

**Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups**

**1. Inquiry Panels:**

**a) 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 has finished its final report for presentation to the Committee.

Projected End Date: September 2016

**b) 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

The panel has finished its final report for presentation to the Committee on 12 September.

Projected End Date: September 2016

**c) Tackling Poverty** (convener: Sybil Crouch)

Key Question: How can the Council’s Tackling Poverty Strategy be improved?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel has agreed its work plan and an initial Poverty Awareness session (delivered by the Council’s Tackling Poverty Unit) took place on 25<sup>th</sup> July, this was open to all Councillors. A further awareness session has been arranged for 15<sup>th</sup> September. The Panel’s evidence gathering sessions will commence in September.

Projected End Date: December 2016

## 2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups

### a) Partnerships & Collaboration

Preparations for this potential inquiry will begin shortly.

Key concerns:

- how are we currently working with others?
- how effective is it?
- how could the Council's collaboration with other authorities/ partners be further developed & improved?
- are we learning from examples elsewhere?

### b) Preparedness for School

The Pre-Inquiry Working Group for this inquiry has been arranged for the 11 October.

Key concerns:

- how can support for 0-3 year olds be improved so that they arrive at school ready to learn?
- are we getting this right e.g. effectiveness of Flying Start

## 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	
Social Care at Home	20 Aug 2015	16	5	1	25 October 2016
Corporate Culture	15 Oct 2015	19	0	0	6 Jul 2016 (complete)
Education Inclusion	21 Jan 2016	19	0	1	29 Nov 2016
School Governance	16 Jun 2016	6	2	4	tba
		Response to other 4 recommendations: Action already in place			

#### 4. **Performance Panels:**

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

The Panel carried out pre-decision scrutiny of the Corporate Building and Property Services Commissioning Review on 15<sup>th</sup> August and the convener attended Cabinet to provide scrutiny's feedback on 18<sup>th</sup> August. Whilst the Panel had no issues with the recommendation to retain both services and transform in-house, they made a number of recommendations including improved clarity that that value for money and quality of service are key elements of the commissioning review and to provide more detailed cost comparison information in order to clearly demonstrate that Corporate Building Services is providing value for money.

At its meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> August the Panel looked at the Wales Audit Office Annual report and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter budget and performance monitoring reports.

The Panel continues its focus on carrying out pre-decision scrutiny of the Commissioning reviews. Up-coming meetings will look at the Highways and Transportation review and the Parks & Cleansing review.

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

See separate report – agenda item 9.

##### c) **Public Services Board** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The first meeting of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel has been arranged for 28<sup>th</sup> September. The majority of external members have been recruited including representatives from SCVS, ABMU Health Board and the Police and Crime Panel. A nominee is expected shortly from the Fire Authority. The Panel will discuss its draft work plan and will also hear from a representative from the Future Generations Commissioner's Office on the role of the Commissioner in monitoring the work of the Public Services Board and the links with scrutiny.

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

The panel met on 22 August to discuss the July performance report. Overall the panel was pleased with performance and was particularly pleased with the sustained drop in the number of looked after children which has remained consistently below 500 for the last three months. The current figure stands at 493 looked after children with 11 ceasing to be looked after.

The panel did have some concerns the new assessment process and was informed that the department was currently reviewing it after the first quarter's data. The panel will return to this in the next quarter.

The panel was keen to send a message to staff in the department to congratulate them on sustained good performance.

e) **Adult Social Services** (convener: Uta Clay)

The panel met on 24 August and discussed Learning Disabilities.

The panel considered an overview of the Learning Disability population in Swansea and current levels of demand, the social work assessment process and what is taken account of when assessing what needs need to be met in relation to learning disabilities, how the assessment translates into a service and an outline of the type of service/support that people might expect to receive and an explanation of the different approach between Child and Family Services and how people are supported through the transition process.

The panel had some concerns about the numbers of people in Swansea with a learning disability as it appeared almost 4% higher than the national average. Officers agreed to look into this.

The panel was also concerned about the removal of eligibility criteria in the assessment process (under the Social Services and Well Being Act) and that eligibility for a service would be down to a professional's judgement. The panel and officers both agreed that this could lead to legal challenges. The panel welcomed the framework being developed however to ensure there would be a consistency of approach amongst professionals.

The panel was also concerned about the ability of people with learning disabilities to develop and rely on networks rather than services. Officers stressed how the assessment process was strengths based and empowered and enabled people rather than "fixing" them. It was noted that this kind of approach would require a change in culture and behaviour.

The panel also highlighted its concerns with quality of care and use of the private sector in providing care and support for learning disabled people. Officers stressed the importance of good contract monitoring to ensure that care provided by the private sector was as good as the care provided by the in-house teams.

The panel's next meeting is on 21 September and it will receive a briefing on the commissioning reviews and the panel agreed to invite the cabinet member to the next meeting.

## 5. Other Panels / Working Groups:

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

### a) Education Through Regional Working (regional scrutiny group)

A meeting for scrutiny councillors and officers from the six councils participating in ERW was hosted by Swansea on 11 March. Swansea was represented by Cllr Fiona Gordon. It was agreed that a scrutiny councillors group will be set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach. The group agreed its terms of reference, discussed individual Councils scrutiny education work programmes, looked at the ERW Business Plan for 2016-19, shared good practice in relation to individual schools scrutiny and looked at the data for school standards and categorisation. The next meeting will be hosted by Pembrokeshire Council and is being arranged for 27 September 2016. Swansea Scrutiny Team will provide the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

### b) Local Flood Risk Management (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

The Committee previously agreed that the Local Flood Risk Management Working Group can continue to meet on an annual basis in order to provide an on-going scrutiny involvement in the annual review of the Local Flood Risk Management Plan. The Head of Highways and Transportation has been contacted and asked to provide a timescale for future scrutiny involvement. The last meeting of the Working Group took place on 14 December 2015.

### c) 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. This is being arranged.

### d) Planning (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

Arrangements for this Working Group to meet in October are currently being made. This will provide opportunity to ask questions about the current planning system, including Section 106 Agreements, and the call-in process.

Further Working Groups to be convened, in the order of priority shown (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

#### 1. **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 / impact of budget cuts, 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.

**2. Corporate Building Services**

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report to provide a briefing about Corporate Building Services to enable questions and discussion e.g. about value for money provide, costs / competitiveness for works including councillor ward requests.

**3. Digital Inclusion**

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report on digital inclusion for discussion and questions e.g. many council services will be digital in future but is the quality of services being preserved? how can we ensure that people are not being excluded from services once they become digital? what is the Council's strategy to ensure that all can access and are not excluded from services?

**4. Dog Fouling**

the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report on dealing with dog fouling, e.g. community initiatives, support for dog owners, deterrents, dealing with complaints, enforcement, resources, achievements etc.