



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance

At: Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Monday, 2 March 2020

Time: 10.00 am

Convenor: Councillor Chris Holley OBE

Membership:

Councillors: P Downing, P R Hood-Williams, L James, M H Jones, P K Jones, J W Jones, C E Lloyd, I E Mann, B J Rowlands, and D W W Thomas

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Next Meeting: Monday, 30 March 2020 at 10.00 am

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Monday, 24 February 2020

Contact: Scrutiny 637732

Cllr Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement &
Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor David Hopkins
Direct Line: 01792 63 7439
E-Mail: cllr.david.hopkins@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: DH/HS
Your Ref: ref
Date: 13 February 2020

Dear Cllr Holley

Thank you for your letter dated 6 January 2020. Please find response below.

QUESTION

What is being done in Swansea to ensure there is capacity to regulate and ensure ecological constraints are followed?

RESPONSE

Swansea Council has only limited responsibility for monitoring and regulating protected sites and species within the County. Sites and species are protected by national law, international law and government policy, and all public authorities in Wales have a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity (species diversity and species richness) as part of their policy and decision making.

Anyone causing harm or disturbance to sites or species that are protected by these laws is potentially committing a wildlife crime, and where this is witnessed it should be reported to the police. The police and National Wildlife Crime Unit have an investigative and enforcement role in tackling action which contravenes legislation governing the protection of the UK's wild animals and plants. The RSPCA can also deal with wildlife crime.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is the regulatory authority in Wales for a wide range of environmental legislation and responsible for issuing licences to ensure sites and species are protected. Examples of this are in relation to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, European protected species licensing, marine licensing, etc. For most activities NRW undertakes compliance assessment and, where necessary, takes formal enforcement action.

Respective Council departments, in particular Housing, Estates and Education, are responsible for ensuring ecological constraints are followed on land within their ownership and control. Currently these departments buy in ecological services to ensure compliance with regulations.

Where planning applications are submitted to the Council, the potential to impact on ecological networks and features of importance for biodiversity forms part of the assessment of the proposal. Conditions are imposed on any planning permission granted to ensure appropriate provision for their safeguarding, mitigation and/or compensatory measures such as through on/off site habitat creation.

These conditions are discharged in the normal manner prior to commencement or occupation of development, however this does not usually include a requirement for future monitoring/maintenance. The Council does not have an officer that monitors compliance with those conditions that remain applicable to the tens of thousands of historic planning permissions that have been granted, let alone the incalculable number of specific conditions that relate to ecological matters. This has been attempted previously and proven to be totally unfeasible. Furthermore, the Council has no power to take action where protected species or habitats are harmed as a result of works that do not require planning permission. Such crimes are matters for NRW and/or the police.

Since April 2019, the Council has only had one permanent (0.8) Planning Ecologist responsible for providing ecological advice on over 2500 pre-application enquiries and planning applications per annum, discharging ecological matters conditions, etc. This has proven to be an inadequate resource. Accordingly, since the beginning of this year an additional temporary, part-time (0.5) Planning Ecologist has been appointed by diverting resources and funding from elsewhere within the Council's Natural Environment Section. It is acknowledged that this is an unsustainable, short-term solution, but it potentially enables in-house ecological advice to be provided to other departments in addition to dealing with the sheer volume of planning applications. This is important as for 20/21 onwards an additional £25k income target has been identified for the Council's Natural Environment Section, which given staff resources can only realistically be achieved through paid-for ecological advice. This is an ambitious target but is the only means of ensuring the temporary Planning Ecologist post is made permanent and extended to a full time position thereby increasing the capacity to regulate and ensure ecological constraints are followed. Furthermore, in recognition of the new and additional biodiversity obligations introduced by Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act, it is also proposed to create and fund from additional revenue budget, a new post Section 6 officer post within the Natural Environment section from April 2020.

Yours faithfully



**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR DAVID HOPKINS
AELOD Y CABINET DROS GYFLWYNO A PHERFFORMIAD
CABINET MEMBER FOR DELIVERY & PERFORMANCE**

To/
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy and
Strategy

BY EMAIL

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
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e-Mail
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Date
Dyddiad:

Overview & Scrutiny

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19 February 2020

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy. The Panel met on 19th February 2020. This letter relates to the Annual Budget 2020/21.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

On the 19 February, the Panel met to discuss the Annual Budget 2020/21. The Panel are grateful to Cabinet Members and officers who attended all the Panels meetings to provide information and answer questions.

Each Panel had the opportunity to scrutinise the Budget in relation to their performance Panels. Each Panel was then asked to produce the points they wish the raise.

Please find below the comments from each Performance Panel:

Adult Services

- Panel noted the change of Chancellor could lead to a delay in the announcement of the national budget, which may in turn affect the Welsh Government's budget and therefore the Council's budget.
- Adult Services budget increased by 3.5% and inflationary pressures are 7%, so the Council needs to make the proposed savings next year to stay where it is. This is a concern as not all of the proposed savings will be achieved in this financial year and the Panel felt therefore the savings target next financial year seems to be ambitious.
- Panel was concerned about the £500k proposed savings next year from review of senior staff structure across adults, children and poverty and prevention services. Panel felt satisfied that the plan is to flatten out the structure at every level of the directorate not just at senior staff level and that there will still be at least two Heads of Service, which is essential given the size of the budget and issues the Directorate face going forward.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

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

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

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

- The Panel were concerned about the review of opportunities for outdoor centres, the effect this could have on schools and the lack of confidence that this can be delivered. Adult Services, and Child and Family Services Panels would like to see a copy of the consultation for this.
- With £750k proposed savings from review of mental health and learning disability packages next financial year, there was concern in the Panel that this will be an issue as there is a shortfall of resource to undertake the review of the Health side. The Panel felt that this needs to be resolved as soon as possible if we are to keep to budget for 2020-21.
- Regarding the £100k projected income from Local Area Coordination, the Cabinet Member stated he would like to see a committed funding stream so the scheme can be expanded and is sustainable. The Panel would like to see this introduced.
- The Panel acknowledged that the budget for Social Services is person driven and it would be misleading to focus on the number of people supported.
- Panel was concerned about the areas where savings are proposed and felt savings are being made which could be detriment to the service.
- The Panel will be revisiting the budget again in October so we can more closely monitor the outcomes of the planned efficiency savings.

Education

- We are pleased that Education continues to be one of the top priorities for Swansea Council, because we feel it as vitally important if we are to make the most of the City Deal as we build for future generations.
- We were pleased to hear that the budget will see an increase in monies going to education and schools and will cover Teachers pay grant, Teachers pension costs and the pay increase for non-teaching staff. We were also pleased to hear about the grant of £4 million from Welsh Government for Capital Maintenance Repairs to our schools.
- We agreed with the Cabinet Member that the aspiration of a three-year budget settlement for education is important and believe that we must continue to push for this at every opportunity. The benefit to schools (and education more widely) of being able to plan over three years cannot be underestimated.
- We were pleased to hear about the work carried out with and between primary schools, secondary schools and the budget forum following the budget settlement. We felt that schools should be congratulated for their culture of working together not only in this but also in supporting each other to succeed.
- We would like to thank Schools, Governors and the Education Improvement Service for their excellent work over the past year. Particularly how they have been able to grasp the challenges and move forward delivering good quality education here in Swansea.
- We are pleased about the new cycle / walkways that are being developed across Swansea. However, there was concern that it was being proposed to remove free school transport for some pupils because:
 - a. Lighting and safety of walking routes in winter because of our role in safeguarding pupils.

- b. Possible increase in traffic around those schools concerned, as parents may start to drive children to school when school buses are no longer available.
- c. We were concerned that the estimated potential savings from stopping the provision of school buses, in these three areas, has already be taken out of budget.

Child and Family Services

- Panel expressed concern about the risks associated with grants, in particular the increased risk as the Council relies more and more on grant funding.
- Panel was happy with the overall focus in the budget on the priorities of this Council.
- Panel noted the effective reduction of £1.35m of core funding for Poverty and Prevention next financial year (the majority of which is in Children's Services), and an increase of £1.6m in Child and Family Services, which will basically result in an increase of just £0.25m in an overall budget of £42m. This is a very small increase compared to Adult Services and a very small increase relative to the increase in the RSG.

Development and Regeneration

- Panel had concerns about the overall borrowing requirement, as it was not clear how much we are going to borrow. The Panel needs clarity on (i) how much we are going to borrow, (ii) what the costs will be of this borrowing and (iii) how we will fund the additional cost of the borrowing.
- The Panel felt there was no certainty about how much money the Council will be getting in or how much it will have to pay out.
- Panel expressed concern regarding the 15-year draw down of money from the City Deal. The amount of money we will receive from this is very small and does not even cover the interest payments.
- The Panel would like clarity in terms of the £200k costs for our contribution to regional City Deal arrangements. What is this for and over what timescale?
- Panel expressed concern about future pressures resulting from capital finance charges and also use of MRP and capital equalisation reserve to pay for these charges.
- The Panel would like more clarity in what is reported to the Panel on how Development and Regeneration schemes are costed out and what they entail.

Service Improvement and Finance

Medium Term Financial Plan

- We recognise that the Medium Term Financial Plan is a moving feast and reliant on what we get on specific grant uplift. Can we ask that the narrative associated with these be included in the report?
- We would like more clarity on what will be included in the savings proposal relating to increased parking fees.
- We asked you about the line that indicates reductions to the Library Service and possible reduction of opening hours in the longer term. You told us about the move to introduce community hubs across parts of Swansea, which will

include libraries but also other services forming one-stop shops for local people. Can you tell us more about these including the locations and services that they will include and how this will affect library provision across Swansea?

- We heard about efforts to ensure that with the Councils fees and charges we will look for full cost recovery where possible. Can you tell how confident you are that these will be realised?
- We were pleased to hear about the new technologies that are being introduced that will provide more efficient ICT and back office systems.
- We asked about changes to the current collection of nappies. We were pleased to hear that the Welsh Government will be making a proposal in relation to this and other clinical type waste, which will ultimately result in an enhanced service.
- We were also keen to hear about the proposal to develop more cost effective ways of collection and disposal of plastics.

Revenue Budget

- Whilst we have a good explanation of the net budget, it would be advantageous in future to have a summary of expected gross income added to each of the corporate departmental information that is provided.
- We would in the future ask that a glossary of terms be included in with the budget papers to give details of the acronyms used.
- We welcome the creation of a resource to coordinate and progress delivery of all climate emergency and natural environment obligations (including section 6 obligations).
- We asked about the cost to the authority of pupils, including those with Additional Learning Needs, who are placed in Swansea from outside of the County. We wanted to find who pays the bill for those learners, is it the originating Local Authority or us?
- We also want to raise the issue of Houses in Multiple Occupation and the proposals to increase the licencing fee. We discussed the lack of council tax income from HMO properties and how property owners of HMO's are not required to pay business rates. We recognise that we receive an income from Welsh Government based on the Barnett Formula that includes students but we were interested to find out the impact on our budget of the services used by students such as waste collection etc. Can you tell us how much the licence fee will be increased, also, what the deficit to the Council is in relation to loss of council tax and business rates?

I will present these points at the meeting on 20 February 2020.

We would welcome comments on any aspect of this letter but would like answers on the following points:

1. How sure are you that the savings projected in relation to the three new safe walking routes to school will be realised and if they are not, what impact will this have on the overall education budget?

2. Can you provide us with a copy of the consultation for the review of opportunities for outdoor centres?
3. Can you provide clarity on the overall borrowing requirement, (i) How much we are going to borrow? (ii) What the costs will be of this borrowing? And (iii) How we will fund the additional cost of the borrowing?
4. Can you provide clarity on the £200k costs for our contribution to regional City Deal arrangements? What is this for and over what timescale?
5. We would like more clarity on what will be included in the savings proposal relating to increased parking fees.
6. Can you tell us more about the community hubs including the locations and services that they will include, and how these will affect library provision across Swansea?
7. Can you tell us how confident you are that full cost recovery in relation to fees and charges will be realised?
8. Can a summary of the expected gross income be put alongside each of the corporate department figures in future budget papers?
9. Can you provide a glossary of terms with the budget papers in the future that give details of the acronyms used?
10. Can you tell us who pays for those pupils in our schools that are from out of county i.e. is it the originating Local Authority or us?
11. Can you tell us how much the HMO licence fee will increased over the next year and what the deficit to the Council budget might be in relation to loss of council tax and business rates for HMO properties and services used by students?

I would be grateful if you could provide a written response to this letter by 12 March 2020.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 19 February 2020 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
M H Jones
I E Mann

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams
P K Jones
R C Stewart

Councillor(s)

L James
J W Jones
D W W Thomas

Other Attendees

Rob Stewart

Cabinet Member - Economy & Strategy (Leader)

Officer(s)

Jeffrey Dong

Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer.

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): B J Rowlands

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Cllr Chris Holley declared a personal interest in Item 6.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None

3 Letters and Minutes

Letters and notes were received by the Panel.

4 Public Questions

None

5 Scrutiny of the Annual Budget

The Panel completed pre-decision scrutiny on the Annual Budget papers that are due for decision at Cabinet on the 20 February. The Panel thanked the Cllr Rob Stewart the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy (Leader) and Jeff Dong from Finance for attending the Panel and answering questions.

The Panel looked at the:

1. Medium Term Financial Plan
2. Revenue Budget
3. Capital Budget
4. Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Budget
5. Feedback from the other scrutiny panels

6 Summarising Views and Making Recommendations

The following points were highlighted for inclusion in the Conveners letter to Cabinet on the 20 February:

- We recognise that the Medium Term Financial Plan is a moving feast and reliant on what we get on specific grant uplift. Can we ask that the narrative associated with these be included in the report?
- We would like more clarity on what will be included in the savings proposal relating to increased parking fees.
- We asked you about the line that indicates reductions to the Library Service and possible reduction of opening hours in the longer term. You told us about the move to introduce community hubs across parts of Swansea, which will include libraries but also other services forming one-stop shops for local people. Can you tell us more about these including the locations and services that they will include and how this will affect library provision across Swansea?
- We heard about efforts to ensure that with the Councils fees and charges we will look for full cost recovery where possible. Can you tell how confident you are that these will be realised?
- We were pleased to hear about the new technologies that are being introduced that will provide more efficient ICT and back office systems.
- We asked about changes to the current collection of nappies. We were pleased to hear that the Welsh Government will be making a proposal in relation to this and other clinical type waste, which will ultimately result in an enhanced service.
- We were also keen to hear about the proposal to develop more cost effective ways of collection and disposal of plastics.

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- We welcome the creation of a resource to coordinate and progress delivery of all climate emergency and natural environment obligations (including section 6 obligations).
- We asked about the cost to the authority of pupils, including those with Additional Learning Needs, who are placed in Swansea from outside of the County. We wanted to find who pays the bill for those learners, is it the originating Local Authority or us?
- We also want to raise the issue of Houses in Multiple Occupation and the proposals to increase the licencing fee. We discussed the lack of council tax

income from HMO properties and how property owners of HMO's are not required to pay business rates. We recognise that we receive an income from Welsh Government based on the Barnett Formula that includes students but we were interested to find out the impact on our budget of the services used by students such as waste collection etc. Can you tell us how much the licence fee will be increased, also, what the deficit to the Council is in relation to loss of council tax and business rates?

The Panel will request a response to the following points:

1. How sure are you that the savings projected in relation to the three new safe walking routes to school will be realised and if they are not, what impact will this have on the overall education budget?
2. Can you provide us with a copy of the consultation for the review of opportunities for outdoor centres?
3. Can you provide clarity on the overall borrowing requirement, (i) How much we are going to borrow? (ii) What the costs will be of this borrowing? And (iii) How we will fund the additional cost of the borrowing?
4. Can you provide clarity on the £200k costs for our contribution to regional City Deal arrangements? What is this for and over what timescale?
5. We would like more clarity on what will be included in the savings proposal relating to increased parking fees.
6. Can you tell us more about the community hubs including the locations and services that they will include, and how these will affect library provision across Swansea?
7. Can you tell us how confident you are that full cost recovery in relation to fees and charges will be realised?
8. Can a summary of the expected gross income be put alongside each of the corporate department figures in future budget papers?
9. Can you provide a glossary of terms with the budget papers in the future that give details of the acronyms used?
10. Can you tell us who pays for those pupils in our schools that are from out of county i.e. is it the originating Local Authority or us?
11. Can you tell us how much the HMO licence fee will be increased over the next year and what the deficit to the Council budget might be in relation to loss of council tax and business rates for HMO properties and services used by students?

