topic and the time that we had this report necessarily provides a broad view.
- 1.1.11 Finally, many of our conclusions are in line with the Council's current direction of travel and these are offered in order to provide reassurance. Others may be either additional or contrary to what has already been agreed. These are intended to offer challenge and to stimulate debate. Where we have made recommendations these are intended to help improve the service.

2 EVIDENCE COLLECTED

2.1.1 Evidence was collected between November 2016 and February 2017. The evidence gathering activities undertaken included:

- a. Visit to Stepping Stones Children's Centre, meeting with staff and parents
- b. Swansea Library Service
- c. Visit to Swansea Children's Centre meeting with staff and parents
- d. Meeting with Health Visitors
- e. Visit to St Helens Primary School Flying Start, meeting with staff and parents
- f. Meeting with representatives of the GP Partnership Project pilot
- g. Meeting with Headteacher from Trallwn Primary School
- h. Survey of Welsh Medium Primary Schools and day care settings
- i. Meeting with Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Healthy City and Performance & Early Intervention Strategic Manager
- j. Relevant policy, advisory and research documents
- k. University of Wales Trinity St David, Early Years Project

2.1.2 For full details of the evidence gathered including details of all the findings from each session please see the evidence pack for this inquiry. This can be downloaded at www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutinypublications

3 CONCLUSIONS

This report considers the findings from the scrutiny inquiry into school readiness. Each of these conclusions therefore is a suggestion about how the Council's Cabinet might approach this problem. Specific proposals are identified throughout and listed separately in the recommendations section that follows and are designed to answer the inquiry key question '*How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?*'

3.1 Understand the cause and effect of the issues faced by children and their families in Swansea

3.1.1 We found little consensus as to what constitutes being 'ready for school' across the sector and at what age relates to being school ready, is it at 5 or at 3 years of age? The panel recognise that child development does not necessarily line up with school starting age. Children starting school at 3 are much less ready than those at 5 years. Our inquiry therefore also led us to consider whether schools are 'child ready', which we will explain later in the report.

The term 'school ready' was considered vague by the Panel who agreed to define their inquiry to '*Children 0-5 years of age particularly relating to self-care, literacy, language and socialisation with particular reference to how we and our partners work with parents and care-givers to ensure children are ready for school*'.

- 3.1.2 The Panel heard that the Healthy City Board in Swansea, of which Swansea Council is part, have made a commitment to prioritising Early Years (-9 months to 5 years) and to improving school readiness. The approach and impetus has been in collaboration with the Institute of Health Equity (Marmot Review) under the Healthy City programme. They are working with partners in Swansea to accelerate progress in reducing health inequality by focussing on 'giving every child the best start'. Councillors were pleased to hear that this approach is rooted in the principle of a universal strategy and by targeting of services on a proportionate basis Swansea wide.
- 3.1.3 The Healthy City Board has pledged, as part of the School Readiness Strategy, to 'improve young children's development outcomes across the population with a clear focus on closing the gap in school readiness between advantaged and disadvantaged groups of young children' by ensuring that the four recommendations from the strategy are met by:
1. Increasing awareness of readiness (raise awareness of how families and communities can improve a child's school readiness through a statement of key messages)
 2. Assessing and signposting (early identification of developmental needs, increased accessibility to early years services, promotion of community around the child approach)
 3. Service Re-orientation and Development (expansion of the coverage of the early years pathway, greater co-ordinated level of resource)
 4. Data and Service Quality (Routine use of data collection and sharing to drive developmental milestones, quality of early years services through a motivated and highly skilled workforce.
- 3.1.4 The Panel did feel that many of the initiatives available in the defined target areas like Flying Start are excellent and are clearly making an impact in school readiness but that there are still children and families who need such services outside of those defined areas. The challenge in our communities is how we address that difference: are we only giving every child in Flying Start areas the best start in life? Councillors found from speaking to schools and parents that children are clearly more 'ready' for school after they have been to a Flying Start setting.
- 3.1.5 The Marmot Review Fair Society, Healthy Lives¹ highlights the issue of inequalities in early childhood development. The Panel supported the policy objectives and recommendations that are detailed in this report relating to early years in particular:
- Priority objectives*
1. Reduce inequalities in the early development of physical and emotional health, and cognitive, linguistic, and social skills.
 2. Ensure high quality maternity services, parenting programmes, childcare and early years education to meet need across the social gradient.
 3. Build resilience and well-being of young children across social gradient.

¹ [Marmot Review Fair Society, Healthy Lives](#)

Policy recommendations

1. Increase the proportion of overall expenditure allocated to early years and ensure that expenditure on early years development is focused progressively across the social gradient.
 2. Support families to achieve progressive improvements in early child development, including:
 - Giving priority to pre- and post-natal interventions that reduce adverse outcomes of pregnancy and infancy
 - Providing paid parental leave in the first year of life with a minimum income for healthy living
 - Providing routine support to families through parenting programmes, Children's Centres and key workers, delivered to meet social need via outreach to families
 - Developing programmes for the transition to school.
 3. Provide good quality early years education and childcare proportionately across the gradient. This provision should be:
 - Combined with outreach to increase the take-up by children from disadvantaged families
 - Provided on the basis of evaluated models and to meet quality standards.
- 3.1.6 Positive childhood experience and actions to reduce and negate negative influences in children's early years is considered central to breaking the cycle of disadvantage in communities. This in turn will improve children's life chances and reduce the need for expensive interventions in later years.

'Children who experience stressful and poor quality childhoods are more likely to adopt health-harming behaviours during adolescence which can themselves lead to mental health illness and diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes later in life. Adverse Childhood Experiences are not just a concern for health. Experiencing ACEs means individuals are more likely to perform poorly at school, more likely to be involved in crime and ultimately less likely to be a productive member of society.'

An increasing body of research identifies the long-term harms that can result from chronic stress on individuals during childhood. Such stress arise from the abuse and neglect of children but also from growing up in households where children are routinely exposed to issues such as domestic violence or individuals with alcohol and other substance use problems.

Adverse Childhood Experiences, Public Health Wales 2016²

The Public Health Wales 2016 report into Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the impact on health-harming behaviours in the Welsh adult population (Alcohol Use, Drug Use, Violence, Sexual Behaviour, Incarceration, Smoking and Poor Diet) was considered by the Panel and the conclusions from this document were seen as key in understanding what affects children's future life changes, thus enabling interventions to be put into place that can help address these ACEs or even stop them happening.

² [Public Health Wales, Report into Adverse Childhood Experiences in Welsh Adult Population](#)

The Panel agreed that positive early years experiences are vital to develop the necessary resilience and to mitigate adverse impacts and that consideration and integration of this research into policies across those services working with children and young adults was extremely important.

Some work has begun into breaking the ACE Cycle in Wales through national and local policies and programmes. A range of national policies and programmes are being progressed which aim to:

- Identify and intervene where children may already be victims of abuse, neglect or living in adverse childhood environments;
- Better equip parents and care-givers with the necessary skills to avoid ACEs arising within the home environment and encourage development of social and emotional well-being and resilience in the child;
- Ensure that indirect harms from for instance, domestic violence, substance misuse and other mental and behavioural problems in the family setting are identified, addressed and their impact on children minimised.

In Swansea these policies are being addressed through tackling poverty programmes like Flying Start, Families First and Communities First. These programmes are targeted to the most deprived communities in Swansea. The Panel felt that these services are doing excellent work but we must ensure that the momentum in these developments is continually progressed and maintained.

3.1.7 The Wellbeing and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 puts in place a Sustainable Development Principle which tells organisations how to go about meeting their duty under the Act. The Panel found that there are five key ways of working that apply to this and these must be the objective of, and built into, planning for early years services. These include:

1. Long-term - balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs. Objectives must look ahead to the long-term at least 10+ years and up to 25+ years into the future.
2. Prevention - when setting and taking steps to meet its well-being Objectives, acting to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse.
3. Integration - considering how its Well-being Objectives may impact upon each of the seven Well-being goals and on its other objectives
4. Collaboration - considering how it can work with other public bodies, or with other parts of the same organisations to meet the Well-being Objectives.
5. Involvement - involving people with an interest in achieving its Well-being Objectives and ensuring that those reflect the diversity of the area.

3.2 Protect investment in the early years services

3.2.1 The Panel explored the economic case for allocating scarce public resources, from pregnancy to age 2, including children being school ready. Transforming Young Lives across Wales, The Economic Argument for Investing in Early

Years, Bangor University³ talks about shifting the spending curve towards prevention and early years investment and how this shift in investment would result in the need to spend less in later life services.

'Health economics highlights the fact that decisions about resource use involve choices that are ultimately trade-offs in the use of public sector resources, trade-offs between different groups in society and trade-offs between different stages in the life course.'

'Through investment in Early Years, Wales will benefit in terms of the economy and improve social cohesion. Babies born today could have a greater opportunity to thrive than at present.'

- 3.2.2 The Panel recognise that we have started on the path of investment in prevention and early intervention in Swansea but the argument within this paper indicated developing things further over the longer term. This links to and can be supported by the recommendations outlined in the Wellbeing and Future Generation Act 2015⁴. The Act will expect local authorities and its partners to *'look to the long term as well as focusing on now take action to try and stop problems getting worse - or even stop them happening in the first place'*.

The Panel heard that Budgets for the sector are cross-agency and that currently there is no pooled budget in place to provide additionality to core services. Any increase in budget for Early Years within the authority or the Health Board will require a shift of resource from elsewhere as there are no additional resources available.

The findings of the inquiry indicate that should any dedicated Early Years funding including Flying Start be reduced or cut then at this will have a detrimental impact on our ability to deliver the Strategy and ultimately on improving outcomes for the youngest children in Swansea.

3.3 Support those initiatives that are having a clear impact on children having the best start in life

- 3.3.1 The Panel heard about the core aspects of the Early Years Strategy in Swansea and the impact it is making for young children and their families.
- 3.3.2 The first of these aspects is the Healthy Child Wales Programme which has the overarching aim of developing resilient families that are able to support their children to achieve the best possible health, social and educational outcomes. In Swansea the Healthy City Board is focussing on giving 'every child the best start' and is working to deliver this aim in conjunction with partners across the public and voluntary sector.

³ [Transforming Young Lives across Wales](#), The Economic Argument for Investing in Early Years, Bangor University

⁴ [Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015](#)

The premise of the focus on 'best start' is that experiences during ante natal and infant years of a child's life shape their future life chances. Positive early years experiences are vital to developing the necessary resilience and to mitigate against adverse impacts. The Panel however recognised that it is very difficult to quantify the direct impact as leading economists argue that the impact is longer term with the financial benefits across a wide range of sectors and organisations. The Panel heard that economists say that there would be a 4:1 return for every £1 spent in this area.

- 3.3.3 The Early Years Pathway is an important aspect that has the overall aim of developing the level of resilience within the family. The Panel heard that an assessment is made that determines which Health Visiting level the family will receive: universal, enhanced or intensive. The assessment is completed with the child and family. This programme is delivered in close collaboration with partners across the public and third sector and most importantly in partnership with families. The assessment consists of looking at the child's early years development and an analysis of the family and child's needs, then using this to signpost or refer/identify interventions to address the needs identified.

The Panel recognise that Health Visitors play a pivotal role in achieving the best possible start in life for children and their families. This is done by working with and supporting families during the crucial early years of a child's life.

The emerging evidence shows that investment in the early years of life has significant positive impact on a child's health, social and educational development and their long term outcomes. The health service has a fundamental role in supporting families so children are in a position to fully realise their potential. The delivery of the Healthy Child Wales Programme should make a significant contribution in ensuring this support is readily available.

The Welsh Government expects that every child and family will be offered the HCWP. The programme underpins the concept of progressive universalism and aims to identify a minimum set of key interventions to all families with pre-school children, irrespective of need. For some families there will be a need to increase intervention to facilitate more intensive support.

An overview of the Healthy Child Wales Programme NHS Wales

The Panel was particularly interested to hear about the assessments made in early years as part of the surveillance component of the Healthy Child Wales Programme. We are keen to see universal identification of resilience with more intensive support for those who require it. The Panel believe that this will, in time, show improved school readiness as one of the aspects of improving children's life chances.

3.3.4 **Flying Start**⁵ is a Welsh Government Initiative Early Years programme for families with children less than four years of age who live in some of the most deprived areas of Wales. Flying Start is targeted at defined geographical areas within each Local Authority where there are the highest concentrations of households in receipt of income benefit. Flying Start is offered universally within these areas.

Flying Start forms part of a targeted pathway where approximately 25% of 0-3 year olds are eligible. All children and their families are entitled to

- Funded childcare for 2-3 year olds for 2.5 hours a day
- Flying Start Health Visiting Programme
- Parenting support
- Early language development

Swansea has 19 Flying Start facilities based within Schools of which 1 is a dedicated welsh medium setting.

In addition there is 1 specialised pathway catering for children with additional needs at Stepping Stones (Action for Children) in Killay.

3.3.5 The legislative context is changing with regard to Additional Learning Needs. The (final) Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill was presented to the National Assembly for Wales on 12.12.2016. Unsure when royal assent will be given. The first draft Code of Practice was published in September 2015. The second draft is likely to be published in February 2017.

One of the key legislative changes will have significant implications for Early Years including Flying Start. This change relates to the change in age range where support for children with ALN must be given. The change in age relates to children and young people from the ages from 0-25 years. It is anticipated that the new code will provide much more in depth information.

In light of this it is suggested that it would be beneficial for the Early Years Services led by the Flying Start service in collaboration with the Additional Learning Needs Unit in Education to begin to prepare for these changes.

3.3.6 Integrated **Children's Centres** are based on the concept of providing an integrated service to secure good outcomes for children and their parents and thus ensure the best start in life. Each Centre provides: open access play, early years education, high quality childcare, community training, other vital family support services. Currently in Swansea we have one Children's Centre located in Penlan, with a second under construction located in Mayhill.

3.3.7 The Panel were pleased to see that Flying Start facilities now form part of schools which is good for not only relationship building with parents but for ease of transition from Flying Start into school. The Flying Start and school are able to mirror activities and behaviour which help prepare both the child and their parent/s for the demands and structure of school life.

⁵ Flying Start Wales Government: <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/parenting-support-guidance/help/flyingstart/?lang=en>

3.3.8 The Panel looked at what practically is done within Flying Start and Children's Centres that develops school readiness believing that this then can be shared and used in areas/setting where Flying Start does not operate. They found (not an exhaustive list):

- Structured childcare that mirrors early primary school and is operated as a professional day care setting.
- Access to Health Visitor and the Health Wales Programme
- Early language development, improving communication and socialisation
- Working closely with parents and providing assistance, advice and support
- Transition to school

3.3.9 The Panel found there to be a number of other initiatives that are or could potentially show promise in improving early years development and these are detailed below.

3.3.10 ***Penderi GP Partnership Project***,⁶ the purpose of this project is to ensure that key parenting messages are getting out to children and their families in order to effect positive change and to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences. The Partnership includes:

- GP cluster, which included GPs, Practice Managers and the Parenting six GP practices within the Penderi Partnership Network
- post-natal services/Health Visitors
- early intervention team
- child and family clinics based within primary care settings

The main aim of this work is to provide support and skills training for parents with the purpose of promoting children's wellbeing by enhancing protective factors and reducing their exposure to risk. This is done by:

- supporting families to build upon skills and knowledge that allow parents to better meet the needs of their children
- Working with families in order to assess need in order to identify a family plan that will support the bespoke family learning
- Offering support, advice and guidance and interventions on a range of issues such as domestic violence, behaviour management
- Building protective factors and resilience within families

The Panel were supportive of this pilot which is showing early evidence that is very positive.

3.3.11 ***Education begins at Home Campaign run by Wales Government***⁷, the Campaign highlights that the home environment is the single biggest factor in educational attainment. By creating an environment that values education and

⁶ Penderi GP Partnership Network – [Cluster Action Plan](#)

⁷ [Education begins at Home Campaign](#) run by Wales Government

supports a child's learning, parents are giving their child a significant head start in life. Its strapline is *'Helping your child at home makes a difference to their performance in school.'*

The Education begins at home campaign on Facebook and Twitter is a place for parents and care givers to share ideas on how to help their child through education and play. Partners are encouraged to post useful links to activities and learning tools that can help children develop their learning skills. Information and links to a wide variety of education based topics is also available on the page.

3.3.12 **Attachment Theory** emphasises the importance of children making secure attachments with their main care-giver within their first three years. It suggests that, if these attachments fail to be made, this can have a lasting impact on the child, with the effects often re-emerging during adolescence. Within education, children and young people may tend to underachieve, are often punished for poor behaviour or are excluded. Attachment awareness is aimed at helping schools to recognise the issues involved, to support pupils with attachment difficulties, and thereby to improve attainment, behaviour and overall wellbeing for both pupils and staff. There are a number of risk factors, such as poverty, poor parental mental health, neglect, family bereavement, and frequent moves of home or school, but children from apparently non-vulnerable backgrounds may also suffer.

3.3.13 We recognise that there was a clear need for attachment awareness training and that this is huge piece of work but it was important all organisations working with children and young people partake. Councillors were pleased to see a programme of attachment training was being rolled out across Swansea.

3.3.14 **Assessing the quality of Early Years Settings** and the impact on children's outcomes through an evaluation tool is being completed by University of Wales Trinity St David's in Swansea. The Panel met with Professor Jane Walters who is leading this piece of work.

The Panel heard that research suggests that for settings to have a significant long term effect on outcomes they must be excellent and not just good. The research did tell us that there may be some gaps in assessing this by Estyn because even 'Green' Schools may not have good early years practices as this is not covered well by assessment. The Panel were pleased to hear that Estyn are looking at this. The focus of Estyn on wellbeing is welcomed although they are still working on what this means in practice. The Panel also heard that evidence suggests that early years practice works well in Swansea.

3.3.15 **Jig-so Project, a holistic model of delivery during the earliest years** - provision of holistic support for young and vulnerable first time parents, both mothers and fathers, Swansea wide via a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency team of midwives, Nursery nurses and parenting and early language development practitioners. It complements and works alongside universal core health services to engage parents into a pathway of support that aims to

better enable them to meet their baby and infant's needs and build the resilience factors needed to thrive as a family.

It is still early days as the project has only been fully up and running since May 2016. To date therefore the following has been identified as the main headlines:

- A new model of delivery ensuring integration across different organisations and professions with a focus on innovation
 - Effective early identification and intervention through the links with core midwifery and young babies not being accommodated by the Local Authority at birth due to the work starting pre-birth to build parental skills and resilience.
 - Above Welsh average breastfeeding rates for this group of young mothers. In 15/16 63% young mothers involved with the service were breastfeeding at delivery (national average 60%).
 - In a recent parental relationship group attended by 5 couples 100% of the mothers initiated breast feeding at delivery
 - 92% with improved family relationships
 - Of 34 pregnant mothers that reported they smoked during pregnancy, 15 reduced their smoking behaviour (44%), and 8 stopped completely (24%), meaning that 68% either reduced or stopped smoking during pregnancy
 - Out of 121 participant parents, 111 (92%) reported an improved ability to support their child's learning and development needs.
 - The same number reported that they felt that they could contribute to changes to their lifestyle and behaviours.
 - 102 (84%) reported an improvement in emotional/mental wellbeing
- Presentation at the annual BEVAN conference in Cardiff 2016 as a case study by parent, midwife and manager

3.3.15 The Panel heard that there is considerable momentum for prevention and investment in the Early Years on a multi-agency basis Swansea wide. We were pleased to hear about the early impact of this project and model of delivery has led to the development of a business case to extend the project to all vulnerable parents and not solely those under 25 years of age.

3.4 Measure Impact

3.4.1 Measuring impact is important in ensuring that we are supporting the right initiatives and making the argument for future financial support.

4.4.2 The Panel visited the Children's Centre in Penlan where they spoke to staff and parents about developing children's school readiness. They found the Children's Centre to be a welcoming and homely environment with staff who are well trained and enthusiastic about what they do. Panel members were impressed with the variety of activities that take place at the centre, having visited a mindfulness session with parents, the day care setting and speaking to parents and the Health Visitor.

ICCs have a range of positive impacts on the development of children

Children who attend the Integrated Children's Centres (ICCs) have enhanced social and cognitive skills. As a result of attending activities at the centres, children are more sociable and interact in a more appropriate way with peers and adults. Strong links with primary schools affiliated to the ICCs improve the extent to which children are prepared for schools. The positive discipline at the ICCs also supports children's transition from the Centres to school and improves their behaviour. (NFER 2010)⁸

3.4.3 The Panel heard that a new Family Centre in Mayhill was under construction and are supportive of this development believing that if it reflects the facilities and support provided by the Children's Centre in Penlan it will be of great benefit to Swansea.

3.4.4 The Panel found, from the evidence gathered, that children who have attended Flying Start settings are generally more prepared because they have experienced routines needed for school and parents feel more supported and prepared for that transition.

Flying Start only opened here in St Helens Primary School in 2014 but we are seeing a real difference in pupil's preparedness as they move into Primary School. Pupils are more sociable and resilient than many pupils who have not accessed Flying Start. Headteacher St Helen's Primary School

3.4.5 Nationally, the Welsh Government evaluate the impact of Flying Start on a regular basis with the last report detailing its effect on educational attainment which concluded that:

Despite the unknowns, it is possible to make the tentative conclusion that the attendance of children, who were potentially eligible to receive at least two years of Flying Start provisions, is better than those who lived in the same areas prior to the implementation of the programme. Their attendance is also improving at a more rapid pace than children living in non-Flying Start areas. It also appears that children who were potentially eligible for Flying Start provisions, who also have special educational needs, were more likely to be identified early than those in other areas and before the implementation of Flying Start. Similarly, the differences in attendance and attainment between children living in Flying Start areas and those in non-Flying Start areas appear to be diminishing.

Despite these positive results, the differences found over time can only be partially attributed to Flying Start. A wide range of changes and programmes have been introduced since the implementation of Flying Start, such as the Foundation Phase and the Pupil Deprivation Grant. In addition to this, there are a large number of unobserved factors which could influence educational outcomes, but which could not be included in this analysis. Therefore, with the currently available data, it is only possible to make these tentative conclusions on the impact of Flying Start, or each of the specific provisions, on children's educational outcomes.

**Wales Government Flying Start Evaluation: Educational Outcomes Feb 2017
Conclusions - Impact of Flying Start⁹**

3.4.6 The Panel understand that it takes a 'brave financial leap' to invest in the

⁸ National Foundation for Educational Research: [Evaluation of Integrated Children's Centres in Wales \(NFER 2010\)](#)

⁹ WG Flying Start Evaluation: Educational Outcomes: [Conclusions](#)

prevention and early intervention but it clearly forms part of an 'invest to save' agenda. The need to shift resources towards early intervention and prevention is going to be key to supporting children and their families in the future. It will not only have benefits to children and their families but to society as a whole.

- 3.4.7 The Panel concluded that Flying Start/Children's Centres in Swansea provide excellent facilities and support for children in their early years, with a clear aim of getting children school ready. Practice learnt through this way of working must be shared across the sector particularly in areas that are not supported by Flying Start. In an ideal world the Panel would like to see Flying Start offered right across Swansea but recognise the financial implications of this. The Panel were pleased to hear that Swansea plans to replicate the Flying Start approach on a proportionate basis according to need beyond the current geographical limitation and to invest in up-skilling the early years workforce and beyond in Swansea.

We therefore recommend Cabinet to:

- R1 Support those initiatives that are clearly improving school readiness and monitor the impact.
 - R2 Support the ethos and practice of Flying Start and use this as a basis for developing early years services outside of the designated areas (with the longer term aim of providing coverage across the City and County of Swansea)
 - R3 Ensure the Early Years Services led by the Flying Start service in collaboration with the Additional Learning Needs Unit in Education prepare for the changes in the Additional Learning Needs Reform legislation.
 - R4 Monitor, use and share the good practice that is emerging in this area.
-

3.5 Ensure that Schools are child ready

- 3.5.1 Schools being 'child ready' was a recurring theme throughout the inquiry. Some schools are working closely with parents and other settings like Flying Start and Stepping Stones as well as the wider community while others, it seems, do very little before a child starts with them.

We develop our knowledge of the children before they start at the Flying Start and the school through Health Visitor visits so that the schools is ready for its pupils and the pupils are ready for school.

St Helens Primary School and Flying Start

- 3.5.2 The research project carried out by University of Wales Trinity St David on the quality of early years settings in Swansea has been working with a number of schools in Swansea. Their main focus has been looking at whether settings are ready for children. They found that excellent settings will have some engagement with the community however they do not expect homes to be perfect settings. They said:

Good experiences and being valued in school settings gives children resilience for

other aspects of their lives. It is really important that schools value children from the start - schools fail if children feel they do not fit - if schools are too rigid in their responses to children some will become disenfranchised.

