



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

To/ Councillor Clive Lloyd Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance	<i>Please ask for: Gofynnwch am:</i>	Scrutiny
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	<i>Your Ref Eich Cyf:</i>	
	<i>Date Dyddiad:</i>	8 December 2015

Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance following the meeting of the Committee on 9 November 2015. It is about Sustainable Swansea, Innovation Programme, Performance Improvement, Customer Contact, Commercial Approach and ICT.

Dear Councillor Lloyd,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 9 November

Thank you for your attendance at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 9 November 2015 answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance. We wanted to explore priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to your areas of responsibility. Thank you for the paper provided to the committee that gave us the headlines from your portfolio. We noted the corporate service priorities and progress in relation to: Sustainable Swansea; Innovation Programme; Performance Improvement; Customer Contact; Commercial Approach; and ICT.

We are writing to you in order to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the committee, and, where necessary, raise any outstanding issues / actions for your response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

Sustainable Swansea

You spoke in particular about the Commissioning Review programme, which is being undertaken as part of the New Models of Delivery Workstream of Sustainable Swansea – fit for the future. We noted the completion of reviews recently in respect of Business Support, Residential & Outdoor Centres, Non-schools Catering & Cleaning, and Cultural Services, which have now been

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agreed by Cabinet. We also noted a number of reviews in progress – Libraries, Domiciliary Care, Day Care, Residential Care and Waste Management.

We discussed the role of councillors in these internal reviews. There seemed to be an inconsistent approach to inviting scrutiny councillors. You accepted this as a learning point and welcomed views about how scrutiny councillors can be most effectively engaged in these important reviews. It was acknowledged however that the timing of any involvement needed to be considered as it may be more appropriate for scrutiny to review final proposals. There also may be any issue in involvement in the other stages, to avoid being too close to 'decision-making'.

We also asked a question about the use of external advisors in the commissioning review process which you agreed to provide some clarification on.

Innovation Programme

You mentioned the contribution of the Corporate Culture Scrutiny Inquiry. We were pleased that Cabinet agreed all of the recommendations. The impact of this inquiry will be followed up in the next 12 months.

You also talked about the staff survey which was issued in September. We also noted the staff engagement event which was taking place at the end of November, which you stated was organised following feedback from last year's staff survey.

Performance Improvement

You referred to the very positive Welsh Audit Office (WAO) Corporate Assessment and stated that an action plan was in place. You also reported good progress on the WLGA Peer Review Action Plan (which is being combined with the WAO report).

You were particularly enthused about the new budget and performance steering groups involving Directors and Cabinet Members reviewing business plans and mentioned how this is improving stewardship across the Council.

Customer Contact

We noted that a Customer Services Manager has been in post for a few months and good progress is being made in bringing together various parts of the council including Environment & Housing Repairs call centres, Blue Badge, Switchboard and the Contact Centre. You reported a 21% reduction in phone contact to call centres in Quarter 1 2015 compared with Quarter 1 2014.

You mentioned a new approach to measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction: a new bi-monthly survey to gain a better customer insight. We were particularly interested in how you were finding out whether people felt they were getting a good service and value for money, and how it might be a more effective survey than Swansea Voices. You stated that this was in early stages of development and would share more information with us about this approach, including questions being asked, number of people surveyed and make up.

We also asked about what work was being carried out in relation to demand management. You agreed to provide a written response.

Commercial Approach

We noted that the Head of Commercial Services was appointed in October and that a commercial framework was being established in light of growing number of opportunities across procurement, income and sponsorship / advertising. You added that challenging targets had been set to raise income over the next year (£1m).

You were clear that this was the right thing to do but would take time to get right. The issues of cuts meant it was even more important to find ways to raise income. You also felt that being more commercial was also part and parcel of the Council having a can do culture.

We asked about progress and opportunities for the council to become more commercial. We were aware that the Council was now offering a Knotweed Treatment Service to private homeowners and businesses on a commercial basis. We were interested in other areas of service that were being explored. You mentioned Design Print as an obvious example that was being looked at. We pointed out possible issues in relation to state aid that will need to be checked. You welcomed a view from scrutiny on ideas for income generation.

You informed the committee that responsibility to identify, implement and deliver income from new commercial models was now part of the new Next Generation Services cabinet portfolio, led by Councillor Andrea Lewis. We will follow up on this when we meet with Councillor Lewis in the New Year.

ICT

We discussed the ICT service which has now been brought back in house. You stated that plans were on target in line with objectives agreed in December 2014 and the new service delivery model was being implemented. You mentioned that a revised ICT/digital strategy was being reported to Cabinet in November called 'Aspiring to a Digital Business 2020'. You welcomed the involvement of scrutiny in making the best use of ICT and its effectiveness.

We asked about the decision to bring the service to an in-house managed service and what other options were explored. You talked about the business case but agreed to provide a more detailed response in writing. We were also interested to know whether all staff who wished to transfer back to the authority from Cap Gemini had been able to do so.

Issues for Scrutiny

As mentioned above we noted that you welcomed a contribution from scrutiny in relation to:

- Commercialism – ideas / opportunities for income generation.
- ICT Service - to ensure best use and effectiveness.

Your Response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to:

- our question seeking clarification about the use of external advisors in the commissioning review process;
- our request for more information behind the new bi-monthly customer survey;
- our question about work being undertaken in relation to demand management;
- the decision to bring the ICT service to an in-house managed service and what other options were explored; and
- our query whether all staff who wished to transfer back to the authority from Cap Gemini were able to do so.

Please provide your response by 30 December. We will then include both letters in the agenda of the next available committee meeting.

Finally, we look forward to meeting you again to follow up on portfolio developments and hearing about achievements and impact.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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