The meeting ended at 11.35 am

Chair

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy & Strategy

Special Cabinet – 20 February 2020

Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2019/2020

Purpose:	To report on financial monitoring of the 2019/20 revenue and capital budgets, including the delivery of budget savings.
Policy Framework:	Budget 2019/20. Transformation and Future Council (Sustainable Swansea –fit for the future)
Consultation:	Cabinet Members, Corporate management Team, Legal Services and Access to Services.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The comments and variations in this report, and the actions in hand to address these, are noted;2) The substantial improvement to date be noted and Directors remaining plans to assure Cabinet that service budgets can be sustainably brought back into line for 2019-20 and beyond continue and are implemented by 1 April 2020, and earlier still wherever possible;3) No officer may consider any material further spending commitments until those savings plans, as referenced in recommendation 2 to address service overspending are fully assured and delivered.
Report Author:	Ben Smith
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Background and Introduction

- 1.1 This report details forecast variations from the agreed budget for 2019/20, including the latest assessment of the delivery of savings.
- 1.2 In respect of Revenue Budgets, this report provides a consolidated forecast which combines:
- projected variations (mainly shortfalls) in relation to budget savings agreed by Council in February 2019
 - Variations arising from other service pressures not directly linked to specific savings plans (e.g. increased service demand, price and pay inflation, increased, but most often unfunded, regulatory obligations and burdens from both UK and Welsh governments)
- 1.3 The report includes comments from Directors in relation to the variations highlighted and the action that is in hand or proposed as appropriate.
- 1.4 The report also includes the latest completed Savings tracker summary in Appendix C that indicates the current overall forecast delivery % of the various savings streams by the services is at 84%. Any shortfalls in achieving savings will be reflected in the table at 2.3 and in Appendix A.

2. Revenue Outturn Forecast Based on 3rd Quarter position

- 2.1 Appendix 'A' to this report details the approved Revenue Budget for 2019/20 and the forecast variation at this time.
- 2.2 Other than projected variations on Directorate expenditure, it is still too early to forecast final variations that may arise on some significant Corporate items, including the level of Council Tax collection (which posted a deficit in 2018-19 of £0.3m though in previous years has returned a modest surplus) – it is assumed at the current time that these remain largely as per the approved budget.
- 2.3 The overall Directorate position is summarised below:-

DIRECTORATE

	FORECAST VARIATION 2019/20 £000	SAVINGS VARIATION 2019/20 £000	OTHER VARIATION 2019/20 £000
RESOURCES	-596	1,757	-2,353
PEOPLE - SOCIAL SERVICES	-99	842	-941
PEOPLE - EDUCATION	1,629	0	1,629
PLACE	-500	731	-1,231
NET DIRECTORATE EXPENDITURE	434	3,330	-2,896

- 2.4 Directors' comments on the above variations are shown at Appendix B:-
- 2.5 Within the *Sustainable Swansea* Delivery Programme, work continues to develop service delivery plans that will include all savings requirements across all strands. This includes the cross cutting nature of new reviews as well as the completion of current in-flight reviews.
- 2.6 Whilst continuing to significantly improve, the above potential service overspend, and more pertinently continued shortfall in original savings plans, remains a risk, albeit a diminishing one, more especially so given the overall position is helped temporarily by some one-off grant funding sources . A number of the overspend areas follow on from the outturn position for 2018/19 and need to be considered in the light of the forecast savings going forward within the 2019/20 budget, Medium Term Financial Plan, and the cumulative effect of non-achievement of savings going forward.
- 2.7 Corporate Management Team has re-enforced the current arrangements for budget monitoring in particular :-
- focus on a range of corrective actions;
 - targeted immediate spend reduction action;
 - spending control on all vacancies and contracts;
 - a continued reminder that **no Responsible Officer is authorised to overspend their budget in line with Financial Procedure Rules;**
 - and consequently that Directors have brought forward to Cabinet and Corporate Management Team detailed and realistic mitigation plans to contain service overspending.
- 2.8 Offsetting opportunities do exist to temporarily ameliorate the currently identified service demand and price pressures as follows.
- £1m was set aside in the budget for the potential costs relating to the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy. The final costs relating to this levy will only be known once final employee related costs are calculated at the year end. Should the full allocation not be required then any saving will be proposed to be used to mitigate service pressures at year end.
 - £2m was also set aside to meet any specific and significant inflationary increases arising in year. A Commercial savings target was held corporately in 2018/19 and initially 2019/20. Any actual contract/procurement savings were delivered within services and not allocated to this central target. For 2019/20 this total has been allocated to services and is funded from the Inflationary provision to avoid double counting against previous contract procurement savings. Given the overall financial projection at this stage it is proposed by the S151 officer that £1.1m is allocated to services to cover commercial pricing pressures as outlined in the 1st Quarter report and the remaining £0.9m be conserved for now as a hedge against potential service over spending with any final underspend being allocated equally to the Capital Equalisation Reserve and Restructure Reserve .

- Use of the Contingency Fund as detailed below.

3. Contingency Fund Provision for 2019/20

3.1 The contingency fund is set at the £7.072m contribution for 2019/20 as set out in the budget report approved by Council in February 2019. This is significantly higher than in recent years reflecting additional mitigation against any repeated overspending.

3.2 The current potential calls on the contingency fund for 2019-20 are:-

Contingency Fund 2018/19	Prediction
	2019/20 (£m)
Budgeted contribution for year.	7.072
One off interim support arrangements for Chief Executive and ongoing regional working.	-0.030
One off support to a range of events celebrating the 50 th anniversary of the granting of city status to Swansea .	-0.158
Support for Swansea Community Awards.	-0.003
Key Cities Subscription.	-0.010
High Street Multi Story Car Park urgent lift works.	-0.135
New Depot : CTU equipment(previous service earmarked reserve fully used in extremis to balance budget 18-19. Anticipated spend now funded in 19-20)	-0.314
Western Powerhouse subscription	-0.020
Community Help Fund	-0.025
Christmas trading City Centre car park support . BID to support in addition.	-0.050
Equalities consultation and co-production support	-0.005
ER/VR in year costs if ultimately exceeding balance on Restructure Reserve of £3m (this is currently not expected to be needed on basis of levels of ER/VRS).	0.000
Section 151 officer proposes to utilise current year underspend on contingency fund by allocating it between Capital Equalisation Reserve and Restructure Reserve	-6.322
Balance 31st March 2020	0

The above table lists current potential calls on the budgeted contingency fund. The final amounts will be dependent on a number of factors during the year including speed of implementation, actual costs/commitments incurred and final Directorate

outturn position. Spend approvals will be deliberately limited to seek to maximise underspend here as part of mitigating budget savings action.

As set out in the 2018-19 Revenue outturn report to members some £3m remained within the Restructure Reserve to contribute toward ER/VR costs in 2019-20. The S151 officer proposes that any such costs over and above this £3m will be funded via the contingency. The final costs of ER/VR will only be known towards the end of the year once all management actions re savings proposals etc are implemented. At this stage it is assumed that all ER/VR costs will be able to be contained within the sum left in the Restructure Reserve.

Based on current forecast the S151 officer proposes to utilise the current year forecast underspend on the Contingency Fund of £6.322m to provide additional funding in the Capital Equalisation Reserve and the Restructure Reserve. This provides further flexibility to manage the large scale capital programme ambition in the short term for the former item and renewal of funding to continue to centrally underwrite staff restructuring costs (early retirements and voluntary redundancies if needed), including those proposed by schools themselves, for the latter item.

However , the S151 officer proposes to reserve his final position on the recommended levels of use of the restructure reserve and contingency fund until the absolute success or otherwise of reducing the forecast overspend is known at year-end.

3.3 The current indication is that, for 2019-20, there still needs to be some further closely targeted mitigating action and delivery of savings proposals if a fully balanced budget for services for the year is to be achieved .

3.4 The action being taken includes working through existing plans on an accelerated delivery basis :

- Management and Business Support Review: ongoing review of the management structure across the Council and future requirements given the Council's priorities, future challenges and the changing nature of the role of managers
- Reducing the Pay Bill: review of options to reduce employee costs across the Council as part of our overall future workforce strategy (subject to trade union consultation at the appropriate time)
- Commercialism through third party Procurement Savings and Income Generation: review of further options to increase income from fees and charges, trading etc, in addition to the targets already set for 2019/20
- Progressing implementation of Commissioning Reviews and Cross Cutting Themes.
- Further implementation of the Social Services Saving Plan through which we have identified mechanisms for bringing down overall costs.
- Continuing the extant spending restrictions which have been reviewed, refreshed and reissued by Corporate Management Team.
- Directors detailed action plans which are summarised in their commentary in Appendix B.

3.5 It should be noted that at this time, although the Council continues to pursue a number of VAT related claims, some are more advanced than others, there is NO certainty of windfalls from VAT refunds or any other external source being received in the current year.

4. Revenue Budget Summary

4.1 The position reported above reflects the best known current position. A net £0.434m of shortfall in service revenue budgets, offset wholly by £0.434m of identified additional savings from the non-allocation of the Inflation provision. This is materially better than the equivalent 3rd Quarter report for 2018-19.

4.2 Corporate Management Team have reinforced the expectation that both service and overall net expenditure **must** be contained within the relevant limits of the current year budget as set by Council.

4.3 As previously mentioned, it is too early to provide an accurate forecast as to the potential outturn on corporate items such as Council Tax collection which is in itself potentially affected by the effects of welfare reform measures, but offset by an often increasing tax base.

4.4 Included in the projected budget for 2019/20 for other corporate items are capital finance charges. At this early stage no variance is forecast, in any case any underspending or overspending will be transferred at year end to or from the capital equalisation reserve, a strategy previously agreed by Council. This will be reviewed and updated during the year as various capital schemes/programmes progress.

4.5 The overall judgement at this point is that there remains some residual need to identify and implement all existing budget savings across all Council Services to improve the 2019/20 position and beyond.

4.6 There remains a degree of confidence that some further inroads can continue to be made into the forecast overspend position by ongoing management and member action/mitigation.

4.7 There continue to be risks around general inflationary pay and price pressures in the forthcoming year including significant increases to the National Living Wage from April 2020 which will significantly impact contractors to the Council in some service areas. It may also put further pressure on the lower end of the current local government pay spine. Whilst entirely welcomed from a policy perspective, nevertheless the Council simply cannot afford to fund them in isolation, unless additional support is forthcoming from the UK and Welsh Governments, otherwise savings will have to be made elsewhere to meet such pressures.

4.8 Detailed monitoring of budgets will continue to be carried out and reported to Departmental Performance and Financial Management meetings on a monthly basis.

4.9 The Section 151 Officer has previously considered professional advice given as to funding levels within the Insurance Reserve and notwithstanding the ongoing modest draws from the reserve over the duration of the MTFP to help support the

revenue budget, he is satisfied there is at least a further £2.648m of headroom (over funding) beyond that reasonably likely needed to meet future claims. This enabled a previous transfer to be made between earmarked reserves and bolster the capital equalisation reserve yet further in anticipation of the substantial future capital spending which remains to be predominantly financed from unsupported borrowing. This transfer was approved by Council on the 24th October 2019 in the annual Review of Revenue Reserves report.

- 4.10 It remains imperative that sustainable base budget savings are found to replace in year one off actions to stabilise the 19-20 budget ahead of the finalisation of the 2020-21 budget round.

5. Capital Budget

- 5.1 Expenditure to 31st December 2019 is £86.448 million, summarised as follows:

Directorate	Budget 2019/20	Actual to 31/12/19	% spend
	£'000	£'000	
Corporate Services	3,299	1,289	39.1%
People	16,852	6,703	39.8%
Place (General Fund)	94,586	44,387	46.9%
Place (HRA)	60,746	34,069	56.1%
Total	175,483	86,448	49.3%

- 5.2 Expenditure on major capital schemes is detailed in Appendix D.

- 5.3 It should be noted that the actual spend to 31 December may only have 7 or 8 months costs relating to external invoices. The capital budgets were reviewed during October which resulted in some budgets being re-profiled into later years. Nevertheless it remains highly likely that some capital expenditure slippage will occur and this will help reduce the in-year revenue costs of capital financing.

6. Housing Revenue Account

- 6.1 The current repairs forecast is £100k underspent, which is mainly due to lower than forecast spend on responsive repairs; which is partly offset by some additional electrical maintenance costs. In addition to this, there is £150k income from technical design fees and an underspend on employee costs of £160k due to higher than anticipated vacancies. As it stands, the slippage on the Capital programme will lead to a reduction in capital finance costs, and we are forecasting this to be in the region of £1m. There are no other material budget issues to flag at this stage.

7. Legal Issues

- 7.1 There are no legal issues contained within this report.

8. Equality and Engagement Implications

8.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

8.2 The Revenue budget of the Council was approved following the application of the corporate Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process throughout the Budget setting process. It is essential where service levels are affected by changes to the Revenue Budgets (including savings options) that the EIA process (alongside consultation and engagement as appropriate) is applied to ensure due regard is paid to the potential equality impacts of any proposals prior to decision making.

Background papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Revenue Budget forecast 2019/20

Appendix B – Directors comments on variances and action plans

Appendix C – Savings tracker summary

Appendix D – Expenditure on major Capital Schemes

REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTION QUARTER 3 2019/20

<u>DIRECTORATE</u>	BUDGET 2019/20 £000	PROJECTED 2019/20 £000	VARIATION 2019/20 £000
RESOURCES	46,291	45,695	-596
PEOPLE - SOCIAL SERVICES	120,750	120,651	-99
PEOPLE – EDUCATION	170,600	172,229	1,629
PLACE	56,769	56,269	-500
<i>NET DIRECTORATE EXPENDITURE</i>	394,410	394,844	434
SPECIFIC PROVISION FOR APPRENTICESHIP LEVY/INFLATION	1,850	1,416	-434
CONTINGENCY FUND	6,322	6,322	0
<i>OTHER ITEMS</i>			
LEVIES			
SWANSEA BAY PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY	86	86	0
CONTRIBUTIONS			
MID & WEST WALES COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY	12,971	12,971	0
<i>CAPITAL FINANCING CHARGES</i>			
PRINCIPAL REPAYMENTS	14,478	14,478	0
NET INTEREST CHARGES	18,119	18,119	0
<i>NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE</i>	448,236	448,236	0
<i>MOVEMENT IN RESERVES</i>			
GENERAL RESERVES	0	0	0
EARMARKED RESERVES	-5,310	-5,310	0
<i>TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT</i>	442,926	442,926	0
DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF	400	400	0
<i>TOTAL CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA REQUIREMENT</i>	443,326	443,326	0
COMMUNITY COUNCIL PRECEPTS	1,465	1,465	0
<i>TOTAL REQUIREMENT</i>	444,791	444,791	0
<i>FINANCING OF TOTAL REQUIREMENT</i>			
REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	242,197	242,197	0
NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES	80,014	80,014	0
COUNCIL TAX - CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA	121,115	121,115	0
COUNCIL TAX - COMMUNITY COUNCILS	1,465	1,465	0
<i>TOTAL FINANCING</i>	444,791	444,791	0

Director's comments on budget variances

Director of Resources

The directorate is undergoing a substantial realignment of all service budgets to address historic cumulative variances and this will see the undelivered historic items fully removed by 1 April 2020. For completeness the full range of variations, in year management one off and permanent actions and new year planned base budget proposals to mitigate those historic shortfalls will be reported for the remainder of 2019-20.