University of Wales Trinity St David's Early Years Project

- 3.5.3 The Panel heard that building on the Trallwn School Pilot, a survey of Primary schools is being developed to ascertain whether there are arrangements in place to engage with children and their families before they start school, what they do and whether they have future plans or aspirations to develop this area.
- 3.5.4 The Panel considered how schools could potentially make themselves more child ready, as there seems to be little consistency on this issue. The Panel questioned whether there needs to be clearer guidance for schools as to what constitutes being a 'child ready school'. The Panel felt that there needs to be more robust challenge on this aspect.
- 3.5.5 Some schools are using their pupil deprivation grant for this purpose. The Pupil Deprivation Grant provides schools and educational setting with additional funding to support children who are entitled to Free School Meals. Some of the ways that schools nationally have used their pupil deprivation grant for this purpose include:
- To employ staff to focus upon family engagement programmes
 - Training existing staff on significant meaningful relationships with families and the wider community
 - To facilitate whole school training on for example attachment
- 3.5.6 In Swansea, St Helen's Primary School and Flying Start have used some of their Pupil Deprivation Grant to employ a Family Engagement Leader within the school. Their role is to link with all families, especially new ones, get to know them, build up trust and an understanding and explain expectations of school. They act as an advocate for the family, can signpost to specialist external support services such as EYST, BAWSO, and offers pastoral support. They are also key in welcome meetings working alongside teachers to ensure the family understand what is expected from them and their child at school.
- 3.5.7 The Panel heard about the new Foundation Phase Profile and how this will help to develop a baseline when children start school. Initial data taken from the results for the first Foundation Phase Profile Baseline Assessment run during Autumn Term 2015 is now available. We recognise this is a new assessment and as such it will take some time before it settles down to become a reasonably robust assessment tool. Analysis has also been completed to show how outcomes vary between schools, and this shows that in some schools the assessments may not be robust at this stage. It is likely to take a few years for the results to be more reliable and consistent across all schools.

We therefore recommend Cabinet to:

R5 Work with schools to ensure that they are child ready and welcoming to

all of their pupils by:

- i. Developing guidance for what constitutes a 'child ready' school
 - ii. Encouraging schools and governing bodies to develop a community engagement strategy which clearly identifies how they will work with parents pre-school and in the early years. (Including Welsh Government toolkit more widely shared and contents more closely considered by schools).
 - iii. More vigorously challenge schools on their child readiness using minimum standards developed in R7
- R6 Encourage the use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant by schools and/or across clusters to help develop school readiness particularly when working with parents, families and communities.
- R7 Ensure that the recently introduced Foundation Phase Profile baseline has more consistency and robustness.
-

3.6 Organisations must work closely together to address the gaps identified in the delivery of early years services

- 3.6.1 No one service, working in isolation, will achieve the positive impact that organisations working together can achieve. The Panel heard for example that a key aspect of the success of the Healthy Child Wales Programme will be its partnership working with local authorities, communities, education and the third sector. We felt that identifying and addressing gaps in delivery in Early Years services is much better addressed when organisations work together.
- 3.6.2 The Panel found that there are some potential gaps in service provision.
- 3.6.3 Flying Start facilities are excellent but only support approximately one quarter of Swansea's geographical area. The Panel recognise that this is targeted at those areas identified as having the most need but did feel that there are children and families across the City and County that would fall into that category. The difference to school readiness that Flying Start makes to pupils was recognised by the Panel who felt that this would be of benefit to all children and their families in Swansea. The Panel recognise that funding will not allow this to be available to all but did believe that more could be done to develop innovative ways of using the Flying Start ethos, partnership working and other good practice in those areas outside of the defined areas.
- 3.6.4 The Panel heard that there is support to replicate a Flying Start approach beyond the current geographical areas and we heard that this is being progressed based upon a 'proportionate basis according to need'.
- 3.6.5 The new Welsh Government Free Childcare for 3 and 4 year olds policy will be a challenge to deliver but the Panel felt that this will be an opportunity to help build the right capacity in those areas not covered by Flying Start.
- 3.6.6 The Panel heard that there are plans to upskill the early years workforce across Swansea which again was an excellent opportunity to develop the right ethos and attitudes to school readiness.

- 3.6.7 The Panel were pleased to hear about the work taking place or proposed to address identified gaps in service delivery particularly relating to non-Flying Start areas including:
- A multi-agency and multi-disciplinary service between Early Intervention Services and Midwifery to identify and support parents and their babies/children, from -9 months and throughout the infant years. This is specifically for those that would benefit from support above the core Health generic services offer, in order to better enable them to meet their child's needs and build resilience within the family unit.
 - A new partnership with a GP Network for an exemplar project for 12 months to deliver parenting skills and interventions to young children and their parents referred by the GPs.
 - A speech and language proposal and an Early Years proposal under the Prevention Plan.

- 3.6.8 The Panel found that not all schools and day care settings provide effective transition to school processes. The Panel were particularly interested in the work carried out in Flying Start facilities, Stepping Stones and some schools in the transition period to school.

The transition is much easier when pupils go from the Flying Start setting to the School as we are located at the same place and managed through the school. Running up to the transition children are taken across to the school and activities and expectations are mirrored for both child and parents. Parents say that the transition is smooth and straightforward with very little disruption for the child.

Headteacher, St Helens Primary School and Flying Start

Transition can be difficult for children and parents of pupils with disabilities with new environment and people. We do our best to work with the school the child is transitioning to. Some schools are excellent at this, visiting Stepping Stones meeting with child and parents/carers to discuss the child and their needs. Others schools we have little contact with through transition. It would be good if more schools accessed Stepping Stones for transition tips.

Stepping Stones Children's Centre Manager

- 3.6.9 It was found that working with children and their parents in this key transition stage would make the move to school much smoother for the child, the parents and the school. Getting to know the child and family, sharing information and developing a transition plan seem to be the key to success. The Panel would like to see more consistency across schools and day care setting in this key transition period with a minimum standard in relation to transition in early years services developed.
- 3.6.10 We saw Speech and Language development as a key issue and a recurring theme throughout the inquiry. We found that access to, assistance and support outside of Flying Start areas was much less than within Flying Start areas. The Panel recognise the importance of speech and language in a child's development and the ability to interact and socialise with peers, in learning at school and how it impacts on future life chances. We were pleased to hear that Early Years speech and language development are priorities within the Prevention Strategy and as such business cases are being

- made for increasing funding to enhance this aspect.
- 3.6.11 In Trallwn Primary School speech and language training is provided to all staff to ensure understanding. It was felt that development was particularly accelerated when early communication needs are identified before the child starts school and shared through the transition period.

We therefore recommend Cabinet to:

- R8 Develop minimum standards for transition to school for both schools and day care settings.
-

3.7 Keep early years issues high on the agenda

- 3.7.1 The Panel believes Early Years need to continue to be high on the agenda and a priority across all partners' business plans. The opportunity to address this issue through the multi-agency Public Services Board (PSB) is supported by the Panel. This year it is one of the Board's identified priorities but it finishes as a defined priority in May 2017. The Panel however heard that there is a call from some of the members of the PSB for it to be kept as priority beyond this current year. Panel members agreed and will include this as a recommendation to Cabinet.

We therefore recommend Cabinet to:

- R9 Support the 'Best Start Swansea Initiative' as a Public Service Board priority for the coming 12 months.
-

3.8 Engage with parents, families and the wider community

- 3.8.1 The Panel found that parental engagement can have a positive impact on a child's learning and that is why it is so important to engage with and include parents in their child's education.

Parents have an important stake in the education of their children and play a significant part in supporting their children's learning. Effective parental involvement sets aspirations and shapes the child's self-concept as a learner. Estyn

- 3.8.2 The Joseph Rowntree Foundation found in their research, looking at poverty and low educational achievement in Wales¹⁰, that parental (family involvement) in their children's education has a causal influence on children's school readiness and subsequent attainment compared with other interventions it reviewed. They suggest, however, that providing parents with better information and access to appropriate support and advice appears to have the greatest effect. This enables them to conclude that interventions that simply raise parents' aspirations for their children to succeed are likely to be unsuccessful, whereas those which 'enable and encourage parents actively to

¹⁰ Joseph Rowntree Foundation [Poverty and Low Educational Achievement in Wales: Student, Family and Community Interventions](#)

engage with their child's learning and the education system more generally' are usually successful. The report concludes that Interventions focused on parental involvement, extra-curricular activities and mentoring should be prioritised within the Flying Start, Families First and Communities First programmes.

Where there is particularly effective parental involvement, the single most important driver is the enthusiasm of the Headteacher. When a school plans and implements positive policies to involve parents, this can have a significant impact on improving pupils' wellbeing, particularly in relation to behaviour and school attendance. Estyn

3.8.3 Panel members found there to be a number of reasons behind some parents' lack of engagement which can become barriers to them being involved in their child's education. Schools, the council and its partners need to identify these families and look at ways of overcoming or mitigating them in order to get meaningful engagement. Some of these barriers include:

- Parents perceiving schools as presenting obstacles, e.g. lack of encouragement, not informing parents of what they can do, and having too little scope for fitting around busy working and family lives.
- Costs, time and transportation, language (for some parents for whom English is not a first language), low levels of literacy and numeracy, and a lack of confidence.
- Understanding their world...especially families that have a chaotic life, negative personal experience and/or have low expectations or value in education.
- Parental attitudes "Not my job." Some parents feel that active involvement and assistance is the responsibility of the school and the teachers to educate their children
- Attitudes of some teachers - There is also variation within schools in terms of the attitudes of different teachers; some are welcoming and encouraging of involvement where others may be less so.
- Specific barriers faced by some families, for example, asylum seekers and refugees. Asylum seekers and refugees find themselves in situations of poverty, and may suffer discrimination or stigmatisation. As newcomers they face language barriers. They lack knowledge on how local systems operate and very often they do not know where to go to access information

3.8.4 During the Panel's inquiry they found that some of the activity that currently takes place to engage and involve parents in early years development is excellent.

3.8.5 Health Visitors working in communities see families on a regular basis running up to a child starting school. The Panel saw this as a very important part of the jigsaw of support that parents receive to prepare their child for school. The Panel heard about the Family Resilience and Assessment Tool that Health Visitors complete with the parents to help to identify the level of resilience within the family which in turn assesses the amount of support the family need. The Panel felt that although in its early stages, it was a good example of how services can work closely with parents to get the best

outcomes for their children.

- 3.8.6 The Penderi General Practitioners Partnership and the Primary Care Early Years Project is working closely with parents and families with the aim of providing a person centred approach to support and skill training for parents to improve their family resilience. They work in partnership with families to assess need and develop a family plan that will support family learning and is bespoke and tailored to the needs of that family. We heard that it is in its early stages where 37 families have received or are receiving a service and of those, 35 have children under 5 years.

The Panel met with some of those people involved in the partnership and were keen to hear about this multi-agency funded work designed to reduce or mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experience so that children can have a better start in life. They agreed with the assessment made at the meeting that there is a lot of great potential in this way of working, that early results are promising, and that it was important to collect evidence of how it was working and to assess its impact over time.

- 3.8.7 Flying Start/Children's Centres providers have parental inclusion and involvement built into every part of their work with children, from working with pregnant women, young mothers and dads through to the transition to school as children leave the early years setting.



Visit to Children's Centre in Penlan

The Panel visited two settings and were very impressed with their inclusivity, finding that they work hard at reaching and involving parents not only in relation to the child's development but around the parents' own wellbeing. The Panel found that both the Children's Centre in Penlan and St Helen's Primary Flying Start show excellent practice in making children and their families school ready, in particular with harder to reach and vulnerable families.

- 3.3.8 The Headteacher at St Helen's Primary School said that one of the main aims of the school is to be 'at the heart of the community' and the parents we

spoke to said that *it is excellent and they are doing that now.*

Parental involvement in the schools visited ranges from a school being described as the 'hub' of the community where parents, including those from disadvantaged groups, feel very welcome in the school and await the next project with enthusiasm to a school where parents are rarely involved beyond a few formal events. Estyn

We met with a group of 15 parents whose children attend St Helens Primary School Flying Start and heard a number of important messages including:

- Both children and parents feel they are more ready for school when their child is/has attended Flying Start
- The inclusivity of the School and Flying Start is central to its success
- The importance of the big focus on bringing community together and actively encouraging that through their work with parent/families
- Being able to access a number of different services and support from one location, for example the Health Visitor to baby massage
- Both parents and staff expressed how proud they are of the school

3.8.9 The Panel found Trallwn Primary School to be working intensively with the local community, including and involving it in the work of the school. This has improved school readiness of pupils who may (or may not) end up going to the school. At a meeting with the Headteacher we discussed this good practice and the importance of addressing not only parents' skills but the norms in the community, that by knowing families before they come into school they are much better prepared to support and teach children. We heard about the universal approach to pre-school engagement and the specialist targeted support and about how partnership working with Health Visitors and speech and language specialists was also very important.

The school uses the Wales Government Family and Community Engagement Toolkit¹¹ which supports engagement with parents but heard that this toolkit was little known or used by schools generally. The use of this toolkit could be more widely considered for use by schools along with the practice learnt by Trallwn in relation to engaging the community more widely. Trallwn Primary School is not part of a designated Flying Start area and the Panel felt that this approach could go some of the way in helping to address the gap in parental engagement in non-Flying Start areas.

Engaging families in their children's learning is a powerful way of raising standards and well-being in schools. It is also essential for narrowing the attainment gap between learners from richer and poorer backgrounds.

This toolkit will help schools develop their approach to family and community engagement. The focus is on engagement that will improve learning outcomes, and on engaging with families of children who are underperforming, from deprived backgrounds or who get less support for their learning at home.

The toolkit is structured around 5 themes:

¹¹ [Family and community engagement toolkit for schools. Wales government](#)

1. *Practical support to school leaders to help them embed family and community engagement in the ethos of the school*
2. *How to build the school's capacity for engagement.*
3. *How to overcome barriers to engagement, including families that interact with the school less frequently or have needs that are harder to accommodate.*
4. *Ideas and examples of how schools can engage with families as serious and practical partners in children's learning.*
5. *Information on helping families find additional support and how to plan more effective transitions with a focus on what is important for the learner and their family.*

Wales Government Family and Community Engagement Toolkit

- 3.8.10 The Panel heard about the work Swansea Library Service does to reach out into the Community, in working with children and their families and ultimately how this helps with children's school readiness.

Library and library activities are free, therefore allowing children and families from all backgrounds to use it. Each library has a designated children's area with a selection of resources and there are no overdue fees on children's books. They run reading and writing groups, baby rhyme-time and many other activities where parents and children can engage. They also work with schools to encourage children and families to join and use the facilities.

Bookstart is another useful tool which is administered by the Library Service in partnership with health. In addition to the Bookstart pack a Bookshine pack for hearing impaired children and Booktouch for visually impaired children are used. Dual language packs are also given out to those families whose first language is not English.

The Panel recognised the ability to easily access libraries and the work that libraries do within our communities. They were interested to hear that people find the environment and atmosphere in libraries a safe and non-judgemental one and people who may not engage with other services able to engage with libraries. The Panel emphasised the importance of libraries as community hubs where people come for many reasons other than to borrow books e.g. use computers, borrow music simply to read the newspaper and be amongst other people.

- 3.8.11 The Panel visited the Action for Children Stepping Stones facility which provides support and early years services for children with disabilities. They provide a specialist Flying Start style pathway working closely with parents and carers in supporting their needs.

The Panel had a one to one discussion with a parent at the facility who had found the Stepping Stones engagement and support for her as a parent to be invaluable. She said that Stepping Stones *has been a lifesaver and has helped us deal with the many issues I have experienced when having a child with Autism, helping us to move forward and my son is now due to start Primary School shortly.* Although she explained that this was not without its problems she found the transition to Primary School particularly difficult because only one of the four schools she visited was either suitable physically or welcoming to her and her children. The Panel were concerned

to hear this and feel that many schools still need to be better prepared and more welcoming for all pupils.

- 3.8.12 It is clear that there are many examples of good practice in parent and community engagement in Swansea let alone further afield but what has become evident is the need particularly for more engagement of schools with parents and their communities in order to prepare their children for school. Some schools are working much more closely with parents and families particularly those with a Flying Start Setting but very few do extensive work in the local communities like Trallwn Primary School. The Panel felt that there is scope for much more parental and community engagement especially in those areas that do not have Flying Start. The Panel felt that more cluster working in relation to this aspect could be developed.
- 3.8.13 The Panel were concerned that there does not seem to be any clear strategy for how schools involve parents and whether there is any formal monitoring of the extent of parental involvement. They felt that parental engagement requires an active partnership with parents and this needs to be pro-actively developed. The Panel questioned whether schools should have their own community engagement strategies based upon the requirements of their communities.
- 3.8.14 The Panel emphasised the importance of those working with children and families to engage them in partnership. Parents must feel part of the child's development not feeling that things are being done 'to' or 'for' them but 'with them'.
- 3.8.15 It was felt that the good practice evident in our Flying Start settings around parental engagement should be shared more widely and considered by schools in Swansea, particularly in their work with vulnerable and harder to reach parents/families.
- 3.8.16 The use of ICT can also be a useful tool to improved parental engagement, by providing a convenient means for parents to access up-to-date information about their child's learning and provide more information for parents.

3.9 Raise public awareness of school readiness and encourage use of key messages across Swansea

- 3.9.1 The importance of school readiness is clear but the Panel feels that it is necessary to highlight the importance of raising awareness of this issue and using key messages to educate the population as a whole.
- 3.9.2 One of the Healthy City Partnership key initiatives is called Best Start Swansea which includes a key messages campaign that relates specifically early years with the purpose of raising awareness and changing attitudes that predominate in some communities.

Using this organisations are asked to take an active role through:

- The use of the publicity materials, promoting twitter and Facebook and website pages
- actively seeking opportunities to up-skill their workforces
- Identifying key contacts to lead on the campaign within their Organisations
- To link/facilitate events under the Best Start banner



3.9.3 Panel members would like to see Best Start Swansea continue as a priority for the Public Services Board in the coming year because these key messages, from their viewpoint, still need to reach communities.

The Panel felt that the key messages found in the Welsh Adverse Child Experiences (ACE) Study must to be shared and understood across schools and the early years sector. The impact of ACEs on children’s future life chances is clear, with actions to prevent or to mitigate those being central to improving those children’s chances of a successful and fulfilling life.

This latest report shows how experiencing abuse and other problems in childhood is linked with increased levels of chronic disease in adulthood and much greater use of health care. What happens to us as children can make our bodies develop differently, leaving them more vulnerable to conditions like Type 2 diabetes and heart disease in later life. Emphasising the importance of a healthy start for all aspects of a child’s life, Professor Bellis continues: “Finding solutions to the harms children suffer and the problems adults face because of their childhood experiences needs a new life course approach to health.

“This cannot be achieved by the NHS alone. That is why we are working with our key partners, including the Welsh Government, police, local authorities, charitable and voluntary sector organisations, to develop a joined-up approach to prevent ACEs and support adults whose health is suffering because of childhood trauma,”

he concludes.

Welsh Adverse Childhood Experience Study (Nov 2016)

3.9.4 The Panel wanted to highlight the UNCRC guiding principles¹² and ensure that these key messages resonate in our communities and guide our public services in Swansea.

- Article 2 - Non-discrimination (All rights apply to all children without exception. It is the State's obligation to protect children from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights)
- Article 3 - Best interests of the child (All actions concerning the child shall take full account of his or her best interests)
- Article 6 - Survival and development (Every child has the inherent right to life, and the State has an obligation to ensure the child's survival and development)
- Article 12 - The child's opinion (The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child)

3.9.5 Councillors considered the Welsh Government Initiative called 'Ready to Learn'¹³ which was launched last year, that aims to raise awareness and advise parents on how to give your child the best start at school. It details some of the things that parents can do to prepare their child for school emphasising the importance of education beginning at home.

It includes for example: visiting the school with your child before they start to meet the reception teacher and borrow storybooks from your local library such as 'your first day at school', reading to your child and encouraging them to recognise their name. There is a Facebook page and associated materials that parents can use with their children to improve their school readiness.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Support those initiatives that are clearly improving school readiness and monitor the impact.

4.2 Support the ethos and practice of Flying Start and use this as a basis for developing early years services outside of the designated areas (with the longer term aim of providing coverage across the City and County of Swansea)

4.3 Ensure the Early Years Services led by the Flying Start Service in collaboration with the Additional Learning Needs Unit in Education prepare for the changes in the Additional Learning Needs Reform

¹² <http://www.childrenswales.org.uk/uncrc-principles.aspx>

¹³ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/parents/education-begins-at-home/?lang=en>

legislation.

- 4.4 Monitor, use and share the good practice that is emerging in this area.**
- 4.5 Work with schools to ensure that they are child ready and welcoming to all of their pupils by:**
 - a) Developing guidance for what constitutes a ‘child ready’ school.**
 - b) Encourage schools and governing bodies to develop a community engagement strategy which clearly identifies how they will work with parents pre-school and in the early years. (Including Welsh Government toolkit being more widely shared and contents more closely considered by schools).**
 - c) More vigorously challenging schools on their child readiness using minimum standards developed in 4.8.**
- 4.6 Encourage the use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant by schools and/or across clusters to help develop school readiness particularly when working with parents, families and communities.**
- 4.7 Ensure that the recently introduced Foundation Phase Profile baseline has more consistency and robustness.**
- 4.8 Develop minimum standards in relation to transition to school for both schools and day care settings.**
- 4.9 Support the ‘Best Start Swansea Initiative’ as a Public Service Board priority for the coming 12 months.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Panel would like to record its thanks to the following people who came and gave evidence to us:

- Staff and parents at Stepping Stones, Action for Children in Killay.
- Staff and parents at the Children's Centre in Penlan.
- Staff and parents at St Helens Flying Start
- Headteacher at Trallwn Primary
- Swansea Library Service
- Health Visitors in Flying Start settings
- Penderi GP Partnership Project
- Quality of Early Years Setting Project, University of Wales Trinity St David's
- Prevention and Early Intervention Strategic Manager
- Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Healthy City
- The Welsh Medium Schools and early years settings that responded to our Survey

ABOUT THE INQUIRY PANEL

The **School Readiness Scrutiny Inquiry Panel** is a team of Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet. Their role is to examine a strategic issue of concern and to make recommendations about how policies and services can be improved.

Members of the Panel

Councillors

Hazel Morris (Convener)

Wendy Fitzgerald

Fiona Gordon

Jan Curtice

Paulette Smith

David Anderson Thomas (Co-opted Parent Governor Representative)

The inquiry was supported by Michelle Roberts from the Council's Scrutiny Unit.

For further information contact:

Michelle Roberts, Scrutiny Officer

City and County of Swansea

☎ 01792 637256

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 10 April 2017

SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORTS

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 Panel: a) Public Services Board
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure awareness and understanding of the work of the Panel • Consider its effectiveness and impact • Consider any issues arising and action required
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mary Jones (convener)
Lead Officer & Report Author	Brij Madahar Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There are five Performance Panels established by the committee. Whilst the work of Inquiry Panels 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 Performance Panels represent regular monitoring of particular services.
- 1.2 Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services.
- 1.3 The committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panels 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.

1.4 This report is about the following Performance Panel:

a) Public Services Board

To focus the discussion a short written report has been provided by the convener of the Panel, and is attached. This includes a summary of Panel activities, correspondence between the Panel and Cabinet Members, proposals made and impact. NB - The Committee should note that it is the designated committee for scrutinising Swansea Public Services Board (for the purposes of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015).

1.5 The Public Services Board Performance Panel has a fixed membership of 12, as follows:

Councillors:

Labour Councillors:

Fiona Gordon	Convener of Schools Performance Panel
Uta Clay	Convener of Adult Services Performance Panel
Nick Davies	Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee

Liberal Democrat Councillors:

Mary Jones (CONVENER)	Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee
Chris Holley	Convener of Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel

Conservative Councillor:

Paxton Hood-Williams	Convener of Child & Family Services Performance Panel
----------------------	---

Other:

Partner Representatives:

Paul Newman	ABMU Health Board
Cllr John Warman	Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Paulette Smith	Police & Crime Panel
Cherrie Bija	SCVS
unfilled	Natural Resources Wales
unfilled	Probation Service

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
Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel is to consider “*What difference is Swansea Public Services Board making for citizens?*”

2. Key Activities

Since the last update to the Committee (November), the Panel has held four meetings, as follows.

