

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) Regional Working (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

Key Question: How can the Council, with its partners, develop and improve regional working for the benefit of Swansea and its residents?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The panel met with Martin Nicholls to look at regional working within the Place Directorate on 13 November and will in January speak to the Director of Social Services and the respective Chief Officers about the regional working picture in Social Services and Education. The Panel will then meet with some of the people from the different partnerships including for example Western Bay, ERW and City Deal.

Projected End Date: April 2018

NB - An inquiry into the Swansea's Natural Environment is anticipated to commence in early 2018.

2. 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	
School Governance	16 Jun 2016	6	2	4	25 Sep 2017 (complete)
		Response to other 4 recommendations: Action already in place			
Building Sustainable Communities	19 Jan 2017	10	0	0	17 Oct 2017 (complete)
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1	15 Nov 2017 (further follow up tba in 9-12 months)
School Readiness	15 Jun 2017	9	0	0	Mar 2018
Tackling Poverty	15 Jun 2017	12	1	2	1 Mar 2018

3. Performance Panels:

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

A progress report appears separately in the agenda as Item No. 8

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Mo Sykes)

The Panel on 15 November met with pupils, headteachers, chair of governors and the challenge advisors for Parklands Primary and Olchfa Comprehensive Schools to look at the collaboration work they are doing in relation to the New Curriculum for Wales. In December the panel will discuss Looked After Children Educational Performance and Outcomes and also how schools are spending their Pupil Deprivation Grant to support vulnerable pupils.

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

The meeting on 25 October focussed on two of the Public Services Board work streams – Ageing Well and Domestic Abuse. The Panel received presentations from officers on both areas of work which looked at progress and future plans. The next meeting on 13 December will be scrutiny of the draft Wellbeing Plan.

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

The Panel met on 14 November to undertake pre decision scrutiny on the Family Support Services Commissioning Review – Focusing on Children with Additional Needs and Disabilities. The Panel will meet again on 18 December to consider Child Disability and receive an update on Advocacy.

e) Adult Services (convener: Cllr Peter Black)

The Panel met on 21 November to consider Demand Management including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and to receive a presentation on the Western Bay Programme from Sara Harvey, Programme Director. The next meeting on 19 December will focus on Workforce Development and Systems Support.

f) Development & Regeneration (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

The Panel had their initial meeting on 7 September and had an overview from Phil Holmes on the current development projects being undertaken in Swansea. The next meeting on 11 September will see Ben Smith, Martin Nicholls and Huw Mowbray attend to answer a series of questions around the strategic aims and health of development so far with additional enquires around budgets.

4. Regional Scrutiny:

a) Education Through Regional Working

A regional 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 29 September 2017 and was hosted by Powys Council. The group discussed the ERW Business Plan, Performance Management and met a representative of Estyn to look at the new inspection regime for local authorities, ERW and individual schools. The next meeting will take place on 9 March 2018 and will be hosted by Carmarthen.

Swansea's Scrutiny Team is providing the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

5. Working Groups:

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups.

a) Emergency Planning & Resilience (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

Following the meeting on 11 October the Working Group's views and recommendations were sent to the relevant cabinet member. The cabinet member has now responded and this correspondence is included in the agenda papers under item 11 (scrutiny letters).

b) Community Cohesion & Hate Crime (convener: Cllr Elliot King)

This Working Group met on 14 November to enable information and discussion / questions about the council's work to support and promote community cohesion and tackle issues and effectiveness, and consider the current situation. The Working Group recommends that a further meeting is held in six months to focus on community cohesion, as they are concerned about the lack of a plan / strategy for this aspect. A letter to this effect has been sent to the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities.

c) **Car Park Charges** (convener: Cllr Will Thomas)

Based on concerns raised this will enable scrutiny councillors to ask about:

- the impact / effectiveness of increase in winter charges and generally (beaches and city centre) and complaints from businesses (challenge of council raising income versus business development)
- price rises contributing to fewer people visiting Gower and the City Centre and discouraging tourism
- loss of city centre footfall to out of town shopping precincts as people can park there for free
- how we compare with elsewhere

The Working Group meeting will take place on 28 November at 4.00pm.

d) **Tethered Horses** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

The committee has agreed to revisit concerns / issues regarding Tethered Horses. Working Group meetings were originally held in the first quarter of 2016, resulting in a number of recommendations addressing the issue of whether the council should introduce a ban on the tethering of horses.

A further one-off Working Group meeting has been arranged for 31 January which will enable councillors to get a position statement on the current situation, find out how things have changed / improved since the scrutiny in 2016, and identify any issues outstanding. Relevant officers have been invited along with Friends of Swansea Horses.

e) **Roads & Footway Maintenance** (convener: Cllr Sam Pritchard)

This is an area of public concern and will enable scrutiny councillors to ask about the situation in Swansea and work / measures to tackle problems, with reference to:

- Service practices and procedures (e.g. dealing with pot holes)
- Use of resources / impact of budget cuts
- Quality and effectiveness of maintenance and repair
- Efforts to minimise disruption to major access roads
- Challenges / improvement issues.

The Working Group meeting will take place on 31 January at 4.00pm.

f) Local Flood Risk Management (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

This is an annual recurring item in the work programme.

The working group will meet on 20 February to receive an annual update to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The Cabinet Member for Environment Services will attend to update the group.

Further Working Groups to be convened, in the order of priority shown (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

1. Homelessness

This will enable information and discussion / questions on the draft Homelessness Strategy, and performance of relevant services.

2. Renewable Energy

This will 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.

3. Digital Inclusion

This will enable councillors to follow up on the Working Group meeting held in March 2017. At that meeting the Working Group detailed a number of issues to be considered as part of a review of the digital inclusion strategy. Councillors will be able to consider how well prepared both the Council itself and the public is to use digital technology.

4. Bus Services

This will enable information and discussion / questions about the relationship between the Council and service providers e.g. progress with the agreement of a Quality Bus Contract, and consider current service issues.

5. Public Conveniences

This will enable information and discussion / questions on public convenience provision / access in Swansea, and relevant concerns.