Variance	£000	Explanation and Action
<u>Savings Variation</u>		
18/19 Sustainable Swansea Savings targets:		
Management review of grade 10 and above	113	These three areas form part of Corporate Services proposals to merge and review cross-cutting functions across the Council related to Business Support functions, exploring new ways working including regional collaboration where possible. Limited opportunities are available regarding shared services and the regional working options are very slow in progressing, with little if any appetite across other organisations. Further Proposals and plans are now in place to achieve this saving by 1 st April 2020.
Service review/regional working/shared services	239	
Stopping or reducing services through new ways of working	597	
Merging of Land Charges with Planning and Building Control as per the Commissioning Review	25	The team has successfully merged with Planning and savings achieved in the Place Directorate. It was planned that new ways of working would release this £25k in legal, however, this is no longer possible.
Establishing Business Support hubs in the People and Place Directorates	-79	An additional saving achieved as a result of implementing the 'One Council' approach to Business Support.
19/20 balance	-125	Additional savings as a result of vacancy freeze and delay in appointing staff.
16/17 & 17/18 saving targets	531	Alternative proposals are now in place to deliver this by 1 st April 2020
Sub total	1,301	

Other saving targets:		
Transfer and review of the Welsh Translation Unit, including cost and charges	150	The Welsh Translation Unit is reviewing ways of working however, the demand for Welsh translation continues to increase. In order for the Council to meet its statutory responsibilities and statutory deadlines. New proposals are in discussion related to this saving.
16/17 Communications model & Corporate Health & Safety/Wellbeing	306	This saving is challenging with the identified model of merging the marketing and communications from across the council into one team not able to progress. In addition, the increase in demand in the referrals to occupational health has not enabled the growth of this area to become income generating due to all spare capacity being used internally. Alternative proposals are now in place to achieve the saving by 1 st April 2020.
Total Savings variation	1,757	
Other Net Underspends	-2,353	Mainly as a result of Legal Services underspends of £-688k due to staff savings of £-427k and income from the Liberty Stadium court case £-130k, Financial Services underspends due to CTRS forecasted underspend of £-450k, however, this dependant on caseloads & net staff savings of £-503k, Digital and Transformation staff savings of £-400k and potential IT contract cost savings of £-295k due to Oracle support and maintenance contract which has been negotiated as part of the Oracle Cloud implementation, training of support team on new contact centre technology and other contract costs, however, these are subject to confirmation.
Total Variation	-596	

Corporate Services underwent significant change in 2017/18 which followed into 2018/19, in order to realise savings and rebalance the budget.

The Directorate has proactively and strictly managed spending throughout the year, and as a base budget has performed well. The legacy savings from the previous years have affected the budget and these have been offset by underspends on service areas mainly as a result staff savings through managing vacant posts and from a one off income item in relation to the Liberty Stadium court case and Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)

underspend, which is dependent on caseloads. This has resulted in an overall Directorate variance of £-596k.

Detailed plans and proposals are now in place to deliver alternative savings to the above variances. The full year effect of those savings will not be felt until 1st April, but as a result of reflecting these savings against in-year budgets for some services this has created a new overspend position, even though the Directorate as a whole is underspending in-year. Individual service overspends have occurred where they have adopted a new unplanned saving mid-year which will not materialise until 2020/21. This is not without difficulty in some areas where vacant posts have been left unfilled and ultimately deleted in the savings proposals. This continues to create pressure across Resources and work has been prioritised accordingly.

Action Plans for Resources include:

- Releasing of vacancies in each service
- Ensuring all legacy savings are achieved, which were previously allocated to services
- Service budget reviews to release additional savings, reviewing the risk across the Council including impact on other Directorates.
- A range of other measures are being considered as part of in year and annual budget savings considerations , these include.
 - Review of the CTRS which is a demand-led service
 - Reductions in corporate services.
- Bringing forward savings as a result of digital wherever possible
- Reducing and stopping fees and subsidies wherever possible.

Director of Social Services

Social Services

Variance	£000	Explanation and Action
Savings Variation		
Implement preferred options as outcome of Commissioning Review (Learning Disability, Physical Disability & Mental Health service provision)	500	This project continues with dedicated resource and senior management input. Initial retendering exercise underway. The continued effect of increases to minimum wage and the need to diversify the supplier base will cause costs to increase.
Review of CHC Arrangements/LD MH Right Sizing and Review	248	This scheme has had success in obtaining external funding for appropriate placements. This work will continue.
Review all packages of care to ensure fit for purpose and effectively manage new admissions to domiciliary care.	140	Domiciliary care continues to be subject to significant demand pressures. Rightsizing work is therefore likely to release capacity rather than reduce spend.
Direct Payments Strategy - Targeted increase in recourse to direct payments as alternative to non-complex	100	Savings in this area continue through reviews of allowances paid and, where appropriate, the reclaim of unused balances.

Variance	£000	Explanation and Action
domiciliary care packages		
Income Targets	-500	Targets are expected to be exceeded in this area due to significant deferred payment receipts as well as funding transfers received in respect of legislative changes.
Maximise Income Opportunities in Outdoor Centres	25	Staffing changes have taken place in the centres, however there is an expected overspend in this area.
Creation of a single family support function across Poverty & Prevention and CFS	50	This target is 87% achieved. Unachieved savings are primarily a consequence of the Youth Offending Service's disaggregation from regional arrangements.
Increase income from training delivered	10	This saving target is dependent on income that will not be realised until later in the year.
Realignment of employability service to maximise efficiency of grant and management.	100	This saving is currently 50% achieved. An Employability Commissioning Review is underway to identify further opportunities to offset core funds to achieve this target in 19/20 and beyond.
Direct licensing model with Duke of Edinburgh Wales in line with other authorities.	20	The model is dependent on income generated to make savings and cover costs. As the area is expected to overspend, this saving target is unachieved.
Transfer Client Income and Finance from Social Services to Corporate Centre and make efficiencies in the process.	17	This saving has been largely achieved through increased income. It remains possible that this saving will be achieved.
Cross Cutting Savings	132	Cross cutting savings arising from a combination of proposed changes to terms and conditions are unlikely to be achieved.
Other		
Independent Child and Family Placements	1,360	This budget is subject to both fee and demand pressures, with a number of high cost placement in Q3.
Adoption Fees	200	The council contributes towards a regional adoption service where costs are shared between partners dependent on placement activity. This forecast corresponds with the latest placement information.
External Residential Care	-324	Tight management of costs and increased income mean than business as usual underspends are predicted in these areas.
External Domiciliary Care	-193	

Variance	£000	Explanation and Action
Internal Staffing and Services	-3,219	A number of grants have been received that are able to support the overall financial position. Work to ensure services are designed in a way that enables the Council to access all funding sources continues and will cause significant underspends to appear in this financial year.
Third Party Spend	-265	The Directorate continues to maintain tight vacancy and cost management approaches.
MHLD Complex Care	1,500	This remains an area of significant pressure. Additional budget has been allocated but is being outstripped by pressures on demand and fees.
Overall Variation	-99	

Director's Comments

For the first time in some years, we are predicting an overall underspend at the third quarter. This is largely driven by increased income, both client and grant. Work is underway to mitigate the time limited nature of the grants and to manage the challenge provided by increasing demand for services.

The Directors action plan as outlined in the Quarter 2 report for Social Services to mitigate the previous overspend forecast included:

In order to address the £1m gap, an in year review of gross expenditure across the Directorate compared to last financial year is being undertaken. For any increases above 2% wage inflation, remedial action will be taken to bring increased spend back below 2% by year end.

In addition to the above, a vacancy freeze will be implemented across the Directorate for any posts which do not give rise to either a safeguarding or business continuity risk.

Finally WG have announced a further tranche of regional grants to address Winter pressures and the local authority will seek to draw down further funding to accelerate transformational activity this financial year.

Director of Education

Variance	£000	Explanation and Action
Home to School Transport	545	Inflationary fuel price pressures and continuing demand, particularly within the ALN and post 16 sector continue to increase costs. These demand and price pressures are inherently volatile and uncontrollable within current transport policy.
Catering and Cleaning	786	The service continues to be subject to substantial inflationary pressures on the

		cost of food and staff. This has been partially offset by a combination of management cost control and positive take up of paid meals. Further means of reducing net cost are being examined.
Additional Learning Needs	600	This forecast primarily concerns the cost of placements within Independent Special Schools. The Council continues to see both cost and demand pressures in this area, despite continued efforts to increase the supply of such places locally.
Centrally funded non-delegated pressures.	679	This overspend is primarily attributable to ongoing historic pension costs borne by the Council on behalf of Schools. It also includes increases in the cost of maternity/paternity leave.
Potential one-off managed savings	-981	All savings opportunities are being explored to alleviate the pressures above.
Overall Variation	1,629	

Many of the pay, price and demand pressures identified above are a continuation of the overspend position from 2018/19. Ongoing robust management action will continue.

The Directors action plan outlined in the Quarter 2 report for Education to mitigate the forecast overspend at that stage included :

The scale of external demand and cost pressures facing education services is such that no continuing robust management action will be able to bring the net spending across the directorate into balance within the 2019-20 financial year. By far the most significant area of education spending is the delegated schools budget and whilst this cannot be reduced in year it would be possible to effectively 'top slice' the budget in 2020-21, as a one off base adjustment, to effectively recover any net overspend by the year end on the 1st April 2020. Any such retrospective 'top slicing' would be in addition to any cash or real terms reductions in funding for schools approved as part of the Council budget for 2020-21.

However, to mitigate and minimise any potential reduction to schools delegated budgets all LEA budgets will be reviewed further in the first instance.

Director of Place

A number of issues need to be highlighted for the purpose of visibility. These include unfunded budget pressures as follows:

- Significant increased electricity costs for street lighting of £200k
- Reduced recycling prices in waste management reflecting an income shortfall of £222k
- Increased costs for maintaining and replacing aging social services fleet £381k

In year savings of £731k have been identified as difficult to achieve by year end and these comprise mainly of Commissioning Review (Service in the Community), IT delays for rollout of mobile working and delayed and “cashable” Integrated Transport Unit savings and transport savings removed budget but authorisation to implement withdrawn

In addition there are some challenges in achieving all of the “cross cutting” saving requiring policy changes identified for 19/20 in particular

- Staff – Christmas closure, average holiday pay, 50% Honoraria reduction, 50% market supplement reduction and remove first aid payments (total £118k)

The directorate has identified appropriate mitigation to offset these spending pressures within its overall budget to enable it to offset these costs and return a balanced budget and has looked to accelerate other in year measures and income generation which will allow it to improve on its projected out-turn by declaring a forecast underspend of £500k.

November 2019 MTFP Tracker Report

Target Savings

£12.64m

Expected Savings by 31st March 2020

£10.60m 

Oct: £10.17m

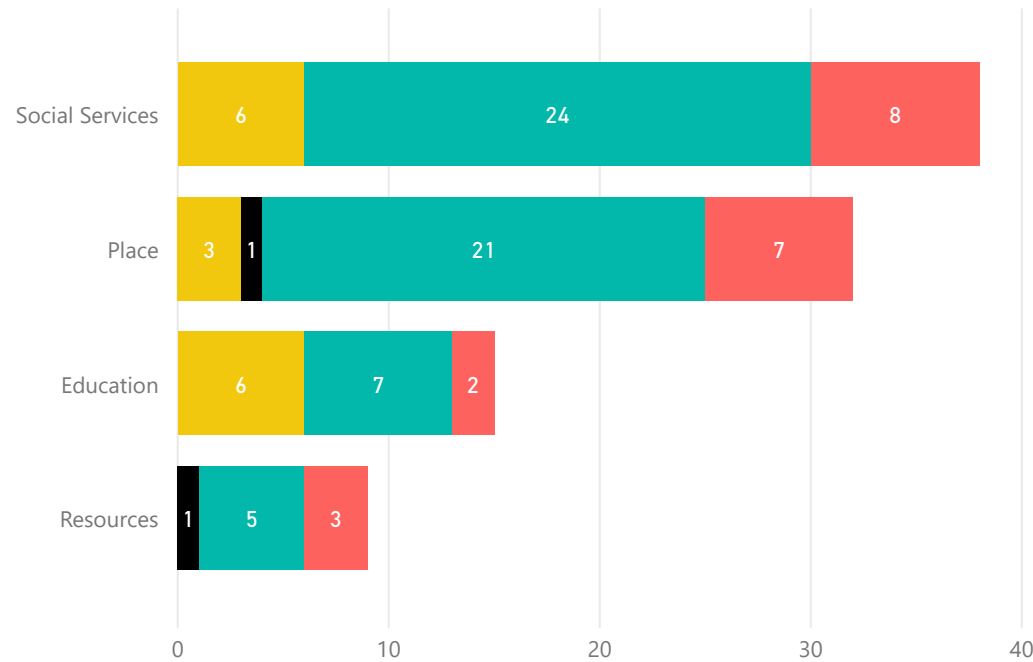
Delivered

£7.85m

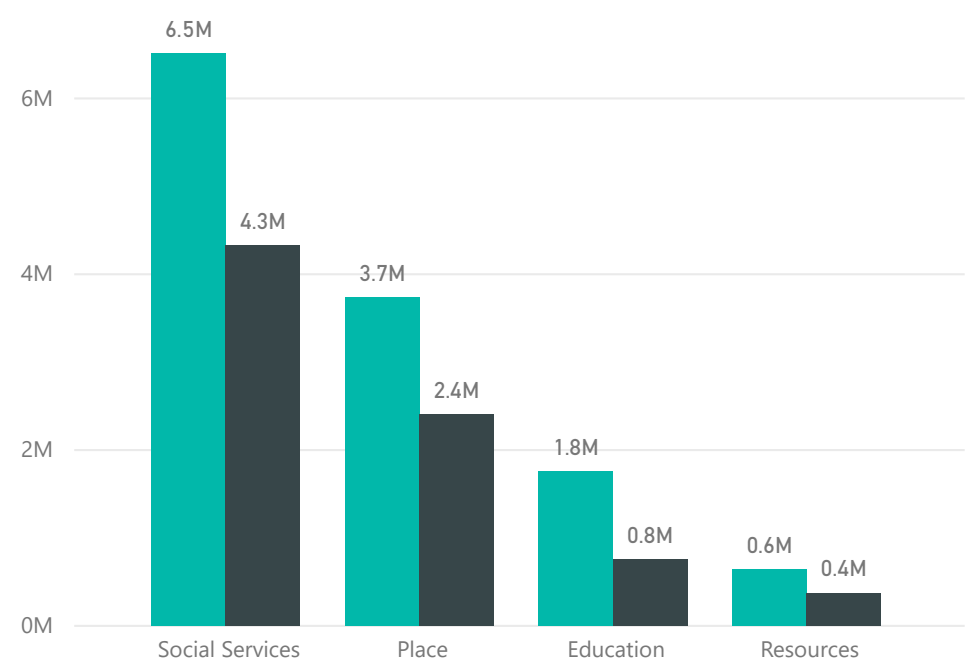
Oct: £6.84m

Sept: £6.30m

Nov BRAG  Amber  Black  Green  Red

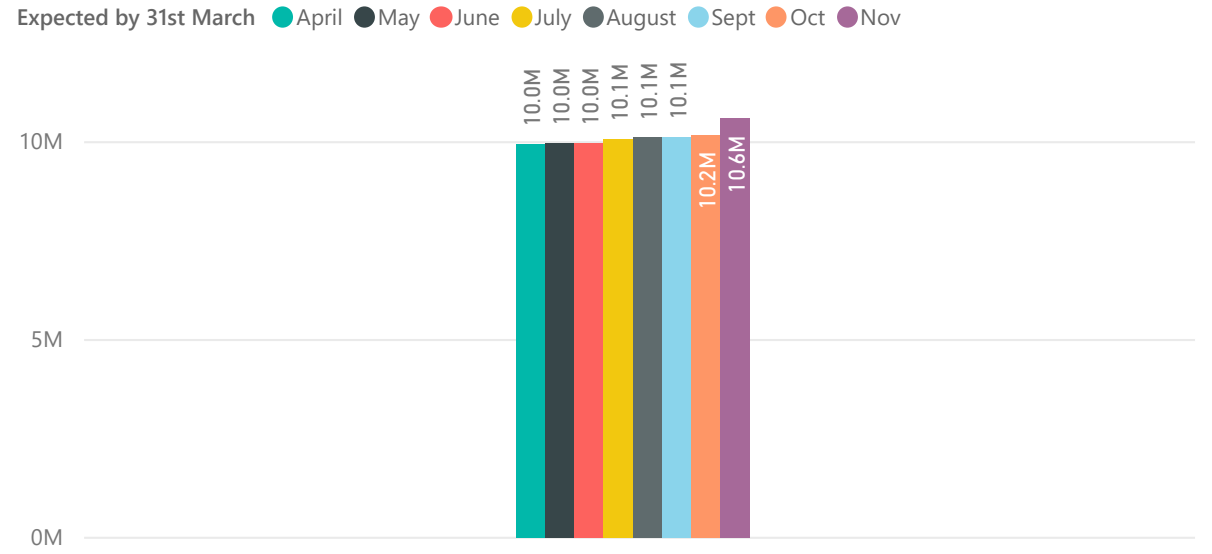
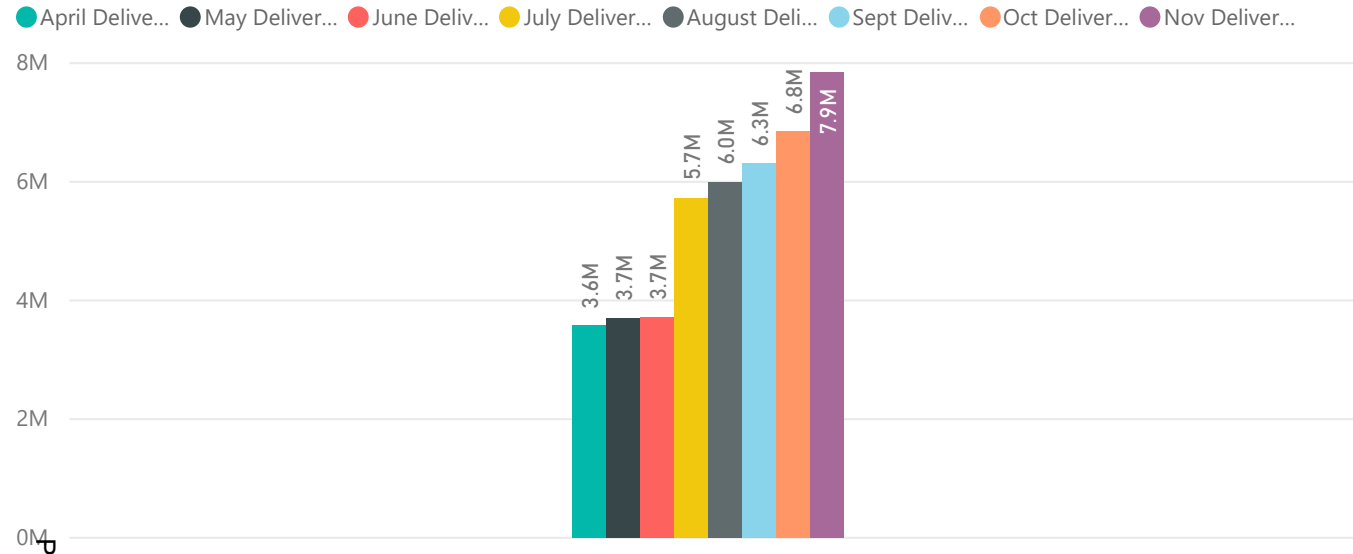