- 6 December:
 - Public Services Board (PSB) Priorities for 2016/17
- 18 January:
 - Statutory Consultation on Draft Wellbeing Assessment
 - Q & A Session with PSB Core Group Member: SCVS
- 15 February:
 - Q & A Session with PSB Core Group Member: Council
- 15 March:
 - Q & A Session with PSB Core Group Members: ABMU Health Board, South Wales Police, Natural Resources Wales

3. Achievements / Impact

a) PSB Priorities

The Panel heard from the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration, the Director – People, and the Head of Planning & City Regeneration on the four priority work streams identified by the PSB as the focus of its work for 2016/17 (Domestic Abuse; Independence of Older People; Economic Development; Good Start in Life). The Panel was particularly interested in looking at the performance monitoring arrangements in place, in order to assist them to assess the difference that the Public Services Board is making for the citizens of Swansea. As a result the Panel made a number of recommendations that would improve the performance management of the projects.

b) Draft Wellbeing Assessment

The Panel was presented with the draft Wellbeing Assessment as scrutiny is a statutory consultee and made a number of comments that they wish to have taken into account as part of the consultation. The Panel was also concerned about what was being done to ensure the survey reached communities and how this matter was being communicated, as the Wellbeing Assessment may not be the easiest of reads. The Final Wellbeing Assessment is awaited and the Panel looks forward to hearing about the response to the Assessment and how public views have influenced the final report.

c) Q & A Sessions with PSB Core Group Members

The Panel is carrying out Q & A sessions with the members of the Public Services Board core group, in order to consider the contribution each individual organisation is making to the work of the Public Services Board, and achievement of positive outcomes. The PSB Core Group is responsible for: planning the work of the PSB; setting the agendas for meetings; leading and managing the work streams; and reviewing and developing the PSB. The Panel is writing to the Chair of the PSB (Leader of the Council) with views, issues and recommendations following these sessions.

Some of the issues that are being explored include:

- The level of commitment to the work of the PSB
- How pooled funding to tackle PSB priorities is being addressed and achieved.
- How the PSB is monitoring progress against targets and evaluating achievement / effectiveness

Full correspondence between the Panel and the Chair of the PSB, Cllr Rob Stewart, covering the above work is appended to this report. A letter relating to the meeting on 15 March is being drafted.

4. Future Work Programme

The Panel meets on 12 April and will continue meeting with PSB Core Group members by holding a Q & A session with the representatives of the Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service. The Panel will also reflect on the year's work and effectiveness.

Key scrutiny activities for the new municipal year will include:

- Q & A session with the Welsh Government representative on the PSB Core Group
- Final Wellbeing Assessment
- Public Services Board Priorities for 2016/17 – End of Project Update
- Wellbeing Plan

5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

The Scrutiny Programme Committee is designated as the scrutiny committee for scrutinising Swansea Public Services Board, for the purposes of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Although the committee has set up this Performance Panel in order to undertake this role, the committee is ultimately responsible and therefore it is important that it:

- Receives and consider a regular progress report from the Panel about its work and consider any additional actions as part of the scrutiny work programme as required
- Receives and consider all correspondence between the Convener of the Panel and the Chair of the Public Services Board
- Ensures that relevant Cabinet members are held to account for the work of the Public Services Board through Cabinet Member Q & A sessions



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Cllr Rob Stewart
Chair of Swansea Public Services
Board

CC Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Enterprise,
Development & Regeneration

BY EMAIL

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

e-Mail
e-Bost:

Our Ref
Ein Cyf:

Your Ref
Eich Cyf:

Date
Dyddiad:

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

10 January 2016

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Chair of the Public Services Board following the meeting of the Panel on 6 December. It contains recommendation from the Panel regarding the Public Services Board's priorities for 2016/17.

Scrutiny of the Public Services Board's Priorities for 2016/17

Dear Councillor Stewart,

This letter is to provide you and the members of the Public Services Board (PSB) with feedback from the meeting of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel (the Panel), which took place 6 December 2016.

We were briefed on the Board's work streams and associated projects for 2016/17 by Chris Sivers, Councillor Robert Francis-Davies and Phil Holmes, and we are grateful to them for taking us through the details of the projects and explaining how the Board is expected to support them.

We wished to examine these work streams in detail, as one of the main areas of concern arising from the work of the former Local Service Board Scrutiny Performance Panel was the issue of performance management and monitoring. That Panel previously indicated that it believed that the work of the (former) Local Service Board did not demonstrate effectively the difference it made to the citizens of Swansea, and had made the following recommendations:

- Clear arrangements need to be put in place to monitor the outcomes of the PSB's work.
- Consult with the scrutiny panel about the format of future performance monitoring reports for the work of the PSB and ensure that the panel receives regular performance monitoring reports.

Therefore our intention was to scrutinise the performance monitoring arrangements for the PSB's work streams and also to provide any recommendations that we feel would improve the performance management framework of the PSB. We also plan to ask the individual core group members to provide details on how their organisations are contributing to the delivery of these projects; therefore this process has enabled us to gain a better grasp on what is to be achieved prior to our Q&A sessions with them.

Overall

We were satisfied that the projects will benefit from oversight from the Board and we now have a much better understanding of why these projects were selected and the outcomes that are being sought as a result of the projects and the intervention of the PSB. Whilst our discussion with the project sponsors was wide-ranging, we have focussed on a number of recommendations that we believe would improve the performance management of the projects and they are outlined below.

Domestic Abuse – The Key 3 Project

We felt that the aims of the project (to provide an integrated referral pathway for women who are experiencing domestic abuse/sexual violence, substance misuse and mental health issues) are clear and we were satisfied that this project will benefit from PSB intervention due to the complex nature of the issues and the multitude of agencies involved.

However, we considered there to be a lack of robust data regarding the number/size of the cohort that is being targeted through this project. We felt that as the project is focusing on a very specific group experiencing three issues: domestic abuse and sexual violence, substance misuse and mental health issues, there should be more data regarding the numbers who need to be targeted. We also believe that the PSB should look at ways to quantify the cost/service savings that this approach could provide. A better understanding of this data would enable a clearer picture to be developed regarding the outcomes and success of the project. Therefore, we recommend that the PSB considers ways that this could be improved.

Ageing Well

Given the significant impact that an aging population is having on public services we agree that the Ageing Well work stream is a major piece of work that requires the support of the PSB. We noted the five projects that are within this work stream.

We were encouraged to hear of plans to provide joint funding through the PSB for additional Local Area Co-ordinator (LAC) posts, as this is a positive step forward for partnership working and, if successful, would clearly demonstrate the commitment of organisations to the work of the PSB and the partnership approach it is developing.

Whilst we were informed that the widespread opinion is that the LAC role has been successful, we are concerned that the plans to expand the number of posts are being progressed before the first year evaluation report has been completed. We were advised that there have been delays in finalising the report; therefore we recommend that the expansion of the LAC posts is postponed until the PSB has had the opportunity to consider the evaluation, in order to ensure that it is the most effective way to focus important joint resources. We would also like to be informed when the report is available.

We recommend that the aim to develop an “age friendly” city centre should be widened in its scope to include “age friendly” communities as our belief is that the interactions older people have in their communities are equally, if not more important, to those they experience in the city centre.

Good Start in Life

We were informed of the key message campaign to promote children’s readiness for school. We were interested to hear about the reasons for the Board’s involvement, due to the large reach it has in terms of employees and services and agree that this is a practical application of the support that the Board can provide, through ensuring consistent messages are spread by all relevant professionals and that the messages can also be promoted internally to their staff.

Our particular area of concern was regarding the sustainability of this project and how it would be taken forward in the future. We were informed that a full evaluation would take place in summer 2017 to look at outcomes and to consider ways to take the campaign further. We will be interested in the results and plan to follow this up at the appropriate time, i.e. when the End of Project Updates for the Public Services Board Priorities for 2016/17 are reported to the Board.

We were also concerned that the key message campaign should not just focus on deprived areas, as the issue of readiness for school is apparent across the city and county. We were reassured that the key message campaign would be promoted by all professionals coming into contact with families regardless of where people live.

Our view is that in achieving a ‘good start for life’, it is vital that early intervention with families, where there are potential problems, is imperative. The sooner such problems are identified, action can be taken to minimise the risk of the problems escalating. Early intervention could resolve such

problems before they escalate and have a future major detrimental effect on the child's development.

Consequently, as it is maternity staff and health visitors, who have the first contact with families, the Health Board should train staff in and stress the importance of recognising families, where there could be potential problems. This would enable the appropriate authority(ies) to intervene at an early stage, for the benefit of the child.

Additionally, for your information, there is currently a scrutiny in-depth inquiry underway looking at how children's readiness for school can be improved. The findings and recommendations will be reported by the end of March. We will send a copy of this letter to the Convener so she is aware of our views on this matter.

City Centre

We were pleased to hear of the ambitious plans for re-developing and revitalising the Kingsway through developing a proposal for a technology led business district in order to address the lack of modern, flexible working space in the city centre. We were also pleased to hear that the proposals are being developed in partnership with Tech Hub Swansea and are intended to complement and extend their work in supporting tech start up business and not to be a competitor. We held a detailed discussion about the value of the Council intervening in the property market and the need to support Swansea's growing technology sector. We were satisfied that this project will benefit from the Board's intervention, given the range of relevant key local partners that are represented on the Board.

However, we feel that the project should also consider how it will contribute to dealing with social deprivation and tackling poverty. We posed a question on how this project would impact on the lives of people in deprived communities and whilst we support the view that the development of well-paid technical jobs has a positive impact overall, we were expecting some more specific details on how this project will contribute to tackling poverty. We believe that there is an important opportunity for this to be made explicit within the project and its aims, for example development of an outreach programme/work experience programme to provide schools/colleges with direct links to businesses and to assist in ensuring that the skills that are developed match the requirements of firms. We believe that as the suite of performance indicators remains to be developed for this project, then a clear opportunity remains to include targets relating to tackling poverty.

Forthcoming meetings

Our next meeting will take place on 18 January and we will be considering the findings of the Wellbeing Assessment (as scrutiny is a statutory consultee),

We will also hold the first of our Q&A sessions with members of the PSB core group and will be meeting with Amanda Carr, Director of SCVS. The focus of

our discussions will be to understand the contributions being made by the individual organisations to the work of the Board. This will provide us with the opportunity to follow up recommendations made by the former Local Service Board Scrutiny Performance Panel including:

- The level of commitment from individual partners to the work of the Board
- The effectiveness of the Board in communicating its work, objectives and outcomes to its stakeholders
- The effectiveness of the Board in addressing the issue of pooled funding to tackle priorities

I have attached our updated work plan for your information, as we have now confirmed dates for attendance from all the PSB core group members, and we appreciate them making themselves available.

Your response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful however if you could specifically respond to the following recommendations:

- Improve the baseline data of the cohort being targeted as part of the Key 3 Project, to include number of people to be targeted, and look at ways to quantify the cost/service savings that this approach could provide
- Ensure that the evaluation of the first year of the Local Area Co-ordinator roles is considered prior to the expansion of these posts and inform the Panel when the report will be available.
- Consider widening the scope of the Ageing Well work stream project to include “age friendly” communities as well as an “age friendly” city centre.
- Ensure that the Scrutiny Panel receives the End of Project Updates for the Public Services Board Priorities for 2016/17, when available.
- Include an outcome for tackling poverty/dealing with deprivation within the Economic Development/City Centre work stream.

I would be grateful if you could reply to this letter by 31 January 2017.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mary Jones
Convener, Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk

**Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel
Work Plan 2016/17
December 2016 V3**

Meeting Date <i>Meetings will take place between 10am-12pm</i>	Agenda items
Meeting 1 26 September 2016	<p>Introduction to Swansea Public Services Board/Scrutiny Process, to include the Board's objectives/priorities/outcomes, timeline, well-being goals and how they will link with the current population outcomes. Dave Mckenna</p> <p>Future Generations Commissioner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Commissioner • Role of Scrutiny <p>Draft work plan discussion, including Panel's Terms of Reference Rosie Jackson</p>
Meeting 2 6 December 2016	<p>Public Services Board Priorities for 2016/17 Project sponsors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration (<i>standing in for Cllr Rob Stewart – Chair of PSB</i>) • Chris Sivers – Director of People • Phil Holmes – Head of Planning & City Regeneration
Meeting 3 18 January 2017	<p>Statutory Consultation on Wellbeing Assessment Dave Mckenna/Steve King</p> <p>Q&A Session with PSB Core Group Members SCVS – Amanda Carr (Director)</p>
Meeting 4 15 February 2017	<p>Q&A Session with PSB Core Group Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABMU Health Board – Andrew Davies (Chair of ABMU Health Board) • Council – Cllr Rob Stewart (Leader of City & County of Swansea and Chair of the PSB)
Meeting 5 15 March 2017	<p>Q&A sessions with PSB Core Group Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW Police – Chief Constable Peter Vaughan and Chief Superintendent Joe Ruddy • Welsh Government – Helen Lentle (Deputy Director of Legal Services, Welsh Government) • Natural Resources Wales – Martyn Evans (Head, Ecosystems Planning & Partnerships) <i>Can attend from 11.15am</i>

Meeting 6 12 April 2017	Q&A Session PSB Core Group Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Service – Deputy Chief Fire Officer Mick Crennell and Cllr Janice Dudley (Chair of the Fire Authority) Final Wellbeing Assessment – <i>published version</i> Dave Mckenna/Steve King Annual Review of Panel’s work – to reflect on the year’s work, achievements, experiences, issues, ideas for future scrutiny
-----------------------------------	---

Future Items for work plan (2017/18)

The work of the scrutiny panel is planned on the basis of the municipal year i.e. May 2016 to April 2017. Some of the key items from the Public Services Board’s work plan will carry over into the 2017/18 municipal year so are not included in the above work plan. In order to ensure that there is clarity over the items that the Panel will need to consider they are noted here. These include:

- **Public Services Board Priorities for 2016/17 – End of project update:** due to be reported to PSB in July 2017, by sponsors and co-ordinators. To be reported to scrutiny panel August 2017. **NB** 6 monthly up-date of PSB priorities removed from work plan as it is unlikely to report much change from initial session on 6 December. A better use of the Panel’s time will be to receive the end of project update scheduled for later in 2017.
- **Wellbeing Plan** – due to be produced a year following the completion of the Well-being assessment. The Scrutiny Panel is a statutory consultee for both the wellbeing assessment and the wellbeing plan.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Convenor, Public Services Board
Scrutiny Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor Rob Stewart
Gofynnwch am: (01792) 636141
Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
E-Mail / E-Bost: cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref / Ein Cyf: RS/
Your Ref / Eich
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad: 24th January 2017

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Jones

Thank you for your letter of 10 January 2017 providing an update on the Scrutiny of the Public Service Board Panel meeting that took place 6 December 2016.

I appreciate your consideration of the work of the Board and its priority groups. You've raised a number of key points in your feedback and I will ensure that relevant members of the Board have this feedback. As you will be aware, there are many organisations involved in the work of the Public Service Board, and many individual citizens have been involved in developing and shaping the priorities and the work that is taking place in the sub-groups. As Chair of the Board, I am working to facilitate the partnership working and therefore would not wish to respond on behalf of all of the groups without consulting them.

I will therefore forward your letter to those who are the leads for these groups to provide a response to you, with a deadline of 14 February 2017.

Many thanks once again for your response.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & STRATEGY

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Convener, Public Services Board Scrutiny
Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:
Your Ref / Eich
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

Councillor Rob Stewart
(01792) 636141

cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
RS/KH

1st March 2017

**To receive this information in alternative format, please contact the above.
I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall, cysylltwch â'r person uchod.**

Dear Councillor Jones

City Centre Priority Project

Thank you for your letter dated 10 January 2017 seeking further information in relation to the City Centre regeneration project on how it will deal with social deprivation and tackle poverty, as well as a recommendation that an outcome for tackling poverty/dealing with deprivation is included within the Economic Development/City Centre work stream.

In response, I can confirm that there are initiatives with relevant outcome objectives in place in Economic Development that work with City Centre project colleagues and key external partners to help secure and fill employment, work experience and training opportunities arising from the City Centre regeneration programme: -

Beyond Bricks and Mortar (BB&M)

The City and County of Swansea's Planning and City Regeneration Service's BB&M initiative, in place since 2009, has utilised the significant purchasing power of the Council to include community benefit clauses within its legal agreements with developers and contractors of physical regeneration projects, requiring the successful contractors to undertake measures that will benefit the community, including:

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

- Targeted recruitment and training – identifying new job and training opportunities for long term unemployed and disadvantaged in our communities;
- Supply Chain initiatives – securing commitment to local sourcing and enabling local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to bid for sub-contract opportunities;
- Contributions to Education – working with schools and colleges, providing short term work experience, mentoring, career talks etc.;
- Community Initiatives – e.g. Community engagement, Considerate Constructor scheme, volunteering days, offer of services to support community groups.

BB&M maintains a number of relevant outcome indicators in relation to its work and since 2009 the team has secured 117 supplier contracts containing community benefit clauses, 9553 training weeks for the unemployed and disadvantaged, and placed 284 people into employment or training opportunities.

The BB&M Team works with a number of external organisations to source candidates for the job and training opportunities created through community benefit clauses. The external organisations include Jobcentre Plus, Shaw Trust, Remploy, Working Links, TBG Learning, Ethnic Youth Support Team, Gower College Swansea and HE providers. Internally the BB&M Team works closely with several authority-run schemes including Workways+ and the Council's Poverty and Prevention Team's programmes: Communities First, LIFT and Communities for Work.

In 2014 BB&M won the Welsh National Procurement Awards' Community Benefits category, putting the Council's scheme at the forefront of good practice. In July 2016 Council extended its BB&M community benefit policy to cover all the Authority's activities where community benefits can add value, including planning applications (S106), works, services and supply contracts, sale of land for development as well as construction and regeneration projects. The BB&M Team is also currently leading development of an Apprenticeship scheme to identify and deliver apprenticeship opportunities and a work experience programme across the Council to offer short term opportunities for people to gain valuable experience and so increase their prospects of getting into work.

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

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Workways+

Workways+ is an ESF funded support scheme designed to support people over the age of 25 into employment. The project focusses on a narrow target group of those who are economically inactive, but living outside of Communities First wards. (Communities First wards are served by the national Welsh Government 'Communities 4 Work' ESF project only). The project provides a team of employability mentors who undertake outreach work to identify individuals that could benefit from the project, assess their needs, and help them with any training and work experience needs to help them gain employment. Employment Liaison officers meet regularly with potential employers to identify work experience placements and job opportunities for individuals made ready to enter the labour market. The Workways+ team works closely with the BB&M team and regeneration colleagues in identifying placement and job opportunities, as well as close liaison with the Communities 4 Work team to ensure all individuals eligible for support are able to access help from the most appropriate project.

The Council's Planning and City Regeneration Service, therefore, undertakes a range of activities that helps to create good job opportunities for people and to address some of the barriers to employment and training. There are opportunities through BB&M and Workways+ initiatives for the Service to contribute to tackling Poverty and to work with the Council's Poverty and Prevention Service and other key external partners to help target more people affected by poverty to take advantage of the mentoring, skills development and employment opportunities that arise.

I do hope this response is helpful to you and the Members on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Performance Panel.

The Best Start for our Children

Supporting the development of our children is a strategic priority for the Council and we see it as a vital long-term investment in the future of Swansea – just as important as the current investment in regenerating the city.

That's why, under the Healthy Cities umbrella, City & County of Swansea, South Wales Police, MAWW Fire and Rescue Service, SCVS, Voluntary organisations, Swansea environmental Forum, Public Health, ABM, the universities and the

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Probation service in Swansea have all made a commitment to collaborate to reduce inequalities and to raise awareness of how families and communities can improve a child's readiness for learning and life. We will be working together to support parents from pregnancy right through to their child starting school.

The campaign **Best Start Swansea** features a cartoon family, The Jacks, who live their lives the Swansea Way: looking after themselves and giving their children the best possible start in life. There's Grandpa Jeff, Mum Seren and Dad Mack and children Gemma, Sammy and Flap Jack. The core themes of Best Start are on the poster opposite – so much of it is just common sense but sometimes it helps to be reminded in our busy lives to take time out to think about reading with our children or just spending time together.

The campaign was tested with children in schools across Swansea who helped name the children and developed their characters.

Over the coming months you'll start to see the Jacks posters appearing around the city, in places like libraries, GP surgeries, leisure centres and Flying Start venues. There'll be lots of opportunities for families to get involved, through things like regular Rhyme Time sessions in your local library, a summer family activity challenge, a big buggy push and activities in your local leisure. You can find out more on our website www.beststartswansea.co.uk and on social media on Facebook @BestStartSwansea and Twitter @BestStartSwansea

Ageing Well

We would be happy to consider widening the scope of the Ageing Well work to include developing Age Friendly Communities; this is supported by the Ageing Well Steering Group although we felt that this would need a phased approach as every community has different strengths and challenges in its own right. We can build on work carried out nationally and consider how to best deliver this locally.

We will consider the findings of the formative evaluation prior to the development of a business case to expand Local Area Coordination.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Domestic Abuse Workstream

In response to the PSB Scrutiny Panel letter we would like to offer clarification on comments on the DA Workstream;

- It is reported that currently around 1 in 5 children live in households where domestic abuse is a feature and 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse throughout their adult life span.
- The Walby Report (2009) estimated that the total cost of domestic abuse to the UK economy was £15.7 billion per year. In Wales alone this was estimated to be £303.5 billion a year. This can be broken down into £202.6m in service costs and £100.9m in lost economic output. This does not include any element of human or emotional costs which research suggests costs Wales on average an additional £522.9m. (This does not include any costs for sexual violence or wider forms of violence against women).
- The CAADA (now SafeLives) Research Report 2014 'In Plain Sight' states the following;

'Toxic Trio': Co-occurrence of domestic abuse, parental mental ill health & drug/alcohol abuse

1.4 Our data show a range of additional vulnerabilities present in the family in these cases, including substantial rates of disclosed mental health problems amongst both parents (25% of all mothers and 17% of all fathers), substance misuse, including alcohol and/or drugs (13% of all mothers, 25% of all fathers), antisocial or criminal behaviour (7% of all mothers, 28% of all fathers) and experience as a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse in a previous relationship (42% of mothers, 30% of fathers). Additionally, 14% of families were homeless.

1.5 Given their presence as additional risk factors in Serious Case Reviews, we looked at the presence of one or both of: parental mental ill-health and substance misuse in these families alongside the domestic abuse. Our data show a clear co-occurrence between the 'toxic trio' risk factors of domestic abuse, substance misuse

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

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

(alcohol and/or drugs) and parental mental ill health. Nearly a third of mothers (31%) and a third of fathers (32%) had disclosed either mental health problems, substance misuse, or both.

1.6 These rates are slightly lower, but broadly aligned with, disclosure rates in our forthcoming adult National Insights Dataset 2012–13, in which victims of domestic abuse disclose mental health concerns in 30% of cases, and substance misuse (alcohol and/or drugs) in 19% of cases.²³ These rates are likely to be under-reported, perhaps significantly, given that parents are asked the question at a point which may be the first time they have sought help: we know that longer term rates of mental ill health amongst domestic abuse victims tend to be higher.²⁴ Also consistent with our data, a recent report by the NSPCC (Radford et al., 2011) on Serious Case Reviews where domestic abuse was present found that a number of factors increased the risk to children in domestic abuse families, including: Presence of parental mental health problems (including suicidal thoughts and/or threats to kill from men, and depression, low self-esteem or anxiety for women). Parental substance abuse, in particular alcohol abuse. History of violence, either against previous partners or other adults or as young offenders.²⁵

- Because of the relatively high levels of reported and researched co-existing issues it is hoped that the developed Pathway will be asked as a matter of routine to every adult that accesses our identified services that will take part in this year-long funded Project.
- Possible identified service areas will be the DA Hub (Domestic Abuse) and one of the CMHT (for both Mental Health and Substance Misuse). Conversations will need to be ongoing to clarify and confirm arrangements before the start of the post.
- Whilst we could extrapolate from national data to suggest that the numbers of the cohort we seek to work with can be significant, until we have done the work locally to determine demand and also the ability of services to respond to such a joint service, we are being cautious about numbers. This project is one that virtually every area in the UK sees as an issue, and if it were straightforward to do, it would have been solved long ago. We are very pleased that Swansea PSB is grasping this significant challenge with the commitment from partners to create real and lasting change.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

We hope that this clarifies some of the comments that the PSB has on this workstream.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & STRATEGY

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ clr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Cllr Rob Stewart
Chair of Swansea Public Services
Board

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 636292

e-Mail
e-Bost:

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

BY EMAIL

Our Ref
Ein Cyf:

Your Ref
Eich Cyf:

Date
Dyddiad:

31 January 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Chair of the Public Services Board following the meeting of the Panel on 18 January. It contains feedback from the Panel's Q & A session with the Director of Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS) and provides comments on the draft Wellbeing Assessment.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

This letter is to provide you and the members of the Public Services Board (PSB) with feedback from the meeting of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel (the Panel), which took place 18 January 2017.

Q&A session with the Director of SCVS

As you are aware we are undertaking a series of Q & A sessions with all the core group members in order to understand the contribution their organisations are making to the work of the PSB. As result of our discussion with Amanda Carr, Director of SCVS, we would like to raise the following points for consideration by the PSB.

