

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) School Governance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

Key Question: How can the Council ensure that school governors provide effective challenge for their schools?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel’s final report will be presented to Cabinet on 18 February. A response to the recommendations from Cabinet will then be expected within two months.

Projected End Date: Complete

b) Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

Key Question: How is the Council working with health and other partners to reduce demand for specialist child & adolescent mental health services?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel is due to meet the SCVS Mental Health Forum on 27 January. Following this the panel has planned evidence gathering sessions with the following:

- 16 February – Chief Education Officer and councillors Richards and Raynor
- 23 February – Head teachers from primary and secondary schools
- 22 March – Head of Adult Services

Projected End Date: April 2016

c) Building Sustainable Communities (convenor: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

Key Question: How can the council best support residents to run services in their own communities?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

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The Panel have now agreed their Terms of Reference (attached) and work programme for the inquiry and started the evidence gathering with a meeting on the 27 January with Poverty and Prevention looking at the Community Transformation Fund. The panel also spoke to the Head of Legal and discussed how the council is preparing for and currently dealing with aspects of community action. The panel will now put together a survey and also speak to frontline staff and community organisations around this matter.

Projected End Date: April 2016

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups:

a) Tackling Poverty (convener: Sybil Crouch)

Preparations for this inquiry will begin shortly.

3. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

Follow-ups of inquiries will consider both the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and wider impact / difference made. Inquiry Panels are reconvened between 6-12 months after cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Services for Looked After Children	17 Sep 2013	14	1	0	15 Jul 2014 (Follow up complete)
Public Transport	12 Nov 2013	13	1	0	20 Oct 2014 (Follow up complete)
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	3 Dec 2014 (Follow up complete)
Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	17 Nov 2014 (Follow up complete)
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	24 Jun 2015 (Follow up complete)
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	11 Jun 2015 (Follow up complete)
Inward investment	20 Jan 2015	10	0	2	14 Jul 2015 Further follow up (3 March 2016)

Public Engagement	17 Feb 2015	15	1	0	25 Aug 2015 (Follow up complete)
Streetscene	14 Apr 2015	14	4	3	20 Jan 2016 (Follow up complete)
Social Care at Home	20 Aug 2015	16	5	1	May 2016
Corporate Culture	15 Oct 2015	19	0	0	Jul 2016
Education Inclusion	21 Jan 2016	19	0	1	Oct 2016

4. Performance Panels:

a) **Service Improvement & Finance** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

See separate report - item 8 of the agenda.

b) **Schools Performance** (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The School Performance met on the 21 January to consider the Annual Education Performance Data including the ERW data packs. They will also meet on the 9 February to look at the Education part of the Annual Budget and on the 11 February when they will have an event to look at best practice in schools across Swansea.

c) **Local Service Board** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The Panel's next meeting is on 22 February which will be attended by Cllr Rob Stewart, Leader of the City & County of Swansea in his capacity as Chair of the LSB. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss what progress the panel has made in scrutinising the LSB priority of Older People's Independence.

The Panel will also receive a briefing from Dave McKenna, Scrutiny Manager, on the transition from Local Service Boards to Public Service Boards as a result of the introduction of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Panel are being asked for their views on the draft terms of reference of the Public Service Board and the on-going role of scrutiny in the new arrangements.

d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: Paxton Hood-Williams)

The Panel met on 18 January to examine the performance of the Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and to consider its impact on children and families. The panel was pleased with the performance of the domestic abuse hub. In particular:

- The Equilibrium Programme which educated perpetrators of domestic abuse to change their behaviour and was a solutions focussed programme in line with the Sings of Safety practice framework.

- The various campaigns that encouraged women to seek help and support, eg Ask and Act
- The Ray Project which worked with schools (some, not all schools in Swansea) to help identify controlling and abusive behaviour in young people. The panel felt that all schools would benefit from working with this project.
- The multi-agency approach of the hub and the inclusion of all the agencies in the recent systems review.
- The panel was particularly supportive of the proposal to employ a Health Visitor and adult services and substance misuse social workers which would then give the hub a full complement of staff.
- The ability of the Hub to work with families quickly, preventing duplication through the cross-agency working and to enable better commissioning of services.

The panel highlighted a number of concerns:

- Some schools were not receptive to the work of the Ray project. The panel felt that domestic abuse occurred across all areas of Swansea and therefore all schools could benefit from engaging with the Ray project.
- Following up on families who had accessed support but were not necessarily formal cases. In these instances the panel was informed that the Hub would monitor the number of police referrals of domestic violence via Public Protection Notices (PPNs)

5. Other Panels / Working Groups:

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Panels / Working Groups.

a) Transformation of Adult Social Services (convener: Uta Clay)

The Panel met on 11 January. Its key business was to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on the review of Abergelli and the Beeches.

The panel submitted the following views the Cabinet Member for consideration alongside the report that was presented to Cabinet on 21 January.

