



City and County of Swansea

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

Council Chamber - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 12 February 2018 at 4.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

M Durke  
L S Gibbard  
C A Holley  
E J King

**Councillor(s)**

C R Evans  
D W Helliwell  
B Hopkins  
W G Lewis

**Councillor(s)**

E W Fitzgerald  
T J Hennegan  
P K Jones  
W G Thomas

**Co-opted Member(s)**

D Anderson-Thomas  
J W Jones

**Co-opted Member(s)**

P M Black

**Co-opted Member(s)**

P R Hood Williams

**Officer(s)**

Kate Jones  
Brij Madahar  
Stephanie Williams

Democratic Services Officer  
Scrutiny Team Leader  
Principal Lawyer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): S E Crouch, I E Mann, M Sykes and G J Tanner

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

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

**96 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.

**97 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 8 January 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**98 Public Question Time.**

There were no public questions.

**99 Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Member for Environment Services (Councillor Mark Thomas)**

The Cabinet Member for Environment Services provided a verbal address further to the written report circulated.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the vast expanse of his portfolio. He noted that such areas were very important to the public and often the area's which were most frequently asked about. It was becoming more and more challenging to meet expectations, particularly given budget cuts.

The Cabinet Member specifically highlighted the following: -

**Highways and Transportation**

- The estimated backlog of highway maintenance was estimated at around £130 Million
- There had been a drop in the position of the Authority from Second to Fourth place out of 22 Councils from last year to this year for the conditions of the principle roads. The main reason for the drop was increased investment into Cycleways and Footways, which resulted in less funding available for Roads.
- Despite the pressures, the Service had received a number of Awards and that was a credit to the staff.
- It was hoped that additional funding would be secured this year.

**Waste, Parks and Cleansing**

- Waste, Parks and Cleansing had recently merged as one area, which allowed for greater movement of staff to critical areas when necessary
- Waste Management had seen significant budget cuts, but were still meeting targets
- There was a reduction in performance in respect of the recycling and composting rate. This was due to change in the restrictions on wood recycling imposed by National Resources Wales (NRW) which would affect all Authorities
- A proportion of the fleet was in the process of being replaced providing a more reliable fleet
- The service had made some key achievements particularly in respect of fly tipping

**Public Protection**

- Building control was run in competition with the private sector. There were high levels of service delivery and the service had met all its key targets
- Trading Standards had met all key targets and had been increasing awareness of scams
- Food and Safety had provided a good service in times of budget and staff cuts
- Registration and Bereavement had highly trained staff in respect of bereavement.

**Pollution, Pest and Animal Control**

- Greater awareness was needed of the services offered in relation to pest control
- Response times to complaints were very good

- The need to provide a more sustainable service going forward which would also meet the needs of the public.

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

- Fly tipping - difficulties with private land as well as safety issues in some locations
- Rules at Civic Amenity Sites e.g. Vehicle entry, and whether there was an impact on fly tipping
- Possibility of cameras at known fly tipping sites.
- Suitability of the use of Glyphosphate for weed control – the Cabinet Member discussed balancing the reports of carcinogenic properties with EU Guidance as well as the lack of alternatives
- What measures would be taken to deal with areas of high air pollution now they can be identified
- Looking at the ways which potholes were being repaired as there were a significant number of potholes being repaired then re-emerging soon after
- Frequency that dog bins are emptied – the Cabinet Member stated a review had been undertaken to identify areas of higher and lower usage
- Food safety and food hygiene standards
- Issues with Car Park Machines at Langland and Caswell with large periods where the machines in disrepair, and the need to put pressure on the contractors who provide the machines to resolve the problems identified.

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

## **100 Pre-decision Scrutiny: Transfer of Management of Allotments to Management Associations**

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and the Interim Head of Property Services were present for the Committee's consideration of the Cabinet Report on 'Transfer of Management of Allotments from City and County of Swansea to Management Associations'.

The Cabinet Member highlighted some key elements of the report. Swansea Council had 16 allotment sites, which provided 307 plots. Paragraph 3 of the Cabinet Report set out the proposed options and Option 2 set out at Paragraph 3.2 was the preferred option.