We were encouraged to hear the view of the Director that the key role of the PSB is to look at service delivery for the key objectives and focus on co-ordinating the resources that are already in place in order to avoid duplication and ensure they are used effectively. We will continue to look for examples of how this is being achieved as we take forward our scrutiny of the PSB.

We were pleased to hear that the PSB is establishing a working group to develop a communication strategy, as it is important that the work of the board is clear, transparent and understood by the public. We believe that this strategy needs to be community focused and look for ways to encourage greater public involvement in the development of the PSB's work and priorities. We support SCVS's view that the communication strategy needs to focus on engagement and ways of taking forward co-production, and not just focus on promoting key messages. However we also acknowledge that resources need to be in place to develop and deliver this, and believe the PSB should consider how this will be supported.

We discussed the uncertainty of funding faced by SCVS and other third sector organisations, which can impact on its ability to support the work of the PSB and to forward plan. We were disappointed to hear that there is no longer a specific Partnership Officer based in SCVS, who had a key role in connecting the work of the third sector with public sector bodies. Whilst it is within the remit of the Director to attend key strategic meetings, we were advised that SCVS is often not always able to provide or coordinate representation to sub, working and task and finish groups. We therefore recommend that the PSB considers the option of agreeing some pooled funding to facilitate the involvement of the third sector in its work.

Consultation on the draft Wellbeing Assessment

We discussed the draft Wellbeing Assessment, in our role as statutory consultees, and have the following comments that we wish to be taken into account as part of the formal consultation process:

- There is a need for a plain English summary to make the Wellbeing Assessment more accessible.
- It appears that the comparative data used to inform the scores for the drivers is based on a comparison only with other Welsh authorities, however the Panel felt that the comparative data should be widened to include best performing authorities from across the UK for a more accurate picture of how well Swansea is performing, given that Wales is not necessarily best performing. Similarly, strategy/objectives should be set against best in class – particularly where we have scored ourselves highly.
- We felt that the score given for E2 (children, young people and adults have good mental health and wellbeing) was too high, based on the findings from the scrutiny inquiry into CAMHS (Children's and Adolescents Mental Health Services), which found a concerning lack of service provision for children and young people with mental health issues. Similarly the Panel expects that findings from other scrutiny work/inquiries should inform the Wellbeing Assessment.

- Statements within the Wellbeing Assessment should be clear whether they are based on fact or opinion and if based on data then clearly referenced, for example, outcome D states that the majority of people living in Swansea are not in income poverty. We do not dispute this statement however we believe that the statements such as these should reference the evidence on which they are based.

Panel members will also contribute to the consultation process individually via the survey.

Forthcoming meetings

Continuing our Q & A sessions with PSB core group members, we will be meeting with you and Andrew Davies (ABMU) on 15 February.

Your response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful however if you could specifically respond to the following recommendations:

- The PSB's communication strategy should focus on engagement and ways of taking forward co-production, and not just on promoting key messages.
- The PSB should confirm how the development and delivery of its communication strategy will be resourced.
- The PSB should consider the need to facilitate the involvement of the third sector in its work, for example the option of agreeing pooled funding to support this.
- Confirm that our comments in relation to the Wellbeing Assessment will be considered as part of the revised draft.

I would be grateful if you could reply to this letter by 21 February 2017.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mary Jones

Convener, Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Convenor, Public Services Board Scrutiny
Performance Panel

BY E MAIL

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:
Your Ref / Eich
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

Councillor Rob Stewart

(01792) 636141

cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk

RS/KH

1st March 2017

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Jones

Thank you for your letter of 31 January. I was pleased to hear that you have had a productive discussion with Amanda Carr from SVCS and that you have been able to contribute to the consultation on the Wellbeing Assessment. The Panel's points are well made and will of course be carefully considered. I also note your comment about the need for a more accessible summary of the Assessment and you will be pleased to hear that the Public Services Board made the same suggestion and that this is now available on the website. Great minds as they say.

The rest of this letter covers my responses to your other points.

1. The PSB's communication strategy should focus on engagement and ways of taking forward co-production, and not just on promoting key messages.

As you are aware, the Public Services Board discussed this issue at its January Meeting and agreed that an exploratory workshop should be held and that this would report back to the Board at a future date. While the initial focus will be on agreeing a set of core communication messages it is clear that there is an appetite to use communications to do more than simply that. We will be exploring how communications can be used as a partnership tool at the workshop and in that context this suggestion is helpful. I will ask that this issue is added to the workshop brief.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

2. The PSB should confirm how the development and delivery of its communication strategy will be resourced.

As we are still at the early stages of developing our approach to communications we have not yet agreed how the approach will be resourced. Again I will ensure that this is included in the workshop brief.

3. The PSB should consider the need to facilitate the involvement of the third sector in its work, for example the option of agreeing pooled funding to support this.

I note your point about the value of voluntary sector involvement at all levels of partnership working and I agree that this is absolutely right. The PSB recognises Swansea Council for Voluntary Services as one of its Core Group members and this reflects the important role they have strategically in Swansea. This is a key issue and one that we will need to address as part of the process of developing the Wellbeing Plan over the next 12 Months.

In terms of pooled funding it has certainly been an aspiration of mine to use the Public Services Board to facilitate this and again I hope that this will be a conversation that we can have as part of the development of the Wellbeing Plan.

From a Council perspective we are committed to working in partnership with the Voluntary Sector although the financial challenges we face mean that we are continually reviewing the support we provide financially.

I trust that these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & STRATEGY
COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART
LEADER / ARWEINYDD

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 636141

✉ cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Cllr Rob Stewart
Chair of Swansea Public Services
Board

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 637257

e-Mail
e-Bost:

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

BY EMAIL

Our Ref
Ein Cyf:

Your Ref
Eich Cyf:

Date
Dyddiad:

16 March 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Chair of the Public Services Board following the meeting of the Panel on 15 February. It reflects on the Panel's Q & A session with the Chair of the Public Services Board.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

This letter is to provide you and the Public Services Board (PSB) with feedback from the meeting of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel, which you attended on 15 February 2017.

Q & A session with the Chair of the PSB

Our meeting with you is part of a series of Q & A sessions we are arranging with all the PSB Core Group members in order to understand the contribution their organisations are making to the work of the PSB.

This letter reflects on the Q & A session with you, issues raised, and the views and recommendations of the Panel, including any matters we would like the PSB to consider.

In your opening remarks you referred to:

- The evolution of the Public Services Board from the Local Service Board, key differences including the statutory footing, and new challenges, particularly for some of the partners to engage with all the PSBs across Wales.

- The PSB organisational chart which showed the structure of the PSB, the participation of the various organisations involved, and links with scrutiny on a local level and national accountability.
- The relationship between the Core Group and Partnership Group, and the need to strike a balance between executive decision-making and wider engagement with partners.
- PSB priorities – you stated that there has been a cross-over with previous LSB priorities but these were in the process of being closed off. New priorities will be informed by the response to the Wellbeing Assessment.

We discussed the following issues:

The role of Councils in the leadership of PSBs compared with that of partners, and their commitment, involvement and engagement.

Although Council's have a statutory responsibility to provide leadership for PSBs, you stated that it was not possible for the Council to lead on everything, and that the success of the PSB depended on shared leadership, whether that is about partners taking a lead on certain aspects, or contributing in other ways. You clearly welcomed the involvement and support of partners. The contribution of finance and resources however was a key issue to be progressed.

We heard that there is a good level of partner attendance at meetings, and that a big difference between the former Local Service Board and the PSB was organisational representation at a far more senior level. You spoke positively about partner commitment to PSB priorities, such as Domestic Abuse. Examples were also noted of certain partners, such as the Fire Service, volunteering to lead specific work streams at sub-group level.

How pooled funding to tackle PSB priorities is being addressed and achieved.

You told us that to date administrative support for the PSB has become jointly funded, but discussions have been held about creating a pooled budget for the PSB. You explained that this was a difficult issue - although supported in principle, commitment on finance and resources was needed. However, you felt that progress was being made, and it was positive that partners have indicated a willingness to contribute to the funding for two new Local Area Coordinators. This was cited as a something of a test for the PSB, as the commitment to fund has been given but you are waiting to see whether that will be delivered. We noted that the evaluation report in respect of Local Area Coordination would be published soon, and this would provide evidence with regard to the expansion of this approach. You indicated that there was good evidence of success but clearly partners will need to see a sound business case before any agreement to collaborate on this. We look forward to seeing

the evaluation report. Please ensure that the report is provided to Panel Members as soon as it is published.

The variation / mismatch in the resources between partner organisations that may affect their contribution or ability to participate effectively and support work, and how that can be addressed.

We referred to issues raised by SCVS, one of the PSB's invited participants, at the Panel's Q & A session in January. The Panel heard about the pressure on their resources to assist the work of the PSB. In our meeting with Amanda Carr, Director SCVS, we discussed the uncertainty of funding faced by SCVS and other third sector organisations, which can impact on their ability to support the work of the PSB and to forward plan. Whilst it is within the remit of the Director to attend key strategic meetings, we were advised that SCVS is often not always able to provide or coordinate representation to sub, working and task and finish groups, given the relatively small number of people involved. We felt that the PSB would need to consider some way of funding to facilitate the involvement of the third sector in its work.

You reiterated that participation was encouraged but invited participants were not being asked to contribute financially to the PSB. You did however recognise that their involvement in assisting with and helping to deliver the work of the PSB could be a pressure. You stressed that invited participants could not be funded to participate however you accepted that where they may be asked to carry out specific work this should be resourced. We agreed that the achievement of a pooled budget for the PSB, one that the Council would also contribute to, would clearly help in being able to do this. You noted the issues raised and indicated a willingness to discuss with SCVS. You referred to the long-standing relationship between the Council and SCVS, noting that the SCVS is a recipient of Council funding to support the organisation generally.

Progress with the delivery of PSB priorities, and process of monitoring progress against targets and evaluating achievement / effectiveness, including how well specific actions for individual organisations are being completed.

We heard that partners are signed up to the priorities and there is buy-in. You felt that things were moving forward at a good pace, and organisations were mobilised to work on the priorities. You remarked that it remained a challenge to identify issues which had the potential to cut across all the organisations involved.

You referred to the driver diagrams that have been used in the past to show outcomes, measures of success, and actions necessary, which will continue to be drawn up for PSB priorities. You stated that specific actions will be clear from this which the Panel can follow. You added that the process of discussion across the partnership does take time including the agreement of priorities, actions and measures that the whole PSB is comfortable with and fully behind.

You conceded that there was much to do in terms of developing an effective performance management framework for the PSB. It is something which the Scrutiny Panel must see in order to carry out its role. It is essential that we can identify specific measurable actions for projects so that we can monitor progress and delivery against targets, and difference made. It would be helpful if this also shows the contribution of individual partners. As we see this framework emerging we will give constructive feedback to improve the quality of reports on plans and performance.

You encouraged the Panel to read PSB Partnership Group agendas in order to see more detail and keep abreast of progress with priorities and projects.

Public consultation on the draft Wellbeing Assessment, and efforts to ensure awareness amongst communities and understanding to ensure a good level of response.

We wanted to know what was being done to ensure the survey reached communities and how this matter was being communicated, as the Wellbeing Assessment may not be the easiest of reads. We look forward to hearing about the response to the Assessment and how public views have influenced the final report.

Possible future reorganisation of PSBs across Wales and reduction in number on a regional basis.

We talked about the possible reorganisation of PSBs across Wales, following a regional footprint. Exactly what footprint that would be was clearly a matter of debate. You felt that it may benefit those partners that currently support all PSBs across Wales and improve their capacity to engage more effectively. You told us that you would welcome changes however not at the cost of the priorities identified by Swansea.

The input of Welsh Government and Welsh Local Government Association.

You were satisfied with the input and support from the Welsh Government to the Swansea PSB, with regular attendance at relevant meetings. You also mentioned the input provided by a number of national Commissioners to advise and support local work.

With regard to the WLGA we noted that there was no direct input however it had a key role in advising local authorities on relevant matters such as the regional agenda and Welsh Government White Papers.

The experience of PSBs elsewhere and good practice.

We noted that practice across Wales differed slightly and that it was difficult to identify good practice with the experience to date.

Possible impact from the ending of Communities First funding.

Given the recent Welsh Government announcement about ending funding for the Communities First Programme we were concerned to know the impact this may have on projects in Swansea. We understood that there would be a phased approach to ending the Programme (70% funding for the coming year) and that a legacy fund would be established from April 2018 to help maintain effective interventions. We also learned that alternative pots of money are expected to become available in due course to support initiatives such as helping people into employment.

We felt that implications from the decisions by Welsh Government on the Communities First Programme needed to be discussed by the PSB to consider the effect on organisations, projects and initiatives across the partnership, and managing the transition. The sustainability of successful projects already delivered in Swansea was clearly a matter of concern.

The effectiveness of partnership working in relation to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Following on from our recent scrutiny inquiry we talked about the importance of CAMHS and the need for effective partnership working to tackle mental health. You acknowledged this as a big national issue but accepted the need to do more collectively locally to ensure sufficiency of care in the area. You pledged to do what you can in terms of the PSB and the Western Bay health and social care partnership to ensure focus on this issue.

Forthcoming Q & A Sessions with Core Group Members

We met with representatives of the ABMU Health Board, South Wales Police, and Natural Resources Wales on 15 March. I will write to you again sharing our views and observations following this meeting.

We have arranged to meet with representatives of the Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service on 12 April. A session with the Welsh Government representative will need to take place early in the new municipal year.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any further comments however **we do not expect you to provide a formal response.**

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mary Jones

Convener, Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 8

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 10 April 2017

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 year and provides a copy of correspondence between scrutiny and cabinet members, where discussion is 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(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Mike Hawes, Director – Resources
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

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 Programme Committee or conveners of panels / working groups, are published on the Council's website (<http://swansea.gov.uk/scrutinypublications>) 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 where specific discussion is required. Letters are included where cabinet member responses were awaited and have now been received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response.

2.3 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. The exception to this is the Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel, whose letters will also be reported as this committee is the designated committee for scrutinising Swansea Public Services Board (for the purposes of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015). However all Performance Panel conveners will provide a quarterly progress report to the committee, including summary of correspondence with Cabinet Members and outcomes. Note - the letters relating to the Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel are included in this agenda under item 7 as part of the routine progress report being provided by the convener.

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 last year – see **Appendix 1**.

3.2 The following letter(s) are also attached for discussion:

	Activity	Meeting Date	Correspondence
a	Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Working Group	12 Jan	Letter to / from Cabinet Members for Wellbeing & Health City and Environment, Development & Regeneration
b	Committee (Cabinet Member Q & A)	13 Feb	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services
c	Local Flood Risk Management Working Group	1 Mar	Letter to / from Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation
d	Digital Inclusion Working Group	6 Mar	Letter to Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty & Communities
e	Committee (pre-decision scrutiny)	13 Mar	Letter to Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration
f	Committee (Cabinet Member Q & A)	13 Mar	Letter to Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance

3.3 Some points to note:

- HMO Working Group - Having heard from Cabinet Members, officers and members of the public the HMO Working Group made a number of recommendations. The Group called for clear controls over the density and spread of HMOs across the City and County of Swansea, most notably in Uplands and St Thomas given the proximity to university campuses. They also called for more resources to be directed to HMO enforcement activities. The response of the relevant Cabinet Members is attached. This work is now concluded.
- Local Flood Risk Management Working Group – the annual scrutiny meeting to look at progress with the local flood risk plan took place on 1 March, and the Group made a number of recommendations in relation to underground watercourses, the prioritised programme of works, and public information about flood risk.
- Digital Inclusion Working Group – the Group has provided views to the relevant Cabinet Member(s) on the Council’s Digital Inclusion Strategy, which is going to be reviewed shortly. The Working Group is keen that this issue is revisited by scrutiny after the election perhaps as a further working group, or at the very least raised at the relevant Cabinet Member Question and Answer Sessions.

3.4 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 as a result of the views and recommendations made. 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.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Scrutiny Letters Log (20 May 2016 - 25 May 2017)

Ave. Response Time (days): 19 (target within 21 days) % responses within target: 66

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Date	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received	Days Taken	Reported to SPC (if applicable)
1	Committee	11-Apr	Cabinet Member Q & A	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	24-May	01-Jun	8	13-Jun
2	Tackling Poverty Inquiry Panel	20-Apr	Proposed In-depth Inquiry	Anti-Poverty	26-May	Not required	n/a	n/a
3	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	11-Apr	Development of the Post-16 Service; Independent Residential Placement	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	31-May	20-Jun	20	n/a
4	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	06-Jun	Pre-decision scrutiny of Waste Management Commissioning Review Cabinet Report	Environment & Transportation	13-Jun	30-Jun	17	n/a
5	Committee	13-Jun	Pre-decision scrutiny of Castle Square Cabinet Report	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	15-Jun	04-Jul	19	n/a (not public)
6	Schools Performance Panel	09-Jun	Cefn Hengoed Community School	Education	17-Jun	Not required	n/a	n/a

7	Tethered Horses Working Group	07-Jun	Further letter to Cabinet Member following response to conclusions / recommendations of the Working Group	Wellbeing & Healthy City	20-Jun	Not required	n/a	11-Jul
8	Adult Services Panel	21-Jun	Agreed terms of reference and agreed to invite 2 people to be co-optees	Adults & Vulnerable People	27-Jun	Not required	n/a	n/a
9	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	22-Jun	Resquesting further information on PIs relating to the Tackling Poverty corporate priority	Anti-Poverty	06-Jul	07-Jul	1	n/a
10	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	22-Jun	Comments on the Corporate Plan	Transformation & Performance	06-Jul	22-Jul	16	n/a
11	Committee	09-May	Cabinet Member Q & A	Environment & Transportation	07-Jul	29-Jul	22	12-Sep
12	Corporate Culture Inquiry Panel	06-Jul	Impact report	Transformation & Performance	12-Jul	Not required	n/a	08-Aug
13	Committee	13-Jun	Cabinet Member Q & A	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	14-Jul	03-Aug	20	12-Sep
14	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	27-Jun	Performance Monitoring	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	25-Jul	29-Jul	4	n/a
15	Adult Services Panel	05-Jul	Adult Services Improvement Plan	Adults & Vulnerable People	25-Jul	Not required	n/a	n/a

16	Committee	11-Jul	Cabinet Member Q & A	Wellbeing & Healthy City	27-Jul	17-Aug	21	12-Sep
17	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	25-Jul	CSSIW inspection reports Youth Justice & Early Intervention Service	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	10-Aug	25-Aug	15	n/a
18	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	15-Aug	Pre-decision scrutiny - CBPS Commissioning Review	Next Generation Services	17-Aug	08-Sep	22	n/a
19	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	27-Jul	Revenue and Capital Outturn for 2015/16.	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	18-Aug	09-Sep	22	n/a
20	Committee	08-Aug	Cabinet Member Q & A	Education	01-Sep	08-Sep	7	10-Oct
21	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	31-Aug	1st Quarter Budget monitoring	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	08-Sep	23-Sep	15	n/a
22	Schools Performance Panel	01-Sep	School Improvement Service and school reserves	Education	20-Sep	06-Oct	16	n/a
23	Adult Services Panel	24-Aug	Learning Disabilities	Adults & Vulnerable People	23-Sep	Not required	n/a	na
24	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	22-Aug	Performance Monitoring	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	28-Sep	03-Nov	36	n/a
25	Committee	12-Sep	Cabinet Member Q & A	Anti-Poverty & Communities	11-Oct	01-Nov	21	14-Nov
26	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	26-Sep	Western Bay Adoption Service Annual Report	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	11-Oct	19-Oct	8	n/a

27	Public Services Board Performance Panel	28-Sep	Outline of panel's work plan for 2016/17	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	18-Oct	28-Nov	41	12-Dec
28*	ERW Scrutiny Cllr Group	27-Sep	Letter to Joint Cttee - Outcome of regional ERW Groups discussions	Education	18-Oct	n/a	n/a	n/a
29	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	21-Sep	1st Quarter performance monitoring - Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit performance indicators	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	25-Oct	16-Nov	22	n/a
30	Committee	10-Oct	Cabinet Member Q & A	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	25-Oct	05-Dec	41	09-Jan
31	Schools Performance Panel	19-Oct	Bryniago Welsh Medium Primary School	Education	03-Nov	Not required	n/a	n/a
32	Planning Working Group	19-Oct	Rrevised planning committee arrangements, section 106 agreements, the Call-In process, enforcement activity and the Planning Annual performance report	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	10-Nov	7/12/16	27	09-Jan
33	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	02-Nov	Transformation Fund - fruther information requests. Requests an update on the Libraries Service Commissioning Review.	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	21-Nov	13-Dec	22	n/a
34	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	31-Oct	Integrated family support service; health assessments	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	22-Nov	28-Nov	6	n/a

35	Schools Performance Panel	16-Nov	Pupil Deprivation Grant Spend and Annual Audit of Schools	Education	29-Nov	Not required	n/a	n/a
36	Committee	14-Nov	Cabinet Member Q & A	Environment & Transportation	30-Nov	21-Dec	21	09-Jan
37	Education Inclusion Inquiry Panel	29-Nov	Education Inclusion Follow up /Impact (1)	Education	12-Dec	Not required	n/a	n/a
38	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	12-Dec	Pre-decision Scrutiny - Parks & Cleansing Commissioning Review	Environment & Transportation and Wellbeing & healthy City	14-Dec	30-Dec	16	n/a
39	Schools Performance Panel	08-Dec	Looked after children, restorative practice and pioneer schools	Education	20-Dec	21-Dec	1	n/a
40	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	30-Nov	Post 16 Service	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	21-Dec	Not required	n/a	n/a
41	Public Services Board Performance Panel	06-Dec	PSB Priority work streams	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	10-Jan	01-Mar	50	10-Apr
42	Adult Services Panel	14-Dec	Social care at home inquiry follow-up	Adults & Vulnerable People	10-Jan	01-Feb	22	09-Mar
43	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	19-Dec	Performance Monitoring - October 2016	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	11-Jan	01-Feb	21	n/a
44	Civic Events Working Group		Reply to Cabinet Member response - Royal Visits and Lord Mayor	Transformation & Performance	11-Jan	Not required	n/a	13-Feb

45	Adult Services Panel		Linkages between the budget and performance management objectives	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	11-Jan	09-Feb	29	n/a
46	Committee	12-Dec	Cabinet Member Q & A	Adults & Vulnerable People	12-Jan	01-Feb	20	13-Feb
47	Education Inclusion Inquiry Panel	03-Jan	EOTAS	Education	13-Jan	Not required	n/a	13-Feb
48	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	20-Dec	Recycling and landfill annual performance report	Environment & Transportation	18-Jan	06-Feb	19	n/a
49	Public Services Board Performance Panel	18-Jan	Q&A session with Director of SCVS - Core Group member; Feedback on Wellbeing Assessment consultation	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	31-Jan	01-Mar	29	10-Apr
50	Committee	09-Jan	Cabinet Member Q & A	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	01-Feb	Not required	n/a	13-Feb
51	Planning Working Group	01-Feb	Call-in; consultation; member training; fees; infrastrcutre	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	08-Feb	24-Feb	16	09-Mar
52	HMO Working Group	12-Jan	Houses in Multiple Occupation	Wellbeing & Healthy City	13-Feb	08-Mar	23	10-Apr
53	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	23-Jan	Child and Family Services Performance	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	13-Feb	Not required	n/a	n/a
54	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	13-Feb	Pre Decision scrutiny of Domestic Abuse Commissioing Review	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	13-Feb	27-Feb	14	n/a

55	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	07-Feb	Budget	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	14-Feb	01-Mar	15	n/a
56	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	25-Jan	Fees and Charges	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	16-Feb	08-Mar	20	n/a
57	Schools Performance Panel	16-Feb	Annual Education Performance and school music service	Education	23-Feb	Not required	n/a	n/a
58	Local Flood Risk Management Working Group	01-Mar	Flood Risk Management Plan	Environment & Transportation	07-Mar	29-Mar	22	10-Apr
59	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel	22-Feb	Fees and Charges, commercial estates	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	08-Mar	27-Mar	19	n/a
60	Committee	13-Feb	Cabinet Member Q & A	Next Generation Services	09-Mar	14-Mar	5	10-Apr
61	Child & Family Services Performance Panel	14-Mar	Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Family Support (Under 11s and Over 11s Clusters) Commissioning Reviews	Services for Children & Young People (Deputy Leader)	15-Mar	21-Mar	6	n/a
62	Committee	13-Mar	Pre-decision Scrutiny: Castle Square	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	15-Mar			
63	Committee	13-Mar	Pre-decision Scrutiny: City Centre Regeneration (accommodation strategy)	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	15-Mar	Not required	n/a	10-Apr
64	Public Services Board Performance Panel	15-Feb	Q & A session with Chair of PSB	Finance & Strategy (Leader)	16-Mar	Not required	n/a	10-Apr

65	Digital Inclusion Working Group	06-Mar	Digital Inclusion Strategy	Anti-Poverty & Communities	22-Mar	Not required	n/a	10-Apr
66	Committee	13-Mar	Cabinet Member Q & A	Transformation & Performance	24-Mar	Not required	n/a	10-Apr
67	Adult Services Panel	08-Mar	Objective setting for senior officers; Adult Services Performance Management Report	Adults & Vulnerable People	27-Mar			



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

To
Councillor Mark Child
Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Healthy
City

Councillor Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Planning
and Development

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 637256

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

13 February 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Houses in Multiple Occupation Scrutiny Working group to the Cabinet Members for Wellbeing & Health City and Enterprise, Planning & Regeneration following the meeting of the Working Group on 12 January 2017. It is about the Housing in Multiple Occupation in Swansea.

