

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 14 August 2017

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION

Purpose	To enable the Committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to areas of responsibility.
Content	The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee to participate in a question and answer session: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Housing, Energy & Building Services
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question the Cabinet Member on relevant matters• Make comments and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Tracey Meredith, Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Business Intelligence
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1. Introduction

1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the council's cabinet to account. The cabinet is made up of the Leader and 9 additional councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific responsibilities:

Cllr Rob Stewart	- Economy & Strategy (Leader)
Cllr Clive Lloyd	- Service Transformation & Business Operations (Deputy Leader)
Cllr Jennifer Raynor	- Children, Education & Lifelong Learning
Cllr David Hopkins	- Commercial Opportunities & Innovation
Cllr Robert Francis-Davies	- Culture, Tourism & Major Projects
Cllr Mark Thomas	- Environment Services
Cllr June Burtonshaw /	- Future Generations
Cllr Mary Sherwood	
Cllr Mark Child	- Health & Wellbeing
Cllr Andrea Lewis	- Housing, Energy & Building Services
Cllr Will Evans	- Stronger Communities

- 1.2 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and monitor performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.
- 1.3 Cabinet Member Question Sessions have become a main feature of Committee meetings. At least one cabinet member is scheduled to appear at each monthly Committee meeting, ensuring all Cabinet Members appear before the Committee over the course of a year, in order to ask questions on their work. Questions will focus on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

2. Cabinet Member Question Session

2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:

- a) Councillor Andrea Lewis – Cabinet Member for Housing, Energy & Building Services

Within this cabinet portfolio, she is responsible for:

- More Homes Delivery
- Homes as Power Stations (City Deal)
- Council House Management
- Council House Repairs
- Housing Policy, Affordable Housing & Housing Options
- Housing Adaptions & Renewal Schemes
- Welsh Housing Quality Standard
- Green Energy Schemes
- District Heating Schemes
- Sheltered Housing
- Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Public Space Protection Orders & Tenancy Enforcement
- Homelessness
- Poverty Reduction
- Cooperative Housing
- Promotion of Green Transport Options
- Electric & Hydrogen Vehicles & Infrastructure
- Tidal Bay Lagoon

2.2 The Cabinet Member has provided some 'headlines' in relation to the portfolio to help the Committee focus on priorities, actions, achievements and impact (see **Appendix 1**).

2.3 The Cabinet Member has also provided a statement (see **Appendix 2**) in respect of the following issues which the Committee wished to raise:

- Implications / actions taken regarding safety of council housing and buildings following Grenfell Tower fire in London
- Progress with the development of a Homelessness Strategy

- Progress on control of Houses in Multiple Occupation following the Scrutiny Working Group earlier this year (correspondence relating to that meeting **attached**)

3. Approach to Questions

3.1 At the Cabinet Member Question Sessions the Committee will generally ask cabinet members about:

- priorities / objectives
- specific activities and achievements, progress against policy commitments, key decisions taken, and impact / difference made
- headlines on the performance of services and the key targets monitored to measure improvement and success
- their engagement with service users / public and what influence this has had
- what they hope to achieve over the coming months and challenges (e.g. resources / budget)
- key decisions they are expecting to take to Cabinet over the next year
- interactions with scrutiny over the last year, and whether there is any specific scrutiny activity they would welcome

3.2 The Committee will also be interested in:

- Sustainability and future trends - to what extent long-term thinking is influencing work / decisions, in light of the Well-being of Future Generations Act?
- Public Services Board (PSB) – what is their relationship with the work of the PSB? how is the work of the PSB impacting on their portfolio and helping them to deliver on priorities, and making a difference?

3.3 Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee. Following the session the chair will write to the Cabinet Member in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for the Cabinet Member to consider.

3.4 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during this item then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

4. Previous Correspondence

4.1 The Committee last had a Q & A regarding the portfolio service area in February 2017. Amongst the issues discussed then included:

- More Council Homes Project
- Welsh Housing Quality Standard
- Corporate Apprenticeships & Trainees
- Housing Voids
- Disabled Facility Grants
- Gypsy Traveller Site Provision

The actual correspondence relating to this meeting is **attached** as the Committee may wish to follow up on these issues and previous discussion, as necessary.

Members of the Committee have asked for an update on the More Council Homes Project (new build on Milford Way, Penplas), including timescales for the allocation of lettings.

5. Other Questions

- 5.1 For each Cabinet Member Q & A Session the Committee invites members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions.
- 5.2 On this occasion the Committee has been asked to raise the following with the Councillor Lewis:
- It has been proposed that tenants living in the Council's high-rise blocks of flats be issued with fire blankets, for use in manageable fire emergencies in their flats. Does the Cabinet Member intend to go ahead with this approach, which potentially could limit and control fire outbreaks and, if not, why not?
 - Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on plans for Green Energy Schemes for the Council's housing stock?

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

Background Papers: None

Legal Officer: Debbie Smith
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley