



Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 November 2017

Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18

Purpose:	This report reviews progress with the agreed scrutiny work programme for 2017/18.
Content:	The work programme is described, including the plan for future committee meetings and topics that will be examined by scrutiny through various Panels and Working Groups.
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• review the scrutiny work programme (including progress of current Panels and Working Groups)• consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny• plan for the committee meetings ahead
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's scrutiny work programme, and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- 1.2 A report is provided to each meeting to enable the committee to maintain an overview of agreed scrutiny activities, monitor progress, and coordinate work as necessary.
- 1.3 The broad aim of the scrutiny function is to:
 - help improve services
 - provide an effective challenge to the executive

- engage members in the development of policies, strategies and plans
 - engage the public
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of scrutiny time and resources.

It also needs to be:

- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available
 - relevant to council priorities
 - adding value and having maximum impact
 - coordinated and avoid duplication
- 1.5 The work of scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the committee itself, by establishing informal panels or via one-off working groups. Panels and Working Groups would be open to all non-executive councillors - the committee will agree membership and conveners following expressions of interest.
- 1.6 Scrutiny will regularly send letters to Cabinet Members communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, by producing reports. Inquiry panels will produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered. Inquiry panels will reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and the impact of their work – usually 6-12 months following cabinet decision.
- 1.7 Although much of the work of scrutiny is carried out by informal panels and working groups these meetings are accessible to the public. Agendas, reports and letters relating to all such scrutiny activities are published, in the same manner as the committee, on the Council's modern.gov online platform:
<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

2. Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18

2.1 Overall Programme

- 2.1.1 The agreed scrutiny work programme for 2017/18 is set out in ***Appendix 1***.
- 2.1.2. The following paragraphs break down the work programme by specific ways of working to provide a quick overview.

2.2 Scrutiny Programme Committee:

2.2.1 The committee work plan for the year ahead is attached as **Appendix 2**. This should be kept under review to ensure it represents a robust and effective plan. The plan includes a schedule of future Cabinet Member Question & Answer Sessions.

2.2.2 Committee members should review and confirm items for the next and future meetings giving specific consideration to who should attend so that meetings are always well planned and prepared for, e.g. information required and key questions that the committee wishes to ask.

2.2.3 The major item(s) scheduled for the next committee meeting on 11 December:

- Cabinet Member Question Session: Stronger Communities - Councillor Will Evans.

2.2.4 The committee will have the opportunity to review priorities and introduce issues of concern as and when they arise, e.g. pre-decision scrutiny which may require extra meetings.

2.2.5 Pre-decision scrutiny – this is carried out by the committee unless delegated elsewhere. The committee is invited to consider the available information on future cabinet business and any opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny, taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications (see Forward Plan attached as **Appendix 3**). Any requests will require discussion with relevant Cabinet Member(s) to confirm timescales and window of opportunity for scrutiny involvement. Pre-decision scrutiny enables scrutiny to develop understanding about and ask questions on proposed Cabinet reports to provide ‘critical friend’ challenge and influence decision-making.

2.2.6 Commissioning Reviews – it has already been acknowledged that reports on various commissioning reviews that are planned over the next year are key cabinet decisions and should be subject to pre-decision scrutiny. This will be carried out via the committee or relevant Panels as appropriate. The following commissioning reviews are expected. Therefore scrutiny arrangements for these will need to be scheduled into work plans.

Commissioning Review	Cabinet Portfolio	Expected Cabinet Meeting
Catering Services	Service Transformation & Business Operations	17 Aug
Planning & City Regeneration	Culture, Tourism & Major Projects	17 Aug
Public Protection	Environment Services	19 Oct
Family Support (Child Disability)	Health & Wellbeing	16 Nov
Additional Learning Needs	Children, Education & Lifelong Learning	tbc

2.3 Inquiry Panels:

2.3.1 The following Inquiry Panels are active:

In Progress (yet to report):	Completed (follow up stage)
1. Regional Working (evidence gathering stage) - Expected end: Mar 2018 2. Natural Environment (expected Start - End: Dec 2017 - June 2018)	1. Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (Nov) 2. Tackling Poverty (Mar) 3. School Readiness (Mar)

The inquiries on School Governance and Building Sustainable Communities have recently been followed up. Monitoring of both inquiries is now complete. Conveners' letters (and cabinet member responses) will be reported to the committee in due course.

2.4 Performance Panels:

2.4.1 The following Performance Panels meet on an ongoing basis (frequency of meetings in brackets):

1. Service Improvement & Finance (monthly) 2. Schools (monthly) 3. Adult Services (monthly)	4. Child & Family Services (every two months) 5. Public Services Board (every two months) 6. Development & Regeneration (quarterly)
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2.4.2 Performance Panel conveners will be asked to provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact. As the work of these Panels for this municipal year has begun a schedule for Performance Panels updates to committee has now been developed.

2.5 Working Groups:

2.5.1 The following Working Groups will be convened during the year ahead, with projected date:

1. Community Cohesion & Hate Crime (14 Nov) 2. Car Park Charges (28 Nov) 3. Roads & Footway Maintenance (Jan) 4. Local Flood Risk Management (annual - Feb)	5. Homelessness (Feb/Mar) 6. Renewable Energy (Feb) 7. Digital Inclusion (Mar) 8. Bus Services (Apr) 9. Public Conveniences (May)
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A meeting on Emergency Planning & Resilience was held recently. The Convener's letter (and cabinet member response) will be reported to the committee in due course.

2.6 Progress

2.6.1 The committee is responsible for monitoring progress of work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility.

2.6.2 **Appendix 4a** provides a timetable of all scrutiny activities (projected or actual where dates are known). Lead councillors and officers are also noted within.

2.6.3 **Appendix 4b** provides a snapshot of progress with all of the informal Panels and Working Groups established by the committee and their current position.

3. **Public Requests for Scrutiny / Councillor Calls for Action**

3.1 None

4. **Financial Implications**

4.1 Any costs that arise out of work plan activities, for example expenses for witnesses or transport costs, are not envisaged to be significant and will be contained within the existing Scrutiny Budget.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Agreed Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18

Appendix 2: Committee Work Plan 2017/18

Appendix 3: Forward Look (Cabinet Business)

Appendix 4a: Scrutiny Work Programme Activity Timetable 2017/18

Appendix 4b: Scrutiny Panel / Working Group Progress