Dinas a Sir Abertawe

Cofnodion Cyfarfod y Panel Perfformiad Craffu - Gwella Gwasanaethau a Chyllid

O bell drwy Teams

Dydd Llun, 10 Mai 2021 am 10.00 am

Yn Bresennol: Y Cynghorydd C A Holley (Cadeirydd) oedd yn llywyddu

Y Cynghorydd(wyr)	**Y Cynghorydd(wyr)**	**Y Cynghorydd(wyr)**
P M Black	P Downing	P R Hood-Williams
L James	M H Jones	J W Jones
D W W Thomas	I E Mann	B J Rowlands

Mynychwyr eraill

Aandea Lewis	Aelod y Cabinet dros Gartrefi, Ynni a Thrawsnewid Gwasanaethau

Swyddog(ion)

Emily-Jayne Davies	Swyddog Craffu
David Meyrick	Rheolwr Tai Cynllunio a Chyflwyno
Mark Wade	Pennaeth Tai ac Iechyd y Cyhoedd

Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb
Y Cynghorydd(wy): P K Jones

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1 **Datgeliadau o fuddiannau personol a rhagfarnol.**

Yn unol â'r Côd Ymddygiad a fabwysiadwyd gan Ddinas a Sir Abertawe, ni ddatganwyd unrhyw fuddiannau.

2 **Gwahardd pleidleisiau Chwip a Datgan Chwipiau'r Pleidiau**

Yn unol â Mesur Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru) 2011, ni ddatganwyd pleidleisiau chwip na chwipiau'r pleidiau.

3 **Cofnodion y Cyfarfod(ydd) Blaenorol**

Cytunwyd bod cofnodion cyfarfod y Panel Craffu Perfformiad Gwella Gwasanaethau a Chyllid, a gynhaliwyd ar 12 Ebrill 2021, yn gofnod cywir.

4 **Cwestiynau gan y Cyhoedd**

Ni chafwyd unrhyw gwestiynau gan y cyhoedd.

5 **Diweddariad Blynyddol Safonau Ansawdd Tai Cymru**

Daeth y Cynghorydd Andrea Lewis, Aelod y Cabinet dros Gartrefi, Ynni a Thrawsnewid Gwasanaethau, i'r cyfarfod i gyflwyno **Adroddiad Blynyddol Safon Ansawdd Tai Cymru (SATC)** ac ateb cwestiynau. Roedd Mark Wade, Pennaeth Tai ac Iechyd y Cyhoedd, a David Meyrick, Rheolwr Cynllunio a Darparu Tai, hefyd yn bresennol i gyflwyno i'r panel ac ateb cwestiynau.

Cynhaliodd y panel drafodaeth am y gofyniad statudol i bob landlord cymdeithasol yng Nghymru, sy'n rhan o Strategaeth Tai Lleol y cyngor yn ogystal â'r Mesurau Atebolrwydd Cyhoeddus. Clywodd y panel fod Llywodraeth Cymru wedi atal ei holl weithgareddau monitro SATC yn 2020 a'i bod ond wedi ailgyflwyno'r rhain ym mis Mawrth 2021 oherwydd y pandemig. Yn wreiddiol, roedd Llywodraeth Cymru wedi pennu'r dyddiad cau ar gyfer cartrefi cymdeithasol a rhentir gyrraedd SATC erbyn 31 Rhagfyr 2020. Oherwydd y pandemig, y dyddiad cau newydd yw 31 Rhagfyr 2021 erbyn hyn.

Roedd y trafodaethau'n cynnwys y canlynol:

