

# **CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**

## **MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3A, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON**  
**MONDAY, 9 JANUARY 2017**  
**AT 4.30 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

C Anderson  
N J Davies  
F M Gordon  
P M Meara

**Councillor(s)**

A C S Colburn  
C R Evans  
T J Hennegan  
G J Tanner

**Councillor(s)**

S E Crouch  
E W Fitzgerald  
J W Jones

**Co-opted Member(s)**

D Anderson-Thomas

**Co-opted Member(s)**

C A Holley

**Co-opted Member(s)**

P R Hood-Williams

**Officer(s)**

Mike Hawes  
Brij Madahar  
Debbie Smith  
Jeremy Parkhouse  
Kate Jones

Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer  
Scrutiny Co-ordinator  
Interim Deputy Head of Legal & Democratic Services.  
Democratic Services Officer  
Democratic Services Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): U C Clay

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

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

Councillor C R Evans – Minute No 121 – employed by Barnados, a Partner in the Post 16 Service. - personal

117 **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.

118 **MINUTES.**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 12 December 2016 be approved as a correct record.

119 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.**

There were no public questions.

120 **CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION: LEADER / CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & STRATEGY (COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART).**

Councillor R C Stewart, Leader / Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy, provided an address on his Cabinet Portfolio which highlighted the following key areas: -

1) City Deal – The proposals put forward to Central Government for a City Deal for Swansea were outlined. The City Deal was based upon attracting new industries and technology and was projected to create a significant number of new jobs to the region. The City Deal included 11 individual projects with a geographical spread between the partner Authorities. The projects in Swansea included:- Digital District on the Kingsway, Life Science Campus at Morriston Hospital, Digital Arena and Square in the City Centre, and the Innovation Quarter in SA1. The Leader highlighted the 'Homes as Power Stations Initiative' which will focus on sustainable energy efficient homes. He also talked about work led by Sir Terry Matthews to encourage and help graduates in the area to start up, develop and grow their business ideas in this region. He stated that one of the City Deal projects related to the development of 5<sup>th</sup> Generation communication networks. The Leader stated that the City Deal would represent significant investment and economic growth for the region and a decision from the UK government was expected in the next few weeks.

2) Budget – The budget was currently out for consultation and was scheduled to be agreed by Council in February 2017. It was highlighted that there was a £16 M budget deficit and certain areas, particularly social care were in need of increased spending of approximately 4%. Improvements and savings were being made from Commissioning Reviews and departments such as Corporate Services were out-performing on savings targets. On the whole, progress was being made, however this still remained the 3<sup>rd</sup> most difficult year on record in terms of savings which had to be achieved. The Committee noted that the draft budget would be presented to Council on 23 February. It was also noted that there had been an agreement to pool the investments of the 8 regional Pension Funds to reduce administration costs of each fund. A joint committee to oversee this arrangement was in the process of being set up. It was clarified that each fund would retain its distinct identity and the administering authorities would remain responsible for complying with the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations and pension's legislation in respect of their members.

3) Regionalisation Agenda – Consideration must be given to which footprint to follow in the future for collaboration. The Welsh Government has asked for Council's views on the best way forward given that there are already a number of different regional partnership approaches e.g. Western Bay, City Region and Education through Regional Working using different footprints, with a view to creating one consistent footprint.

The Leader responded to questions from the Committee regarding the demolition of the Oceana building. Concern was expressed regarding the contract for inspecting

the building for asbestos and need or scrutiny. The Leader commented the asbestos contained within Oceana was very unusual and had been used in a very unique way. He also pointed out that there was no purchase price for the building but the Authority had entered into a lease exchange agreement. He emphasised that without the acquisition of Oceana, investment on the Kingsway as part of the City Deal could not be delivered. It was added that the overall position was still very positive.

Following discussion about scrutiny and the involvement of the Development Cabinet Advisory Committee in this matter, it was agreed that the Scrutiny Programme Committee would examine the demolition asbestos survey / contract award in respect of the Oceana building, and request access to any relevant documents.