 Target (£)  Nov Delivered

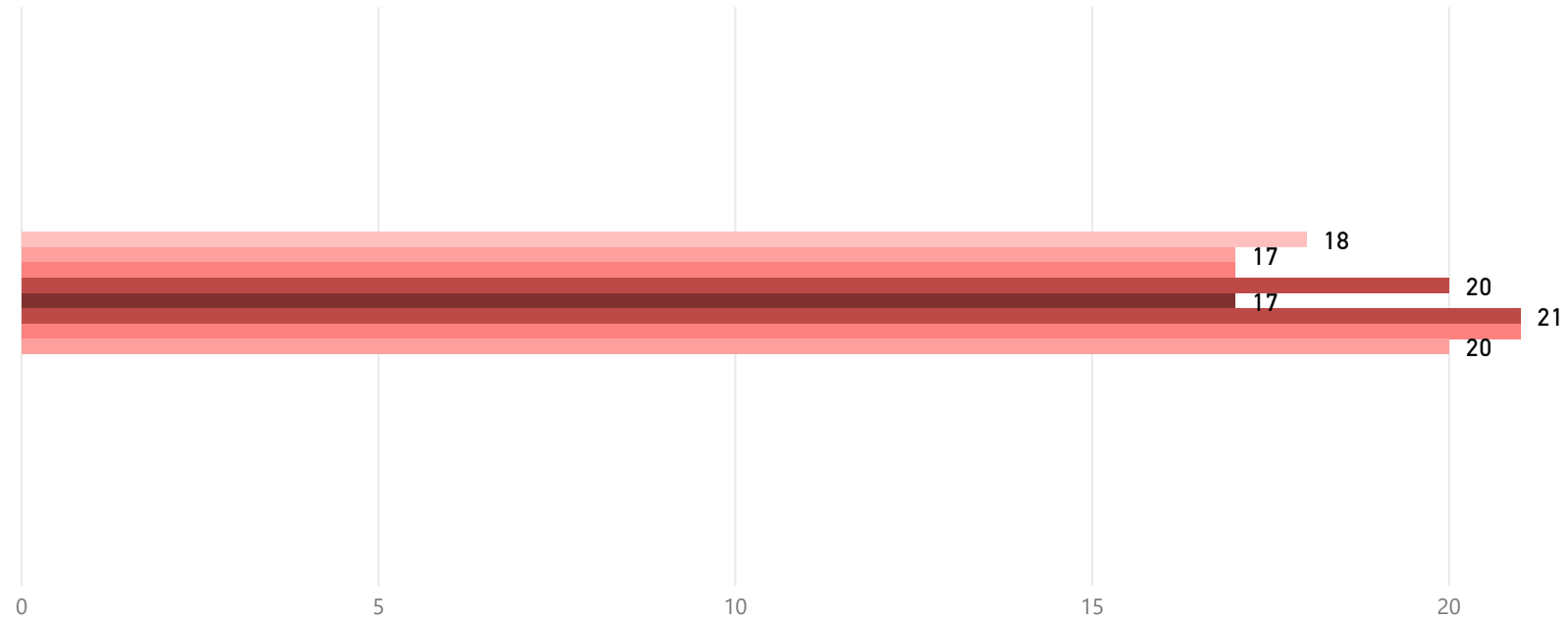




Delivered to Date



Red BRAG Count of April ... Count of Ma... Count of June ... Count of Jul... Count of Au... Count of Se... Count of Oct ... Count of No...



Appendix D

Capital expenditure on major schemes to 31 December 2019 (where spend greater than £250k)	£000's
People	
Pentrehafod Comp School Remodelling	538
EOTAS new build	2,077
Gorseinon primary new build	2,110
Bishop Vaughan VA School	289
St Joseph's VA School	290
Resources	
Agile & Mobile programme (laptops and accessories)	1,129
Place	
Swansea Central Phase 1 (Arena)	20,705
Swansea Central Phase 2 (Kingsway offices)	494
Llys Dewi Sant site	381
Kingsway infrastructure and demolition	2,116
Highways - carriageways & resurfacing	2,893
Highways - footways	441
Highways - bridges and retaining walls	335
Highways Patch resurfacing	612
Highways Active Travel Fund schemes	512
Bascule Bridge	433
Seawall repairs Mumbles	303
CTU - chassis cabs and bodies	427
Corporate Building (including school improvements)	4,825
Disability Facilities Grants	2,428
Mini adaptation grants	464
Property Appreciation loans	257
Sandfields Renewal Area	323
Freedom Leisure improvements	3,008
Plantasia improvements	299
HRA	
HRA capital programme (excluding More Homes schemes)	32,215
HRA capital programme - More Homes schemes	1,854

Total scheme value where spend greater than £250k

81,758

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Cabinet Member for Delivery & Performance

Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Panel 2nd March 2020

Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2018-2019

Purpose:	<p>To report on the number, nature and outcome of complaints made against the Authority, together with details of lessons learned and service improvements.</p> <p>The following reports have been prepared separately in conjunction with this report, and are appended for information purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Social Services Complaints;• Child and Family Services Complaints;• Freedom of Information Act (FOI);• Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA).
Policy Framework:	None
Consultation:	Access to Services, Legal and Finance
Report Author:	Julie Nicholas-Humphreys
Finance Officer:	Janet Morgan
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Swansea Council is a large organisation providing a variety of services and whilst every effort is made to carry out these services accurately and professionally, complaints are made for a number of reasons.
- 1.2 Members of the public complain for various reasons, such as lack of action/consultation, delay, staff attitude etc. Customers wishing to voice their

dissatisfaction or concerns are dealt with open-mindedly and impartially by the Complaints Team.

- 1.3 The Council recognises that in order to meet the needs and concerns of members of the public, the monitoring of complaints is a valuable resource in its requirement to continually improve services. All complaints are taken very seriously and the Corporate Management Team receives monthly updates on complaints received, providing valuable customer insight. **Appendix 1** contains all statistical tables referred to in this report.

2. Requests for Service (RFS)

- 2.1 A request for service is not a complaint (e.g. a request for service could be a request to repair an unlit lamp post or missed bin collection). A complaint would only arise should the request for service not be properly dealt with.

3. The Corporate Complaints Process

- 3.1 The current Corporate Complaints Policy was adopted on 01/04/2013 in line with the Welsh Government Model Complaints Policy issued in 2011 and the process can be viewed by visiting:
<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/7326/Corporate-complaints-procedure>

3.2 Stage 1 Complaints

- 3.2.1 The majority of Stage 1 complaints are dealt with by the relevant service areas. When a complaint spans several different service areas, the complaints team will coordinate the handling of the complaints and provide a single, substantive response. All stage 1 complaints should be responded to within 10 working days.
- 3.2.2 **1676** Stage 1 complaints were received (see Appendix 1) 46% were Not Justified and 38% were found to be either fully or partly justified, with the remaining either withdrawn, outcome unspecified or no response required. When service delivery is below the level we would normally expect, steps are taken wherever possible to learn from mistakes in order to improve future service delivery.
- 3.2.3 0.7% of the complaints received were made through the medium of Welsh, or related to Welsh Language issues. In accordance with legislative requirements this information is reported to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

3.3 Stage 2 Complaints

- 3.3.1 If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a Stage 1 complaint, they may request that the matter be investigated by the Complaints Team, which is independent of the service department.
- 3.3.2 The Complaints Team will carry out an investigation, re-examining those issues with which the complainant remains aggrieved. This investigation will include a review of all relevant correspondence, often incorporates separate discussions

with both the complainant and relevant officers from the service department(s) concerned and should be responded to within 20 working days.

3.3.3 Complainants who remain unhappy with the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation by a Complaints Officer can refer their complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

3.3.4 Of the 1676 Stage 1 Complaints received only 153 disagreed with the original investigation and appealed to Stage 2. 86% (131) were not justified and 14% (22) were either justified or partially justified.

4. Social Services Complaints

4.1 The handling of the majority of Social Services complaints is carried out under specific legislation and the Authority has a separate policy for such complaints, see <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/6520/Making-a-Comment-Complaint-or-Compliment-about-Swansea-Social-Services>

Full details of Social Services Complaints can be seen in **Appendix 2** (Adults) and **Appendix 3** (Childrens)

4.2 In some cases, complainants are not eligible to make complaints under the Social Services complaints procedure. In these cases their complaints are handled under the corporate procedure and as such they are included in this report.

5. Corporate Complaints Received

5.1 Appendix 1 (Table 1) shows details of complaints received at stages 1 & 2 during 2018-19.

5.2 The “Comments” section relates to cases where an individual has made a comment regarding a service as opposed to a complaint, which is then passed on to the relevant service unit for information. These comments may be negative or positive.

5.3 Although Complaints have increased (see Appendix 1, Table 2) requests for Service and Comments have decreased, indicating that Customers are using the correct form of contact according to their need.

6. Cases reported to the Ombudsman

6.1 Should a complainant remain dissatisfied following completion of the two internal complaint stages, they can take their complaint to the Ombudsman’s office for independent investigation.

6.2 The Ombudsman will usually check with the Authority whether or not the complaint has been through Stages 1 & 2 of the Authority’s complaints procedure. Where this has not been done, the Ombudsman will usually refer the complaint back to the Authority, to give an opportunity to attempt to resolve the complainant’s concerns through our internal complaints processes first.

6.3 The Ombudsman publishes an Annual Report and sends an annual letter to the Authority every year and full details of his report and letter for Swansea Council for 2018/19 can be viewed online at:
<https://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/en/publications/Annual-reports.aspx>
and <https://www.ombudsman.wales/annual-letters-2018-2019/> (see Appendix 6)

6.4 In summary, there have been a total of **83** complaints to the Ombudsman (there were 62 cases in 2017/18). However, of the total complaints received by the Ombudsman this year **only 1 was upheld**, 1 was not upheld, 9 were resolved by quick fix/voluntary settlement and all the others were either out of their jurisdiction, premature, or closed after initial consideration. There were no s16 Public Interest Reports during this year.

7. Service improvements introduced following complaint investigations

7.1 Lessons can usually be learned from complaints received where complaints are upheld. Redress measures have included the issuing of apologies, small compensation payments, additional training for staff and the introduction of new procedures.

7.2 The Complaints Service receives an Internal Audit every three years to ensure its undertaking its functions correctly.

8. Compliments

8.1 When compliments are received they are acknowledged and forwarded to the Head of Service for the relevant service area. A selection are highlighted for the staff newsletter, The Weekly. This has a positive impact on staff morale and allows departments to recognise good practices. Examples of the many compliments received are shown in Appendix 1 (Table 3).

9 Subject Access Requests

9.1 A Subject Access Request is a request made by an individual under the Data Protection Act for personal data held on them. A total of **135** Subject Access requests were received this year, (which is higher by 83 on the previous year) and it is highly likely that since the £10 fee has been removed and the promotion and understanding of GDPR, that this will be an area that will increase on an annual basis.

9.2 Detailed analysis of both FOI & Subject Access requests can be found in the Freedom of Information Annual Report 2018-2019 (**Appendix 4**)

10. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act

10.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 allows local authorities to conduct covert surveillance activity where it is required for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder. This is now subject to Magistrates Court approval.

10.2 Analysis of RIPA activity this year can be obtained in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Annual Report 2018-2019 (**Appendix 5**)

11. Conclusion

11.1 Whilst the resource levels are reducing, the demand continues to grow year on year across the service, it is worth noting, based on the statistical evidence provided, that there are no trends to cause concern.

12. Equality and Engagement Implications

12.1 The Authority reports to the Welsh Language Commissioner on the number of complaints received concerning compliance with Welsh language legislation and those made through the medium of Welsh. This year, just under 0.4% of all complaints fell into this category.

13. Financial Implications

13.1 All costs incurred in dealing with complaints have to be covered from within existing budgets.

14. Legal Implications

14.1 None.

Background papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Corporate Complaints 2018/19 - statistical data

Appendix 2 - Adult Services Complaints Annual Report 2018/19;

Appendix 3 - Children's Services Complaints Annual Report 2018/19;

Appendix 4 - Freedom of Information Act (FOI) Annual Report 2018/19;

Appendix 5 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Annual Report 2018/19.

Appendix 6 - PSOW Annual Letter 2018/19

TABLE 1: Complaints recorded from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 by Service Department

Service Area	Stage 1 Complaints 2018/19	Stage 1 Complaints 2017/18	Stage 2 Complaints 2018/19	Stage 2 Complaints 2017/18	Requests for Service 2018/19	Request for Service 2017/18	Comments 2018/19	Comments 2017/18
Commercial Services	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Communications & Customer Engagement	63	43	2	3	7	2	3	9
Corporate Building & Property Services	139	105	7	9	61	56	6	7
Cultural Services	73	48	4	7	35	46	9	23
Economic Regeneration & Planning	84	66	17	13	14	23	5	5
Education	19	20	4	1	9	3	1	3
Financial Services	62	57	5	7	73	95	4	2
Highways & Transportation	301	279	47	17	144	244	22	34
Housing & Public Protection	242	213	48	29	186	187	8	9
HR & OD	11	9	0	0	4	8	4	1
Information & Business Change	5	1	0	1	2	2	0	4
Legal & Democratic Services	12	7	0	2	7	7	0	4

Poverty, Wellbeing & Communities	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Services Corporate	52	48	In SS figures	1	46	47	0	3
Waste Management & Parks	611	639	19	10	187	349	21	49
Totals	1676	1538	153	95	776	1069	83	153

TABLE 2: Comparison of total enquiries received with the Previous Year

	1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	Difference (+ or -)
Stage 1	1538	1676	+138
Stage 2	95	153	+58
Requests for Service	1069	776	-293
Comments	153	83	-70
Total	2885	2688	-197

**Adult Services Complaints
Annual Report 2018-2019**

Purpose:	To report on the operation of the Complaints Team in relation to Adult Services for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.
Report Author:	Julie Nicholas-Humphreys
Finance Officer:	Janet Morgan
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Swansea Council's Social Services Complaints Procedure seeks to empower service users or those eligible to speak on their behalf to voice their concerns in relation to the exercise of Social Services functions.
- 1.2 With effect from 1 August 2014 revised legislation came into effect, bringing the Social Services complaints procedure into line with other complaints procedures across public services, in particular the process for NHS '*Putting Things Right*'. The Social Services Complaints Policy reflects the requirements of the new legislation and full details of the new policy can be viewed online at: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/6520/Making-a-Comment-Complaint-or-Compliment-about-Swansea-Social-Services> . The legislation requires the reporting of additional information which has been incorporated into this report.
- 1.3 SC Adult Services are committed to ensuring that concerns raised are listened to and resolved quickly and efficiently. Lessons learned from this process are fed back to relevant teams and used wherever possible to improve future service delivery.

