

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3A, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
MONDAY, 9 MAY 2016 AT 4.30 PM

PRESENT: M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

U C Clay
N J Davies
J W Jones
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

A C S Colburn
E W Fitzgerald
P M Meara

Councillor(s)

S E Crouch
T J Hennegan
G Owens

Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas
P R Hood-Williams

Co-opted Member(s)

F M Gordon

Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley

Officer(s)

Brij Madahar
Wendy Parkin

Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Senior Lawyer

178 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D W Cole and D J Lewis.

179 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL & PREJUDICIAL INTEREST.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

Councillor N J Davies – Minute 183 Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation - Personal Interest – employed by Graham Evans & Partners LLP which conducts public liability claims against the Authority.

180 **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.

181 **MINUTES:**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 11 April 2016, be agreed as a correct record.

In relation to Minute 166 Members sought clarification about the statement made by the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration about the inclusion of Library Services, along with other Cultural Services, in the 'Prior Information Notice' in order to seek interest from external parties. It was agreed that the committee's letter to the Cabinet Member, reflecting the Question & Answer Session, should ask him provide more information about this.

182 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.**

There were no public questions.

183 **CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION. (COUNCILLOR DAVID HOPKINS).**

Councillor Hopkins provided opening remarks, in support of his written report, prior to taking questions from the Committee.

Stuart Davies, Head of Highways & Transportation, and Chris Howell, Head of Waste Management & Parks, were also present and assisted the committee as required on their questions.

The question session led to discussion around the following topics:

- The status of relevant Commissioning Reviews (e.g. Waste Management, Parks & Cleaning, Highways & Transportation)
- Recycling performance / excessive packaging / litter
- Backlog of road repairs (e.g. potholes), inspection and prioritisation
- Civil parking enforcement / costs to provide Parking Services
- Swansea Marina income / maintenance of Tawe Barrage
- Progress on developing a Quality Bus Partnership with First Cymru
- Fleet Management and depot rationalisation
- Charges for street closures (e.g. national celebrations / street parties)
- Dog fouling & enforcement / provision & cost of dog waste bins
- Street cleansing schedules and targeting
- Programme for Safe Routes to School / 20 mph limits around schools
- Grass cutting in parks / maintenance e.g. where managed by 'Friends of Parks' Groups
- Cost of works in relation to councillors' environmental allowances (e.g. wooden posts to prevent parking and protect grass verges)
- Effectiveness of LED street lighting
- Home to school transport

The Chair thanked Councillor Hopkins and the officers for attending.

RESOLVED that the Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

184 **SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORT - LOCAL SERVICE BOARD. (COUNCILLOR MARY JONES).**

Councillor Mary Jones, Convener, provided an update of the work of the Local Service Board Scrutiny Performance Panel.

Further to the discussion at the last committee meeting she stated that the work of the Performance Panel had now concluded its work, and the new Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel would be meeting from June 2016.

She referred to the main conclusions of the Panel's which have been communicated to the chair of the Local Service Board, Councillor Rob Stewart (Leader of the Council). The Panel's letter is due to be considered by the new Public Services Board when it meets for the first time on 17 May, and Members hoped to see the new Board accept the Panel's views and recommendations.

RESOLVED that the report be **NOTED**.

185 **ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME REVIEW 2015/16.**

As the final meeting of the current municipal year, the report assisted Councillors to take stock of the work done during the municipal year and reflect on the experience. The Committee was also encouraged to begin to think about the scrutiny work programme for the forthcoming municipal year.

The report provided the committee with:

- A summary of the work of the Committee and the overall scrutiny work programme (including progress of the various Panels and Working Groups)
- Feedback on the performance of scrutiny and the annual councillor survey
- A summary of improvement activities carried out
- A list of outstanding work that may be carried over
- The Cabinet forward plan for opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny.