Questions and discussions with the Leader focussed on the following: -

- City Deal (including financial contributions by partners / different sectors, comparisons with the Cardiff City Deal);
- Success of Techniums;
- Kingsway development and further demolition of buildings on the Kingsway / Oxford Street (adjacent to Oceana) as part of the overall scheme;
- Proposed Student Complex on the Kingsway;
- The creation of high quality, flexible and useable office space in the City Centre to address current deficiency;
- Agreements in place to bring businesses to the Kingsway, and commitments from the private sector;
- Increasing the number of people working and living in the City Centre;
- Approach to Houses in Multiple Occupation and controls
- Relocation of Civic Centre and Central Library and Accommodation Strategy;
- Confirmed developments within the City Centre including Mariner Street, High St. Urban Village, Parc Tawe, Castle Square and St David's;
- 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Networks.

**RESOLVED** that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Leader, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

## 121 **SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORTS.**

Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener, provided an update regarding the work that has been undertaken in relation to Child and Family Services Performance Panel. He summarised the key achievements / impact as noted in the report.

The Convener highlighted the following: -

- The reduction in the number of Looked After Children which is positive progress
- Continuing monitoring of the Western Bay Service
- The development and progress of the Post 16 Service which should deliver enhanced outcomes for children.

- Data and outcome reports to monitor the Post 16 Service
- Relocation of Post 16 Service to a more one stop shop for children

The committee was interested that the Panel has asked whether it is feasible for a case conference to be recorded and shown to the Panel to help it to better understand the care review process. Committee members suggested that this would be of benefit to all councillors.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted

122 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17.**

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/2017.

The Scrutiny Coordinator informed the Committee that the Scrutiny Team would be losing 2 members of the staff in the next few weeks, which would have an impact on the Work Programme. Any decisions on the Work Programme would need to take account of short-term pressures on support, whilst recruitment of new officers was being arranged. As a consequence It was proposed that the Partnership & Collaboration Inquiry Panel, which has not yet started, be put on hold.

The Committee considered a request for scrutiny from Councillor Ioan Richard to look at the topic of Renewable Energy. It was agreed to add this to the work programme however subject to time and resources may need to be held over to the new municipal year.

It was noted that the anticipated Cabinet report on Castle Square was now listed for February's Cabinet meeting therefore can be dealt with at the committee meeting on 13 February for pre-decision scrutiny.

The Chair advised that an item would be added to the 13 March Committee to discuss the approach to future Commissioning Reviews with the Director – Place. It was also proposed that a special meeting be arranged to consider Crime and Disorder Scrutiny, currently listed for the 13 March 2017.

Confirmation was also sought regarding an imminent Cabinet report on an Accommodation Strategy, indicated by the Leader, as it was not yet shown in the cabinet forward plan.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- 1) The contents of the update be noted;
- 2) The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the two members of staff leaving to thank them for their work on behalf of scrutiny;
- 3) The Partnerships & Collaboration Scrutiny Inquiry be put on hold;
- 4) The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to Councillor Ioan Richard regarding his request for a Scrutiny Working Group to look at Renewable Energy;
- 5) A special meeting be scheduled for the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny.

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

The Chair presented a report outlining proposed revisions to the scrutiny panel / working group memberships.

**RESOLVED** that the following amendments to the panel / groups, as outlined in the report be endorsed:

- Tackling Poverty Inquiry Panel – Remove Gloria Tanner
- Digital Inclusion Working Group – membership be agreed as follows:

**Labour Councillors: 2**

Geraint Owens	Lesley Walton (convener)
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**Liberal Democrat Councillors: 3**

Chris Holley	Paul Meara
Jeff Jones	

**Independent Councillor: 1**

David Cole	
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**Conservative Councillor: 1**

Tony Colburn	
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124 **SCRUTINY LETTERS.**

The Chair reported the Scrutiny Letters Log.

Councillor C A Holley discussed the letter he sent to the Cabinet Member from the Planning Working Group which highlighted some concerns including Section 106 agreements, the Call-In procedure and Pre-Application Advice Fees. Councillor Holley stated that he wished to convene a meeting of the Working Group to discuss the Cabinet Member's response to the Group's letter and draft a reply. This was agreed by the Committee. As a result of the Working Group it was noted that the Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel would now be including the Planning Annual Performance Report in its work plan.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Letters Log and update be noted.

125 **FEEDBACK FROM RECENT SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

There had been no recent Scrutiny Events.

126 **UPCOMING SCRUTINY EVENTS.**

There were no upcoming Scrutiny events.

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

The Audit Committee Work Plan for 2016/2017 was noted.

128 **DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2016/17 MUNICIPAL YEAR (ALL AT 4.30 PM).**

The dates and times of future Committee meetings for the 2016/2017 Municipal Year were noted.

129 **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 6.00 pm

**CHAIR**