

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 will in late 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 on the 2nd and 16th February.

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)
Tackling Poverty	15 Jun 2017	12	1	2	1 Mar 2018
School Readiness	15 Jun 2017	9	0	0	27 Mar 2018

3. Performance Panels:

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

The meeting on 12 December focussed on the Annual Review of Performance and Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring. The next meeting on 10 January will look at the budget proposals that are being consulted on by Cabinet and also include focus on the Corporate Complaints Annual Report.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Mo Sykes)

The Panel on 12 December looked at educational performance and support for Looked After Children and discussed how schools are spending their Pupil Deprivation Grant to support vulnerable pupils across schools in Swansea.

At their next meeting on the 18 January the panel will look at the Annual Education Performance Data and school categorisation. On the 5 February Councillors will meet with Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning to discuss the education aspects of the annual budget.

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

The meeting on 13 December focussed on the Draft Well Being Plan. The Plan is subject to public consultation until 13 February 2018. The draft final Plan will be reported back to the Panel before agreement. The next meeting on 14 February will focus on the Early Years work stream and achievements.

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

The Panel met on 18 December and received an update on Advocacy. The Panel will meet again on 5 February to consider the budget proposals in relation to Child and Family Services before they go to Cabinet.

e) Adult Services (convener: Cllr Peter Black)

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

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

The panel met on 11 December and questioned Ben Smith, Martin Nicholls and Huw Mowbray around the strategic aims and progress in relation to development and regeneration activities. There is an extra meeting on 5 February to review the draft Council Budget.

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

This Working Group met on 14 November which enabled information and discussion / questions about the council's work and effectiveness to support and promote community cohesion and tackle hate crime, and consider the current situation. The Working Group will meet again around May 2018 to focus on Community Cohesion, as there was concern about the lack of an overarching direction, or strategy, for this aspect.

b) Car Park Charges (convener: Cllr Will Thomas)

The Working Group met on 28 November and discussed a range of issues relating to car parks and charging. e.g. effect of winter charges, effect of charges on tourism and city centre footfall. As well as speaking to the relevant Cabinet Member and officers, the Panel was able to hear views from a number of members of the public about matters relating to foreshore car parks. The Panel has written to the Cabinet Member for Environment Services with its views and suggested improvement actions.

c) **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.

d) **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.

e) **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.