Dear Cabinet Members,

Houses in Multiple Occupation Scrutiny Working Group – 12 January 2017

The Houses in Multiple Occupation Scrutiny Working Group has now concluded its work. Thank you for your contribution to our meeting on the 12 January. This letter contains our views, conclusions and recommendations from our examination of this topic and the issues brought to our attention.

The Scrutiny Programme Committee agreed for this to be an issue for scrutiny after they were contacted by a member of the public who expressed concern about the numbers and control of HMOs in Swansea. They also raised particular issues about the spread of HMOs in the east side due to the new University campus, and its effect on the local area.

The Working Group received background on the subject from the relevant Council departments on the 25 November, spoke to you both as the relevant cabinet members and also asked for submissions from the public both in writing and in person at our meeting on the 12 January.

As part of this work we considered:

- The Council's responsibilities (legislative or otherwise) and current position regarding HMOs licensing, management and control, and future plans.
- Service aims / targets / performance measures /Service costs
- The intensity of HMOs across Swansea including East / West comparison

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

- Recent changes / trends and causes. Future projections.
- The Council's engagement with universities / landlords / HMO providers, and partnership working
- Impact on Council Tax revenue from HMO properties

We would like to thank those members of the public who submitted their views both in writing and in person ([full copies](#) of consultation submissions are available). In summary, this highlighted:

- The need for communities to feel they are listened to, valued and respected, particularly in areas where there are already a large concentration of HMOs
- The changing demography of certain parts of Swansea and its impact on community cohesion (including residents, facilities available in the areas and the sustainability of community groups)
- The noise disturbance, anti-social behaviour and street scene issues caused by large concentrations of HMOs on communities/individuals living in these areas
- The fear that without intervention now St Thomas will experience similar issues to Uplands area
- The need for a ceiling to the numbers of HMO properties so they are more spread across Swansea and not concentrated in certain areas
- The need to look for ways of encouraging re-conversion of properties back to family homes
- Potentially harmful concentrations and the proposed HMO concentration ratios and radius from property applications

We are aware that Supplementary Planning Guidance on HMOs was discussed at Planning Committee on the 10 January and that it will now go out to public consultation. We welcome this new guidance and would encourage members of the public to give their views directly into this process.

Following our consideration of the relevant information and issues we wish to make a number of recommendations:

Recommendations

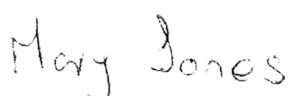
In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to our recommendations below:

1. The Working Group identified a financial surplus from the fee income received after licensing related salaries of HMO Officers had been paid. This discovery came from figures provided by the department and from questions by working group members to officers. We recommend that this surplus should be used to increase the number of HMO Licensing Officers.
2. Bring forward the Additional HMO Licencing Scheme review to be agreed at the October 2017 Council meeting for implementation in March 2018 and use this opportunity to:
 - a. Raise the landlord fee, and use any identified surplus between fee income and costs, to employ additional enforcement officers. This will enable the service to be proactive rather than reactive enabling greater enforcement

- of existing legislation particularly around policing of HMO's over the five year term.
- b. Determine the evidence base for consideration of Additional HMO Licensing across the City and County of Swansea by immediately undertaking proactive survey work, starting with the St. Thomas Ward. The survey for this Ward should be completed by April 2017.
 - c. Promote:
 - i) the new Rent Smart Wales legislative requirements to landlords and to tenants, which allows tenants and prospective tenants to identify properly registered landlords and licenced agents.
 - ii) the public register of licensed HMOs on the Council's website www.swansea.gov.uk/hmoregister
 - iii) the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and obligations on householders regarding waste, litter, and nuisance.
 - d. In addition to the above, liaise with Wrexham Council to learn from their practice whereby they differentiate between good and not good landlords. *'Separating the Good from the Bad' – The public register will be promoted as the most appropriate place to find shared accommodation. This should assist tenants to avoid substandard properties and rogue landlords and ensure that tenants are directed towards licensed HMOs.'* **Wrexham County Borough Council**
3. The Supplementary Planning guidance define a threshold above which concentration or intensification of HMOs will be deemed harmful within a 50 metre radius of a proposal
 4. The Supplementary Planning Guidance define a HMO threshold of:
 - a. No more than 20% in the designated HMO Management Area
 - b. No more than 10% in the remainder of the City and County (the Working Group accepts that there may be exceptions that would need to be assessed on their own merits)
 5. Advise on noise insulation for all HMO licenced properties of 3+.
 6. Take action against landlords / tenants that remove or tamper with the closures on fire doors within HMOs. There should be more rigorous enforcement of the requirement for fire doors to soft close and be properly maintained.
 7. Investigate the possibility of incentives being offered to re-convert surplus HMOs back to family homes.

We look forward to your written response by 7 March 2017.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Convener of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Scrutiny Working Group

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Convener
Houses in Multiple Occupation
Scrutiny Working Group

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:
Your Ref / Eich Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

Councillor Mark Child/
Councillor Robert Francis-Davies
(01792) 637441/637440

cllr.mark.child@swansea.gov.uk
MC/RFD/CM

8th March 2017

**To receive this information in alternative format, please contact the above.
I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall, cysylltwch â'r person uchod.**

Dear Councillor Jones

**HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – 12TH
JANUARY 2017**

Thank you for your letter dated 13th February 2017.

- 1. The Working Group identified a financial surplus from the fee income received after licensing related salaries of HMO Officers had been paid. This discovery came from figures provided by the department and from questions by working group members to officers. We recommend that this surplus should be used to increase the number of HMO Licensing Officers.**

Information provided at the Scrutiny Working Group referred to the range of officer posts involved with HMO licensing and their typical salary costs. A total annual income figure was not requested or provided at that time. Annual HMO licence fee income fluctuates depending upon the housing market, the number of new licence applications and licences requiring renewal.

Licence fees are required to be paid in full when an HMO licence application is made. The fee paid covers a maximum five year period (i.e. the life of an HMO licence). A proportion of the fee is therefore carried across that period as 'receipts in advance'. This means even though the fee is paid in full in one particular financial year, it is able to be utilised in that year and subsequent years over the term of the licence.

This is permitted and should not be interpreted as a surplus.



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Page 2

From 1st April 2017, there will be one additional Environmental Health Officer dealing with HMOs and other private sector housing enforcement matters. It is anticipated this will equate to approximately 0.8FTE on HMO licensing, which will be funded by HMO licensing fees.

2. Bring forward the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme review to be agreed at the October 2017 Council meeting for implementation in March 2018 and use this opportunity to:

a. Raise the landlord fee and use any identified surplus between fee income and costs to employ additional enforcement officers. This will enable the service to be proactive rather than reactive enabling greater enforcement of existing legislation particularly around the policing of HMOs over the five year term.

b. Determine the evidence base for consideration of Additional HMO Licensing across the City and County of Swansea by immediately undertaking proactive survey work, starting with the St Thomas Ward. The survey for this Ward should be completed by April 2017.

c. Promote:

i) the new Rent Smart Wales legislative requirements to landlords and to tenants, which allows tenants and prospective tenants to identify properly registered landlords and licensed agents.

ii) the public register of licensed HMOs on the Council's website www.swansea.gov.uk/hmoregister

iii) the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and obligations on householders regarding waste, litter and nuisance.

d. In addition to the above, liaise with Wrexham Council to learn from their practice whereby they differentiate between good and not good landlords. *'Separating the Good from the Bad' – The public register will be promoted as the most appropriate place to find shared accommodation. This should assist tenants to avoid substandard properties and rogue landlords and ensure that tenants are directed towards licensed HMOs.'* Wrexham County Borough Council



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Page 3

a) The current HMO Licensing Policy 2016 was adopted by Council in November 2015 and the renewal of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme for Castle and Uplands took effect in March 2016. The fees were reviewed at that stage and were increased. The Council can only set a fee which covers costs incurred in administering HMO licensing and whilst this will be reviewed during the five year life of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme, the increased fees have only been in place for a year. A further increase to fees at this stage is viewed as unreasonable and open to challenge.

b) Proactive survey work has started in the St Thomas ward. The results of the survey will be reported back to the Cabinet Member in April. This will determine the need for consideration of Additional HMO Licensing in the area in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004.

Notwithstanding the results of the St Thomas survey, a city-wide additional licensing declaration is not felt to be appropriate or proportional for Swansea. There is not the evidence base locally to support such a declaration and such action would certainly deflect resources away from the geographical areas of concern.

c) Work to promote Rent Smart Wales requirements has been ongoing since 2015 and will continue alongside an increasing role for enforcement of the legislative provisions. This will be done in liaison with the single licensing authority Cardiff Council who operate Rent Smart Wales.

The public register of licensed HMOs is on the Council's website and is referred to by officers across the Council as well as third sector partners and both universities. Officers in various teams across the Council continue to deal with waste, litter and nuisance issues from HMOs, liaising with residents, property owners and agents, both universities and students' unions.

Our use of the public register of licensed HMOs already echoes that used by Wrexham Council. The content and use of the public register is governed by statute.

3. The Supplementary Planning Guidance define a threshold above which concentration or intensification of HMOs will be deemed harmful within a 50 metre radius of a proposal.



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Page 4

- 4. The Supplementary Planning Guidance define a HMO threshold of:**
- a) No more than 20% in the designated HMO Management Area**
 - b) No more than 10% in the remainder of the City and County**
- (the Working Group accepts that there may be exceptions that would need to be assessed on their their own merits)**

5. Advice on noise insulation for all HMO properties of 3+

The Supplementary Planning Guidance is the subject of a comprehensive public consultation until 5 March 2017. Numerous representations have already been received, which have included comments on the points raised by the Scrutiny Panel in recommendations 3, 4 and 5, specifically with regard to alternative threshold figures, methods of defining an area for threshold calculations, and the merits of requiring noise insulation measures for HMO properties. Following the conclusion of the consultation period all representations that have been duly submitted will be considered in detail by the Planning Authority, with the assistance of independent consultants, before any appropriate changes to the draft document are made. The amended Final Draft SPG will be presented to Members of the Planning Committee in due course for their review, alongside a schedule of the Planning Authority responses to all comments duly submitted during the consultation period.

6. Take action against landlords/tenants that remove or tamper with the closures on fire doors within HMOs. There should be more rigorous enforcement of the requirement for fire doors to soft close and be properly maintained.

The correct operation of fire doors is checked during inspections of HMOs and complaints of slamming fire doors are investigated. Action is taken with the landlord/agent/licence holder where doors are inadequate, poorly maintained, missing or do not operate effectively.



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Page 5

7. Investigate the possibility of incentives being offered to re-convert surplus HMOs back to family homes.

The Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal and Disabled Adaptations Policy prioritises disabled facilities grants and situations where vulnerable occupiers are living with risks to their health and safety. There are currently no resources available to offer grants for conversion of properties back to family homes. This could however be considered as part of a wider regeneration initiative subject to available funding.

Yours sincerely

**COUNCILLOR MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR
WELLBEING & HEALTHY CITY**

**COUNCILLOR ROBERT FRANCIS DAVIES
CABINET MEMBER FOR
ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT &
REGENERATION**



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To/
Councillor Andrea Lewis
Cabinet Member for Next
Generation Services**

BY EMAIL

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:* **Scrutiny**
*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:* **01792 637257**
*e-Mail
e-Bost:* **scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk**
*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:* **SPC/2016-17/11**
*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*
*Date
Dyddiad:* **09 March 2017**

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services following the meeting of the Committee on 13 February 2017. It is about More Council Homes Project, Welsh Housing Quality Standard, Corporate Apprenticeships & Trainees, Housing Voids, Disabled Facility Grants and Gypsy Traveller Site Provision.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 13 February

Thank you for attending the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 February 2017 and answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services.

We wanted to explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact, in relation to your areas of responsibility. Thank you for providing a written paper, that gave some headlines from the cabinet portfolio, in support of your appearance.

Things you highlighted to the committee included developments in relation to:

- The More Council Homes Project and Progress – you referred to the upcoming viability study of housing land in the council's ownership that will help inform decisions on the number of units and delivery of further affordable housing. You talked about the need to procure a development partner to extend house building plans beyond the pilot projects.
- Progress and improvements in relation to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

- Commercial Services and their importance in supporting staff and departments in relation to income generation and efficiencies.
- Corporate Building and Property Services and your involvement in the Education Capital Programme.

These topics provided the focus for our meeting. We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the committee, and, where necessary, raise any outstanding issues / actions for your response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

More Council Homes Project

We noted progress in relation to the first development at Milford Way. You confirmed that, despite some poor weather, all the foundations had been laid for housing units at the site and work had started on the construction on the first set of houses. You were pleased that this involved apprentices on site which is helping to develop local employment skills. We heard that the first key handover was anticipated to be in May 2017, and completion of the site by September.

We wanted you to confirm the costs involved in this project as ‘house builder’, in particular the unit costs per house. We understood that this will be the subject of a report to Cabinet in the near future, but would appreciate any information that can be provided to us ahead of that.

We discussed the house building capacity of the Council and the current and future involvement of external organisations. You were clear that the expansion of house building plans beyond the pilot projects was dependent on the procurement of a development partner. We noted that the experience and lessons learnt from the first pilot site will be reviewed to help determine future needs, and that your focus was on getting value for money. You also confirmed that work here is learning from the experiences of other local authorities involved in house building elsewhere, such as Flintshire County Council. Considering practice elsewhere the idea of setting up an arms-length development company was raised by committee members, and you were urged to look into this as part of options for the future.

We also asked about the process for the allocation of new homes. You confirmed that the process would be no different from the existing council housing points based priority waiting list. However you added that the new homes would be built to ‘passivhaus’ standards therefore would require prospective tenants to engage with this and enter into certain agreements if they are to live in this type of property.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard

Thank you for providing us with progress on actions following the recent Scrutiny Working Group which looked at Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Programme. The Group's recommendation focused in particular on improving engagement with tenants and local ward councillors.

You told us that:

- Councillors are now receiving letters with information on the WHQS programme prior to work commencement in wards and will receive information on the level of WHQS compliance.
- The tenant's handbook has been updated with a section on the WHQS.
- A plan outlining the ways in which we will communicate information relating to major works has been devised and will be implemented during 17/18.
- The tenant's magazine Open House contained a large feature article on WHQS including photos of the completed work and will be reporting the level of WHQS compliance each year.
- The Building Advisory Group which is attended by tenants meets from time to time to discuss capital works.
- The Council public website has been updated and now contains a section on the WHQS as well as the main planned repairs and improvements such as Wind and Weatherproofing, Re-roofing and Kitchen and Bathroom renewal across local areas in Swansea. The website will be reporting the level of WHQS compliance each year.
- The kitchen/ bathroom brochure will be reviewed in 17/18 and photos will be incorporated.
- Photographs of major schemes are taken before work is undertaken and once it is complete.

The committee welcomed these improvements, and committee members reflected on the experience in their local areas.

Corporate Apprenticeships & Trainees

We asked about the apprenticeships offered by the Council and success rate in apprentices going on to become fully qualified / trained tradespeople, and gaining employment.

We heard that all apprentices are taken to full accreditation, of course subject to passing necessary courses, and that there was around a 95% success rate.

You told us that the Corporate Apprentice and Trainee Strategy is looking to extend the Beyond Bricks and Mortar initiative to ensure that members of our community, especially young people, are given opportunities of meaningful training and employment, helping to develop local skills.

Housing Voids

We asked about the current number of void properties. You confirmed there were 242 voids, which you stated was just below target levels. You explained that some of this attributed to works that would usually be carried out whilst empty before letting to new tenants.

Disabled Facility Grants

We referred to our previous meeting with you where we raised some concern about the time taken to deliver disabled facility grants. Your response letter showed that there has been an increase in the average number of days to complete a disabled facility grant between 2014/15 and 2015/16. The committee sought assurance about improving performance and reducing times.

We noted that the increase was in part due to the time taken with assessments by the Occupational Therapy (OT) service. We also noted the decision taken by housing in early 2016 to employ 2.5 OT staff in addition to the OTs based in Social Services which is expected to improve performance in 2016/17 and beyond. We will keep a watching brief on this.

Gypsy Traveller Site Provision

Having completed a review of the gypsy traveller site search process to 2013 and making a number of recommendations to Cabinet on learning points to inform future work, we asked about developments with regard to the accommodation of gypsy travellers, and how the search for additional provision is being taken forward.

You informed the committee that land is allocated in the Deposit Local Development Plan (LDP) for an extension to the existing authorised Ty Gwyn site as well as for the creation of a new site nearby off Pantyblawd Rd. You added that a Flood Consequences Assessment is to be carried out prior to LDP Examination that will look at the flood mitigation measures to demonstrate that it is deliverable. You told us that the gypsy and traveller families have been fully consulted on and responded to the Deposit LDP proposals which will inform future site provision.

Your Response

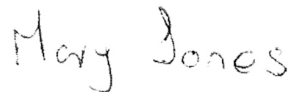
In your response we would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to our request for you to:

- provide further information on costs relating to the more homes pilot projects; and
- ensure that the option of establishing an arms-length development company is considered in any further council house building.

Please provide your response by 30 March. We will then include both letters in the agenda of the next available committee meeting.

We will arrange to follow up on portfolio developments and hearing about achievements and impact in due course.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Chair
Scrutiny Programme Committee

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

Councillor Andrea Lewis
(01792) 637442

BY EMAIL

E-Mail / E-Bost: cllr.andrea.lewis@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref / Ein Cyf: AL/CM

Your Ref / Eich Cyf:

Date / Dyddiad:

14th March 2017

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Jones

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION – 13TH FEBRUARY

Thank you for your letter dated 9th march 2017 and in particular your request for responses to the questions below:

To provide further information on costs relating to the more homes pilot Projects

As indicated at the committee, works are ongoing on the first pilot properties with expected completion being between May and September. As such costs for the first completed properties will be available shortly after completion i.e. June 2017. I would be happy to share these with the committee in line with the report being presented to cabinet around that time

To ensure that the option of establishing an arms-length development company is considered in any further council house building.

In relation to 'the option of establishing an arms-length development company', this was referred to in the 'More Council Homes' strategy which was approved by Council at its

**COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ANDREA LEWIS**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR NEXT GENERATION SERVICES /
AELOD Y CABINET DROS WASANAETHAU'R GENHEDLAETH NESAF**

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637442

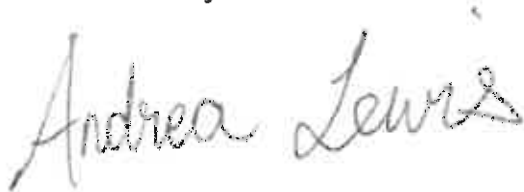
✉ cllr.andrea.lewis@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

meeting in November 2016. In it, mention was made of the Council taking on the developer role in the future which could be facilitated by an arm's length arrangement. The Council also approved a specific recommendation of the strategy to further investigate this possibility and the action plan established an anticipated completion of this task by the end of 2017.

I trust these responses are sufficient

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR ANDREA LEWIS
CABINET MEMBER FOR NEXT GENERATION SERVICES

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ANDREA LEWIS
CABINET MEMBER FOR NEXT GENERATION SERVICES /
AELOD Y CABINET DROS WASANAETHAU'R GENHEDLAETH NESAF

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637442

✉ cllr.andrea.lewis@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

Dinas A Sir Abertawe

BY EMAIL

Councillor David Hopkins
Cabinet Member for Environment &
Transportation

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:*

01792 637256

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

*Date
Dyddiad:*

07 March 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transportation, following the meeting of the Working Group on 1 March 2017. It is about the Local Flood Risk Management Plan Management.

Dear Councillor Hopkins,

Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group 1 March 2017

Thank you for attending our meeting along with Mike Sweeney to present the annual update and to answer our questions.

The Working Group heard that the City and County of Swansea as the Lead Local Flood Authority had successfully delivered the Flood Risk Management Plan for the cycle 2015 to 2021. We were pleased to hear that partnership working with Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government was now working very well and is the best that it has ever been.

We learnt that work on the Flood Risk Management Plan has progressed to the development of a list of potential risks that have been prioritised with an associated programme of maintenance and works. We heard that the programme of work has been developed based upon conclusions made from both nationally supplied Flood Maps and local knowledge.

We were interested to hear that the flood risk in Swansea is mostly linked to ordinary small watercourses and the entry headwall to culverts and that the Authority has given priority to examining these critical watercourses in terms of the degree of flood risk and consequences of flooding should overspill occur.

We were pleased to hear that the Authority currently has a regular maintenance programme of inspecting and clearing grids on watercourses and highway culverts under council ownership. We heard that each is classified as a Red, High or Low priority location and that inspections are carried out prior to or during adverse weather conditions.

We asked how accurate the modelling produced by Natural Resources Wales was at a local level. We heard that it was not done at a local level but nationally so there are some aspects missing, for example underground water courses and issues relating to many culverts. We noted that the Authority is not involved in the production of this model and it is not exact but should be used as an indicator which is then developed and built upon using local knowledge and factors.

We were told that over the course of the six year programme the 80 issues prioritised will be looked at, some hotspots will require regular maintenance while others will need assessing for alternative options or works

We heard that there is a programme for gullies that involves cleaning/emptying gullies once every three years. We were also interested to find that a number of hotspots have been identified for more regular maintenance.

We wanted to find out more about how we inform the public and councillors about works that are on the plan and more general information about flood risk. We heard that there is a leaflet that is available on the Councils website that gives information about who to contact etc. but that it is in need of updating. You said that you will arrange for the leaflet to be reviewed, updated and made available in council public buildings as well as on the website.

We also thought it would be useful to include some more information in this leaflet about what the public can do for themselves to help protect their properties from flooding especially in areas of potential flood risk. You agreed that this would be a good idea and you would also look at getting it more widely distributed in such areas.

Recommendations

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would however be grateful if you could specifically refer to the points and recommendations below:

1. Look at whether there is an issue to consider in relation to full underground watercourses
2. Make the prioritised programme of works list available to local ward members and the public
3. Review and update the leaflet that is available to the public on flood risk and include links to appropriate further information and advice on ways that the public can help protect their property from flooding.

Please provide your response by 29 March 2017.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Susan Jones
Convener of the Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group
cllr.susan.jones@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Susan Jones
Convener of the Flood Risk
Management Scrutiny Working
Group

BY EMAIL

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:
Your Ref / Eich Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

Councillor David Hopkins
(01792) 637439

cllr.david.hopkins@swansea.gov.uk
DH/KH

29th March 2017

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

Dear Councillor Jones

Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group – 1st March 2017

Thank you for your letter dated 7th March 2017 regarding the views and recommendations expressed in the Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group meeting on the 1st March 2017.

You have been advised that the City and County of Swansea, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, had successfully delivered the Flood Risk Management Plan by March 2016 for the cycle 2015 to 2021 to accord with European Floods Directive 2007/60/EC.

I am pleased to hear that you had learnt that the Flood Risk Management Plan has progressed to the development of a list of potential locations where flood risk was deemed significant enough to warrant further examination. The scope of the work was undertaken following conclusions drawn from the Flood Maps and historical information which the Authority had knowledge of from previously reported flooding incidents. You were advised that the programme for assessing prioritised sites has been developed by taking into account the level of the consequences of flooding, which in effect, looks at the risk to people, economic activity and Natural / Historical Environment affected by potential significant flood risk.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
DAVID HOPKINS
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION /
AELOD Y CABINET YR AMGYLCHEDD A THRAFNIDIAETH

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637439

✉ cllr.david.hopkins@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Referring to the recommendations that you have made, I wish to respond by answering the points raised as they have been listed.

Look at whether there is an issue to consider in relation to full underground watercourses

I refer to the point raised in the meeting regarding the responsibility with underground watercourses and in particular to flooding issues which are reported emanating from land where there was a history of old mine workings. Unlike most other areas in South Wales, which was predominantly subjected to mining of significant Coal Measures on a much larger scale, groundwater flooding is more of a problem. In Swansea, the majority of the former coal mining areas are believed to have been fully recovered but the Authority does receive complaints regarding groundwater issues when the water table rises above the level of the ground and causes flooding. Should flooding occur close to entries to old mines i.e. adits and mine shafts, then the Authority will refer the complaint to the Coal Authority to consider taking remedial action. In the majority of cases however, where groundwater flooding occurs without any evidence of any mine entry, then the responsibility will rest with the riparian landowner to resolve. For information I have attached a link to the Coal Board website which has an interactive map that displays all of their assets in Swansea and this is used frequently when dealing with complaints of this nature.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-coal-mining-information>

Historically however, there are no records of any groundwater flooding which can be considered to have significant consequences, but there are local problems to which the Authority can offer further advice on how to solve such problems.

