



**To/
Councillor Hayley Gwilliam
Cabinet Member for Community
(Support)**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

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Scrutiny

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SPC/2024-25/2

02 August 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Committee on 16 July 2024. It is about our follow up on the Co-production Scrutiny Working Group. A formal written response is not required.

Dear Councillor Gwilliam,

Follow up – Co-production Scrutiny Working Group

The Committee takes responsibility for following up on previous Scrutiny Working Groups, to check on progress with the topic / issue(s) and response to any specific suggestions or recommendations made and agreed action coming out of the Scrutiny session.

At our Committee meeting in July, we followed up on the Co-production Scrutiny Working Group, which originally met in March 2023 to look at a number of issues related to the Council's role and responsibilities on the development of Co-production in the Council and progress, helping to improve involvement and engagement with service users, partners and the public in the design & delivery of services & decision-making.

Overall, the Working Group had recognised that Co-production at Swansea Council was early into its journey, but were encouraged by the approach the Council was taking. Key issues for our follow up session were progress on:

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- How Co-production has been developed and current stage in the journey
- Reports / Decisions made
- How the advice, support and feedback from Co-Production Lab Wales has benefitted the Council
- The role of Co-production Champions and extent to which Co-production is being embedded across the Council
- Co-production models / tools being utilised, with examples of activity
- The delivery of Councillor / Officer training & development on Co-production

We thank you and lead officers for attending the meeting to answer questions. Thank you for providing a report on progress since the Working Group on the delivery of the Co-production Project and Strategy for Swansea Council, and updating us on the issues raised by the Working Group and actions taken.

The Head of Communications, Corporate Planning & Performance, Lee Wenham, took the Committee through the report highlighting certain aspects, including key findings from the learning phase, the advice and support provided by Co-Production Lab Wales, developments, and next steps.

We noted that:

- there are currently 48 officers on the Co-production Champions Network list. The Champions are available to services wanting to develop more Co-production activities, willing to act as a critical friend, provide advice and advocate for Co-production across the Council.
- a suite of training sessions has been delivered to Council staff, covering various aspects of Co-production.
- a comprehensive toolkit has been developed to assist staff and members in implementing Co-production, hosted on the staff intranet site, providing a large amount of information and guidance. You reported that this will be promoted across the Council, communicating the benefits of Co-production and the support that is available for those wanting to use more Co-productive approaches.
- a high-level Co-production Policy has been developed (approved by Council in January 2024) explaining what it means and to support everyone in the organisation to consider Co-production as an approach, where appropriate, providing a framework to incorporate Co-production behaviours in the work they do and the services they deliver. We noted that the Policy draws on the good work undertaken within Social Services, specifically the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board Strategic Co-production Framework and Swansea Council's Co-production for Social Care Strategy, building on the experience and learning. You stated that Swansea Council was the first Council in Wales to introduce a Co-Production Policy.

Your report concluded that:

- the Council's Co-production project, in collaboration with Co-production Lab Wales, has made significant strides in embedding a culture of Co-production.
- the learning phase identified existing good practices and areas for improvement, while the Co-production Champions Network and comprehensive training sessions equipped staff with the necessary skills and knowledge.
- the development of a corporate Co-production Policy and a practical toolkit further supports the Council's commitment to an increase of the use of co-productive approaches across the Council.

Committee Views, including any outstanding issues / actions:

We discussed the potential for the use of Co-production to be extended across all Council directorates, noting its relative success where there are specific client groups such as in Social Services where there were already examples of Co-production activity.

The Council will need to look at the key areas where Co-production can be targeted, for example within the Housing Service, where it could have the most value. We noted the intention to look at how Co-production can benefit the Council's 12 Corporate Transformation Programmes and projects, with at least six of these considering its use and piloting approaches. It was understood that in the case of some Council services Co-production would not necessarily be applicable or appropriate.

Before we can conclude formal follow up of the Co-production Working Group the Committee would like a further report in 12 months for an update on how the use of Co-production is developing, to include case studies where Co-production has been used across the Council following the introduction of a Co-production Policy. You reported that we have a solid foundation to increase of the use of Co-productive approaches across the Council, so the Committee looks forward to seeing evidence of Co-production being embedded in the Council and difference made.

The Committee was told that an annual report will be produced detailing the development of Co-production across the Council, to be reported to the Council's Strategic Equality Board which will monitor the impact of the Co-production Policy. **The Committee requested that this be circulated to all Councillors to improve awareness and understanding.**

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful and would welcome comments on any of the issues raised within, however, we do not expect you to provide a formal response.

Yours sincerely,

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

COUNCILLOR PETER BLACK
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee
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