- 1.4 Our aim is to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity and teams are encouraged to be proactive in achieving this goal.
- 1.5 Where someone has been deemed 'not eligible' to utilise the social services complaint procedure in accordance with guidance/legislation, their complaints may be dealt with under the corporate complaint procedure. This ensures that everyone is able to voice their concerns and that a complaints mechanism is accessible to everyone.
- 1.6 Appendix 1 contains all tables referred to in this report.

2. Total Complaints received during the reporting period

- 2.1 **Table 1** shows this year's total complaints received by the Complaint Team in respect of Adult Social Services with the previous two years' figures for comparison. The total number of Stage 1 complaints received this year has increased by in comparison with figures for the previous year.
- 2.3 Under the Social Services complaints policy, both the old and new legislative framework allow complainants to immediately request a stage 2 investigation. Through efforts to resolve complaints internally wherever possible, the number of stage 2 complaints this year has decreased to four.

3. Analysis of Stage 1 Complaints

- 3.1. A detailed breakdown of the Stage 1 Complaints received by Service Area is shown in **Table 2**. Complaints need to be acknowledged within 2 working days, and in **91%** of cases where complaints proceeded to conclusion, discussions took place within 10 working days, this was slightly down on the previous year at **94%**.
- 3.2 Complaints have been broken down by individual service team this year, in order to provide greater clarity on specific areas where complaints are being received. This will help with the identification of systemic issues and trends which can then be scrutinised more closely within those teams affected.

4. Stage 2 Complaints

- 4.1 Complaints are considered at Stage 2 of the complaints procedure either where we have not been able to resolve the issues to the complainant's satisfaction at stage 1, or the complainant has requested that the matter be immediately considered at Stage 2.
- 4.2 Both the old and new social services complaint regulations give an eligible complainant a statutory right to request Stage 2 of the process. Complainants are able to request that their complaint is dealt with directly at Stage 2 should they wish, and is not dependent on having been investigated at stage 1 or the outcome at stage 1.

- 4.3 An independent person is commissioned for a Stage 2 investigation. A formal report is produced which presents the facts and considers the feelings around the difficulties to suggest ways to move forward. Resolution and applying lessons learned is the prime objective of the complaints procedure.
- 4.4 **Table 3** provides a summary of the complaints handled at Stage 2 of the complaints process.
- 4.5 The Social Services Complaints Procedure has set criteria as to who can raise a complaint under that policy. Where an individual is not eligible to make a complaint under the Social Services complaints policy, their concerns will be handled through the Authority's Corporate Complaints Procedure.
- 4.6 The timeframe for dealing with Stage 2 complaints is 25 working days under the Social Services complaints policy, or within a reasonable time agreed with the complainant due to the complexity of a case or where enquiries could be extensive to provide a comprehensive review. For complaints made after the implementation of the new regulations, where an extension of time is sought this will normally only be granted with the permission of the Chief Social Services Officer or other delegated officer on their behalf. All investigations this year were subject to extended periods of time.
- 4.7 Whether the complaint is upheld or not, staff need to reinstate confidence in a good working relationship with the service user or their representatives, to move forward following the formal Stage 2 Process. There have been 7 complaints taken to Stage 2 in this reporting period.
- 4.8 **Summary of Stage 2 complaints**
- 4.9 Case 1: Adult Corporate – dissatisfaction with consultation. 6 Complaints, none upheld
- 4.10 Case 2: Community Support Team
- Dissatisfaction with service 7 complaints of which 4 were partially upheld, one upheld, and 2 not upheld. This complaint impacted on one service user as was in relation to meeting with friends from a previous service.
- 4.11 Case 3: Care Home Quality Team.
- Dissatisfaction in relation to the care a relative received a care home. None of the complaints were upheld.
- 4.12 Case 4: Community Support Team
- Financial Issues relating to Direct Payments.
- There were 16 complaints, of which 6 were upheld in part, 9 were not upheld and 1 was resolved. An apology was offered for the delay in receiving the

assessment in a timely manner and the number of Social Workers that have dealt with the case. It was also recommended that the direct payments hours should be clarified and reviewed to ensure that the hours provided are a realistic amount for the purposes of supporting the service user to reduce isolation and to participate in the community.

5 Complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

- 5.1 The remit of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is to identify whether a member of the public has suffered hardship or injustice through maladministration, or identify where services have fallen below a reasonable standard. There is an obligation for a report to be produced on any investigation the office accepts. The reports produced are defined under two separate headings. Section 16 (Public Interest) Reports, for which there is a requirement for the Authority to publish details and Section 21 Investigation Reports which do not need to be published. Further details of the role of the PSOW can be found at <http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk>
- 5.2 The PSOW has produced his Annual Letter for 2018/19 which can be seen online at:
<https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Swansea.pdf>
The council received 13 queries from the Ombudsman in relation to social services, none of which were investigated. Two of which were referred back into the complaint process to be investigated via stage 2 of the complaint process and one was referred back for a new assessment.

6. Reasons for complaints and their outcome

- 6.1 Further analysis of the reasons for complaints is shown in **Table 4**. Whilst service users have unique and complex individual circumstances, complaints have been grouped under 'best fit' generic headings for reporting purposes.
- 6.2 Wherever possible, lessons are learned and improvements are made to service delivery when a complaint is upheld. 27% of complaints were justified/partly justified this year, slightly down on last year (32%)

7. Advocacy

- 7.1 Advocacy services exist to represent service recipient's views and feelings when dealing with organisations. Social Services engage in statutory arrangements to ensure the welfare of clients with mental health and learning disability needs where capacity is compromised and provide signposting to other organisations providing such services for all clients.
- 7.2 The Complaints Officer will work with groups and organisations providing advocacy services, to address issues and promote the provision of assistance to service-users through the complaints process. Effective engagement with advocacy services empowers more individuals and groups to make use of the complaints process at the earliest opportunity.

8 Compliments

- 8.1 Adult Services have received in excess of **98** compliments over the course of the year. At the point of service delivery, service users, relatives or friends can convey their appreciation more formally through the Comment or Compliment process. Set out in **Table 5** are examples of some of the compliments which have been passed to the complaints team in relation to Adult Services. The individual staff members have been made aware of the compliments concerning them, as has the Head of Service.
- 8.2 Compliments received are an equal reflection of individual and team efforts and Adult Services teams should be encouraged by their successes having regard to compliments received.

9. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct equality and engagement implications arising from this report.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 All costs incurred in dealing with complaints have to be covered within existing Budgets in Corporate Services.
- 10.2 External Independent Investigators and Independent Persons may be appointed to deal with some complaints in accordance with legislation. The cost to the Authority of providing this service in 2018/19 for Adult & Directorate Services was **£7,695**, (down £7,165 on the previous year)

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 Complaints should be administered in accordance with the regulations outlined in paragraph 1.2 above.

Background papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Statistical Data Tables

Appendix 1 – Statistical data in Tables

Table 1 - Total number of complaints received by Complaint Team				
	Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/2019
Service Requests		29	27	27
Corporate		19	18	25
Stage 1		100	138	135
Stage 2		4	7	4
Ombudsman		5	7	13
Totals		157	197	204

Table 2 – Stage 1 Social Services complaints by Service Area	Total
Adult- Commissioning & Partnership	0
Adult- Community & Intermediate Care Services	0
Adult- Health & Home Care	1
Adult Safeguarding	1
Bonymaen Residential Home	1
Care Home and Quality Team	4
Central Hub	7
Client Property and Finance	0
CMHT 1	0
CMHT 3	3
CMHT 4	0
Community Alarms	1
Community Services Hub	6
Community Support Team	3
Contracting	2
Cwmbwrla Day Service	0
Dcas Central Hub	6
Dcas North Hub	3
Dcas West Hub	0
Direct Payments	1
Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs)	2
Financial Assessments	0
Financial Issues	12
Hospital social work team	5
Intake Team-CAP MDT	2
Llanfair	0
Long Term Home Care Team	2
Long term care and complex team	1
Morrison Hospital	1
North Hub	28
Occupational Therapy Service	1

Occupational Therapy Unit	1
Older People Community mental health	1
Older people, residential & day services	1
Other Agency	4
Referred to Health	3
Safeguarding	5
Safeguarding and wellbeing	1
Ty Einon	1
Unknown	18
West Hub	5
Western Bay Adult Safeguarding	1
Whitehorn IDS	1
Total number of Stage 1 SS complaints	135

Table 3 – Stage 2 Social Services complaints by Service Area		Total
Service	Outcome	ID
Budget Consultation	6 complaints, none upheld	Case 1
Community Support Team	7 complaints, 4 partially upheld, 1 upheld, 2 not upheld	Case 2
Care Home Quality Team	No complaints upheld	Case 3
Community Support Team (financial issues re Direct Payments)	16 Complaints, 9 not upheld, 6 partially upheld, 1 resolved	Case 4

Safeguarding concerns														5				
Staff attitude		1		1						1				2				
Unhappy with action taken	2	1	2	2					1		2	1	1			1	1	
Unhappy with charges levied	2	3		1														
Unhappy with decision		1								1					1			
Unhappy with level of service	4	3	2				1			1								
Unhappy with response					1		1								1			
Unknown				18														
Withdrawal of service	1							1										
Totals	27	20	10	27	6	0	3	5	3	7	5	1	3	4	7	1	5	1

Table 5 – Examples of Compliments Received

Teams	Compliments Received
Cwmbwrla OPMHT	We are both very grateful to you....it is so refreshing to meet a professional who understands the importance of not just person centred care but also relationship centred care. You captured the essence of mum as a person from a few occasions of meeting her when clinical staff had 7 weeks and still could not see what we were saying. A huge thank you from the bottom of our hearts.
Hospital SW team	A has been brilliant during this time. She has been so professional, patient and kind. She has been available on a daily basis constantly updating me either via email or phone. My cousin is not what you would describe an easy man to deal with and Anna has been calm and stoic with handling his behaviour. She has managed the situation with a great sense of humour and firmness. A has now secured a wonderful placement so that he can continue to convalesce and I am hoping he will continue to progress after his discharge today
Bonymaen House	You and your staff have given us our life back, and for that we are grateful to a degree that we can't put into words. Your service is outstanding, and the standards to which you work are superior to any we had encountered in previous months. We sincerely hope that you all will continue with the work that you do with passion, and with all your heart - and that is, probably, what makes the greatest difference of all!
Cwmbwrla Day Centre	Letter from Ambulance Service thanking Day Service driver for calling 999, looking after patient until help arrived and then driving patient to the hospital and providing support that was above and beyond what would normally have been expected.
North Hub	M is relatively new to adult services and was covering duty social worker on Monday of this week. We had an issue with one of our service users . M went to Clydach to visit Mrs X to discuss a possible placement and found her condition to have deteriorated further. He telephoned 999 and the family and remained with her, liaising with the first responder and then waiting until almost 8pm for the ambulance to arrive. During this time he provided Mrs X with reassurance and care including giving her sips of water. His attitude was one of caring, consideration and great concern for a very vulnerable elderly lady. I was extremely grateful to him and impressed with the lengths he went to which was over and above what would generally be expected. I believe that he should be commended on his service and supported to continue with the amazing attitude to his job that he has.
Central Hub	I would like to thank L for listening and taking into account my concerns when assessing my mother. She has also recognised the need for increased care at home. I am confident that going forward L and I can work together to provide my mum with the care she needs. L's pragmatic approach and willingness to work with me has been greatly appreciated.
West Cross Day Service	People are very quick to complain about services these days - I would like to applaud one of Swansea's services and give credit where it is well and truly due. Yesterday I attended an 'awards ceremony' for the service users at West Cross Day Service for adults with various learning difficulties. My daughter attends

	<p>and has done for several years. At the ceremony each and every individual's various achievements were recognised and applauded. The atmosphere was truly one of celebration, inclusion and fun. It was most enjoyable and worthy of praise. However what was missing was applause for the incredible staff who work on a daily basis with the service users. People who attend have complex and profound difficulties of varying degrees, especially with communication. And yet each and every person was totally involved, aware and appreciative of the proceedings. It was a pleasure to witness adults who have difficulty making contact being included and participating. The staff obviously know each one and how to include them and encourage them to not only take part but also to really enjoy the experience. I was more than impressed. I know from my own experience how my daughter has 'blossomed' under the care of the people who work with her. This is entirely due to their dedication, hard work and sense of who she is and what motivates her. I imagine it is the same for the other service users. The staff certainly seem to be performing 'magic' as far as I am concerned. So I just wanted to record my thanks, and to bring to your notice the excellent service provided by these workers. Thank you!</p>
Local Area Co-ordinator	<p>It was great seeing you I don't know what it is but I am always on a high when I have been up to see you, it's hard to explain but when I was thinking of ending my life when I was really poorly in the early days & when you started working with me you helped me a lot, then I started to think just maybe life was worth living after all and look at me now, I still have my off days but not as much as I was before so thank you for giving me my life back</p>
Social Worker	<p>Thank you card and email - thank you for the care and attention over the last 14 months, it's been very much appreciated. C - you have been involved with Dad's Care since August 2017 and have supported both Dad and myself during this time and for that we will be forever grateful. Your professionalism and skill throughout has been exemplary and has mitigated any anxiety we would expect to encounter on what is a bewildering journey to the uninitiated in elderly care. I would be grateful if you could forward on my email to your manager as this praise is well deserved and should be recognised.</p>
Long Term Homecare Team	<p>I wanted to thank you and all the carers in your team for the care given to my Aunt over many years. My Aunt would not have attained such a great age without the superb care she received and the diligence, respect and professionalism of the Carers have been absolutely tremendous. Please pass on our very deep gratitude and most sincere appreciation to your colleagues for the tremendous job you all do.</p>
Local Area Co-ordinator	<p>When A came into my life, I can honestly say I was at a point of sheer desperation. I am an 83 year old active lady who looks after my 85 year old severely disabled husband who has vascular dementia. My friend suggested I telephoned A although I didn't know what at the time she could do for me. She has</p>

	<p>been a ray of sunshine in my life, sorting out a smoke alarm, talking to me about what's available, taken me to the carers centre, re introduced me to clubs I had previously been a member of and most importantly facilitating a sitter for my husband for me to go to the hairdressers and old age club once a week. Without her intervention I really don't know what I would have done as I was absolutely exhausted and depressed. Had I not met her, I honestly believe that such was my exhaustion I would probably have ended up in hospital and my husband in a care home, a situation I pray every night won't happen as we have been married for 63 years and never been apart.</p>
Central Rehab team	<p>My mother (91) fell and broke her shoulder and I'd like to thank the team who swung into action. Not only did they provide support for my parents but also for my dad (who is 95 with vascular dementia) but also to my brother and I. Special mention to the ladies who made a difficult time for the family a little easier. All three showed a genuine sympathy and professionalism when sorting things out for us. I know that social services come in for all manner of criticism but I cannot thank your team enough.</p>
Hospital Social Work Team	<p>I just wanted to say thank you for what you did for dad this year. We still have the four carers a day but they are living at home and getting out on the bus - dad can walk with 2 sticks a good distance! He is doing an exercise class every week and loves it and we have got him regular private physio. All of this is down to the call you made to let us take him home. We have all lost weight and sleep, particularly that first horrendous month. You did prepare me though and said it would be tough- boy, it was! But regardless of what happens in the future you gave him the chance to recover from the delirium, which we all know wouldn't have happened if he went into a home in that state! I am emailing you as I think it important you know what a difference you make, as did the Ward Sister, who like you, believed in us.</p>
Re-enablement	<p>I would like to convey my thanks and appreciation to the team without which I would not have been able to return to my own home after a recent operation. Their cheerful happy faces brighten up my day and blow away any depressive thoughts. Nothing is too much trouble for them all, many thanks once again.</p>
Re-enablement	<p>I thought it important to inform you of what is happening at the grassroots of the Social Services Domiciliary Care. Re-enablement Team, Gorseinon Hospital, for 6 weeks from the 5th January 2019 the above team of Community Care Assistants had been visiting our home three times daily to care for my 86 year old husband. Their dedication to their work was very impressive, demonstrating very high standards of care and ensuring his dignity at all times. Their kindness and understanding to ensure his needs were met was greatly appreciated. I was extremely grateful for their support as I am his main carer and have been for many years</p>



Appendix 3

Children's Services Complaints Annual Report 2018-2019

Purpose:	To report on the operation of the Complaints Team in relation to Childrens Services for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
Report Author:	Julie Nicholas-Humphreys
Finance Officer:	Janet Morgan
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Swansea Council's Social Services Complaints Procedure seeks to empower service users or those eligible to speak on their behalf to voice their concerns in relation to the exercise of Social Services functions.
- 1.2 With effect from 1 August 2014 revised legislation came into effect, bringing the Social Services complaints procedure into line with other complaints procedures across public services, in particular the process for NHS '*Putting Things Right*'. The Social Services Complaints Policy has been revised to accommodate the requirements of the new legislation and full details of the new policy can be viewed online at: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/sscomplaints>. The legislation requires the reporting of additional information which has been incorporated into this report.