Make the prioritised programme of works list available to local ward members and the public.

In reply, to the group's request being made regarding the programme of the works being made available to local ward members and the public: At this stage, I would like to inform the Group that the programme was produced for the intention of informing the Working Group on how the work will progress and to show an indication on the rationale of producing the programme. In order for the programme to be successful however, it will very much be reliant on additional funding and resource being made

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
DAVID HOPKINS
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION /
AELOD Y CABINET YR AMGYLCHEDD A THRAFNIDIAETH

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637439

✉ cllr.david.hopkins@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

available to procure the planned work. Consequently, although I concur with the group's recommendation, I wish to give this proposal some further deliberation until such time that the additional support has been identified.

In the meantime I have attached a link to the Flood Risk Management Plan which is published on the Authority's website.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/floodriskmanagementplan>

Review and update the leaflet that is available to the public on flood risk and include links to appropriate further information and advice on ways that the public can help protect their property from flooding

In reply, I wish to confirm that I concur with the Working Group and the need to review and update the existing flooding leaflet. Consequently, I wish to confirm that I will instruct the Drainage Section to produce an updated flooding leaflet and request the information to be more widely distributed.

To conclude, I wish to acknowledge and thank you for the recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group and I hope that I have responded to the matters you have raised. Clearly, the production of the Flood Risk Management Plan will be a major challenge for the Authority, but one which we can aspire to deliver by continually seeking funding streams and working closely with all of our partners in the interest of reducing the consequences of flooding to our worst affected communities in Swansea.

.Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR DAVID HOPKINS
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
DAVID HOPKINS
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION /
AELOD Y CABINET YR AMGYLCHEDD A THRAFNDIAETH

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637439

✉ cllr.david.hopkins@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

To
Councillor Will Evans
Cabinet Member for Anti Poverty

cc.
Councillor Clive Lloyd
Cabinet Member for Transformation &
Performance

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am: Scrutiny

Direct Line: 01792 637256
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

e-Mail scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
e-Bost:

Our Ref DI/1
Ein Cyf:

Your Ref
Eich Cyf:

Date 22 March 2017
Dyddiad:

Summary: This is a letter from the Digital Inclusion Scrutiny Working group to the Cabinet Member for Anti Poverty following the meeting of the Working Group on 6 March 2017. It is about the Digital Inclusion Strategy for Swansea Council.

Dear Councillor Evans,

Digital Inclusion Scrutiny working Group

I am writing following the scrutiny meeting held on 6 March 2017 to look at the issue of digital inclusion.

Can I first thank you for your attendance at the meeting and that the officers, Sarah Caulkin and Liz Shellard for their report and their answers to our questions. All of your contributions were very much appreciated.

Overall we were pleased to hear that serious attention is being given to this issue given the increasing number of council services being placed online, the importance of ensuring that all citizens are able to access council services when they need them and the need to ensure that as many people as possible have the skills to participate in what is an increasingly digital world.

We were also pleased to hear that progress is being made and that initiatives such as Get Swansea Online are having an impact. We were impressed by the impact demonstrated by the monitoring of these courses.

This is of course a challenging area of work and there is clearly much more that needs to be done. We also happy to hear, therefore, that a review of the digital inclusion strategy is to be conducted shortly. With that in mind we would like to suggest a number of issues that we believe should be addressed as part of that review. In raising these issues we have in mind our experiences as ward councillors and what we know about the needs of our constituents.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

Issues for the Digital Inclusion Strategy Review

- While we appreciate the need to move people toward digital channels the council should nevertheless ensure that people are able to communicate through non-digital channels where needed
- The language of digital inclusion needs to be carefully considered – the council should not be ‘educating’ or telling people what they must do but rather working with people and offering choices
- The overall levels of digital exclusion need to be captured so that progress can be measured – in particular to understand who is excluded as opposed to those who simply do not need or wish to communicate with the Council
- The needs of different groups should be carefully researched and understood. The strategy should not be based on sweeping generalizations or stereotypes – we support what we heard about the Council doing more to analyse the data that it already holds but suggest that additional sources of information will be needed
- There is a need for a partnership approach given in particular the increasing online services for welfare benefits and health – this should be developed through the Public Services Board
- As well as courses digital skills could be developed more through family and cross generational approaches through schools and community groups – we would like to see this developed
- Language can be an additional barrier for those who do not have either English or Welsh as their first language – we would like to see this issue considered and, in particular, the needs of refugees
- The strategy needs to ensure that those moving to online services are not missing out on advice that they might need. Here we are thinking in particular about the links to financial inclusion and ensuring that advice about financial services and welfare benefits is not being missed because someone is receiving a service online
- The strategy needs to address the legitimate concerns that people have about privacy and security. We believe that there is a degree of public suspicion about what the council does with data it receives on line and a fear of scams. These concerns need to be addressed.
- There is certainly scope to run positive campaigns to encourage people to do more online – we think that such work should be undertaken on a piloted basis aimed at smaller communities or population groups for example

While we do not require a formal reply do this letter we do expect that these issues will be given full consideration as part of the review. With this in mind, and given the importance of this issue, we will be asking that this issue is revisited by scrutiny after the election perhaps as a further working group. In any case we would expect that the issue is raised at the relevant Cabinet Member Question and Answer Sessions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Walton', written in a cursive style.

COUNCILLOR LESLEY WALTON

Convener of the Digital Inclusion Scrutiny Working Group

✉ cllr.lesley.walton@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To/
Councillor Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Enterprise,
Development & Regeneration**

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Direct Line:
Linell Uniongyrochol:*

01792 637257

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

SPC/2016-17/13

BY EMAIL

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

15 March 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration following the meeting of the Committee on 13 March 2017. It is about a Cabinet report on City Centre Regeneration.

Dear Councillor Francis-Davies,

**Pre-decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Report:
City Centre Regeneration – Delivery and Funding Strategy**

The Scrutiny Programme Committee included your report on 'City Centre Regeneration – Delivery and Funding Strategy' in our agenda for pre-decision scrutiny as it was indicated to us that it would contain information on the accommodation strategy, e.g. concerning the relocation of staff from the Civic Centre, and for the Central Library and Archives Service.

At our meeting on 13 March we were therefore surprised to read very little within the report about the accommodation strategy. We did note the brief mention of the need (and associated cost) to undertake feasibility and flood mitigation assessment of the Civic Centre site post relocation of the Civic Centre to the City Centre.

Please note that when a report on the accommodation strategy comes forward to Cabinet we intend to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on it. We will of course monitor the Forward Plan for future cabinet business however any information you can provide directly, to facilitate the process, will be helpful.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

I am unable to attend Cabinet on 16 March however I am hoping that a representative of the Committee can attend in support of this letter; otherwise please consider in my absence.

Your Response

We would welcome any comments however we do not expect you to provide a formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style.

COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To/
Councillor Clive Lloyd
Cabinet Member for Transformation
& Performance**

BY EMAIL

*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/2016-17/14

24 March 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance following the meeting of the Committee on 13 March 2017. It is about Sustainable Swansea, Digital Strategy and ICT, Performance Management, and Asset Management.

Dear Councillor Lloyd,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 13 March

Thank you for attending the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 March 2017 and answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance.

We wanted to explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact, in relation to your areas of responsibility. Thank you for providing a written paper, giving some headlines from the cabinet portfolio, in support of your appearance.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the committee, and, where necessary, raise any outstanding issues / actions for your response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE
GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

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

The Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future Transformation Programme

We noted progress in relation to the delivery of savings. You reported that the Transformation Programme, coming into its third year of delivery, has provided the framework for around £48m of savings, as well as other non-financial benefits to the organisation.

You spoke about the impact and outcomes of Commissioning Reviews that have been completed. Having reflected on the process you told us that the next phase would shift the focus on cross-cutting areas. We highlighted the need to develop Commissioning Reviews with greater external stakeholder input and challenge, to make them more robust and meaningful. We felt that some reviews have had too much of an inward council focus.

You talked positively about the development and success of the Programme which you felt was now becoming embedded in the culture of the Council as normal business. We acknowledged that the focus on the Programme was not just about budget reductions, but innovation and organisational development.

You praised the way in which employees have responded to the demands of cultural and transformational change, some of which is evidenced by staff survey responses. We asked about work to improve the corporate culture, and improve the workplace in order to recruit and retain staff. You were passionate about creating an organisation which attracts people, is a good place to work where people feel valued, and provides a good career path.

We were pleased to hear your remarks that scrutiny has made a valuable contribution to transformation e.g. through pre-decision scrutiny of commissioning reviews, and recent inquiry work on Corporate Culture. We talked generally about the relationship between cabinet and scrutiny. Again we welcomed your comments about the crucial role played by scrutiny, as a critical friend, in improvement, development and transformation.

Digital Strategy and ICT

You reflected on the decision to bring the ICT back in-house and benefits. You reported that this has saved the Council £1.5m per year and improved the Council's ability to innovate through the new digital strategy.

We were interested in the spending on Corporate ICT improvement, targets and savings made. You told us that £1.75m had been budgeted for 2013-16, £767k of which was specifically allocated to digital projects.

You provided us with progress on the digital strategy, which is now going into its second year, and mentioned a number of improvements, including:

- Development of a unified communication system (in collaboration with ABMU Health Board regarding telephony)
- Upgrading systems for services e.g. Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS), Councillor Casework, and the Family Information System
- Upgrading the infrastructure to increase resilience
- Projects such as roll out of Office 365 and Skype for Business

We noted that a big part of plans was increased support for agile working across the organisation, both from an ICT, culture, and savings point of view. You stated that a number of trials were taking place with some employees, and ultimately agile working would reduce future accommodation requirements. We discussed the provision and funding of suitable ICT (e.g. laptops, telephones) for agile working, and you confirmed that this was covered by the ICT budget.

You also highlighted the importance of effective customer contact and engagement, particularly with a greater focus on self-service and access to council business and services on-line. We noted that a single contact centre has brought together five teams so that customers have a single point of contact, and that queue-busting initiatives have been introduced.

We also asked you about the take up and continuing development of the Councillors Casework System. You stated that the casework system has improved significantly and was useful, but could be developed further. You felt that its effectiveness depended on how well it is used by councillors. We noted that not every councillor has taken advantage of the system however you were aware of positive experiences of those that have done so.

Performance Management

You reported on the performance management framework which continues to be embedded and developed. We were particularly interested in work to revise and refresh the risk management framework, in line with risk becoming more business oriented. We asked you about your responsibility for integrating risk management within the performance framework. You were confident that Wales Audit Office would view risk management arrangements in Swansea as robust.

Asset Management

Given your responsibility for asset management, we asked about recent disposals including the former Penllergaer Civic Centre. With regard to this disposal you were asked whether there had been sufficient return from the site and some members questioned the merit of development of the land for housing. You provided assurance that the best possible value was obtained for the site but decisions about suitable use were matters for the Planning

Authority to determine, not cabinet members. However, you added that there is a need for more housing in Swansea.

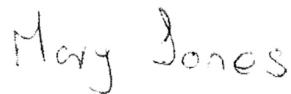
You reported on the delivery of accommodation strategy, achieving total savings in excess of £1.15m, which we noted were ahead of target and expectations. We noted that moving out of Oldway House has saved over £600k. We asked about the accommodation strategy and interim plans for civic office accommodation whilst development is taking place. You told us that this was some way off, certainly not in the next 12 months; therefore firm plans were not in place.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any further comments however **we do not expect you to provide a formal response.**

We will arrange to follow up on portfolio developments and hearing about achievements and impact in due course.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 9

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 10 April 2017

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME REVIEW 2016/17

Purpose	This is the last scheduled meeting of the committee of this council year, and council term. This report is to help councillors take stock of the work done this year and reflect on the experience. The committee may also want to consider what topics might be looked at by scrutiny in the new council year.
Content	The scrutiny work programme is described and reviewed. The work completed by the committee is attached together with a summary of the established scrutiny panels and working groups.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• consider the effectiveness of the scrutiny work programme• consider how well the committee has worked this year• identify any topics that might be looked at by scrutiny in future
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Mike Hawes, Director – Resources
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Being the final scheduled meeting of this council year it is good practice for the committee to look back on the year's work and consider its effectiveness. This report is to help councillors take stock of the work done this year and reflect on the experience, and the committee may also want to identify future scrutiny topics.

2. Scrutiny Arrangements

- 2.1 The broad aim of the scrutiny function is to:

- help improve services
- provide an effective challenge to the executive
- engage members in the development of policies, strategies and plans
- engage the public

- 2.2 The council's scrutiny arrangements, agreed by Council in October 2012, aimed to achieve the following:
- All work to be managed by a single Scrutiny Programme Committee through a single work plan. This will ensure that work is cross cutting and not restricted to departmental silos.
 - Specific work will be undertaken both through the committee and by establishing informal panels (for in-depth activities) or working groups.
 - The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee shall maintain overall responsibility for the work and timetable for scrutiny, and ensuring that the work is carried out, in conjunction with the committee itself.
 - All backbench councillors should have the opportunity to participate in scrutiny work regardless of committee membership.
- 2.3 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Programme Committee are attached as **Appendix 1**.

3. Work Planning

- 3.1 The committee has needed to ensure that the work of scrutiny is:
- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available
 - relevant to council priorities
 - adding value and having maximum impact
 - coordinated and avoids duplication
- 3.2 A Scrutiny Work Planning Conference took place on 12 May 2016 and was attended by 16 scrutiny councillors, 5 co-opted members (including members of the Standards Committee) and the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- 3.3 Those in attendance were asked to think about what topics scrutiny should focus on, considering whether anything important was missing from current work, and whether the balance was right across Cabinet portfolios.
- 3.4 A range of perspectives were considered, including:
- Review of last year's work plan
 - The council's corporate priorities (provided by Mike Hawes – Corporate Director for Resources)
 - Suggestions and ideas from councillors, cabinet members, staff, partners, and the public (gathered from the annual scrutiny survey)
- 3.5 Those present shared views about the work programme and their priorities for the year ahead.

- 3.6 Taking into account feedback from the conference, the committee considered what additional work should be included in the work programme. This was 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 scrutiny time and resources.
- 3.7 The committee recognised the importance of aligning scrutiny work more closely to the corporate priorities. The committee also wanted to ensure that there was a good coverage of scrutiny activity across all cabinet portfolios.
- 3.8 A proposed work programme was discussed by the committee in June 2016 i.e. the topics that should be examined through various panels and working groups as well as a plan for future committee meetings. The work programme included work that was ongoing or already committed, either because of its importance or because work was incomplete, as well as new topics.
- 3.9 Non-executive councillors who are not members of the committee were given the opportunity to participate in panels and other informal task and finish groups. New scrutiny topics, once agreed, were advertised to all non executive councillors and expressions of interest sought. The membership of panels and working groups were then determined by the committee.

4. Summary of Work Completed

- 4.1 The work of scrutiny has been carried out primarily in three ways – through the committee itself and by establishing informal panels (for in-depth activities) or one-off working groups.

4.1.1 Formal Committee Meetings

- 4.1.2 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. A report was provided to each meeting to enable the committee to maintain an overview of agreed scrutiny activities (including the work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups established), monitor progress, and coordinate work as necessary.

- 4.1.3 As well as developing and managing the overall work programme and keeping an oversight on all scrutiny activities, the committee has focussed on holding Cabinet Members to account by holding formal questioning sessions and providing challenge on a broad range of policy and service issues over the course of the year. This has resulted in the committee communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement through chair's letters to Cabinet Members. A copy of this year's completed committee work plan is attached as **Appendix 2**.

4.1.4 The work can be summarised as follows:

- Cabinet Member Questioning Sessions

The committee held all 10 Cabinet Members to account by holding a series of question sessions throughout the year. This has enabled the committee to explore their work, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

- Crime & Disorder Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Programme Committee is designated as the Council's Crime & Disorder Committee under the Police & Justice Act 2006. The committee met with Chief Superintendent Martin Jones (South Wales Police) and Chris Sivers (Director – People) about the Safer Swansea Partnership to discuss progress on Safer Swansea Partnership Performance with questioning on plans, performance, and challenges.

- Final Inquiry Reports

The following inquiries were completed over the last year. The committee formally agreed the final inquiry reports, produced by Panels, for submission to cabinet for decision:

Inquiry	Report to Cabinet	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations		
			Agreed	Partly	Rejected
Building Sustainable Communities	20 Oct 2016	19 Jan 2017	10	0	0
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	20 Oct 2016	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1
Tackling Poverty	16 Mar 2017	awaited			
School Readiness	tba following SPC approval on 5 Apr	awaited			

A response to the following inquiries (completed during 2015-16) was also received in the last year:

Inquiry	Report to Cabinet	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations		
			Agreed	Partly	Rejected
Gypsy Traveller Site Search Process	18 Feb 2016	21 Jul 2016	5	0	0

School Governance	18 Mar 2016	16 Jun 2016	6	2	4
			4 actions already in place		

- Chair's Letters - these are an established way for scrutiny to communicate findings, views and recommendations for improvement directly to Cabinet Members, reflecting discussion at meetings. Letters sent by the committee and working groups, and those by panels where required action from the committee, and Cabinet Member responses were published within the Scrutiny Programme Committee agenda for discussion. Response times are being monitored and currently (as at 30 Mar) show the average response time being 19 days (against target of 21 days). Of the 42 letters which required a response 66% have been responded to within time.
- Scrutiny Dispatches – the committee produced a quarterly summary of the headlines from the work of scrutiny for council and the public, which focussed on impact and how scrutiny is making a difference. It was reported to Council in September and November and March. Using Scrutiny Dispatches as a mechanism for internal and external communication of activity has resulted in greater media coverage both in the Evening Post and Swansea Bay Radio. This is one of the agreed improvement outcomes for scrutiny. Scrutiny Dispatches is proving to be a valuable way to support and shape media coverage in the future.
- Pre-decision Scrutiny – Taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications., 9 cabinet reports were subject to pre-decision scrutiny:

Report	Cabinet Member	Cabinet Meeting	Undertaken by
Waste Management Commissioning Review	Environment & Transportation	16 Jun 2016	Service Improvement & Finance Panel
Castle Square – Development & Public Realm Opportunity	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	16 Jun 2016	Committee
Corporate Building & Property Services Commissioning Review	Next Generation Services	18 Aug 2016	Service Improvement & Finance Panel
Parks & Cleansing Commissioning Review	Environment & Transportation and Wellbeing & Healthy City	15 Dec 2016	Service Improvement & Finance Panel
Budget	Finance & Strategy	9 Feb 2017	Service Improvement & Finance Panel
Domestic Abuse Commissioning Review	Services for Children & Young People	16 Feb 2017	Child & Family Services Panel

Family Support (Under 11s and Over 11s Cluster)	Services for Children & Young People	16 Mar 2017	Child & Family Services Panel
Castle Square Development & Public Realm Opportunities	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	16 Mar	Committee
Swansea City Centre Regeneration – Funding & Delivery Strategy	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	16 Mar	Committee (focus on accommodation strategy)

- Referrals from Council (or other bodies) – None
- Coordination with Audit Committee – the Chair of Audit attended to share the work plan of Audit Committee for discussion to ensure mutual awareness and understanding of respective work plans and co-ordination. Likewise the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee also attended the Audit Committee. The work plan of the Audit Committee has been a standing item on the committee agenda.

Other Reports:

- Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report
- Scrutiny Annual Report for 2015/16
- Scrutiny Councillor Support & Development
- Guidance for Co-opted Scrutiny Members
- Annual Local Government Performance Bulletin 2015/16
- Council Priorities: Update from Director - Resources
- Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme – Compliance & Progress
- Sustainable Swansea – Cross Cutting Proposals
- Oceana Building – Asbestos Survey / Contract Award & Financial Implications
- Scrutiny Performance Panel conveners provided progress reports on the work and impact of their Panels.

4.2.1 Informal Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

4.2.2 A number of scrutiny panels were established, with conveners and members appointed by the committee, to carry out in-depth inquiries or undertake in-depth monitoring of particular services. The use of panels ensured that scrutiny was both flexible and responsive to issues of concern:

- a) Inquiry Panels: to undertake discrete in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis. These would be significant topics where scrutiny can make a real difference. Inquiry panels are expected to take no longer than six months to complete and would 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.

The following Inquiry Panels met over the last year:

Inquiry	Status
Building Sustainable Communities	Complete
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	Complete
Tackling Poverty	Complete
School Readiness	Complete

(NB – An inquiry into partnerships and collaboration was agreed but was placed on hold due to available time and resources)

Follow up of Previous Scrutiny Inquiries – Inquiry Panels reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and cabinet action plans, and the impact of their work. A meeting will usually be held 6-12 months following cabinet decision, with a further follow up arranged if required. The following previous scrutiny inquiries were followed up during the year:

Inquiry	Monitoring Status
Corporate Culture	Complete
Social Care at Home	Complete
Education Inclusion	Complete

- b) Performance Panels: to provide in-depth monitoring and challenge for clearly defined service areas. Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services. Performance Panel conveners have also been required to provide the committee with regular progress reports on the work of their Panels.

Five Performance Panels have been established and met over the last year:

- Service Improvement & Finance
- Schools
- Child & Family Services
- Adult Services
- Local Service Board (*multi-agency Panel*)

4.2.3 Working Groups - Although the majority of scrutiny work would be carried out through the committee and panels, the committee can also established informal working groups of councillors. This has supported flexible working where it had been agreed that a matter should be carried out outside of the committee but did not necessitate the establishment of a Panel. This method of working was intended to be light-touch – effectively a one-off meeting to consider a specific report

or information, resulting in a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member(s) with views and recommendations.

Working Group meetings took place during the last year to look at the following:

- Planning
- Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Local Flood Risk Management
- Digital Inclusion

4.2.4 Scrutiny of Regional Bodies:

Education through Regional Working (ERW):

Swansea scrutiny is also involved in a regional scrutiny arrangement with the six councils participating in the 'Education Through Regional Working' (ERW) school improvement consortium. A scrutiny councillors group was set up in 2015/16 in order to coordinate scrutiny work across the region and ensure a consistent approach. At present this involves two meetings per year. Swansea is represented by the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Convener of the Schools Performance Panel. Meetings took place in September 2016 (hosted by Pembrokeshire Council) and February 2017 (hosted by Ceredigion Council).

The Swansea Scrutiny Team is providing the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

4.2.5 **Appendix 3a and 3b** provides a snapshot of progress with the informal panels and working groups established by the committee to carry out specific activities and their current position. For further information a contact list for lead scrutiny members and officers is also contained in **Appendix 4**.

4.2.6 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 scrutiny activities are published on-line: <http://swansea.gov.uk/scrutinypublications>.

5. **Public Requests for Scrutiny**

5.1 In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 the Scrutiny Programme Committee has a protocol to deal with requests for scrutiny from individual councillors (who are not members of the committee) and/or members of the public.

5.2 Also, councillor calls for action (CCfA) specifically enable councillors to refer issues of local importance to an overview and scrutiny committee, however as a means of "last resort" in a broad sense, with issues being raised at a scrutiny committee after other avenues have been explored.

5.3 In accordance with these protocols, the chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee is required to consider any requests received and bring about a proposal about how to deal with these to the committee for consideration.

5.4 Over the year the committee considered 1 public request for scrutiny:

- Houses in Multiple Occupation - this related to concerns about the numbers and control of HMOs in Swansea, and in particular the spread of HMOs into the east side due to the new University campus, and effect on local areas. This was added to the work programme and a Working Group was set up to discuss this topic.

5.5 Requests for scrutiny from councillors other than committee members were also made, regarding:

- Oceana Building Demolition: Concern about financial implications as described in a report to Cabinet on 20 October. Although this request was initially not agreed the committee subsequently held a discussion on this matter in March 2017, focused on the asbestos survey / contract award and implications.
- Renewable Energy: This would enable information and discussion / questions on the Council's aims and objectives, development projects / initiatives, and progress in the promotion and use of renewable energy. This topic is relevant to the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and sustainable development. Concern was raised in particular with clarity about the output of renewable energy installations. This was added to the list of future Working Groups.

5.6 Additionally, correspondence was received by the scrutiny team from members of the public and was dealt with as follows by the chair:

- Cutting of Trees at 'Bolgoed Field', Pontarddulais / Impact on Bat Roosts: Correspondence referred to relevant Cabinet Members / officers. Member of public advised of Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure if considered necessary.
- Parc y Werin / Proposed New Primary School Build: Correspondence opposing the new school build and concern about impact on the park referred to Monitoring Officer given current legal process (application for village green status / inquiry).