The Committee asked questions of the Cabinet Member and Interim Head of Property Services which focussed on the following: -

- Private Management
- Responsibility for Insurance
- Vetch Field – Intention for usage after current lease
- Position should Allotments Associations wind-up
- Constitution of Allotments Associations
- Charges for the plots under the management of the Allotment Associations

- Extent of current waiting list for allotments
- Site Surveys and extent of work required before handing the sites to the Allotment Associations
- Requirement for oversight on fair allocation of plots
- Estimated costs saving of proceedings with Option 2

**Resolved that: -**

- 1) the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Cabinet Member outlining the views of the Committee, for Cabinet's consideration; and
- 2) the Cabinet Member provides current waiting list figures for allotments as well as estimated costs savings of proceeding with option 2; and
- 3) the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy be circulated to all Councillors.

**101 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Reports:**

In the absence of the Convener of the Panel, Councillor Mo Sykes, the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel Update was noted.

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

The Chair presented a report on the Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

The Scrutiny Team Leader reported updates further to the written report circulated including the fact that Councillor Sam Pritchard has volunteered to act as Convener of the Renewable Energy Working Group.

**Resolved that: -**

- 1) Councillor Steve Gallagher, Peter Jones, Irene Mann, Sam Pritchard and Brigitte Rowlands be added to the Local Flood Risk Management Working Group;
- 2) Councillor Peter Jones replace Councillor Susan Jones as Convener of the Local Flood Risk Management Working Group;
- 3) Councillors Oliver James and Andrew Stevens be removed from the Development & Regeneration Performance Panel;
- 4) Councillor Oliver James be removed from the Regional Working Inquiry Panel;
- 5) Councillor Lesley Walton be added to the Natural Environment Inquiry Panel; and
- 6) The Membership of the New Working Groups be approved as follows: -

**Renewable Energy Working Group (11)**

**Labour Councillors: 4**

Louise Gibbard	<b>Sam Pritchard (Convener)</b>
Peter Jones	Lesley Walton

**Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 4**

Mike Day	Kevin Griffiths
Wendy Fitzgerald	Mary Jones

**Conservative Councillors: 2**

David Helliwell	Brigitte Rowlands
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**Uplands Councillors: 1**

Irene Mann	
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**Homelessness Working Group (16)**

**Labour Councillors: 13**

Mandy Evans	Erika Kirchner
Louise Gibbard	Alyson Pugh
Joe Hale	Sam Pritchard
Terry Hennegan	Mo Sykes
Oliver James	Gloria Tanner
Yvonne Jardine	Mike White
Elliot King	

**Liberal Democrat/Independent Councillors: 1**

<b>Peter Black (Convener)</b>	
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**Conservative Councillor: 2**

Lyndon Jones	Linda Tyler-Lloyd
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**103 Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18.**

The Chair updated the Committee on progress with the Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18. It was highlighted that the next meeting was a special Scrutiny Programme Committee on 5 March 2018 for Crime and Disorder Scrutiny, to focus on the work of Safer Swansea Partnership.

**Resolved** that Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18 be noted.

**104 Scrutiny Letters.**

The Chair presented a report on Scrutiny Letters. Correspondence from the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing relating to the Committee's Q & A session in November, and the Cabinet Member for Environment relating to the Car Park Charges Working Group, were included.

Some key points were highlighted in section 3.3 of the report. Following the Q & A with Councillor Mark Child. It was highlighted that the Committee needed to consider the dissemination of information on Local Area Coordination, specifically what would be satisfactory to address the Committee's desire for regular feedback on Local Area

Coordination? It was suggested that this fits in and should feed into the work of the Adult Services Performance Panel which could schedule a recurring item into its work plan to look at the approach and effectiveness.

With regard to individual Councillors, they were encouraged to establish a good working relationship with their Local Area Coordinator, and establish if necessary some form of regular informal contact.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- 2) the issue of Local Area Coordination be picked up by the Adult Services Performance Panel.

**105 Audit Committee Work Plan (For Information).**

The Audit Committee Workplan was noted. The Chair also reported that a new Chair of Audit Committee would be confirmed at Council on 1 March 2018, and would be invited to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee to help develop the relationship between audit and scrutiny.

**106 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.**

The dates and times of upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were noted.

The meeting ended at 5.55 pm

**Chair**