- Effeithiau'r pandemig ar y gwaith sy'n cael ei wneud a hygyrchedd i eiddo â thenantiaid. Nododd y Cyng. Lewis y gwaith gwych a wnaed gan y Gwasanaethau Tai dan amgylchiadau anodd.
- Clywodd y panel fod SATC yn nodi ei ofynion ar draws chwe phrif thema sy'n cynnwys cyflwr da; bod yn ddiogel; wedi'u gwresogi'n ddigonol, yn ynni-effeithlon ac wedi'u hinswleiddio'n dda; cynnwys ceginau ac ystafelloedd ymolchi modern; wedi'u lleoli mewn amgylcheddau diogel a deniadol ac yn cyd-fynd â gofynion penodol yr aelwyd.
- Esboniodd swyddogion, os nad ystyrir bod elfennau o fewn y themâu hyn mewn cyflwr rhesymol, ac yn perfformio fel y bwriadwyd, y cânt eu hystyried fel 'methiant derbyniol'.
- Dros y 21 mis diwethaf, mae'r nifer sy'n cydymffurfio'n llawn â SATC wedi cynyddu 2,338 i 7,753 eiddo.
- Clywodd y panel y disgwylir y bydd pob eiddo yn y rhaglen wedi cael cyfle i dderbyn cegin ac ystafell ymolchi newydd yn 2021, er gwaethaf llai o fomentwm oherwydd COVID-19.
- Erbyn hyn mae 7,753 o gartrefi wedi'u cydymffurfio'n llawn ac mae 5,795 o gartrefi yn cynnwys o leiaf un methiant derbyniol yn Abertawe. Mae hyn yn cynrychioli 57.2% sy'n cydymffurfio'n llawn a 42.8% â methiannau derbyniol.
- Mae'r cyngor yn disgwyl y bydd lefelau'r nifer sy'n cydymffurfio'n llawn yn codi a bydd methiannau derbyniol yn lleihau wrth i'r rhaglenni gwella sy'n weddill barhau i gael eu cyflwyno yn 2021. Bydd tenantiaid yn parhau i gael eu hannog i gymryd rhan er mwyn sicrhau cydymffurfiad llawn â SATC.
- Holodd y panel sut mae 'methiannau derbyniol' yn cael eu cofnodi yn erbyn eiddo lle mae'r tenantiaid eu hunain wedi gwneud gwaith uwchraddio, fel ceginau

newydd. Esboniodd swyddogion fod gwaith ar y gweill i ailymweld ag eiddo o'r fath er mwyn cofnodi eu bod yn cydymffurfio.

CYTUNWYD y byddai swyddogion yn dosbarthu gwybodaeth am brosiectau tai i aelodau perthnasol y ward.

Manteisiodd y panel ar y cyfle i gydnabod ymdrechion staff, yn enwedig yn ystod y flwyddyn ddiwethaf o'r cyfyngiadau symud. Ystyriodd aelodau'r panel yr wybodaeth a ddarparwyd, gan ofyn cwestiynau, a mynegi'u barn am yr wybodaeth a oedd ar gael. Diolchodd y Cadeirydd iddynt am eu mewnbwn

6 **Adolygiad Blynyddol**

Ystyriodd y panel y dogfennau adolygu ac nid oedd ganddynt unrhyw beth pellach i'w ychwanegu.

7 **Llythyrau**

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 11.07 am

To:
Cllr Andrea Lewis
Cabinet Member for Homes, Energy & Service Transformation

Please ask for: *Gofynnwch am:*	Overview & Scrutiny
Direct Line: *Llinell Uniongyrochol:*	01792 636292
e-Mail *e-Bost:*	scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
Date *Dyddiad:*	26 May 2021

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Homes, Energy & Service Transformation. The letter concerns the meeting held on 10 May 2021 and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard Annual Report.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

On the 10^{th} May, the Panel met to discuss the Welsh Housing Quality Standard Annual Report. The Panel wish to thank yourself, Mark Wade, Head of Housing and Public Health, and David Meyrick, Housing Planning and Delivery Manager, for attending to present to the Panel and answer questions. We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussions and to share the views of the Panel.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Annual Report

The Panel heard that the last fourteen months have been challenging, following pandemic restrictions in terms of internal work on properties. You explained that emergency repair work was carried out when required, and you acknowledged the hard work of staff working sympathetically and carefully during the pandemic. We recognise that this did set back targets, however, we understand Welsh Government have addressed this and subsequently extended the compliance deadline.

Officers explained that the WHQS programme was introduced in 2002 with the objective of raising the standard of social housing across Wales, embracing a large number of legal and regulatory obligations. The original deadline for compliance was 31^{st} December 2020, now having been extended to the end of this year.

We heard that the WHQS fits in with a number of corporate priorities, and links to improving public health, resident well-being and reducing poverty. The £500M investment over the last eighteen years has also had a big economic impact on the communities. The Council has targeted training and opportunities towards people in the communities where work is being carried out.

Officers explained that the Council has a duty to compile and present statistics annually. We heard that normal reporting cycles have been disrupted by the pandemic and this report subsequently covers the longer period from April 2019 to December 2020. The pandemic also impacted upon the ability to deliver the work programme. Welsh Government have given an extension of twelve months to meet the compliance period, now being 31st December 2021.