6. Developing the Work Programme for 2017/18 and beyond

6.1 A Work Planning Conference will take place in the new municipal year that will help the committee to consider and identify priorities for scrutiny for the coming year. All scrutiny councillors will be invited to participate in this. As well as new topics the work programme for

2017/18 will need to consider the continuation of current activities because of their importance or because work may be incomplete.

6.2 Work Outstanding

The following work may need to be carried over from the current work plan:

- Inquiry Panels (identified by not started)
 - Partnerships & Collaboration (*this inquiry was placed on hold due to available time and resources. It has been suggested this could look at how the Council could improve its approach to partnership working and collaboration to help achieve the outcomes of the Well Being of Future Generations Act*)
- Follow up of Previous Scrutiny Inquiries
 - School Governance
 - Building Sustainable Communities
 - Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
 - Tackling Poverty (cabinet decision awaited)
 - School Readiness (cabinet decision awaited)
- Performance Panels
 - Service Improvement & Finance
 - Schools
 - Child & Family Services
 - Adult Social Services
 - Public Services Board (*multi-agency Panel*)
- Working Groups
 - Local Flood Risk Management (*the committee has agreed that this Working Group should meet annually to review flood risk plans*)

Previously identified:

 - Roads / Highway Maintenance
 - Corporate Building Services
 - Dog Fouling
 - Renewable Energy
- Other
 - ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group (twice a year)
- Any suggestions arising from this year's scrutiny work to feed into the next Work Planning Conference.

- 6.3 Commissioning Reviews – it has been agreed by the committee that final reports on all commissioning reviews should be subject to scrutiny. This will be carried out via the committee or relevant Panels as appropriate. This work will need to be scheduled into respective work plans.
- 6.4 The Committee is invited to share ideas about any other topics that might need to be looked at by scrutiny in future.
- 6.5 The first scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee in the new council year is expected to be 12 June 2017.

7. **The Scrutiny Experience**

- 7.1 The committee will recall that the flexible approach to scrutiny in Swansea, which has attracted interest from other councils, was recognised nationally when the City and County of Swansea was shortlisted for a Municipal Journal Award in the category of Excellence in Governance and Scrutiny. Unfortunately we did not claim the top prize but to be shortlisted for this award was a real achievement and shows how far we have come.
- 7.2 As the committee reaches the conclusion of the year's work it is good practice to reflect on achievements and issues that have arisen. Committee members are encouraged to share their views on how process and practice can be improved, thinking of experiences both positive and negative.
- 7.3 The following questions may be worth considering:
- What has worked particularly well?
 - What has not worked so well?
 - Has scrutiny focused on the right things?
 - What could be improved about the committee?
 - What would help you develop as a scrutineer?
- 7.4 A range of relevant statistics about scrutiny activity covering the last year is attached as **Appendix 5** to help the committee consider the performance of scrutiny. Member attendance at the committee is noted as 68%, which means on average 11 out of 16 Councillors were present across the 11 meetings held to date this year.
- 7.5 The annual councillor scrutiny survey was also issued during February and March to all councillors. As well as gauging general perceptions and getting views to inform improvements to the way scrutiny works in the future, the survey was also designed to capture councillor's ideas about what the scrutiny work programme should look like – these will be fed into the scrutiny work planning conference that will take place in the new municipal year. 35 survey responses were received. This includes 27 out of the 62 non-executive councillors (43%). The full results of the survey are attached as **Appendix 6**.

Some points to note from the councillor survey:

- 97.2% stated they had a good understanding of scrutiny
- 88.5% stated that scrutiny arrangements are working well
- 94.2% agreed that non-executive members have good opportunities to participate in scrutiny
- 94.3% felt that scrutiny activities are well-planned
- 85.8% felt that scrutiny provides regular challenge to decision-makers
- Most valued: the ability to question cabinet members; and flexibility to hold in-depth inquiries as well as one-off meetings to look at issues of concern.
- As well as to ask questions, many people engaged with scrutiny because of the opportunity to influence.
- Areas for improvement, include:
 - quality of information
 - participation of more councillors
 - time of meetings
 - cabinet responses to scrutiny / cabinet scrutiny relationship

The results will be captured in the Scrutiny Annual Report, including trends over the last few years, which will be drafted in the next few months. This will also include results from the staff / partner survey which is currently running.

8. Improving Scrutiny

8.1 The various improvement activities can be summarised as follows:

8.1.1 Scrutiny Annual Report:

The Scrutiny Annual Report for 2015/16 was agreed in July 2016. The report supports continuous improvement for the scrutiny function. The committee has identified a simplified set of improvement outcomes to provide a focus for scrutiny. Progress against these is outlined below:

1. We need to talk more to cabinet members so that we can plan better and ensure that our work is making a difference

Comment: An informal meeting between the Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance and Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee took place to discuss cabinet business and the interface with scrutiny. This enabled some issues relating to the pre-decision scrutiny process to be resolved.

2. We need to align the work of scrutiny more closely to the five corporate priorities so that we can focus and impact on the things that matter.

Comment: The Committee established new Inquiry Panels on School Readiness and Partnerships & Collaboration. The work of scrutiny over the past year has also focussed on the Sustainable Swansea Programme, with all Commissioning Reviews undergoing pre-decision scrutiny. The committee also considered an annual report on corporate safeguarding. It is also having a regular dialogue with the Director – Resources about corporate priorities to ensure the work programme is looking at the right things.

3. We need more briefings and development sessions so that we have the knowledge and skills we need

Comment: The committee discussed support and development needs during the year. Members welcomed more e-learning opportunities and identified the need for a training session on questioning skills, to ensure the right questions are asked and questioning is robust. Scrutiny training is to be delivered as part of the Councillor Induction Programme following the council election in May.

4. We need more coverage in the media so that the public are more aware of our work

Comment: The 'Scrutiny Dispatches' quarterly report is written in a more newsworthy style, and with assistance from the Communications Team press releases have been developed for media coverage. The last year has seen greater media coverage of scrutiny activities and impact, in the South Wales Evening Post, BBC Wales online, and Swansea Bay Radio. Seven topics looked at by scrutiny have featured, including Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services.

5. We need more members of the public contributing to scrutiny meetings so that we can reflect their views in our work

Comment: In addition to inviting questions for Cabinet Member Q & A sessions and requests for scrutiny, the committee agenda now includes a public question time. We are seeing people in the public gallery at almost 20% of scrutiny meetings (51 observers in total). Similarly around 20% of scrutiny agendas have an element of public input (e.g. reporting public views), and almost 10% of meetings are generating press coverage. This is the first year we have collected this information so will look with interest at progress in future years.

6. We need closer links with regulators and inspectors so that we can provide a more coordinated and effective challenge

Comment: We still need to discuss with Wales Audit Office links between our work plans, mutual awareness and use of audit / scrutiny findings. It appears that regulator and inspectors are now actively seeking the involvement of scrutiny councillors in their work e.g. invitations to attend performance review meetings alongside cabinet members and officers, and this is welcomed.

8.1.2 Training & Development Sessions:

Training received by scrutiny councillors during the year:

- Councillors Holley and Hood-Williams attended a seminar arranged by the Wales Audit Office on 'The Future of Governance: Effective Decision Making for Current and Future Generations'. It focused on the implications of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act on running, delivering and holding public services to account, and skills and behaviours needed.
- All scrutiny councillors were invited to attend a Poverty Awareness Workshop, delivered as background to the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry.

9. Scrutiny Annual Report

- 9.1 The key achievements from the scrutiny work carried out over the past year will be featured in the Scrutiny Annual Report which will be published in the next few months.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 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.

11. Legal Implications

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

Background papers: None

Legal Officer: Wendy Parkin

Finance Officer: Paul Cridland

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Programme Committee Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: The Committee's Completed Work Plan 2016/17

Appendix 3a: Overall Scrutiny Work Programme Timetable 2016/17

Appendix 3b: Progress of Panels and Working Groups

Appendix 4: Scrutiny Councillor / Officer Leads

Appendix 5: Scrutiny Performance Data

Appendix 6: Annual Councillor Scrutiny Survey Results

Scrutiny Programme Committee - Terms of Reference

1 General

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee will have the following general responsibilities:
- a. Holding members of the Council's executive to account.
 - b. Monitoring the performance of public services, policies and partnerships.
 - c. Contributing to corporate and partnership policy and strategy development.
 - d. Conducting in depth inquiries into service and policy areas.
 - e. Involving the public in service improvement and policy development.
 - f. Considering the opinions of external inspectors.
 - g. Making reports and recommendations to Council or Cabinet on the discharge of any functions of the authority as appropriate.
 - h. To undertake reviews as directed by Council.
 - i. Preparing and publishing a regular work plan.
 - j. Contribute to an overall strategic work programme for scrutiny that will be reported regularly to Council.
 - k. Observing the principles of effective scrutiny as set out in the Protocol for Scrutiny.
- 1.2 The Committee will have responsibility for coordinating the scrutiny of the following:
- a. The community strategy / single integrated plan.
 - b. Swansea's Local Service Board.
 - c. The Council budget.
 - d. Central / corporate functions of the local authority.
 - e. Groups and organisations with which the Council has formed links through grant funding, compacts, subscription or service level agreements.
 - f. External bodies which are able to levy a statutory precept upon the Authority.
 - g. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Annual Report, Mid Term Report and Quarterly Progress Reports.

2 Scrutiny Panels

- 2.1 The Committee may establish Panels / working groups for the purpose of undertaking in depth inquiries or for looking at the performance of particular areas of service delivery.
- 2.2 Each Panel / working groups will be led by a Scrutiny Convener who will be responsible for:

- a. Convening meetings of the relevant Panel
- b. Chairing meetings of the relevant Panel
- c. Ensuring that the Panel undertakes work to the specifications and timescales agreed by the parent board
- d. Reporting back to the parent Board with findings, conclusions and recommendations as appropriate

2.3 Councillors will be appointed to a Panel on the following basis:

- a. At least two political groups on the Council to be represented on the Panel.
- b. Membership of Panels will be open to any non executive members of the Council regardless of whether they are a member of the Scrutiny Committee.
- c. New panels will be advertised to all non executive members and expressions of interest sought. The membership of panels will be determined by the Committee.

3 Scrutiny Work Programme

3.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee will be responsible for coordinating the work of the Scrutiny panels. Other tasks linked to the delivery of the work programme include:

- a. Monitoring the delivery of the scrutiny strategic work programme;
- b. Preparing and agreeing the scrutiny annual report as required by Council;
- c. Dealing with business relating to regional / national scrutiny meetings (for example in relation to the Welsh Local Government Association or the Centre for Public Scrutiny);
- d. Considering reports relevant to the development and improvement of the Council's Scrutiny function;
- e. Dealing with consultation and implementation of national policy changes relevant to scrutiny;
- f. Preparing and publishing a regular work plan;
- g. Making reports and recommendations to Council, Cabinet or the Democratic Services Committee on the discharge of any functions of the authority as appropriate.

4 Service and Policy Areas

4.1 Areas of responsibility cover all functions of the Council and specifically:

- a. All of the functions of the Council as a Social Services Authority under all relevant legislation;
- b. All functions of the Council under the Children Act (1989 and 2004);
- c. All of the functions of the Council as a Planning Authority under the Town and Country Planning Acts and all other relevant

- legislation including countryside, nature conservation and rights of way matters, in force from time to time;
- d. Acting as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of the Police & Justice Act 2006;
 - e. All of the functions of the Council as a Housing Authority under the Housing Acts and all other relevant legislation;
 - f. Outcomes of reviews undertaken by outside agencies or audit bodies;
 - g. Items where Welsh Government Guidance suggests that matters should be considered by scrutiny.

5. Cabinet Portfolios

- 5.1 The work of the Board will not be limited to any particular Cabinet portfolio(s). Invitations to attend meetings, reports, letters and recommendations will be directed to the relevant Cabinet Member(s) as each issue requires.

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan

Standing Agenda Items:

Scrutiny Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain overview on scrutiny work, monitor progress, and coordinate as necessary To plan for future committee meetings including key expectations e.g. key questions to explore, witnesses / information required To review future cabinet business and consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny To consider any councillor / public requests for scrutiny and/or Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA)
Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups (including appointment of conveners) and subsequent changes
Scrutiny Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review scrutiny letters and Cabinet Member responses arising from scrutiny activities
Scrutiny Dispatches (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve content of Dispatches prior to reporting to Council, ensuring visibility and awareness of headlines from scrutiny activities, achievements and impact (8 Aug; 14 Nov; 9 Mar)
Scrutiny Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about upcoming and feedback from recent scrutiny events (e.g. relevant regional / national scrutiny development & improvement Issues; WLGA / CfPS network meetings)

Items for Specific Meetings:

Meeting	Reports	Purpose
13 Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Services for Children & Young People
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider report of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group. The report is cross cutting (i.e. covers safeguarding of adults and children) and is not a report on social services performance but on how the Council as whole is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Programme 2016-17 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider feedback from Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference and proposals for the work programme, including work plan for future committee meetings
11 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Healthy City
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Service Improvement & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Chris Holley, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel's work and achievements

	Finance Performance Panel	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the annual report of the work of overview & scrutiny for the municipal year 2015/16, as required by the constitution
8 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Child & Family Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Support and Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on training and development needs to develop knowledge and skills To reflect on agreed Councillor Training and Development programme and actions necessary to further scrutiny related activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance for Co-opted Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding to the previously agreed protocol for co-option, a proposed guide for co-opted members once they have joined panels and working groups.
12 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty and Communities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Inquiry Report: Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Mary Jones, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Inquiry Report: Building Sustainable Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Terry Hennegan, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
10 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Local Government Performance Bulletin 2015-16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure awareness of content of the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales report and use to support the scrutiny of service performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny / Audit Committee Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair of Audit to attend to share work plan of Audit Committee / Annual Report 2015/16. Discussion to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mutual awareness and understanding of respective work plans and co-ordination - issues relating to work programmes can be discussed

14 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Public Services Board Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Mary Jones, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Adult Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from Director - Corporate Services, on council priorities, strategic challenges, key decisions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme – Compliance and Progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss annual progress report on implementation of Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme, and consider impact (scheme was agreed by Cabinet in October 2014)
12 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Adults & Vulnerable People
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Chris Holley, Convener, attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
9 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with the Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Child & Family Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
13 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services (including follow up on scrutiny report / recommendations agreed by cabinet in July on the Gypsy & Traveller Site Search Process)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Inquiry Report: Tackling Poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Sybil Crouch, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Fiona Gordon, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
9 Mar (special)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime & Disorder Scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Chairs of Safer Swansea Partnership to attend to provide information and take questions on the performance of the Partnership to enable committee to explore plans / objectives, achievements, impact, challenges etc

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Adult Services Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener to update on headlines from the Panel's work and achievements
13 Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Swansea – Cross Cutting Programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with Martin Nicholls, Director – Place, on approach to future commissioning reviews
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Decision Scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Square Development & Public Realm Opportunities • Swansea City Centre Regeneration – Delivery and Funding Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oceana Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on demolition asbestos survey / contract award
10 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Inquiry Report: School Readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel from Councillor Hazel Morris, prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Public Services Board Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Mary Jones, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel's work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Work Plan Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reflect on the year's work, achievements, experiences, issues, ideas for future scrutiny

Scrutiny Work Programme 2016-17

Appendix 3a

ACTIVITY	November	December	January	February	March	April
Scrutiny Programme Committee	14	12	9	13	9 13	10
Inquiry Panels						
Current:						
Tackling Poverty (started Jun 2016)	2 7,10 17,21 28	1	16		16	
Readiness for School (started Oct 2016)	3 17 23	20	11 19 27	2 20	20	
Partnerships & Collaboration (inquiry on hold)						
Follow Up:						
Social Care at Home (Cabinet 20/8/15) COMPLETE		14				
Education Inclusion (Cabinet 19/11/15) COMPLETE	29		3			
School Governance (Cabinet 16/6/16)						
Building Sustainable Communities (19/01/17)						
CAMHS (Cabinet 16/2/17)						
	Planning	Evidence Gathering	Final Report	Cabinet		
Performance Panels						
Service Improvement & Finance	2 23	12 20	25 7	22	22	
Schools	16	8	18	6 16	16	6
Child & Family Services	30	19	23	13 27	14	3
Adult Services	3 23	14	11	6 8	8	5
Public Services Board (multi-agency panel)		6	18	15	15	12
Other Panels / Working Groups						
ERW Regional Councillor Group (twice a year)				27		
Local Flood Risk Management (annual)					1	
Planning (COMPLETE)				1		
Houses in Multiple Occupation	25		12			
Digital Inclusion					6	

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) **Tackling Poverty** (convener: Sybil Crouch)

Key Question: How can the Council’s Tackling Poverty Strategy be improved?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

Following agreement by the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 February the Panel’s final report was presented to Cabinet on 16 March. A decision from Cabinet will follow.

Projected End Date: Complete.

b) **School Readiness** (convener: Hazel Morris)

Key Question: How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel final report is being presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 10 April for agreement to submit the report to Cabinet for decision. Subject to agreement, the report will be scheduled for 20 April Cabinet meeting.

Projected End Date: Complete

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups

a) **Partnerships & Collaboration**

This planned work is currently on hold and subject to available time and resources.

Key concerns that have been expressed:

- how are we currently working with others?
- how effective is it?
- how could the Council’s collaboration with other authorities/ partners be further developed & improved?
- are we learning from examples elsewhere?

Terms of Reference for any future inquiry are to be agreed however likely focus would be on how the Council could improve its approach to partnership working and collaboration to help achieve the outcomes of the Well Being of Future Generations Act.

3. 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 6-12 months after cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Social Care at Home	20 Aug 2015	16	5	1	14 Dec 2016 (complete)
Corporate Culture	15 Oct 2015	19	0	0	6 Jul 2016 (complete)
Education Inclusion	21 Jan 2016	19	0	1	29 Nov 2016 3 Jan 2017 (complete)
School Governance	16 Jun 2016	6	2	4	tba
		Response to other 4 recommendations: Action already in place			
Building Sustainable Communities	19 Jan 2017	10	0	0	Oct /Nov 2017
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1	tbc

4. Performance Panels:

a) Service Improvement & Finance (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

On 22 March the Panel looked at the 3rd Quarter Performance Monitoring Data and followed upon the issues they had identified in their last 3rd Quarter budget monitoring relating to the overspend.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel at their meeting on the 16 March 2017 met with the Challenge Advisor, Headteacher and Chair of Governors from Birchgrove Comprehensive School to discuss current performance and their prospects for improvement. They will meet again on the 6 April to receive an update on progress with one school and with EMLAS.

c) **Public Services Board** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

See progress report – agenda item 7.

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

The Panel met on 27 February to consider departmental performance and held a pre decision meeting on 13 March to consider services for under and over 11s. The final meeting on 3 April will receive a presentation on the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

e) **Adult Services** (convener: Uta Clay)

The Panel met on 8 March and considered the new performance management report for Adult Services. The final meeting will be on 5 April when the Panel will consider Objective Setting for Senior Officers, Local Area Coordination and Western Bay Intermediate Care Services.

5. **Other Panels / Working Groups:**

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Panels / Working Groups.

a) **Education Through Regional Working** (regional scrutiny group)

A scrutiny councillors group has been set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach across the six councils participating in ERW. At present this involves two meetings per year. Swansea is represented by the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Convener of the Schools Performance Panel.

The Group met on 27 February 2017 and was hosted by Ceredigion Council. The group discussed School Governance and each local authority's education scrutiny work programme. They also received updates from the ERW Managing Director on progress with the recommendations contained in the ERW Estyn Inspection, the ERW Business Plan and school categorisation. The next meeting will take place in September/October, date to be arranged.

Swansea's Scrutiny Team is providing the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

b) **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

The working group met on 1 March where they received its first annual update to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation attended to update the group. A letter was then sent to the Cabinet Member and his response is awaited.

c) **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

Following meetings in November and January the Working Group wrote to relevant Cabinet Member with their views and recommendations. The Working Group had considered a joint briefing report from Housing and Public Health and Planning, met with the relevant Cabinet members and received representations from the public in writing and in person. A response to the letter has now been received and the correspondence is reported to the Committee under item 8 (Scrutiny Letters), which concludes this work.

d) **Digital Inclusion** (convener: Cllr Lesley Walton)

This working group met with the Cabinet Member for Anti Poverty and officers on the 6 March. A letter has since been sent detailing a number of issues to be considered as part of a review of the digital inclusion strategy.

Further Working Groups to be convened, in the order of priority shown (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

1. Roads / Highway Maintenance

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering service practices and procedures (e.g. dealing with pot holes), use of resources / impact of budget cuts, prospects for improvement. This will enable questions about the quality and effectiveness of highway maintenance and repair, and also issues relating to the relationship with utilities and strategic planning / co-ordination of works to minimise disruption to major access roads.

2. Corporate Building Services

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report to provide a briefing about Corporate Building Services to enable questions and discussion e.g. about value for money provide, costs / competitiveness for works including councillor ward requests.

3. Dog Fouling

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report on dealing with dog fouling, e.g. community initiatives, support for dog owners, deterrents, dealing with complaints, enforcement, resources, achievements etc.

4. Renewable Energy

This would enable information and discussion / questions on the Council's aims and objectives, development projects / initiatives, and progress in the promotion and use of renewable energy, and benefits. This topic is relevant to the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and sustainable development.

Appendix 4

Lead Scrutiny Councillor / Officer Contacts:

Activity	Lead Councillor	Lead Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Programme Committee	Mary Jones cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Brij Madahar (01792 637257) brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Inquiry Panels:		
Tackling Poverty How can the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy be improved?	Sybil Crouch cllr.sybil.crouch@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
School Readiness How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?	Hazel Morris cllr.hazel.morris@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Inquiry Panels (follow up)		
School Governance	Fiona Gordon cllr.fiona.gordon@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
Building Sustainable Communities	Terry Hennegan cllr.terry.hennegan@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	Mary Jones cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
Performance Panels:		
Child & Family Services	Paxton Hood-Williams cllr.paxton.hood-williams@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk

Service Improvement & Finance	Chris Holley cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Schools	Fiona Gordon cllr.fiona.gordon@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Public Services Board (multi-agency)	Mary Jones cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Brij Madahar (01792 637257) brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Adult Services	Uta Clay cllr.uta.clay@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
<u>Working Groups:</u>		
Local Flood Risk Management	Susan Jones cllr.susan.m.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Houses in Multiple Occupation	Mary Jones cllr.mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Digital Inclusion	Lesley Walton cllr.lesley.walton@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
Partnerships & Collaboration (pre-inquiry)	June Burtonshaw cllr.june.burtonshaw@swansea.gov.uk	Work currently on hold

Appendix 5

Data for 10 April 2017 Scrutiny Programme Committee

	No. of SPC Meetings	No. of Inquiries Completed	No. of Working Groups	No. of Panel / Working Group meetings	Number of backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny	Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings	How many reports presented to Cabinet	Recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet	No. of scrutiny letters sent	No. of blog posts / press releases
2016/17 (as at 30 Mar)	11 68% attendance	4	4	94	76%	68%	3 (1 scheduled for 20 Apr Cabinet)	81%	67 (23 response n/a)	39 blogs 15 press releases
2015/16 Page 11	14 79% attendance	4	6	96	79%	67%	4	97%	71 (24 response n/a)	55 blogs 6 press releases
2014/15	21 83% attendance	4	5	99	77%	72%	4	90%	78 (26 response n/a)	74 blogs 3 Press Releases
2013/14	16 77% attendance	2 further 5 in progress, completion on 3 of these due May / June	6	96	83%	63%	6	95%	45	62 blogs 8 press releases
2012/13 From Nov 2012)	7 (78% attendance)	4	4	65	89%	69%	3	100%	13	38 blogs 7 press releases

Annual Stakeholder Survey 2017
Councillors

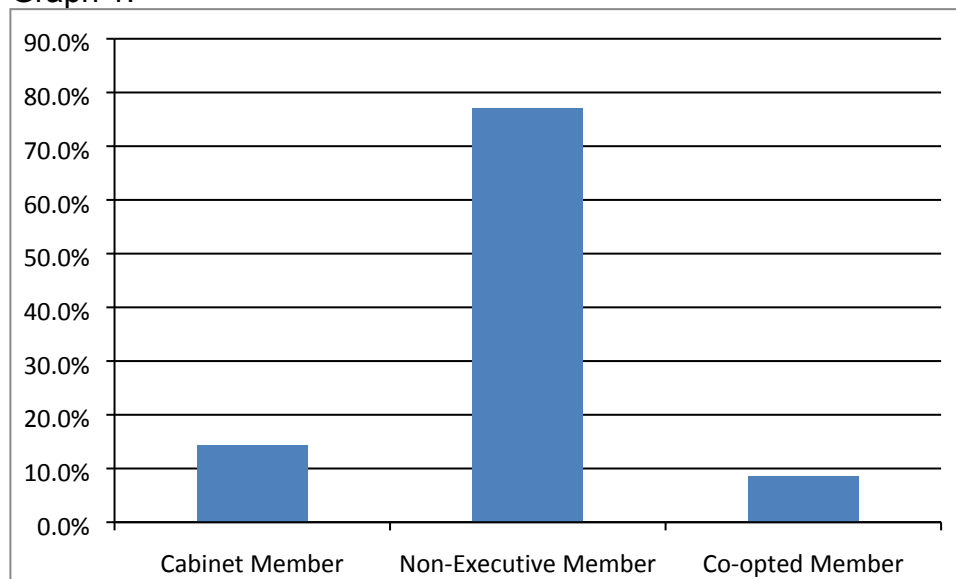
1.0 Introduction

1.1 1. All councillors and co-opted members received a copy of the annual stakeholder survey. 35 completed the survey. The results were analysed and the results were as follows. Total numbers are shown in the brackets.