Members were invited to give views about the work programme and experience of scrutiny to help evaluate how well things have worked and identify areas for improvement. The committee considered the information provided and the following issues were raised during discussion:

- Transformation of Adult Social Services Panel – the convener of the Panel, Councillor Uta Clay, referred to the work of the Panel over the last 18 months, and its concluding letter to the Cabinet Member for Adults & Vulnerable People which will be presented to the committee.
- Councillor Participation in Scrutiny – the committee felt that more councillors should be involved in scrutiny. It was noted that the % of backbench councillors actively involved over the last year was 79% (49 out of 62).
- Pre-decision scrutiny – committee members shared experiences of undertaking pre-decision scrutiny and some concern about the effectiveness of the current process. Specific concerns centred on the timescales provided for scrutiny and

how Cabinet responds to views. The recent pre-decision scrutiny of the School Music Service was cited as an example. Some clarity was sought from members about the purpose of pre-decision scrutiny and the expectations on Cabinet in response to pre-decision scrutiny concerns / recommendations. It was felt that a deferral of cabinet decision may be appropriate to fully consider the views of scrutiny.

The committee noted further information about the upcoming cabinet report on 'Castle Square – Development and Public Realm Opportunity' and considered whether a request for pre-decision scrutiny should be made. There was some concern about the proposal to market the site in response to developer interest, as an important public space.

The chair reminded committee members about the annual scrutiny work planning conference which was being held on 12 May. She stated that the chair of the Audit Committee and the lay members of the Standards Committee had also been invited to the conference to provide an independent / public perspective on future work.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the Terms of Reference of the Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry be endorsed;
- 2) Pre-decision Scrutiny on the upcoming Cabinet report on 'Castle Square – Development and Public Realm Opportunity' (listed in the Cabinet Forward Plan for 16 June) be requested – a meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee to be arranged at the earliest possible opportunity; and
- 3) a meeting be arranged between the chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and relevant Cabinet Member to discuss the pre-decision scrutiny process and possible improvements.

186 **MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY PANELS AND WORKING GROUPS.**

Expressions of interest amongst scrutiny councillors for the new Adult Social Services Scrutiny Performance Panel were reported for agreement. It was reported that both Councillor Peter Black and Councillor Uta Clay had expressed interest in acting as convener.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the membership of the Adult Social Services Scrutiny Performance Panel be agreed as follows:

Labour Councillors: 6

Uta Clay	Geraint Owens
Ann Cook	Paulette Smith
Yvonne Jardine	Gloria Tanner

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 3

Peter Black	Jeff Jones
Chris Holley	

Independent Councillor: 1

Susan Jones	
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Conservative Councillor: 1

Paxton Hood-Williams	
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- 2) the Panel selects the convener at its first meeting, for the Committee's agreement.

187 **SCRUTINY LETTERS.**

The Chair reported the Scrutiny Letters Log and referred to the recent correspondence between Scrutiny and Cabinet Members. This included the concluding letter of the Local Service Board Scrutiny Performance Panel and response.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Letters log be **NOTED**.

188 **FEEDBACK FROM RECENT SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

The Chair referred with pleasure to the shortlisting of Swansea Scrutiny for the national Municipal Journal Achievement Award in the category of 'Excellence in Governance & Scrutiny'. She reflected on the 'judging day' in London that she, along with Councillor Clive Lloyd (Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance) and Dave Mckenna (Scrutiny Manager), attended on 28 April. She was pleased with the presentation made to judges which she felt was well-received, and the experience. She stated that the Awards Ceremony was taking place on 16 June which she, Councillor Terry Hennegan, and Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams would be attending.

189 **UPCOMING SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

The Chair reported on the upcoming Annual Scrutiny Work Planning Conference on 12 May 2016, 4.00 pm, Lord Mayor's Reception Room, Guildhall.

190 **AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PLAN. (FOR INFORMATION).**

RESOLVED that the Audit Committee Work Plan be **NOTED**.

191 **DATE AND TIME OF UPCOMING PANEL / WORKING GROUP MEETINGS.**

The date and time of upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were provided for information.

The meeting ended at 6.05 pm

CHAIR