The Panel heard that in order to meet objectives, Welsh Government guidance sets out forty elements, captured under six generic themes. To achieve compliance, the Council must complete all forty of these elements. When those works are complete, and performing as intended, they are classed as compliant. Officers explained that every work programme has a completion certificate, which is then recorded in a database, reflecting the type of work completed and keeping an accurate record. Council records are then validated by external inspection.

Welsh Government guidance recognises that it is not always possible to bring properties up to standard, in which case an 'acceptable fail' is recorded. The Panel heard that the permitted reasons for an acceptable fail are tenant choice, physical constraints of a site, costs or programme timing.

Officers outlined achievements since April 2019 as; an increase in compliance by 2,338 properties, a 17% increase in compliance since last reported. 5,795 properties are currently categorised as an acceptable fail, inclusive of 3,165 properties where residents have chosen not to participate in the scheme. Officers calculate that the Council will not achieve beyond 77% of compliance, in line with other Local Authorities statistical returns, due to tenant choice.

We heard that work has increased surrounding Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and that a full-time officer is reviewing every EPC report to ensure it captures all work done. The Panel understood that this is an important piece of work to ensure a true reflection of investment when validated by third parties.

We heard that, of the eleven retained housing authorities in Wales, seven have already announced achievement of WHQS compliance. Officers explained that these results vary widely, from 10% to 53% acceptable fails. We understand that Swansea Council anticipate a result in line with the average national picture of retained Local Authorities. Officers outlined that, by the end of the compliance deadline, another £49M worth of capital repair programmes is available to deliver work elements. Officers are confident this will increase total compliance to 70% or above, dependant on any future pandemic restrictions. We heard that this will mean 30% acceptable fail levels, of which 23% is likely to be on the basis of tenant choice not to participate in improvement schemes.

The Panel heard that WHQS does not conclude at the end of the *compliance phase*. The Council then enter into the *maintenance phase* – when responsibilities will be increased, to include decarbonisation and extra fire safety requirements, in addition to maintaining properties at the current standard. The programme will therefore continue indefinitely and officers will continue to report to Scrutiny and to Council to update Members. The Council will also continue to engage with residents / stakeholders through a number of means, such as meetings and websites.

Members queried the number of properties with an acceptable fail regarding smoke alarms. You explained to us that this figure now stands at six, rather than the reported eight. Officers highlighted that smoke alarms are fitted in each property but they have not had access to ensure all are working properly.

The Panel sought assurances that, during the lockdown period, work continued to be carried out on void properties. You explained to us that staff did concentrate efforts on applicable void properties as it was safer to work in an empty property at the time.

Officers undertook to continue to update Members annually on projects and programme delivery within individual wards.

The Panel sought clarification regarding tenant improvements, understanding that the acceptable fail is measured on whether or not tenants agree to be part of the scheme. You explained that the Council must respect that tenants may not want to change what they have installed / invested. Officers further explained that they have recently had clarification from Welsh Government on this point, being advised that the Council can start reviewing such properties. We heard that if properties are technically compliant, the Council need not record an acceptable fail. Some small items, for example extractor fans, may be offered to the tenant in order to bring properties in to compliance.

We queried whether carbon monoxide monitors were installed in properties. Officers explained that there is a dual-function carbon monoxide / smoke alarm device hardwired to the mains circuit in all properties.

The Panel asked how many roofs have been completed altogether, officers confirming that new roofs, weatherboards and rainwater systems have been delivered to 6496 properties within the last 18 years. Members remarked on a recent visit to a void property, commenting on the high standard of installation work and general fit-out.

The Panel asked what enforcement action is available to the Council should tenants not maintain properties or cause deliberate damage. It was explained that procedures are in place and tenants may be charged, for example, for the removal of fly tipping.

Members queried the procurement process. Officers explained that the Council endeavours to deliver work through in-house services when possible, having to complete the tender process. In-house services undertake a significant proportion of all housing repairs on Council housing stock. We heard that this provides a good service to a good standard and that the Council will support in-house contractors as long as they remain competitive in terms of delivery. Officers highlighted that some

larger programmes need 'framework contractors' – for example, the kitchen and bathrooms programme was an investment of over £100M and required input from four framework contractors as well as in-house services.

Officers clarified that the Council expects to borrow more money with the forthcoming *Decarbonisation Programme*. You clarified how the Council fund the WHQS and confirmed that it is covered entirely by the Housing Revenue Account.

Your Response

We hope that you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised, but, on this occasion, no written response is required.

Yours sincerely,

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