1.2 Q2. **Are you a:**

Councillor – Cabinet Member - 14.3% (5)
Councillor – Non Executive Member - 77.1% (27)
Co-opted Members – 8.6% (3)

Graph 1:

**2.0 Scrutiny Arrangements**

2.1 Q3. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't Know
a. I have a good understanding of the work of scrutiny.	62.9% (22)	34.3% (12)	2.9% (1)	0.0%(0)	0.0%(0)
b. The scrutiny arrangements are working well.	17.1% (6)	71.4% (25)	8.6% (3)	0.0%	2.9%(1)
c. The work of scrutiny is councillor-led	36.4% (12)	45.5% (15)	18.2% (6)	0.0%	0.0%
d. Scrutiny works in a cross cutting fashion and not restricted to departmental silos.	25.7% (9)	57.1% (20)	14.3% (5)	2.9% (1)	0.0%
e. Non-executive members have good opportunities to participate in scrutiny.	57.1% (20)	37.1% (13)	5.7% (2)	0.0%	0.0%
f. The Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance.	10.0% (3)	66.7% (20)	10.0% (3)	0.0%	13.3% (4)

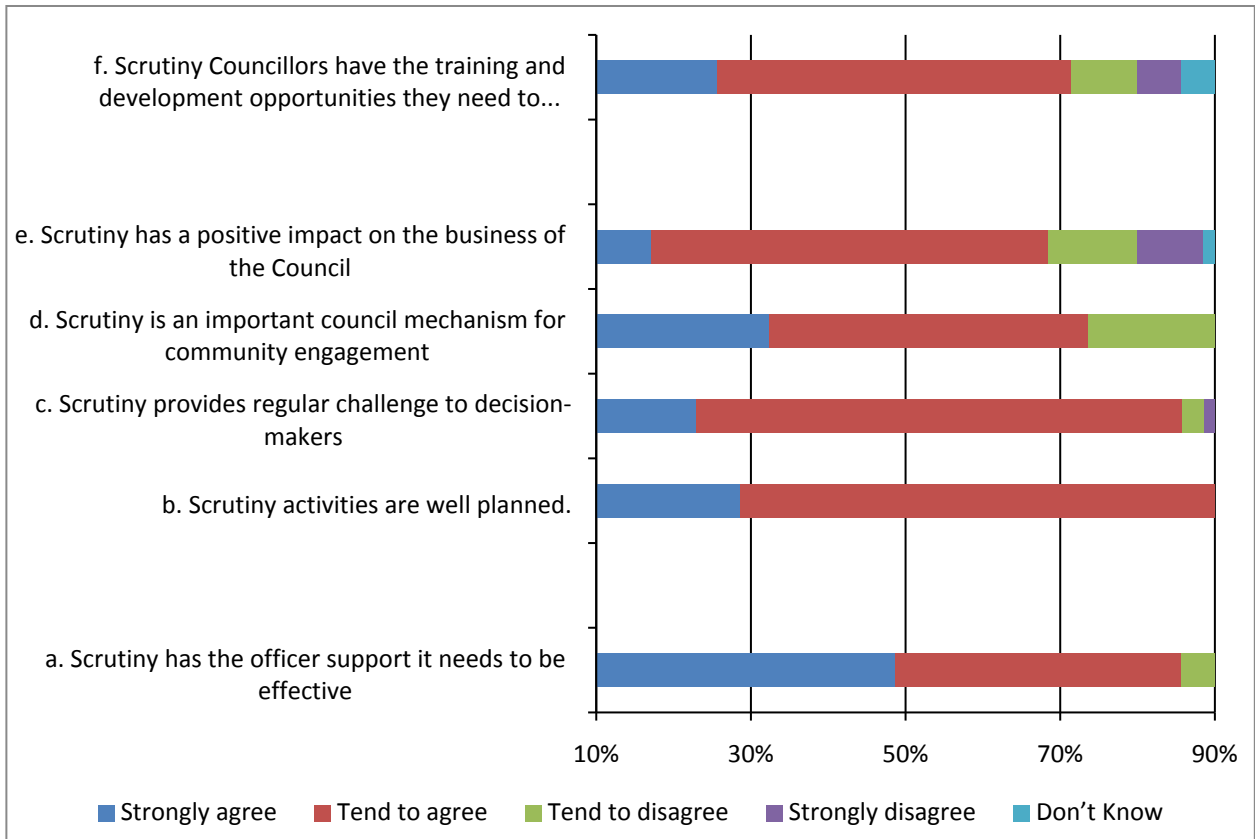
Graph 2:



2.2 Q4. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't Know
a. Scrutiny has the officer support it needs to be effective	48.6% (17)	37.1% (13)	5.7% (2)	0.0%	8.6% (3)
b. Scrutiny activities are well planned.	28.6% (10)	65.7% (23)	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	0.0%
c. Scrutiny provides regular challenge to decision-makers	22.9% (8)	62.9% (22)	2.9% (1)	5.7% (2)	5.7% (2)
d. Scrutiny is an important council mechanism for community engagement	32.4% (11)	41.2% (14)	23.5% (8)	2.9% (1)	0.0%
e. Scrutiny has a positive impact on the business of the Council	17.1% (6)	51.4% (18)	11.4% (4)	8.6% (3)	11.4% (4)
f. Scrutiny Councillors have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their role effectively	25.7% (9)	45.7% (16)	8.6% (3)	5.7% (2)	14.3% (5)

Graph 3:

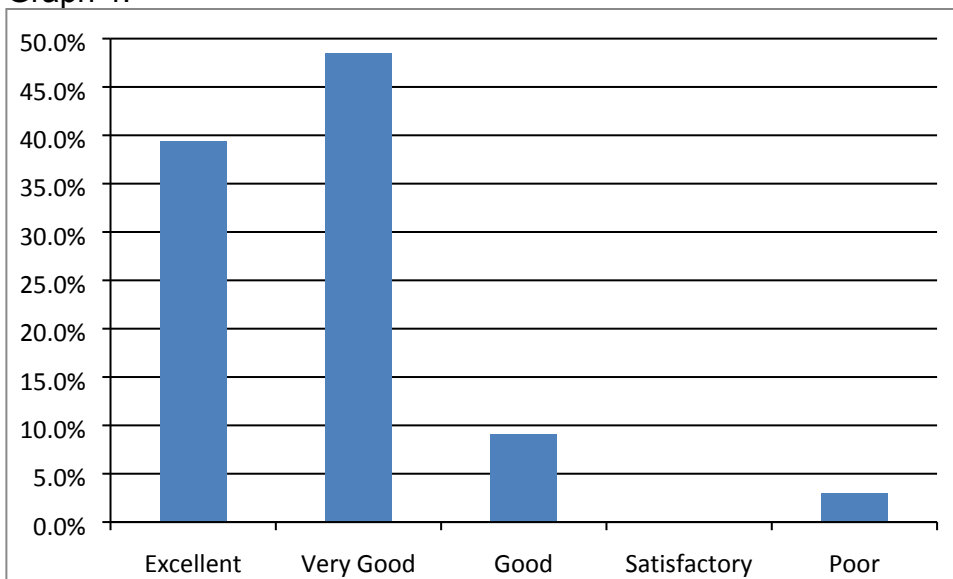


3.0 Officer Support

3.1 Q5. How would you rate the level of support you receive from the scrutiny team?

- Excellent - 39.4% (13)
- Very good – 48.5% (16)
- Good – 9.1% (3)
- Satisfactory – 0.0%
- Poor – 3.0% (1)

Graph 4:



Q6. How could the scrutiny support be improved?

The comments received were analysed and the following themes emerged:

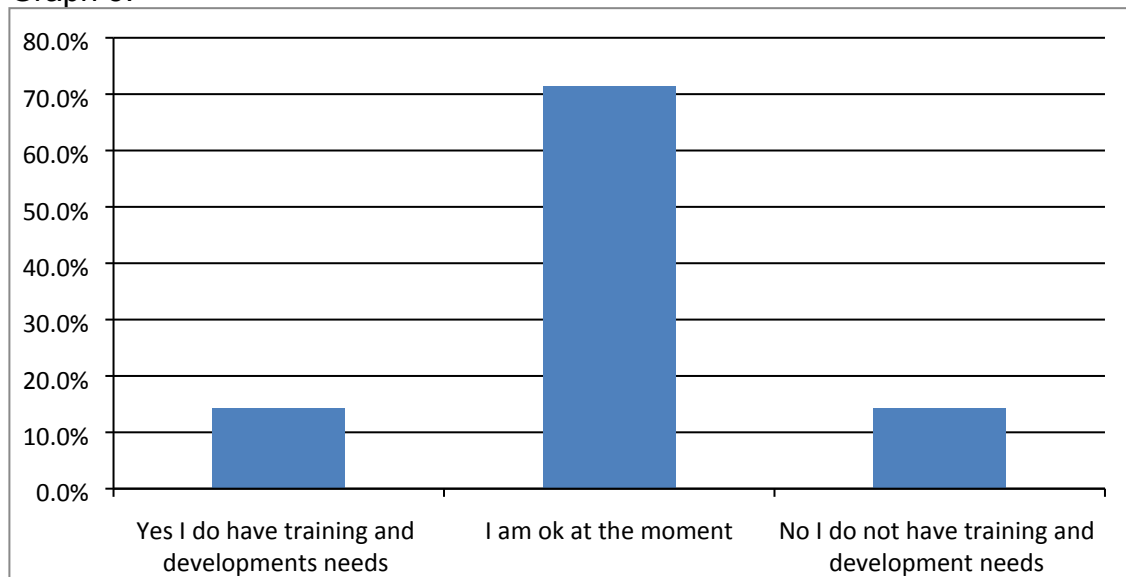
- More staff and resources (4)
- Providing hard copy agendas to co-opted members, as Councillors are.
- Delivery of scrutiny papers via specialist software (e.g. Diligent.com) would help and be more efficient/cheaper.
- Having information about cabinet business – taking this into account in the work of scrutiny and getting more joined up.
- No need for an annual scrutiny work planning conference as the process is ongoing, and topics for scrutiny should (and are) put forward at any time for consideration by the Scrutiny Programme Committee.
- Clarity of purpose of scrutiny activities and occasional informal briefings with the chair and support officer would help cabinet members prepare for meetings and have clear understanding.
- Involving and communicating with all relevant cabinet members when dealing with cross cutting issues e.g. when requesting written response, or attendance at meetings

4.0 Training & Development

4.1 Q7. Do you have any training and development needs that you feel would assist you in your role as a Scrutiny Committee/Panel member?

Yes I do have training and development needs - 14.3% (5)
I am ok at the moment but I would like to receive information on any future opportunities - 71.4% (25)
No I do not have any training and development needs – 14.3% (5)

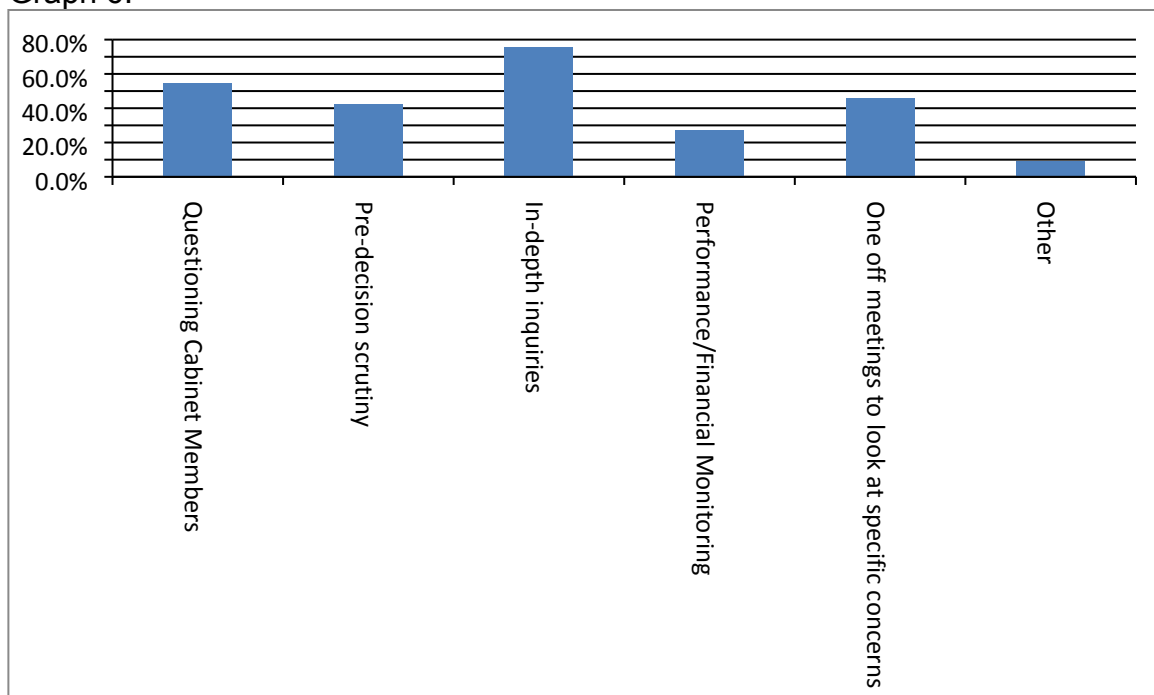
Graph 5:



	<p>Q8. If you do have any training and development needs? Please give further detail below.</p> <p>The following comments were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to prepare for meetings • Briefings to help understand services (e.g. planning) to enable better scrutiny • Refresher training on styles of questioning to be an effective "critical friend" would be helpful • Awareness of any new legislation relevant to scrutiny • Opportunities for councillors to visit scrutiny meetings in other authorities. • Opportunities to shadow relevant officers for a couple of days. • ICT • High-level finance training
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Suggestions for the Scrutiny Work Programme</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>Q9. Do you have any suggestions of topics for possible in-depth inquiry?</p> <p>The following suggestions can be identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Building Services (2) • Procurement (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what are procedures currently in place by the council and are all service users aware of the process? - procurement and tendering process – what is the framework, use of approved list, is it transparent, are we achieving value for money, use of local firms? • Impact of ‘Austerity’ - assess what impact ‘austerity’ has had on the resilience of Council services, especially where savings have come from the head count (e.g. some LAs in Wales are barely able to sustain a robust planning control function) • Recruitment Process (e.g. systems in place to ensure transparency / accountability when post/application forms are received) • Renewable Energy • Child trafficking / exploitation (e.g. not only by people trafficking for the sex and drug trade. Do we consider young people in particular girls who are exploited by other young people not much older? What happens to the young people who are used to look after the drug houses?) • Streetscene (impact of changes to service areas - has the service improved?) • Direct Labour Organisation • Civil Enforcement Service • Bus Services within Swansea • Youth Service Provision • City Deal • Lord Mayor’s Office • Implementation of the Welsh Language Standards (this would help assess compliance with the new laws for Local Government) • Buildings Maintenance

5.2	<p>Q10. Do you have any suggestions of areas for in-depth performance/financial monitoring?</p> <p>The following suggestions can be identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study how budgets (as opposed to allocations) might be set in key areas (where 'budget' is defined as 'a financial representation of an agreed plan of action, for a defined period of time') • Procurement procedures • Capital schemes and changes • Financial decision monitoring - budgetary control is going to be one of the main planks for any future planning • Procurement and tendering process – money can be saved. • Corporate Buildings (planned works and activities) • Fleet Management (looking at our vehicle fleet, usage of the fleet and how we can monitor the mileage etc.) • ER/VR policy / process (criteria for approval - why some staff have been allowed to leave and others not) • Buildings Maintenance. • Regular Scrutiny of Planning Service
5.3	<p>Q11. Do you have any suggestions of topics for one-off scrutiny meetings?</p> <p>The following suggestions can be identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage/listed buildings (Council and private owned) – responsibilities including upkeep etc. • Care Services to the Elderly • Renewable Energy • School Music Service • Civic Centre / Guildhall Parking • Review of Impact of Communities First in Swansea • Dog Fouling • Provision of Community/Play Facilities • Councillor Meeting Rooms • The Palace Theatre High Street Development • ABP's plans for the Dock area. • Tethered Horses (progress since last Working Group / further opportunities for improvement)
6.0	General
	<p>Q12. For you, what have been the most important aspects of scrutiny?</p> <p>Questioning Cabinet Members – 54.5% (18) Pre-decision scrutiny – 42.4% (14) In-depth Inquiries – 75.8% (25) Performance/Financial Monitoring – 27.3% (9) One-off meetings to look at specific concerns – 45.5% (15) Other – 9.1% (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long-term scrutiny of schools performance • Learning about various aspects of council work • It was difficult to pick three options

Graph 6:



6.1 Q13. In your opinion, what has worked well about scrutiny in Swansea?

The comments received were analysed and the following themes emerged:

- The work of Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups (5)
 - Child & Family Services Performance Panel
 - Adult Services Performance Panel
 - 'One off' quick scrutiny
 - Flexibility over timescales to complete work has permitted more questions to be introduced which has resulted in a more robust scrutiny
 - The contribution of pre-decision scrutiny which has increased over the last 12 months in areas such as Commissioning Reviews.
- Holding to account (3)
 - Cabinet Members
 - The opportunity to test the work being undertaken by senior managers and Leaders
 - It tests the mettle of officers and cabinet members - and partner bodies such as NHS and can also be a support mechanism for officers.
- Councillor engagement (3)
 - Involvement of all members (x2)
 - Interested councillors self-selecting their involvement
- The ability to scrutinise topics in-depth (2)
- Ability to ask questions (2)
 - Members able to ask questions, gives members a knowledge of services provided by authority and to be a critical friend and look at things with fresh eyes
 - Being able to ask questions about areas of topic to interested partners/agencies e.g. about working together, improvements in services, better outcomes.

- General:
 - Initially sceptical of the effectiveness of the new arrangements in 2012. However, it would appear that there is now more detailed scrutiny of specific areas, when the need has been identified and a lot of good work is being done.
 - Good communication throughout process and excellent follow up of actions.
 - Having the opportunity to meet with officers to dig down into the work of the council and make changes in direction if necessary.
 - Good working relationship with officers good working relationship with colleagues, especially on long-term scrutiny boards
 - The work of the staff and members has been very good
- From cabinet perspective have been treated fairly at meeting and scrutiny councillor have acted in the truest sense as critical friends.

6.2 Q14. In your opinion, what has not worked well and could be done differently?

The comments received were analysed and the following themes emerged:

- Scrutiny Process (6):
 - Time of meetings – have been occasions when majority of panel members cannot attend and can lead to skewed subjective outcomes without any balance
 - Speed of the scrutiny process
 - Lack of meaningful data and background information to support what has been said and to test the veracity of what is being said to scrutiny
 - More information provided and the time to appraise information properly.
 - More clarity needed when dealing with cross cutting issues on which responsible cabinet member is best placed to respond
 - Outcomes and the way in which they are monitored
- Membership / Attendance (5):
 - Attendance of members is sometimes very scarce
 - Balance on committees, some do much more work than others, although some just sit on more committees than others
 - A wider range of councillors taking part in scrutiny
 - Political balance is important
- Duplication between CACs and scrutiny (2)
- Other:
 - Scrutiny needs to be more involved in the monitoring/challenging of council large scale projects (e.g. there was lack of involvement in the gypsy traveller site search project)
 - Scrutiny Programme Committee flounders a bit.
 - The Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - felt there were gaps in hearing evidence from some key individuals.
 - Political influence - sometimes the feeling that some members of the committee are not able to express their views fully
 - The leadership has not shown that it understands or supports scrutiny
 - Go back to the committee system.

6.3 Q15. What have you found difficult about scrutiny, if anything?

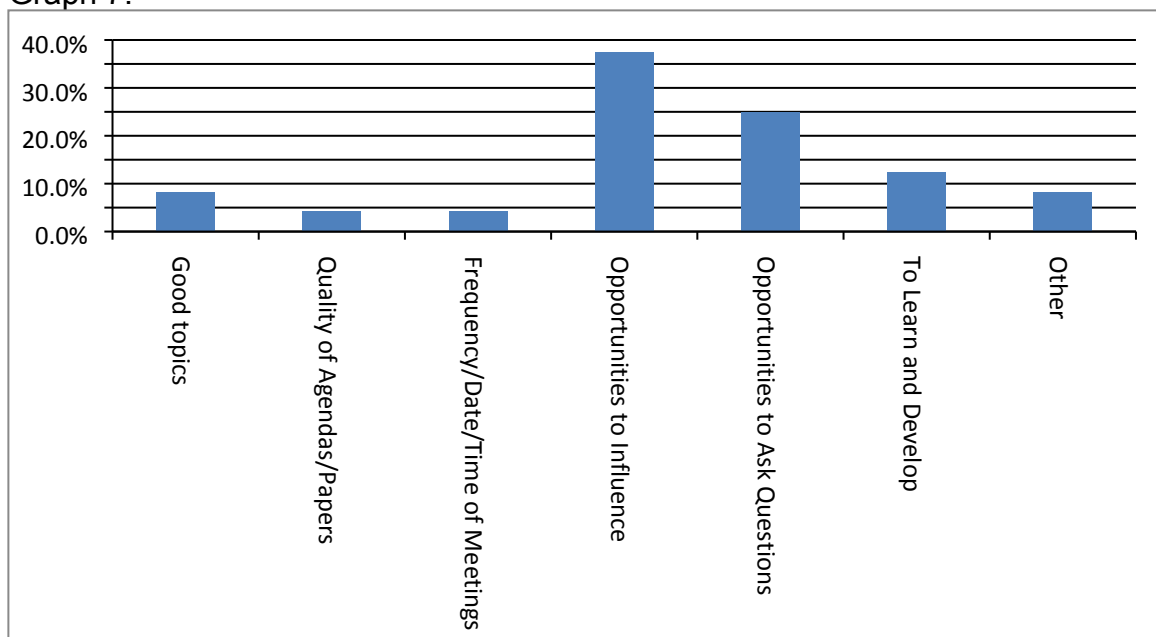
The comments received were analysed and the following themes emerged:

- Time of meetings (3)
- Political interference (2)
- Cabinet responses to recommendations from scrutiny (2)
- Cabinet engagement with scrutiny
- The creation of CACs
- Being dropped into something which is a continuation of the PSB without any prior involvement or briefing about it.
- De-coding the jargon
- The haste in which some scrutiny is undertaken, you cannot get quality outcomes or reliable outcomes
- Sometimes scrutiny hasn't grasped the subject, or thought through the recommendations. It is not necessary to have a long list of recommendations to validate a scrutiny investigation. The findings are just as important.

6.4 Q16. What is the main reason that you have engaged with scrutiny?

- Good topics – 8.3% (2)
- Quality of Agenda/Papers – 4.2% (1)
- Frequency/Date/Time of Meetings – 4.2% (1)
- Opportunities to Influence – 37.5% (9)
- Opportunities to Ask Questions – 25.0% (6)
- To Learn and Develop – 12.5% (3)
- Other – 8.3% (2)
 - Opportunities to improve council services
 - Cabinet member called to scrutiny

Graph 7:



6.5 Q17. What would improve your experience of scrutiny?

The comments received were analysed and the following themes emerged:

- Quality of information (3):
 - A complete knowledge of the subject to be scrutinised
 - Better briefings and background information with supporting evidence.
 - Information, comparisons, ideas and evidence coming from a range of sources outside the normal council viewpoint
- Timings of meetings (3)
- Everybody being engaged in the scrutiny process.(2)
- Better induction process
- Choice of conveners
- More in depth work.
- To receive feedback to Panel's on the outcomes of recommendation being implemented following the evidence gathered/received after investigation forwarded to Cabinet Members.
- Increased use of new technology to allow members to participate remotely through conference call/webcasting.
- The officers and team of scrutiny should be recognised for their hard work, commitment and individual advice.
- Stop going round in circles
- Do away with CACs
- Returning to the system put in place immediately after the 2012 election (SPC with 3 scrutiny committees)