

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

**1. Inquiry Panels:**

a) **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

Following agreement by the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 13 February the Panel’s final report will be presented to Cabinet on 16 March for decision.

Projected End Date: Complete.

b) **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 considered their findings and discussed their conclusions and recommendations to the inquiry at their meeting on the 20 February. They will next meet in March to look at finalising their inquiry report which will be discussed by the Scrutiny Programme Committee in April.

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
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1	tbc

### 4. Performance Panels:

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

On the 22 February the Panel will receive the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Budget Monitoring report and look at some further issues in relation to the Fees and Charges report considered on 25 January.

On 22 March the Panel will look at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Performance Monitoring Data.

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

The Schools Performance Panel on met on the 16 February to look at the Education Annual Performance Data for 2015/16, the latest school categorisation, progress with the local authority Estyn

recommendations for children and young people and received an update on the Swansea Music Service.

The Panel at their next meeting on the 16 March 2017 will meet with the Challenge Advisor, Headteacher and Chair of Governors from Birchgrove Comprehensive School to discuss current performance and their prospects for improvement.

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

The Panel is holding a series of Q & A sessions with members of the PSB Core Group in order to understand the actions and contributions that each organisation is making towards achieving the outcomes and priorities of the PSB. The last meeting on 15 February involved the chair of the PSB and Leader of the Council, Councillor Rob Stewart.

The Panel is due to meet with representatives from ABMU Health Board, South Wales Police, and Natural Resources Wales on 15 March.

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

The Panel's met on 13 February to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on the Commissioning Review of Domestic Abuse Services.

There will be a meeting on 27 February to consider departmental performance and a further pre decision meeting on 13 March to consider services for under and over 11s.

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

See progress report – agenda item 6.

## **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 scrutiny councillors group has been set up in order to coordinate scrutiny work and ensure a consistent approach across the six councils participating in ERW. At present this involves two meetings per year. Swansea is represented by the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Convener of the Schools Performance Panel.

The Group met on 27 February 2017 and was hosted by Ceredigion Council. The group discussed School Governance and each local authority's education scrutiny work programme. They also received updates from the ERW Managing Director on progress with the recommendations contained in the ERW Estyn Inspection, the ERW

Business Plan and school categorisation. The next meeting will take place in September/October, date to be arranged.

Swansea's Scrutiny Team is providing 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.

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 and the response of the Cabinet Member are reported to the committee within this agenda for discussion.

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 has sent a letter to the Cabinet Member giving the panels views.

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.