

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 was presented to Cabinet on 16 March. A decision from Cabinet will follow.

Projected End Date: Complete.

b) School Readiness (convener: Hazel Morris)

Key Question: How can school readiness be improved in Swansea?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel final report is being presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 10 April for agreement to submit the report to Cabinet for decision. Subject to agreement, the report will be scheduled for 20 April Cabinet meeting.

Projected End Date: Complete

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 22 March the Panel looked at the 3rd Quarter Performance Monitoring Data and followed upon the issues they had identified in their last 3rd Quarter budget monitoring relating to the overspend.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel at their meeting on the 16 March 2017 met with the Challenge Advisor, Headteacher and Chair of Governors from Birchgrove Comprehensive School to discuss current performance and their prospects for improvement. They will meet again on the 6 April to receive an update on progress with one school and with EMLAS.

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

See progress report – agenda item 7.

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

The Panel met on 27 February to consider departmental performance and held a pre decision meeting on 13 March to consider services for under and over 11s. The final meeting on 3 April will receive a presentation on the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

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

The Panel met on 8 March and considered the new performance management report for Adult Services. The final meeting will be on 5 April when the Panel will consider Objective Setting for Senior Officers, Local Area Coordination and Western Bay Intermediate Care Services.

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 met on 1 March where they received its first annual update to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation attended to update the group. A letter was then sent to the Cabinet Member and his response is awaited.

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

Following meetings in November and January the Working Group wrote to relevant Cabinet Member with their views and recommendations. The Working Group had considered 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. A response to the letter has now been received and the correspondence is reported to the Committee under item 8 (Scrutiny Letters), which concludes this work.

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

This working group met with the Cabinet Member for Anti Poverty and officers on the 6 March. A letter has since been sent detailing a number of issues to be considered as part of a review of the digital inclusion strategy.

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.