

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

Following agreement by the committee, the final report was presented to Cabinet on 20 October 2016. A response to the recommendations is expected at Cabinet on 15 December.

Projected End Date: Complete

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

Following agreement by the committee, the final report was presented to Cabinet on 20 October 2016. A response to the recommendations is expected at Cabinet on 15 December.

Projected End Date: Complete

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 is about half way through its evidence gathering and has heard from the Bevan Foundation, the Public Policy Institute for Wales, Third Sector and community organisations as well as learning about the integrated impact assessment conducted on the strategy. The

Panel will be gathering further evidence including from council officers, partners, the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission and from representatives of the Assembly Committee that conducted a recent national inquiry into tackling poverty. Focus groups to gather the views of people experiencing poverty and a survey are also due to report into the inquiry.

Projected End Date: December 2016

d) **Children’s Readiness for School** (convener: Hazel Morris)

Key Question: How can children’s readiness for school be improved in Swansea?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Pre-Inquiry Working Group took place on 11 October. They agreed to carry out an inquiry into readiness for school with particular reference to parental engagement. The Panel will meet on 3 November to agree their plan and timetable of work and will start evidence gathering by speaking to the Swansea libraries service.

Projected End Date: March 2017

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?

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	23 Nov 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 met on 2 November and discussed the Mid Term Budget Statement 2016/17 and the Review of Revenue Reserves.

The panel is due to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the Highways and Transportation Commissioning Review and the parks and Cleansing Commissioning Review on 12 December.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel will meet on 16 November to look at the performance of children that receive free school meals (FSM) and what impact the Pupil Deprivation Grants is having for these pupils. Members will also discuss the Annual Audit of Schools report and will receive an update on the use of restorative practice.

The Panel in December will meet to discuss Looked After Children's educational performance and outcomes in Swansea and get receive an update on Pioneer School in Swansea.

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

See progress report – agenda item 8b

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

The panel met on 31 October and examined performance in health assessments for looked after children, performance of the integrated family support service and the September performance report.

Health Assessments

The panel was pleased overall with the performance in conducting health assessments on looked after children. However, performance appeared to dip when looked after children were placed out of county and were subject to a health assessment by a different health board.

Integrated Family Support Service

This service is about to undergo a review and a further update will be brought back to the panel once the review is completed.

September Performance Report

Performance continues to be good across most areas in the department. Looked after children numbers fell again in September by 4 and took the total down to 492. Looked after children numbers have been consistently below 500 since April this year.

The panel did highlight the increase in number of repeat referrals but was assured that the department was going to examine and analyse this in a bit more detail.

Some new performance data measures, which were introduced as a result of the Social Services and Well Being Act, are yet to be recorded because of the frequency with which the data is collected and benchmarking can only be carried out at the end of the year. However, by quarter 3 some data should begin to feed into the monthly performance report.

e) Adult Social Services (convener: Uta Clay)

See progress report – agenda item 8a

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 took place on 27 September. Swansea was represented by Cllr Fiona Gordon. A scrutiny councillors group has been set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach. The group discussed individual Councils scrutiny education work programmes, looked at the ERW Business Plan for 2016-19 and the recent ERW Estyn report, shared good practice in relation to use of the pupil deprivation grant and was updated on the Special Education Needs Reform. The next meeting will be hosted by one of the other local authorities and is being arranged for 27 February 2017. 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 monitor and check progress with the Local Flood Risk

Management Plan and priorities. A meeting will be arranged in the New Year.

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

A further meeting is being arranged and will take place by December.

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

The working group met on 12 October and received an officer briefing to assist it to carry out question planning in advance of its session with the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration. The Cabinet Member session was on 19 October. An in-depth discussion took place on a range of planning issues including: the revised committee arrangements, section 106 agreements, the Call-In process, enforcement activity and the Planning Annual performance report. A letter from the Convener to the Cabinet member is in the process of being prepared.

e) **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

This was agreed following public concern about the numbers and control of HMOs in Swansea, and in particular the spread of HMOs into the east side due to the new University campus, and effect on local areas. It will enable a meeting with relevant Cabinet Member(s) and Officers that are responsible for HMO licensing and planning, and explore:

- The Council's responsibilities (legislative or otherwise) and current position regarding HMOs licensing, management and control, and future plans.
- Service aims / targets / performance measures
- Service costs
- The intensity of HMOs across Swansea including East / West comparison
- Recent changes / trends and causes. Future projections.
- The Council's engagement with universities / landlords / HMO providers, and partnership working
- Impact on Council Tax revenue from HMO properties

The findings of the Working Group can feed in to the planned development of Supplementary Planning Guidance on HMOs and add value to this work.

Two meetings have been arranged to look at this issue.

- 25 November - members will receive a briefing from Council officers, and
- 12 January - public submissions and invitation to the relevant Cabinet members.

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.