SC Children's Services are committed to ensuring that concerns raised are listened to and resolved quickly and efficiently. Lessons learned from this

process are fed back to relevant teams and used wherever possible to improve future service delivery.

- 1.4 Our aim is to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity and teams are encouraged to be proactive in achieving this goal.
- 1.5 Where someone has been deemed 'not eligible' to utilise the social services complaint procedure in accordance with guidance/legislation, their complaints may be dealt with under the corporate complaint procedure. This ensures that everyone is able to voice their concerns and that a complaints mechanism is accessible to everyone.
- 1.6 Appendix 1 contains all tables referred to in this report.

2. Total Complaints received during the reporting period

- 2.1 **Table 1** shows this year's total complaints received by the Complaint Team in respect of Childrens Services with the previous two years' figures for comparison. The number of Stage 1 complaints received this year has dropped 27% compared to last years' figure.
- 2.3 Under the Social Services complaints policy, both the old and new legislative framework allow complainants to immediately request a stage 2 investigation. Through efforts to resolve complaints internally wherever possible, the number of stage 2 complaints this year remains relatively low and the same as last years' figure of 7 received.

3. Analysis of Stage 1 Complaints

- 3.1. A detailed breakdown of the Stage 1 Complaints received by Service Area is shown in **Table 2**. Complaints need to be acknowledged within 2 working days, and in 79% of cases where complaints proceeded to conclusion, discussions took place within 10 working days, down 16% on the previous year.
- 3.2 Complaints have been broken down by individual service team this year, in order to provide greater clarity on specific areas where complaints are being received. This will help with the identification of systemic issues and trends which can then be scrutinised more closely within those teams affected.
- 3.3 Due to continuing changes in the structure of Childrens Services it is possible that the teams shown below have since been reorganised and may no longer exist as the teams set out below. Adjustments will be made to the team names year on year as required to reflect any such changes.

4. Stage 2 Complaints

- 4.1 Complaints are considered at Stage 2 of the complaints procedure either where we have not been able to resolve the issues to the complainant's

satisfaction at stage 1, or the complainant has requested that the matter be immediately considered at Stage 2.

- 4.2 Both the old and new social services complaint regulations give an eligible complainant a statutory right to request Stage 2 of the process. Complainants are able to request that their complaint is dealt with directly at Stage 2 should they wish, and is not dependent on having been investigated at stage 1 or the outcome at stage 1.
- 4.3 An independent investigator person is commissioned for a Stage 2 investigation, with the work of the investigator overseen by an independent person to ensure the investigation is carried out in a fair and proper way. A formal report is produced which presents the facts and considers the feelings around the difficulties to suggest ways to move forward. Resolution and applying lessons learned is the prime objective of the complaints procedure.
- 4.4 **Table 3** provides a summary of the complaints handled at Stage 2 of the complaints process.
- 4.5 The Social Services Complaints Procedure has set criteria as to who can raise a complaint under that policy. Where an individual is not eligible to make a complaint under the Social Services complaints policy, their concerns will be handled through the Authority's Corporate Complaints Procedure.
- 4.6 The timeframe for dealing with Stage 2 complaints is 25 working days under the Social Services complaints policy, or within a reasonable time agreed with the complainant due to the complexity of a case or where enquiries could be extensive to provide a comprehensive review. For complaints made after the implementation of the new regulations, where an extension of time is sought this will normally only be granted with the permission of the Chief Social Services Officer or other delegated officer on their behalf. All investigations this year were subject to extended periods of time.
- 4.7 Whether the complaint is upheld or not, staff need to reinstate confidence in a good working relationship with the service user or their representatives, to move forward following the formal Stage 2 Process.
- 4.8 There were 7 complaints received in this reporting period that went to investigation at Stage 2.
- 4.9 **Summary of Stage 2 complaints**

Case 1 - Looked after children's team

The complaint was made as the parent was unhappy regarding services to her son in respect of a residential placed for respite and that a proper matching exercise had not been carried out, which resulted in a safeguarding investigation and poor communication between the parent and the social work team. Of the 12 complaints, 6 were upheld, 2 were upheld in part and four were not upheld.

Case 2 - Swansea East Team

This was a very lengthy stage 2 complaint investigation which significantly exceeded the timeframe due to the number of complaints made, in total 66. This complaint was also the most expensive investigation ever (since 2006) in terms of cost. The complaints were in respect of dissatisfaction with assessments carried out, delay, poor communication and staff attitude. Of the 66 complaints 22 were not upheld, 11 were upheld in part, 15 upheld, in 13 of the complaints the investigator was unable to make a finding. The remaining 4 complaints were matters which had already been to court so the investigator was unable to investigate those points.

Case 3 & 4 - Swansea West Team

Not pursued and not subsequently upheld

Case 5 - Foster Swansea

This complaint was brought by a foster carer in respect of his interaction with the social work team during a safeguarding investigation via the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. The complaint was investigated via the corporate complaint process. In all 16 complaints were made, none of which were upheld. This person also took the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales who declined to investigate.

Case 6 – Child Disability Team – not upheld

Unhappy with level of service

Case 7 - Friends & Family – not upheld

Unhappy with level of service

5 Complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

- 5.1 The remit of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is to identify whether a member of the public has suffered hardship or injustice through maladministration, or identify where services have fallen below a reasonable standard. There is an obligation for a report to be produced on any investigation the office accepts. The reports produced are defined under two separate headings. Section 16 (Public Interest) Reports, for which there is a requirement for the Authority to publish details and Section 21 Investigation Reports which do not need to be published. Further details of the role of the PSOW can be found at <http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk>
- 5.2 The PSOW has produced his Annual Letter for 2018/19, containing details of cases where the Ombudsman has identified failures in service delivery by public bodies across Wales. 12 cases were referred to the Ombudsman this year however there have been no findings of maladministration. The Ombudsman's letter can be seen online at: <https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Swansea.pdf>

6. Reasons for complaints and their outcome

- 6.1 Further analysis of the reasons for complaints is shown in **Table 4**. Whilst service users have unique and complex individual circumstances, complaints have been grouped under 'best fit' generic headings for reporting purposes.
- 6.2 Wherever possible, lessons are learned and improvements are made to service delivery when a complaint is upheld. 38 complaints (30%) were found to be justified/partly justified this year, which is slightly higher than the equivalent figure for 2017/18 though the number of complaints received actually fell considerably.

7. Advocacy

- 7.1 Advocacy services exist to represent children's views and feelings when dealing with organisations. Social Services engage in statutory arrangements to ensure the welfare of clients with mental health and learning disability needs where capacity is compromised and provide signposting to other organisations providing such services.
- 7.2 The Complaints Officer will work with groups and organisations providing advocacy services, to address issues and promote the provision of assistance to service-users through the complaints process. Effective engagement with advocacy services empowers more individuals and groups to make use of the complaints process at the earliest opportunity.

8 Compliments

- 8.1 Children's Services have received in excess of **46 compliments** over the course of the year. Set out in **Table 5** are some examples of the compliments which have been passed to the complaints team this year in relation to Childrens Services. The individual staff members have been made aware of the compliments concerning them as has the Head of Service.
- 8.2 As well as substantial acknowledgements of thanks from service users that are given to staff at the point of service delivery, service users, relatives or friends can convey their appreciation more formally through the Comment or Compliment process.
- 8.3 Many complaints are often accompanied by compliments for other elements of service provision.
- 8.4 Compliments received are an equal reflection of individual and team efforts and Childrens Services teams should be encouraged by their successes having regard to compliments received.

9. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct equality and engagement implications arising from this report.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 All costs incurred in dealing with complaints have to be covered within existing Budgets in Corporate Services.
- 10.2 External Independent Investigators and Independent Persons may be appointed to deal with some complaints in accordance with legislation. The cost to the Authority of providing this service in 2017/18 for Children's Services was **£25,445** (an increase of £12,720.51 on the previous year)

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 Complaints have be administered in accordance with the regulations outlined in paragraph 1.2 above.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Statistical Data Tables

Appendix 1 – Statistical data in Tables

Table 1 - Total number of complaints received by Complaint Team				
	Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Service Requests		16	20	20
Corporate		28	30	26
Social Services Stage 1		118	172	125
Social Services Stage 2		3	7	7
Ombudsman		4	3	10
Totals		169	232	188

Table 2 – Stage 1 Social Services complaints by Service Area	Total
Bays	3
CCARAT-IAA	4 (2 corporate)
Child and Family general	2
Child Disability Team	4
Conference Chairing	1
EDT	3 (corporate)
Foster Swansea	3 (1 corporate)
Contracting	1
Friends & Family	5 (1 corporate)
LAC	20 (5 corporate)
LAC 14+	5 (2 corporate)
Penderry Team	8 corporate (3)
Safeguarding Team	1
Swansea East Team	15 (1 corporate)
Swansea Valley Team	25 (4 corporate)
Swansea West Team	15 (1 corporate)
Townhill Team	14 (2 corporate)
Unknown	14
Western Bay Adoption Agency	8 (1 corporate)
Total	151

Table 3 – Total Stage 2 complaints by Service Area		
Service	Outcome	ID
Looked after Children	The complaint was made as the parent was unhappy regarding services to her son in respect of a residential placed for respite and that a proper matching exercise had not been carried out, which	Case 1

	<p>resulted in a safeguarding investigation and poor communication between the parent and the social work team. Of the 12 complaints, 6 were upheld, 2 were upheld in part and four were not upheld.</p>	
Swansea East Team	<p>The complaints were in respect of dissatisfaction with assessments carried out, delay, poor communication and staff attitude. Of the 66 complaints 22 were not upheld, 11 were upheld in part, 15 upheld, in 13 of the complaints the investigator was unable to make a finding. The remaining 4 complaints were matters which had already been to court so the investigator was unable to investigate those points.</p>	Case 2
Swansea West Team	<p>Not pursued at the time and then not upheld</p>	Case 3 & 4
Foster Swansea	<p>This complaint was brought by a foster carer in respect of his interaction with the social work team during a safeguarding investigation via the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. The complaint was investigated via the corporate complaint process. In all 16 complaints were made, none of which were upheld. This person also took the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales who declined to investigate.</p>	Case 5
Child Disability Team	<p>Unhappy with level of service – Not upheld</p>	Case 6
Friends & Family	<p>Unhappy with level of service – Not upheld</p>	Case 7

Table 5 – Examples of Compliments Received

Teams	Nature of Compliment
Safeguarding	Just emailing to thank you both for today; it's been quite difficult getting some professionals to recognise how well the family have been doing. I feel that despite some negative comments all professionals were able to reflect, which prevented the children being re-registered. Thank you for all your support with this case, I can't believe how far the family have come.
Family Support Team	Mother was very complimentary of B's skills as a worker in the way he has been working with herself and Child over the past few weeks which have been very difficult. She felt that B's skills in being able to help her see what needed to change, rather than telling her what to do, have made a huge difference to her motivation.
Looked After Children	I just wanted to provide some feedback the inspectors provided yesterday. Child X wrote a letter for them – unfortunately they weren't able to give me a copy – stating how much she had valued your support and the commitment you had shown her. The inspectors were very impressed that a young person had taken the time to express their thoughts in writing. I am also very impressed. You have both clearly made an impact on this young person and their life in a very positive way. There is not much else you can ask of a SW. This was obviously a fantastic piece of SW practice so very well done both.
Supported Care Planning	My daughter's social worker has over the last 2 years consistently supported my daughter and navigated a path (through emotional and difficult relationships) which has resulted in a positive outcome for my daughter. Mrs R, Social worker, has gone beyond the 'normal' duties of her role and would wish this level of commitment and professionalism be recognised by the Authority
Social Worker	I am emailing from X Council to say how much we appreciated the support from Swansea children's services with regards to children X living in your area and care order to us. We have been assisted for over 12 months with welfare checks and visits. There was never any hesitation to assist and I know how busy you must be.
Service & Performance Quality	I just wanted to say that recently I have had some tremendous support from the IRO's and their commitment to the children they are supporting through their role is amazing. I just wanted to say a big thanks to you and your team on behalf of myself and the children I work with.
ALNU	I am a local Swansea mum who has had the pleasure of the most fantastic service and help from H. My son was offered an STF placement September in X primary school. I just wanted to let u know I was probably one of the worst parents so apprehensive about everything but respected H expertise so greatly I made the choice to risk moving my son's school. It has been the best decision I have ever made X school is absolutely fantastic he is so happy!!! I'm so grateful for the hard work and expertise of all your staff who were and are involved with my son. I think H is the most amazing, clever and kind person who clearly cares about children, an absolute asset to the city and county of Swansea also the team at X primary who are bringing my son on so well I understand the strain you are all under with no budget but thank you all

	from the bottom of my heart for every
Supervised Contact Team	2 Thank you Cards received - one from mum and one from dad from a family W has been working with, on the Supervised Contact Team. W has done some wonderful work with the whole family, to enable contact to move on to supervised contact with the social worker in the community, and with the further hope to progress to unsupervised contact.
Looked After Children	Thank you card J received re child X's - It is not often we receive thank you cards from the parents especially when the plan is not to rehabilitate home. I feel this shows how J has been able to establish a positive relationship through his hard work and commitment.
Social Worker	I just wanted to pass over some comments that was made by the foster carers yesterday during supervision. They said that B was one of the most hands on social workers that they have ever met and that the children really like him. He visits regularly, keeps them all up to date on what is happening and shows a genuine interest in how they are feeling. The carers never struggle to get hold of him and he commits to the arrangements he makes with them.
Supported Care Planning	Thank you card received from a family - The case was in PLO and could have well escalated to court due to the significant concerns in respect of mother and father's drug use. C's work, openness and honesty about our worries with parents as well as the co-ordination of support for parents which sometimes resulted in her visiting several times a week following the child's birth with a clear safety plan allowed this family to be able to remain as a unit and parents to evidence their ability to make and sustainable change.
Looked After Children	I wanted to send an email to thank S for all her hard work on a recent court case. S has supported the victim through a really traumatic and emotional time, when the YP needed to give evidence in court. This case was ready for closure really, but S wanted to see through this emotional support and be available to the YP, who has limited family support and a really strong relationship with S. I'm sure this support was invaluable and will have given the YP a major boost of resilience to see through this tough time in her life. We are delighted the male involved has been found guilty and the YP has had some of the justice she deserves.
East 2	I just wanted to make you aware of a positive relationship with A. Child X is now in a stable placement, accessing education and has just managed to sit in a room of professionals and communicate his views to everyone.

**Freedom of Information (FOI)
Annual Report 2018-2019**

Purpose:	To report on requests for information made under the provisions of The Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Legal, Finance.
Report Author:	Julie Nicholas-Humphreys
Finance Officer:	Janet Morgan
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 places a duty on all Public Authorities to comply with the general right of access to all types of “recorded” information held by the Authority (unless an exemption applies under the Act). This right of access to information came into force on 1 January 2005.
- 1.2 The FOI process can be found at:
<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/freedomofinformation>
- 1.3 The FOI Act is fully retrospective and applies to all information held by the Council. The Council adopted a Corporate Policy on Freedom of Information and on Records Management in December 2004.
- 1.4 The FOI policy sets out the Council’s commitment to making information publicly available unless there are sound operational or public interest reasons for not doing so or there are legal reasons preventing it.

