

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 scheduled for Cabinet on 16 February 2017

Projected End Date: Complete

b) 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

Subject to agreement by the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 February the Panel’s final report will be presented to Cabinet for decision.

Projected End Date: Complete.

c) 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 Panel visited St Helens Flying Start, Trallwn Primary School and spoke to the General Practitioners Partnership pilot in Penderry in January. The Panel will consider their findings and start to conclude the inquiry at their meeting on the 20 February.

Projected End Date: March 2017

2. Pre-Inquiry Working Groups

a) Partnerships & Collaboration

This planned work is currently on hold and subject to available time and resources.

Key concerns that have been expressed:

- 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?

Terms of Reference for any future inquiry are to be agreed however likely focus would be on how the Council could improve its approach to partnership working and collaboration to help achieve the outcomes of the Well Being of Future Generations Act.

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	14 Dec 2016 (complete)
Corporate Culture	15 Oct 2015	19	0	0	6 Jul 2016 (complete)
Education Inclusion	21 Jan 2016	19	0	1	29 Nov 2016 3 Jan 2017 (complete)
School Governance	16 Jun 2016	6	2	4	tba
		Response to other 4 recommendations: Action already in place			
Building Sustainable Communities	19 Jan 2017	10	0	0	Oct /Nov 2017

4. Performance Panels:

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

The Panel met on 25 January and received a report on the Fees and Charges levied by the Council from the Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance and the Head of Commercial Services. The convener identified this piece of work to be included in the panel's work plan as fees and charges for services make a significant contribution to the Council's finances. Therefore Panel intended to gain a better understanding of what fees and charges are levied and the processes and rationale that are used to set payment levels. The Panel have a number of questions that they wish to follow up on and a convener's letter outlining their views and recommendations letter will be circulated in due course.

The Panel will hold a special meeting on 7 February to scrutinise the Cabinet Budget reports, with the Leader, Corporate Director of Resources and Chief Finance Officer in attendance to answer questions. Time is also allowed for public questions. The convener's of the other scrutiny performance panels are invited to attend the meeting to provide feedback from their panels. The convener will attend Cabinet on 9 February in order to provide feedback from the scrutiny meeting.

The Panel will next meet to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the Highways and Transportation Commissioning review, and will meet again on 22 February when they will receive the 3rd Quarter Budget Monitoring report and look at some further issues in relation to the Fees and Charges report considered on 25 January.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

See progress report – agenda item 8.

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

The Panel met on 18 January where they carried out the first of their Q&A sessions with members of the PSB Core Group – the Director of SCVS. As a result of this discussion they have made a number of recommendations to the PSB including:

- The PSB's communication strategy should focus on engagement and ways of taking forward co-production, and not just on promoting key messages.
- The PSB should confirm how the development and delivery of its communication strategy will be resourced.
- The PSB should consider the need to facilitate the involvement of the third sector in its work, for example the option of agreeing pooled funding to support this.

The panel was also presented with the draft Wellbeing Assessment as scrutiny is a statutory consultee and made a number of comments that they wish to have taken into account as part of the consultation. A convenor's letter has been sent to the chair of the PSB and a reply is expected in due course.

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

The Panel's last meeting on 23 January looked at placement moves and the matching process for looked after children and the Child & Family Services Performance Report, November 2016.

The panel's next meeting is on 13 February to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on the Commissioning Review of Domestic Abuse Services.

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

The Panel met on 11 January to look at how the Council assesses and provides care for people with mental health needs.

The Panel will be discussing the draft budget on 6 February as it relates to adult services. It also meets on 8 February to continue discussion on mental health services, this time with the ABMU Health Board.

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 Ceredigion Council 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 working group is meeting on 1 March in order to receive its first annual up-date and monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation will be attending.

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

The Convener has written to the Cabinet Member to cover issues felt to be outstanding following the Cabinet Member's response – letter included in agenda item 13. This concludes the work.

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

The Working Group met on 1 February in order to discuss its response to the letter from the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration to its letter arising from the meeting that took place on 19 October. A letter outlining some further concerns will be issued shortly.

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

The Working Group met on the 25 November and again on the 12 January where they received and discussed a joint briefing report from Housing and Public Health and Planning, met with the relevant Cabinet members and received representations from the public in writing and in person. The Convener of the Panel is now preparing a letter for the Cabinet Member/s giving the views of the panel on this matter to conclude this work.

f) **Digital Inclusion** (convener: Cllr Lesley Walton)

A meeting has been arranged for 6 March for a discussion on plans, activities, achievements, impact, challenges, and overall assessment.

Digital inclusion is an important issue for the Council, given that there is a move towards increasing digital contact and making more services on-line. There is concern about the risk of digital exclusion, and how the council is helping citizens to get on-line. The Working Group will be expected to ask the relevant Cabinet Member and officers about: the Council's strategy to ensure access to services for all; work to ensure that people are not being excluded from services once they become digital; and the quality of digital services.

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. 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.

4. Renewable Energy

This would enable information and discussion / questions on the Council's aims and objectives, development projects / initiatives, and progress in the promotion and use of renewable energy, and benefits. This topic is relevant to the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and sustainable development.