



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Chair – Scrutiny Programme Committee
City & County of Swansea

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MC/CM

17 August 2016

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I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall, cysylltwch â'r person uchod.**

Dear Councillor Jones

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS – 11TH JULY 2016

Thank you for your letter dated 27th July 2016 regarding the Cabinet Member questions session held on 11th July 2016. I will outline below responses to your specific questions.

Tethered Horses

Notices have been placed at the site known locally as the racecourse in Penlan as a trial. Four notices were placed at the site at points where roads intersected. Three of the four had gone by the following morning. Currently more permanent adhesives are being investigated for these notices up so that they are more difficult to remove. Notices will be placed at all known locations when the next planned inspection is undertaken which is scheduled to take place during week commencing 15th August 2016.

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Local Area Coordinators

Evaluation

Swansea's Local Area Coordination work is being evaluated by the Institute of Life Sciences at Swansea University. It is part of a wider evaluation commissioned by Western Bay of similar approaches developing across the region (Local Area Coordination in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot and Local Community Coordination in Bridgend.)

Swansea's first report is a formative evaluation of the work undertaken during the development of the approach, and covers the period from December 2014 up to and including the first three months of the service becoming operational (until end September 2015).

It looks at how effective Swansea has been in implementing Local Area Coordination and building the foundations of the model.

The second, summative, part of the report, covering the period October 2015—end March 2016 is expected by September 2016.

This second report will appear alongside the summative reports from Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend.

It is expected to provide information on the benefits of Local Area Coordination to local people and communities, and to give an idea of the potential of the approach to save both financial and other resources.

Role of Local Area Coordinators

Please see attached the Job Description and Person Specification for the Local Area Coordinator posts; I hope this helps to clarify their role.

Feedback to local Councillors

Local Area Coordinators meet and work with local Councillors regularly; it is critically important for them to do so, as this benefits the community and local people and ensures that developments are relevant to the locality.

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Since Local Area Coordination started in Swansea in 2014, and became operational at community level in 2015, Local Area Coordination and our (soon to be) six Local Area Coordinators have engaged with Councillors in the following ways:

- Cabinet Members for Wellbeing and Healthy City and for Adults and Vulnerable People are members of the Local Area Coordination Leadership Group, contributing to the shaping and driving of the approach in Swansea, linking with politicians at Welsh Government level, and promoting Swansea's work with Councillors across the other UK Local Area Coordination development sites.
- Local Area Coordination information sessions held for all local Councillors in the six LAC areas.
- Cabinet and other Members involved, alongside local people, in the co-productive recruitment process to appoint the six Local Area Coordinators.
- Local Area Coordinators contact each local Councillor for their area when they start in post and throughout their work.

Here are some examples of work undertaken with local Councillors to date:

Dan Morris – (St Thomas, Pentrechwyth, Bonymaen, SA1 Waterfront)

- Dan has had a total of 8 introductions from 4 Councillors to date.
- Worked with Coastal Housing to set up a garden party for tenants to meet each other, hear from various speakers (Trading Standards scams prevention, local credit Union, etc) to promote social contact and address issues of loneliness in the new housing complex. Local Councillors invited to attend and were able to meet residents.
- Meets regularly with local Councillors at the Eastside foodbank, where he bases himself once a week.
- Worked with local Councillors to help a local resident negotiate access to her property.

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- Meets regularly with Councillor for Bonymaen, who has supported Dan by providing local information and history and 'walkabouts' to get to know the area.
- Cllrs Evans and Lloyd are supporting the creation of a historical group in Bonymaen and a youth group, in collaboration with Local Area Coordination and PCSO.
- All Councillors are supportive of making joint visits to introductions.
- All have supported the promotion of Local Area Coordination to local resources, including schools, and to isolated and excluded people in their areas.

Ronan Ruddy – (Gorseinon & Loughor)

- Attends meetings of the Town Councils in his area to provide information about his work.
- Has met with Councillors re his involvement in supporting the development of potential growing schemes in the area. Critical advice provided by Councillors to enable him to avoid potentially divisive local issues re school developments.
- Ronan has been introduced to one of the school Principals by Councillor.
- Councillor attended local food bank after discussing with Ronan some of the issues that people face.
- Councillor invited Ronan to assist at family fun day in park.
- Ronan invited to use office space in new Town Council building.
- Ronan has been asked to accompany a Councillor on visits to sheltered accommodation.

Jon Franklin – (Sketty, Sketty Park, Derwen Fawr & Tycnoch)

- Has contacted local Councillors when starting in post and since in order to make connections and inform them about developments in relation to his work.

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Richard Davies – (new in post from August 1st – Pontarddulais and surrounding area)

- Has contacted all the local Councillors for this large semi-rural area to introduce himself and his work.
- Councillor for Pontarddulais was able to broker one of the several local bases that will be needed for Richard to undertake his work, and where he will meet local people who may be vulnerable or excluded in some way.

Francesca Grice – (new in post from August 1st – Uplands, Brynmill, Ffynone, St Helens)

- Has contacted all the local Councillors for the area to introduce herself and her work.
- Has met with one Councillor at the local community centre, to share information about each other's' work.

Claire Jones – (starts in post Sept 5th – City Centre, incl Mount Pleasant, Dyfatty, Sandfields, the Marina)

- All local Councillors for the area have been contacted to advise them of Claire's imminent start date, and several have responded. Claire will follow up when she starts in post.

Parks

All greens are open to the public unless there are specific security or safety issues. I can confirm that ten cuts are scheduled during the season but obviously due to work commitments and weather this may alter slightly.