- 1.5 The Complaints Manager is ultimately responsible for all FOI Reviews required under the Act, which arise if the requester is unhappy with the response. The FOI decision is reviewed in conjunction with a Legal Officer and where appropriate a representative from the relevant Department.
- 1.6 Requesters also have a further right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

2. Information Request Statistics

- 2.1 Table 1: Information requests received this year, broken down by Service Area:

TABLE 1 – Information Requests By Service Area					
Service Area	FOI Requests	Subject Access Requests	FOI /SAR Reviews	Appeals to Information Commissioner	Totals
Information/Communication Technologies	61	0	3	0	64
Social Services (Children Services)	65	30	2	0	97
Social Services (Adult Services)	106	53	5	2	166
Communications	9	1	1	0	11
Corporate Building Services	4	3	0	0	7
Corporate Property Services	51	0	3	0	54
Culture & Tourism	71	0	4	0	75
Environment	118	3	3	1	125
Waste Management	65	4	0	0	69
Financial Services	204	7	1	0	212
Human Resources	55	2	1	0	58
Housing	90	6	2	0	98
Legal & Democratic Services	61	1	2	0	64
Planning	77	3	11	1	92
Education	177	7	4	0	188
Commercial Services & Procurement	7	0	0	0	7
Transportation & Engineering	182	15	5	1	203
Totals	1403	135	47	5	1590

3. Table 2 : Shows the rise in information requests since 2016/17.

Financial Year	Requests Received (FOI, EIR & SAR)	Year on Year Difference
2016/17	1327	-27
2017/18	1361	+34
2018/19	1538	+177

4. Table 3: Timeliness of Responses to FOI & EIR Requests

- 4.1

Financial Year	Answered within 20 days	% answered within 20days
2016/17	917	74.9%
2017/18	987	75.9%
2018/19	907	65%

- 4.2 The decrease in responses within statutory timescales, can only be attributed to a perfect storm of increased demand (11%) with less resources available within service areas.

5. Type of Applicant

- 5.1 FOI requests are received from a variety of sources. The table below gives a breakdown of the type of applicant that made the FOI Request.

Table 4 - FOI Request by Type of Applicant	
Type of Applicant	No.
Commercial Organisation	229
Freelance Journalist	5
Individual	810
Media	212
Not for Profit	93
Politician	52
Solicitors	2
Total	1403

6. Responses to FOI Requests

- 6.1 Table 5 below shows a breakdown of the type of response that the Council gave to the FOI Requestor. **1073** of the **1403** (76%) were either fully disclosed or mainly granted. This statistic clearly shows the Council's continued commitment to openness and transparency.

Table 5 - Type of Response given to FOI Requestor	
Type of Response	No.
Full Disclosure	936
Completely Refused	103
Data not held	99
Mainly Granted	137
Mainly Refused	46
Not Pursued / Withdrawn	63
Timed Out *	3
Ongoing / Incomplete	16
Total	1403

* The "Timed Out" category is used where an applicant did not respond to a request for clarification, therefore the request could not be processed.

7. Responses where Exemptions were necessary to withhold Information

- 7.1 Table 4 below shows a breakdown of the exemptions used under the FOI Act to withhold information.

Table 4 - Number of and List of FOI Exemption Used		
Section	Exemption	No.
12	Cost of Redacting & Extracting Information	53
14	Vexatious & Repeated Requests	2
21	Information accessible to applicant by other means	10
22	Information intended for future publication	1
30	Investigations & Proceedings	2
31	Law Enforcement	9
32	Court Records	0
36	Effective Conduct of Public Affairs	2
38	Health & Safety	1
40	Data Protection	22
41	Information provided in confidence	1
42	Legal professional privilege	1
43	Commercial Interest	40
Totals		144

Note: *In some cases more than one exemption was used to withhold data requested.*

8. Reviews and Appeals

- 8.1 There were **37** FOI Reviews carried out during 2018/19. Of the reviews conducted, the original decision was upheld in **32** of those cases.
- 8.2 The Requester appealed to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) in **9** of those cases. Details of the ICO appeals and their outcome is summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5 - Appeals to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)		
	Information Requested	Outcome of Appeal
	Taxi Licensing	We reversed our position and released the information in an amicable agreement
	Taxi Licensing	We reversed our position and released the information in an amicable agreement
	Pay for Care Work	We reversed our position and released the information in an amicable agreement
	Employment	We reversed our position and released the information.
	Employment	Not upheld by ICO– though more clarification required when responding

Child & Family	Not Upheld by ICO
Trees	We reversed our position and released the information.
Call Recording	Not upheld by ICO
S106 Agreement	Not upheld – clarification sent

9. Looking Forward

- 9.1 The IGU and Complaints Team will review it's processes in the handling of information requests with a view to further improving both the quality of responses and the percentage of cases replied to within 20 working days.

10. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 10.1 This report provides a breakdown of information concerning requests for information for the prescribed period as such reflects current practice and involves no changes to service delivery. Consequently, there is no requirement for an Equality Impact Assessment.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1 All costs incurred through dealing with FOI are covered within existing budgets.

12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 None

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

**Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA)
Annual Report 2018-2019**

Purpose:	To report on the operation of the Authority's use of covert surveillance, conducted under the provisions of The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Legal, Finance.
Report Author:	Julie Nicholas-Humphreys
Finance Officer:	Janet Morgan
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 allows local authorities to conduct covert surveillance activity in circumstances where it is for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder. It also allows local authorities to acquire communication data from Communication Providers.
- 1.2 The process must be in accordance with the Home Office's Code of Practice for Covert Surveillance and Code of Practice on Acquisition of Communication data and this report has been prepared in line with best practice.
- 1.3 This report will provide an overview to the Cabinet of the Authority's practices and activity regulated by RIPA.

2. Service Delivery

- 2.1 A list of authorised officers is shown in Appendix 1. (Table 3)
- 2.2 Table 1 below shows the types of surveillance permitted under RIPA for Local Authority use, comparing annual usage over the last 5 years.

TABLE 1 - Surveillance Permitted Under RIPA					
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-2019
Directed	1	1	0	0	0
Interception of Communications	0	0	0	0	0
Acquisition / Disclosure of Communications Data	0	0	0	0	0
Covert Human Intelligence Source	0	0	0	0	0

2.3 Process & Procedure

- 2.3.1 The Process & Procedure that Swansea Council must follow is available on: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/ripaoverview>. The policy is currently being reviewed with a view to any update or amendments being made in Jan 2020.

2.4 Acquisition and Disclosure of Communications Data

- 2.4.1 Since 8 February 2012, the City & County of Swansea (CCS) has subscribed to the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN)'s Single Point of Contact Services to acquire this information. Annual Returns are provided to the Interception of Communications Commissioner's Office on a calendar year basis.

2.5 Surveillance Activity

- 2.5.1 Table 2 below shows the use of RIPA by services and its purpose within Swansea Council

TABLE 2 - Use of RIPA		
Directed Surveillance		
	0	
Covert Human Intelligence Source		
	0	
Acquisition and Disclosure of Communications Data		
	0	

- 2.5.2 CCS operates an extensive Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system to provide a safer environment for the community. The system is managed and developed in partnership with the South Wales Police. The use of CCTV is not covered by the same regulations as the surveillance reported on above as it is an overt not covert method of observation. A separate code of practice applies to the CCTV system and are public documents.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

3.1 There are no equality and engagement implications

4. Financial Implications

4.1 All costs incurred in dealing with RIPA have to be covered within existing budgets.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 As set out in the Report

Background Papers: None


Appendices: Appendix 1 – Authorised Officers

Appendix 1


TABLE 3 – RIPA Authorised Officers.	
Name	Department / Section
Lynda Anthony	Environmental Health
Peter Richards	Environment Health (Trading Standards)

Our ref: NB

Ask for: Communications

 01656 641150

Date: 7 August 2019

 communications
@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Councillor Rob Stewart
Council Leader
Swansea Council

By Email Only
cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Rob Stewart

Annual Letter 2018/19

I am pleased to provide you with the Annual letter (2018/19) for the Swansea Council. This year I am publishing my Annual Letters as part of my Annual Report and Accounts. I hope the Council finds this helpful and I trust this will enable it to review its own complaint handling performance in the context of other public bodies performing similar functions across Wales.

Whilst overall the number of complaints received relating to local authorities across Wales increased from 794 to 912, I am pleased that local authorities continue to work with my office to resolve many of these complaints at an early stage. This provides complainants with appropriate and timely remedies avoiding the need for my office to fully investigate complaints.

A summary of the complaints of maladministration/service failure received relating to the Council is attached.

Also attached is a summary of the Code of Conduct complaints relating to members of the Council and the Town & Community Councils in your area.

The Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 has now been introduced. I am delighted that the Assembly has approved this legislation giving the office new powers aimed at:

- Improving access to my office
- Providing a seamless mechanism for complaint handling when a patient's NHS care is inextricably linked with private healthcare
- Allowing me to undertake own initiative investigations when required in the public interest
- Ensuring that complaints data from across Wales may be used to drive improvement in public services for citizens in Wales.

I am very much looking forward to implementing these new powers over the coming year.

Action for the Council to take:

- Present my Annual Letter to the Cabinet to assist Members in their scrutiny of the Council's performance
- Work to reduce the number of cases which require intervention by my office
- Inform me of the outcome of the Council's considerations and proposed actions on the above matters by **31 October 2019**.

This correspondence is copied to the Chief Executive of your Council and to your Contact Officer. Finally, a copy of all Annual Letters will be published on my website.

Yours sincerely



Nick Bennett
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

CC: Adam Hill, Deputy Chief Executive
Julie Nicholas-Humphreys, Contact Officer

Factsheet

A. Complaints Received and Investigated with Local Authority average adjusted for population distribution

Local Authority	Complaints Received	Average	Complaints Investigated	Average
City and County of Swansea 2018/19	83	70	0	2
City and County of Swansea 2017/18	62	61	1	2
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	8	20	0	0
Bridgend County Borough Council	33	41	0	1
Caerphilly County Borough Council	65	51	1	1
Cardiff Council	115	103	0	2
Carmarthenshire County Council	49	53	1	1
Ceredigion County Council	23	21	0	0
Conwy County Borough Council	41	33	2	1
Denbighshire County Council	26	27	1	1
Flintshire County Council	50	44	2	1
Gwynedd Council	32	35	2	1
Isle of Anglesey County Council	31	20	2	0
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	15	17	0	0
Monmouthshire County Council	20	27	0	1
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	38	40	1	1
Newport City Council	38	43	0	1
Pembrokeshire County Council	35	35	0	1
Powys County Council	67	38	4	1
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	36	68	0	2
Torfaen County Borough Council	12	26	1	1
Vale of Glamorgan Council	24	37	0	1
Wrexham County Borough Council	45	38	3	1
Grand Total	886		20	

B. Complaints Received by Subject

City and County of Swansea	Complaints Received
Adult Social Services	13
Benefits Administration	2
Children Social Services	12
Complaints Handling	8
Environment and Environmental Health	5
Housing	15
Planning and Building Control	15
Roads and Transport	10
Various Other	3

C. Comparison of complaint outcomes with average outcomes for Local Authorities, adjusted for population distribution

Local Authority	Out of Jurisdiction	Premature	Other cases closed after initial consideration	Early Resolution / Voluntary settlement	Discontinued	Other Report - Not upheld	Other Report - Upheld in whole or in part	Public Interest Reports
2018/19								
Swansea	17	23	30	8	-	-	2	-
Swansea (adjusted)	13	22	24	9	-	1	1	-
2017/18								
Swansea	15	16	19	10	-	1	1	-
Swansea (adjusted)	11	17	21	8	-	1	1	-

D. Number of cases with PSOW intervention

Local Authority	No. of complaints with PSOW intervention	Total number of closed complaints	% of complaints with PSOW intervention
City and County Swansea 2018/19	10	80	13%
City and County Swansea 2017/18	11	62	18%
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	2	7	29%
Bridgend County Borough Council	6	36	17%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	8	68	12%
Cardiff Council	19	110	17%
Carmarthenshire County Council	4	48	8%
Ceredigion County Council	5	24	21%
Conwy County Borough Council	5	39	13%
Denbighshire County Council	4	30	13%
Flintshire County Council	16	56	29%
Gwynedd Council	6	35	17%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	5	31	16%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	0	14	0%
Monmouthshire County Council	0	23	0%
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	4	40	10%
Newport City Council	7	43	16%
Pembrokeshire County Council	6	33	18%
Powys County Council	11	64	17%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	4	34	12%
Torfaen County Borough Council	1	12	8%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	7	30	23%
Wrexham County Borough Council	8	43	19%

E. Code of Conduct Complaints Closed

Local Authority	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total
2018/19								
Swansea	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	5
2017/18								
Swansea	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	6

F. Town/Community council Code of Conduct Complaints

Town/Community Council	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total
Gorseinon TC	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Mumbles CC	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Appendix

Explanatory Notes

Section A compares the number of complaints against the Local Authority which were received and investigated by my office during 2018/19, with the Local Authority average (adjusted for population distribution) during the same period.

Section B provides a breakdown of the number of complaints about the Local Authority which were received by my office during 2018/19. The figures are broken down into subject categories.

Section C compares the complaint outcomes for the Local Authority during 2018/19, with the average outcome (adjusted for population distribution) during the same period.

Section D provides the numbers and percentages of cases received by our office in which an intervention has occurred. This includes all upheld complaints, early resolutions and voluntary settlements.

Section E provides a breakdown of all Code of Conduct complaint outcomes against Councillors during 2018/19.

Section F provides a breakdown of all Code of Conduct complaint outcomes against town or community councils.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the enclosed information, including suggestions for any information to be enclosed in future annual summaries. Any feedback or queries should be sent via email to communications@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Agenda Item 8



**Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member – Economy and Strategy
for Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
2 March 2020**

**Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on local government
use of data: Report and Action Plan**

Purpose:	To brief the Panel on the Council’s proposed response to the Wales Audit Office study and report: “The maturity of local government in use of data”.
Content:	The report sets out the background to the study, the previous Scrutiny report, and outlines a proposed Action Plan which responds to each of 11 identified recommendations across the four areas of the study.
Councillors are being asked to:	Consider the information provided and forward views to the Cabinet Member via letter from the Panel Convener.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Rob Stewart, Leader and Cabinet Member – Economy and Strategy
Lead Officer & Report Author:	Sarah Lackenby, Chief Transformation Officer
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Paul Roach

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In December 2018, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) published the results of a study on how local authorities in Wales were making use of data in order to inform their decision making. Reports were published for Wales and individual local authorities. On 24 June 2019, the Panel received an initial highlight report detailing the key findings of the WAO study for Swansea, which was based on returns from an earlier questionnaire to Council managers and Councillors, and highlights from the main report.
- 1.2 The initial report to Scrutiny briefed panel members on the key findings of the WAO study, which were divided into four areas as follows:

- Vision, Leadership and Culture;
- Data protection;
- Skills and capacity; and
- Evidence-based decision making.

1.3 Accompanying this report is an Action Plan (see Appendix A) which lists the individual WAO recommendations for Swansea within each of the four above headings and for each: proposed actions; milestones, timescales and targets; what success would look like; nominated lead officer, and; achievements to date.

1.4 Across the four areas, there are eleven separate recommendations proposed by WAO. Since the previous Scrutiny Panel report, a small team of officers from various service areas has been considering the recommendations and developing the Action Plan. This report summarises these and outlines the proposed actions and significant issues around each.

2. WAO study recommendations: Vision, Leadership and Culture

2.1 WAO's opening recommendation is that local authorities should *have a clear vision that treats data as a key resource*. The study found that local authorities across Wales are slow to develop a culture that values and uses data effectively to improve services and outcomes. In Swansea, the Council does not currently have a specific, separate strategy relating to 'data'. Our current approach and aspirations for the use of data and information are set out within existing policy and strategy documents in the Digital Services and Information Management and Security areas. To varying extents, data will also underpin (but not always explicitly) service area strategies within the Council.

2.2 Whilst it is possible to pursue each of the recommendations on a largely individual, ad hoc basis, we agree with WAO's central argument that an overall strategy and vision for the Council's use of data should be developed to provide a framework for considering subsequent actions. Such a strategy would define 'data' in this context (that is, what should be in scope for the strategy and actions), as well as setting out what we want to achieve more broadly in our use of data. Our proposed actions would then be informed by a wider and strategic approach to data.

2.3 The second WAO recommendation is that authorities *establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data*; to make integration of data across services easier. Application of standards related to data currently tends to be linked to the operational requirements of individual services. It is considered that for further work on this recommendation should follow the development of the data strategy. This could involve further investigation of the key Council systems, their data and coding standards, and any commonalities and good practice. In parallel, we propose to build on the work already undertaken to develop and promote the authority's Local Land and

Property Gazetteer (LLPG) standards to additional service areas working with address data.

