



**To/
Councillor Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for
Environment Services**

BY EMAIL

*Please ask for:
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Overview & Scrutiny

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16th October 2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Environment Services following the meeting of the Panel on 16th October 2017. It is about the Public Protection Commissioning Review.

Dear Councillor Thomas,

Thank you for attending the meeting of the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel on 16th October 2017 to consider the Public Protection Commissioning Review.

The Panel were grateful to officers Lee Morgan and Mark Wade for providing information and answering questions.

We acknowledged the good work in relation to these services. Overall the Panel thought the Public Protection Commissioning Review was very good and were supportive of the proposals.

However, the Panel also made a number of observations that we wish to share with you.

1. The review covers a range of diverse and complex services. Many of the services are public facing and staff tend to be frontline. It is surprising therefore that there has been little public engagement about the services on offer. Many of the services are offered for free such as pest control in relation to rats, bedbugs and cockroaches. The Panel feels that this could be

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highlighted to the public. The good work of Swansea Council should be celebrated.

2. The services included within the review realise 61.5% of their expenditure via income. The net budget of the services on offer is £2.7m with a total expenditure of £7m. The Panel feel that the service offers excellent value for money given the breadth of the services on offer. We felt that this type of value for money service should be advertised as a success.

3. In relation to customer demand, feedback and complaints information, the Panel read that further work will be undertaken to capture qualitative data using IT solutions. The Panel would like to highlight that IT systems are not always reliable to give valuable and definite outcomes.


4. Whilst the Panel understands that benchmarking data can be useful to assess comparable services, every Local Authority seems to deliver this range of services differently. The Panel does not feel that comparing Swansea's services to other Councils is the best way of analysing performance.

5. The Panel is encouraged that this Commissioning Review has been exploring commercial opportunities. However, we feel that the ones currently being explored are unlikely to be successful to the point where they make a significant difference.

6. Following on from the last point, the Panel are glad that the risks to the public and service delivery are being identified if certain income generating proposals are pursued. The Panel do not feel it sensible to divert attention away from the statutory frontline services to pursue them.

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any further comments however **we do not expect you to provide a formal response.**

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Holley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

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