



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 14 September 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P K Jones
S Pritchard
T M White

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
H Lawson
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

T J Hennegan
W G Lewis
W G Thomas

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley S M Jones J W Jones

Also Present

Councillor Mark Thomas Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management
Councillor Andrea Lewis Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Service Transformation

Officer(s)

Jeremy Davies Group Leader Parks and Cleansing
Scott Dummett Lead Lawyer
Kate Jones Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar Scrutiny Team Leader
Antony Moss Energy Manger
Alex O'Brien Property Manager
Stuart Willingale Team Leader Cleansing Strategy

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): C Anderson and C E Lloyd

Councillor Co-opted Members: P R Hood-Williams and L R Jones

37 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

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

38 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

39 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on the 17 August 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

40 Public Question Time.

There were no public questions.

41 Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities.

Litter and Community Cleansing

The Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management and Officers were present for the consideration of the report on Litter and Community Cleansing.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the impact of the pandemic on both the service and staff and thanked all staff for their continued work and effort during such a tough period. There had been an unprecedented amount of litter as well as the restrictions on the amount of staff that could travel in a vehicle together. There was still some catch up ongoing and 15 extra staff had been employed.

The Committee acknowledged that the work of staff had been exemplary during the pandemic, and also praised the work of individual members helping to tackle litter in their wards.

Questions and Discussions focussed on the following: -

- Performance and Trends in respect of Local Environmental Audit & Management System (LEAMS) – this was a monitoring method of grading the cleanliness of streets which was checked and verified independently
- Use of Community Councillor budgets for cleansing services – costing and level of service provided
- Service response to litter and community cleansing issues– the service aimed to deal with urgent requests within 1 day and standard requests within 5 days
- Fly-tipping – resources to tackle fly tipping and comparisons to neighbouring authorities. Process of dealing with repeat offenders of fly tipping and unlicensed waste carriers – noted a recent joint operation with South Wales Police the results of which were due to be published shortly
- Dog fouling – the Council adopted an approach of engagement, education then enforcement as a final resort, the difficulties of enforcing and catching offenders were highlighted
- Enforcement – discussion around publicising fixed penalty notices as a deterrent as well as consideration of public messaging e.g. warnings of

prosecution on Council vehicles. Noted that the 'Don't be a Tosser' campaign had got people's attention.

- Litter & Drainage - cleaning top of drain covers – currently being incorporated into routine check for the street cleansing team to free up gully teams for blocked drains – an enhanced service was provided for about 3 months during the leaf fall season
- Improvement – heard that service is currently working on a project of digital solutions for cleansing which will link fly-tipping, bulky waste collections etc.
- Effect of littering on wildlife – discussed possibility of greater public awareness raising of the effect of littering on wildlife
- Beach litter picking – told of very high levels of litter picking especially during the summer season particularly during the last 2 summers during the pandemic with numerous parties on beaches – discussion on possibility of litter picking at an earlier time so the beaches were clean for the early morning swimmers
- Neighbourhood Environmental Action Team (NEAT) – no plan to restart at present, but it was very popular and all were very keen to restart once Social Services could confirm it was possible and safe to do so

Energy Policy incl. Generation, Supply & District Heating

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Service Transformation and Officers were present for the consideration of the report on Litter and the Energy Strategy

Councillor Lewis thanked the team for their work in this area, they were a small team who she stated were doing extraordinary things.

Questions and Discussions focussed on the following: -

- Governance - membership and governance of Climate Change Programme Board and the Climate Change Steering Group
- Council's Gas Supply - Clarification of green gas, the difference between green gas and natural gas and the extent to which it is being used
- Future of the grid and power sources such as hydrogen, green gases etc. – ever evolving area with constantly advancing technology
- Proposal, being led by the University, for a hydrogen fuelling station on Fabian Way
- Mini Hydro turbines in docks area, and looking at possibilities of using weir's of rivers
- Progress on Tidal Lagoon – The Council was committed to Dragon Energy Island and a bid had recently been submitted to the UK Government Community Generation Fund to help prepare an outline business case
- Use of £1.3 Million for a Re:fit Cymru (Energy Efficiency) Phase 1 project – upgrade LED lighting, building insulation, solar panels on roofs etc.
- Progress on Solar Farm – it was anticipated that the planning application would be presented around January 2022
- Possibility of re-introduction of subsidy on low energy light bulbs
- What Local Authorities could do to support the climate change crisis further and what resources, funding and powers they would need to do more – role for

members to promote the agenda in the community i.e. supporting businesses to get grants etc.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Members and Officers

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Members, reflecting the discussions and sharing the views of the Committee.

42 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Adult Services (Councillor Sue Jones, Convener).

Councillor Sue Jones, Convener, presented the Adult Services Performance Panel Update Report.

Further to the written report provided she specifically expressed concern for the future of social care and highlighted that with day services not being up and running fully, carers for people with learning disabilities were having problems accessing day services. She also thanked all staff for their efforts.

The Chair thanked Councillor Sue Jones for the update.

Resolved that the update be noted.

43 Scrutiny Dispatches - Impact Report.

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Dispatches – Impact Report

Resolved that Scrutiny Dispatches – Impact Report proceed to Council.

44 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

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

Resolved that the membership of the Healthy City Scrutiny Working Group be approved as outlined in the report.

45 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Chair presented a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme.

The next Scrutiny Programme Committee was scheduled for 19 October 2021. The main items scheduled were Recovery & Transformation Plan Progress Update and the Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report. The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee was also scheduled to attend.

Resolved that the report be noted.

46 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair presented a report on 'Scrutiny Letters' for information.

A letter was included from the Bus Services Working Group, this would be rolled over to the next meeting in order for Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convenor, to speak to the Committee about the work of the Working Group.

Resolved that the correspondence relating to the Bus Services Working Group be deferred to the next meeting for discussion.

47 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.

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

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm

Chair