- 2.4 The Council is also advised to *undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests*. This recommendation aims to help identify options to reduce duplication and waste and further enable data sharing across different service areas. We feel that our detailed response to this should again follow the development of the data strategy. It seems logical that there should be an initial focus on the information required for the 'Swansea Account' (see 2.5), and from this to identify further actions to support this.
- 2.5 WAO's fourth recommendation, to *create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services*, is largely reflected in the Council's existing proposals to provide a single digital identity for citizens to access online services, initially by developing a digital platform and upgrading the Council website. The 'Swansea Account' is the Council's proposed integrated secure online citizen/business account, where all information and services received can be viewed in one place (similar to dealing with any other organisation, e.g. utility companies, banks). It has been piloted in the first instance with the Passport to Leisure scheme, which offers discounts on a wide range of sports and leisure venues to Swansea residents who are on a low income.

3. Data protection

- 3.1 The WAO report states "local authorities need to protect personal information from data misuse but without suffocating innovation" and that "many public sector organisations are wrestling with the benefits and risks of data sharing". Specifically the Council are recommended to *provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share*. The guidance currently on the Council's Staffnet pages and on-line training modules (via Learning Pool) will be reviewed and re-promoted in line with the new Code of Practice from the Information Commissioner, and the framework provided by the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI).
- 3.2 Following on from this, WAO also recommend that authorities *review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities*. In this regard, it is proposed that an audit and review of existing protocols (general and service-specific) be co-ordinated by the Information Governance Unit and developed by the Council's Information Governance Working Group.

4. Skills and capacity

- 4.1 The study noted that "local authorities, in general, do not have the right skills and capacity to manage data effectively", and that "...staff are not being equipped to match the scale and pace of technological change and

the demand for data analytics”. WAO make two recommendations around staff data skills and capacity, firstly that the Council *identify staff who have a role in analysing and managing data to remove duplication and free up resources to build and develop capacity in data usage*; and secondly to *invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills*.

- 4.2 The development of a Data Strategy will inform our response to both recommendations; by providing an initial strategic view of what is in scope as ‘data’ and our high-level objectives to improve the Council’s use of data, which will in turn influence our view of the associated skills involved. In the meantime however, we propose to initially liaise with WAO to clarify their view of the key skills required, and undertake some initial research on potential qualifications and opportunities. Later, subject to the emerging strategy, a skills audit will aim to identify staff whose key role and skills relate to data analysis and management, draw out any gaps (and related issues), and identify potential actions to address them.

5. Evidence-based decision making

- 5.1 The fourth area highlighted by the study relates to the use of evidence in decision-making, in order to create a “data-driven decision-making culture”. The Swansea report noted that “Understanding the data and the level of analysis provided to inform business planning and decision making is an area for improvement.” Therefore, WAO recommend that *we set data reporting standards to ensure minimum data standards underpin decision making*. Our proposed response is two-fold: to scope and undertake a review of good practice in data reporting for the performance review process; and to work with services to continue to improve data reporting standards. The WAO report should serve to add impetus to the need for continuous improvement.
- 5.2 The Open Data Institute simply define open data as data that is “available to everyone to access, use and share”. For local government, WAO see open data as “an important characteristic of data maturity” which can “assist a wide range of organisations to develop new businesses and services... (and) ...enable better data sharing across organisations and geographical areas”. To unlock the potential of data held, WAO recommend that authorities *make more open data available*. However the report acknowledges that most Councils are at the early stages of this. Our initial proposed approach is one based on learning, awareness-raising and progress reporting, including working with other authorities and public bodies on the emerging agenda around open data. The results of this research and raised awareness will feed into the draft Data Strategy, and the Council’s approach and aspirations around open data will form part of that Strategy.
- 5.3 The report’s final recommendation is for the Council to *review the range and quality of the information needed by decision makers and the format*

it is presented. In terms of evidence-based decision making, the Swansea report notes that “The Authority has already taken steps in this direction and cites its approach to making efficiencies and reviewing service data as positive approaches...” However, the Swansea survey revealed “a difference of opinion on whether the Authority uses data to inform decisions and whether this is thoroughly embedded within the culture of the Authority”. Specific actions in respect of this recommendation are perhaps less straightforward to identify and bring forward, although clearly all services should be mindful of this principle and keep information and reporting needs (for internal and external users) continually under review.

6. General Issues

- 6.1 The WAO reports encompass a wide range of linked but discrete areas and issues around the use of data within its four broad themes. Clearly, there is more that can be done across all of these areas in different ways, and the lead nominated officers identified for each recommendation will, in conjunction with colleagues, progress and report back on these matters within the standard reporting frameworks.
- 6.2 Following this Scrutiny Panel meeting, and subject to the Panel’s views, it is proposed that the report be circulated to the Council’s Audit Committee for information. Further progress on this Action Plan will be reported to the Panel in due course.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific implications related to this report. Any financial implications emerging from the action plan will be assessed on a project by project basis, from within existing budget resources.

8. Legal Implications

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

Background Papers:

- Wales Audit Office (WAO) report: *The maturity of local government in use of data, December 2018.*
- WAO report: *Local government use of data – City and County of Swansea, December 2018.*
- Report of the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance to the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel, 24 June 2019: *WAO report on local government use of data: Swansea findings.*

Appendices:

- Appendix A** WAO Data Study – Action Plan (template).

Ref	WAO REPORT	Recommendation Reference	Recommendation Report Reason	Swansea Specific Recommendations	Actions to Achieve Recommendation	Milestones / Timescales / Targets	What would success look like?	LEAD Nominated Officer(s)	Achievements to date
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	R1 Part 1 of the report highlights the importance of creating a strong data culture and clear leadership to make better use of data. We recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have a clear vision that treats data as a key resource; 	Develop a Data Strategy - to define what is in scope (as 'data'), provide an overall vision for the Council's use of data and a higher-level framework for actions in response to these recommendations and related issues.	Prepare draft Data Strategy by Q1-2021, prior to consultation and Council approval.	The Council having an overall vision and strategy for its use of data, which is widely accepted and provides a way forward in its work around the various aspects of 'data'.	Sarah Lackenby	Jan-20 The Council's current digital Strategy 'Aspiring to a Digital Business 2020' (section 1.3.4) states "Aside from its people, information is a key asset for Swansea Council." A new digital strategy has been prepared and will develop this further (currently progressing through approval process and will be part of pre-decision Scrutiny in the coming months). The Council's Information Management Policy, section 4.1 notes "...all information held by the authority is an asset and... should be used to support the business processes of the whole authority". Other aspects relating to the Council's use of data are addressed in other documents, e.g. the Cyber Security Strategy and service-based strategies.
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	R1 Part 1 as aboveWe recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of the Data Strategy. To investigate the data and coding standards associated with the key information systems used in Council departments. Continue to embed and promote the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and use of the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) to services using property or address-based information. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare draft Data Strategy by Q1-2021. Subject to Data Strategy. Ongoing detailed compliance and improvement criteria for LLPG are set and monitored by Geoplace. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Council data-handling services adopting a common set of data/coding standards, as far as is feasible and beneficial. Swansea Council continuing to maintain its pledged address-based data improvement standards for NLPG, and having a clear pathway towards integrating the LLPG within all property and address-based systems. 	Sarah Lackenby / Jo Harley	There has already been some success in promoting the LLPG and NLPG (National Land & Property Gazetteer) standards and UPRNs to those services working with address records, including Electoral Registration, Council Tax / NDR, Highways, Building Control and Housing.
Page 81	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	R1 Part 1 as aboveWe recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of the Data Strategy. Undertake a data audit, primarily based on key Council systems, focusing on information to be collected via the integrated customer account project (the 'Swansea Account'). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare draft Data Strategy by Q1-2021. Subject to Data Strategy. 	More integrated Council systems, providing improved customer insight, business intelligence, citizen experience and operational efficiency (e.g. less duplication in customer contact).	Sarah Lackenby / Jo Harley	The Information Asset Register (IAR) or Register of Processing Activities (RoPA) details the Council's data systems and attributes, with the information maintained by the designated asset 'owner' in each case. Preparations for GDPR improved the accuracy of the Council's IAR / RoPA.
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R1	R1 Part 1 as aboveWe recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services. 	Develop a digital platform and upgrade Council website for integration and provide a single digital identity for citizens to access online services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Platform to be set up. Council Website to be upgraded. 	Development of a single digital identity for citizens, businesses and visitors to access online services.	Jo Harley	The Swansea Account project is currently in development. Digital platform is in place and live. Further work is ongoing to finalised the look and feel of the customer account experience and will be part of the upgraded Council Website which is in progress. The Account project has been piloted in the first instance with Passport
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R2	R2 Part 2 of the report notes that whilst it is important that authorities comply with relevant data protection legislation, they also need to share data with partners to ensure citizens receive efficient and effective services. Whilst these two things are not mutually exclusive, uncertainty on data protection responsibilities is resulting in some officers not sharing data, even where there is agreement to provide partners with information. We recommend that authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share; 	Prepare revised guidance around data sharing, based on the consultation draft Code of Practice published by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), and the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI).	New and revised staffnet pages providing advice on data sharing will be developed during Q2-2020.	Well-informed managers, confident in their knowledge of the opportunities of (and limits to) data sharing.	Kim Collis	General advice on data sharing via Staffnet has been developed over several years. Mandatory on-line training around data protection and cyber security has been provided via the Council's 'Learning Pool' portal.
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R2	R2 Part 2 as above..... We recommend that authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities. 	Undertake an initial audit of protocols and schedule any necessary reviews; to be undertaken by the Information Governance Unit (IGU) and service areas involved, in light of ICO guidelines.	Aim: Q2-2020 (initial audit), with further proposed actions to follow.	An effective corporate 'baseline' data sharing protocol, supplemented by service-specific protocols for users, developed over time in accordance with best practice guidelines.	Kim Collis	There is a facility for services to upload protocols to the IAR, or to use WASPI for external protocols.

Ref	WAO REPORT	Recommendation Reference	Recommendation Report Reason	Swansea Specific Recommendations	Actions to Achieve Recommendation	Milestones / Timescales / Targets	What would success look like?	LEAD Nominated Officer(s)	Achievements to date
									Jan-20
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R3	R3 In Part 3 of our report, we conclude that adequate resources and sufficient capacity are ongoing challenges. However, without upskilling staff to make better use of data, authorities are missing opportunities to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. We recommend that authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify staff who have a role in analysing and managing data to remove duplication and free up resources to build and develop capacity in data usage; 	1. To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of a Data Strategy. 2. Subject to 1, undertake a focussed skills audit to identify Council staff whose key role relates to data analysis and management, and to draw out gaps and other issues. 3. Subject to 1, identify actions (via skills audit) that can be taken to identify and develop these specialist data skills.	1. Prepare draft Data Strategy by Q1-2021. 2. In parallel with development of data strategy: (i) liaise with WAO to determine skills required to undertake data analysis role(s). (ii) research appropriate qualifications in data analysis. (iii) identify Council roles where data analysis is a key component.	A network of staff with the skills to effectively work with data, and increased awareness of expertise within services.	Adrian Chard / Richard Rowlands	Ongoing sharing of experience and knowledge currently occurs as required between officers in services working with data.
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R3	R3 In Part 3 as above.....We recommend that authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills. 	See proposed actions in row above.				
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R4	R4 Part 4 of our report highlights that authorities have more to do to create a data-driven decision-making culture and to unlock the potential of the data they hold. We recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set data reporting standards to ensure minimum data standards underpin decision making; 	1. Scope and undertake a review of good practice and case studies in data reporting in the performance review process. 2. Corporate team and services to continue to implement improvements to data quality and reporting standards.	Report initial findings Q2-2020, with future stages to be developed.	The Council adopting a common set of data reporting standards, as far as is possible and beneficial.	Richard Rowlands / Steve King	Despite staff departures, there remains expertise and experience among Council staff working with data and the reporting standards attached to specific service areas.
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R4	R4 Part 4 as above.....We recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make more open data available. 	1. To consider and develop our approach to this in the context of the Data Strategy. 2. Subject to 1, explore and promote opportunities to make open data available, where possible and beneficial, in conjunction with services. 3. Continue to work with other local authorities and public bodies on the emerging agenda around	1. Prepare draft Data Strategy by Q1-2021. 2. Future detailed actions subject to Data Strategy.	A Council which recognises and values open data, and supports the innovative use of open data to affect positive change and improve local decision making.	Richard Rowlands / Steve King	A small number of examples of providing open data have been progressed, mostly linked to legislative requirements, e.g. Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) data via Equality Act 2010 regulations, public toilets data via Public Health (Wales) Act 2017.
	The Maturity of Local Government Use of Data	LGUD-R4	R4 Part 4 as above.....We recommend that local authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the range and quality of the information needed by decision makers and the format it is presented 	Information providers in the Council continually need to be mindful of data accuracy and quality, its purpose, and the expectations of the target audience.	Ongoing activity. Our approach, and potential improvements, to be further reviewed in light of the development of draft Data Strategy.	To be reviewed in light of the Data Strategy.	Sarah Lackenby	The 'Performance and Statistics' section of the Council website includes information on the performance of Council services and local, contextual statistical information / links for staff and other users. It is kept under

Agenda Item 9

Service Improvement and Finance Work Plan 2019-20

<p>Meeting 1 24th June 2019</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-election of Convener <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bethan Hopkins – Scrutiny Officer 2. Terms of Reference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Convener 3. WAO Report – Local Government Data Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance • Sarah Caulkin – Chief Transformation Officer 4. End of Year Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Convener 5. Work Plan 2019/20
<p>Meeting 2 22nd July 2019</p>	<p>Cancelled</p>
<p>Meeting 3 19th August 2019</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End of Year 2018/19 Performance Monitoring Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager • Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance 2. Q1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2019/20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre 3. Revenue Outturn and Savings Tracker 2018/19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre 4. Revenue Outturn 2018/19 (HRA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre 5. Capital Outturn and Financing 2018/19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre
<p>Meeting 4 16th September 2019</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Archives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracey McNulty – Head of Cultural Services • Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism 2. Charges Item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Williams – Head of Commercial Services • Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance
<p>Meeting 5 21st October 2019</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reserve Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Dong – Deputy Chief Finance and Deputy 151 Officer 2. Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring 2018/19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Howell – Head of Waste Management and Parks • Cllr Mark Thomas – Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure Management 3. Q1 Performance Monitoring Report 2019/20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager • Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance

<p>Meeting 7 9th December 2019</p>	<p>1. Mid-Year Budget Statement 2019/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>2. Q2 Budget Monitoring 2019/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre <p>3. Planning Annual Performance Report 2018/19 and Response to WAO Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ryan Thomas - Development Conservation and Design Manager Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Delivery
<p>Meeting 8 20th January 2020</p>	<p>1. Q2 Performance Monitoring Report 2019/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager Cllr Clive Lloyd – Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Performance <p>2. Budget Proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Centre
<p>Budget Meeting 9 19th February 2020 (tentative)</p>	<p>1. Sustainable Swansea - Fit for the Future: Budget Proposals 2020/21 – 2023/24 – pre-decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services Service Centre Cllr Rob Stewart – Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy
<p>Meeting 10 2nd March 2020</p>	<p>1. Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2018/19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Julie Nicholas Humphreys - Customer Services Manager Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Delivery and Performance <p>2. Q3 Budget Monitoring 2019/20</p> <p>Ben Smith – Head of Financial Services and Service Centre Cllr Rob Stewart – Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy</p> <p>3. Wales Audit Office Report on Local Government Use of Data</p> <p>Steve King – Information, Research & GIS Team Leader Cllr Clive Lloyd – Resilience and Strategic Collaboration</p>
<p>Meeting 11 30th March 2020</p>	<p>1. Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2018/19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen Gibbins - Principal Librarian for Information & Learning Cllr Robert Francis Davies – Cabinet Member Investment, Regeneration and Tourism <p>2. Q3 Performance Monitoring Report 2019/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager Cllr David Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Delivery and Performance
<p>Meeting 12 11th May 2020</p>	<p>1. Annual Review of Well-being Objectives and Corporate Plan 2018/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Rowlands – Corporate Performance Manager Cllr Rob Stewart – Cabinet Member Economy and Strategy

- Also WAO Reports, Pre-Decision Items and Data Unit Wales – Local Government Performance Bulletin