As of April 1st this year, the management of the Parks and Open Spaces lettings, transferred to the Special Events Team. This was part of the transformational activity resulting in the reduction in staff in the former Parks Lettings team help achieve the required savings targets within Cultural Services.

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A review of the service was undertaken, in order to achieve the 1st April implementation date and this included the harmonisation of two former systems managed by two different teams within Cultural Services, into one consistent process.

Prior to the merger of the processes, we had two systems whereby the Special Events team charged an administration fee for all bookings within its portfolio and the Parks Letting Team applied a licence fee, which was paid to the Legal Team to oversee the checking of the Licence / indemnity. However, in the latter case, the implementation of this charge was applied inconsistently.

Under efficiency proposals put in place by the Council's Legal Section, the licence / indemnity issues were transferred to Cultural Services as part of a 'self-service' arrangement, so the licence fee requirement was realised at the initial stage of the booking.

The harmonisation of the process now means that every booking is treated in an equitable fashion and the £35 fee represents an iteration of the Licence / Indemnity Fee that has always existed and which has been increased annually in line with agreed Council fees and charges. As part of the transformation programme for Cultural Services, the new operating model for the Special Events Team is one of cost recovery basis, working to a full cost recovery model in future years.

The £35 fee is an extremely nominal charge which goes some way to covering the cost of managing the booking process, and the professional input required of checking the risk assessments, insurances, indemnities, liaison with other internal departments (e.g. Highways, Environmental Health, Parks, Cleansing etc.) in order to ensure the delivery of a safe event on public land.

We constantly review our procedures and systems and will continue to do so regarding this area of work. However, I would reiterate, that £35 is a very low charge given the amount of work that is involved in processing a booking for events and activities on its land, the purpose of which is to ensure the Council and public are protected as much as possible.

As well as these fees to Friends of Parks, there are additional fees should any commercial activity be requested as part of the hire application.

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CCTV Service

Following the recent Commissioning Review, changes are being made to the Council's provision and use of a CCTV service. This is likely to bring about capacity for closer and more consistent working arrangements between staff and cameras covering residential and community areas (with potential issues such as horse tethering and off road vehicles) and resources dedicated to public space coverage, such as the city centre. There is also the potential to deploy temporary "hot spot" cameras in areas as and when appropriate, as part of a multi-agency response, which may also include temporary deployments of a CCTV equipped vehicle.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Mandatory' licensing applies to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in the east side of Swansea. This means owners of HMOs which have 3 or more storeys AND 5 or more occupiers are required to have a licence issued by the Council. The licensing regime controls property standards and management.

From the housing enforcement (Public Protection) perspective owners of HMOs outside the mandatory licensing regime i.e. the smaller ones are not obliged to notify the Council of their existence. This means the complete picture of HMO activity in the area may not be fully available.

An analysis of records and information available within the Public Protection Service has however been completed.

At the end of July 2015 there were 4 licensed HMOs in the east side (St Thomas ward). At the end of December 2015 there were 5 (the previous 4 + 1) and at the end of July 2016 there were 9 (the previous 5 + 4). Those are in Danygraig Road, Kilvey Terrace, Miers Street and Port Tennant Road.

Numbers are small but this does show an increase in the number of licensable HMOs in the area over the last 12 months.

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In the period 1st August 2015 – 31st July 2016 6 properties in St Thomas and Port Tennant were inspected by Public Protection at the request of the owner for the purpose of obtaining advice on management and property standards required relating to intended occupation as an HMO. These were non-licensable properties.

Over the same period one year earlier, from 1st August 2014 – 31st July 2015, that number was 5. 1 of those 5 properties subsequently became a licensed HMO.

Public Protection have not noted any specific issues with rising complaints related to HMO standards or anti-social behaviour in the area since the new University campus opened.

There have been some issues about parking in Elba Crescent which resulted in new parking restrictions being introduced but it is not known whether that was due to an increase in HMOs or factors such as people working in SA1 but parking in St Thomas.

New Planning regulations introduced this year will improve knowledge / information available on HMOs.

Amendments have been made to the Planning Use Classes Order to create a new Use Class C4 (broadly defined as HMOs of between 3 and 6 occupants) and a new requirement for any proposed change of use to Use Class C4 to require planning permission. Previously in Wales, only changes of use to larger (in terms of numbers of occupants) HMOs were subject to planning control.

The Council and a variety of other Agencies such as the Police maintain an active partnership with Swansea University and continue to liaise on a variety of matters. The Swansea Student Liaison Forum meets regularly. The Forum is unable to control the local housing market, or where students choose to live, but the numbers of HMOs and associated matters will continue to be closely monitored.

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Healthy Cities

I have been unable to provide the full answer here due to colleagues in Public Health Wales and ABMU Trust being on holiday, so I will reply as soon as I can with more information on the Healthy City Partnership. I will also forward on the latest Bulletin for information on some of the current and recent Healthy City Partnership work.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social Behaviour is an issue that is dealt with by several service units across the Council. It forms an important part of the role of the Neighbourhood Support Unit, which is part of the Housing Department, and therefore also forms part of the portfolio of the Cabinet member for Housing.

The Health and Wellbeing portfolio includes the Community Safety team, which is part of the Poverty and Prevention service area. This team includes a member of staff who works as part of a multi-agency unit, including police and other partner agencies as part of the Safer Swansea Partnership.

The portfolio therefore entails oversight of the general response of the Council to issues of anti-social behaviour, and seeks to ensure that appropriate action is taken in close co-operation with other agencies within the Safer Swansea Partnership.

Yours sincerely



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