- The panel understood the need for the review of the current service and the need to deal with the under capacity that was identified was part of the review.
- The panel was broadly supportive of the proposed remodelling of Abergelli and the Beaches alternative day services by consolidating the 2 services, using the Abergelli building as the premises and it supports the creation of additional capacity which will be created at Abergelli.
- The panel's main concern was that service users, who as a result of their individual reviews, decided to withdraw from the day services

at the Beeches and Abergelli, had a follow-up assessment to ensure that their decision remained right for them. The panel also felt that a further review at 6 months should be undertaken to ascertain that the service user continues to be comfortable with the choice they made.

- Two known cases were highlighted of service users who were unhappy with the move to Abergelli. The panel requested that, subject to the carers being in agreement, these cases would be referred to the Head of Adult Services.

Furthermore, the panel raised concerns regarding **safeguarding** and **personal development**. While these were not specifically related to the recommendations contained in the Cabinet Member's report – Review of Abergelli and the Beeches Alternative Day Services, they related to the delivery of day services

1. **Personal development:** the key workers in day centres did significant work with service users in helping them to realise their aspirations and develop their potential. This is highly skilled work which needs insights, training and expertise. Who will do this aspect in future? This task should be carried out by a professionally trained person, not through informal arrangements taking a group to a café in the community.
2. **Safeguarding:** given the key role day centre workers played over recognising signs that a service user might be subjected to forms of abuse, including financial exploitation, it is necessary to stipulate who will be tasked under the new arrangements to fulfil this responsibility and what training they will receive in order to discharge this responsibility.

b) **Education Through Regional Working** (regional scrutiny group)

A meeting for scrutiny councillors and officers from the six councils participating in ERW was held in Port Talbot on 22 September. Swansea was represented by Cllr Fiona Gordon and Cllr Cheryl Philpott. It was agreed that a scrutiny councillors group will be set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach. The next meeting will be hosted by Swansea and is being arranged for 11 March 2016. Swansea Scrutiny Team will provide the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

c) **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

The Local Flood Risk Management Working Group met on 14 December to consider the Local Flood Risk Management Plan. The Group identified a number of issues and recommendations which will be included in their letter to the Cabinet Member. They felt that the authority should have a joined up, holistic and strategic approach to the management of flood risk. The Working Group will also write to the

Committee requesting to meet on an annual basis in order to provide an on-going scrutiny involvement in the annual review of the Plan.

d) **Civic Events (convener: Cllr Anthony Colburn)**

The Convener of the Civic Events Working Group requested a follow-up meeting to address a number of issues that the working group felt needed further consideration.

d) **Welsh Housing Quality Standard (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)**

The Working Group will meet on 3 February with Councillor Andrea Lewis, the Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services, and officers, to consider the Council's progress towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard within its social housing stock.

e) **Tethered Horses (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)**

The Working Group met on 7 January and heard from Friends of Swansea Horses, the Pettifor Trust, the RSPCA and the Cabinet Member. A second meeting is being planned for early March when further evidence will be received. The working group will consider the Council's overall approach and has been asked to comment on a petition from Friends of Swansea Horses that calls for a ban on the tethering of horses on public spaces across Swansea.

Further Working Groups to be convened in the future as time and resources allow, in the order of priority shown:

1. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering assessment of current service in relation to TPOs (objectives, procedures and practice, challenges, improvement plans etc.) for questions and discussion. Some issues raised about the identification / maintenance of TPOs, enforcement process and sanctions, also in relation to the interface with local members about information relevant to their areas.

2. Corporate Building Services

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering assessment of current service (objectives and achievements, procedures and practice, value for money, challenges, improvement plans etc) for questions and discussion. Some issues raised in relation to procurement, costs / competitiveness, joined up working across the Council.

3. Roads / Highway Maintenance

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering service practices and procedures (e.g. dealing with pot holes), use of resources, prospects for improvement. This will enable questions about the quality and effectiveness of highway maintenance and repair, and also issues relating to the relationship with utilities and strategic planning / co-ordination of works to minimise disruption to major access roads.

Building Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

Terms of Reference

Key Question

The panel has agreed that the primary focus for the inquiry should be building sustainable communities through developing community action. The key question, therefore, is:

How can the council best support residents to run services in their own communities?

Lines of Inquiry

The panel will specifically be looking at the following aspects:

- **What does the community action strand mean in practice:** what is the Community Action Strand and how does it help to Build Sustainable Communities?
- **Level of support:** what level of support will the authority provide
- **Transition:** how do/will the transition of services from the local authority to communities actually work in practice and are the processes effective
- **Finance:** how will the transition and support be financed
- **Cross Authority/agency working:** how do we/will we work across the authority and with others to deliver the community action schemes?
- **Working with Communities:** how are we working with local communities to develop this strand
- **Impact:** What has been the impact of community action schemes to date
- **Good Practice:** look at successful and unsuccessful community action schemes and good practice here and elsewhere
- **Sustainable:** how do we/will we ensure continuity of the service provision

Intended Impact and Contribution

This inquiry intends to support the work of the council by:

- Drawing together some general principles for the development of the Community Action Strand
- Offering proposals for improvement in the long, medium and short term
- Providing a councillor perspective on how well the aspect is working
- Pointing to good practice examples
- Sharing of views of different people involved within this aspect