



Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 8 January 2018

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 Rob Stewart, Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy & Strategy
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:	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer:	Tracey Meredith, Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Business Intelligence
Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Finance Officer:	Paul Cridland

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 Rob Stewart, Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Economy & Strategy

Within this cabinet portfolio, he is responsible for:

- City Deal
- City Region Joint Committee
- Strategic Partnerships
- Regional Working & Collaborations
- Finance Strategy & Budget Oversight
- Public Services Board (PSB)
- Constitutional Issue
- Planning Policy (Regional)
- Regeneration Strategy & Major Projects Lead
- City Centre Redevelopment
- 5G project (City Deal)
- Corporate Communications
- Community Leadership
- Poverty Reduction
- Lead Elements of Sustainable Swansea

As Leader of the Council, he is responsible for:

- providing political leadership to the Council
- working with officers to lead the organisation
- appointing the Cabinet

- managing and leading the work of the Cabinet and chairing meetings
- delegation of all executive functions that allow the Cabinet and Officers to make decisions and manage day-to-day delivery of Council Services, in line with the Council's overall policies and budget

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 In particular, Members of the Committee intend to ask the Cabinet Member about: corporate priorities and budget proposals.

3.4 Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee. 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**.

3.5 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.

- 3.6 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 Amongst the issues discussed during the relevant Q & A session last year (January 2017) included:

- City Deal
- Budget
- Regionalisation
- Oceana Building Demolition
- City Centre Regeneration

Relevant correspondence between the committee and cabinet member is attached, as the Committee may wish to follow up on these issues and previous discussion, as necessary.

- 4.2 Other relevant contact with scrutiny:

Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel:

The Leader is the chair of Swansea Public Services Board. He attended a Q & A with the Scrutiny Panel in February 2017 regarding his role and the effectiveness of the Public Services Board. The Panel wrote to the Leader in June reflecting on a series of meetings with PSB Core Group Members, including representatives from the ABMU Health Board, Natural Resources Wales, and the Mid & West Wales Fire Authority. The Panel also wrote to the Leader in October about the Wellbeing Assessment and Wellbeing Plan.

Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Panel:

The Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel is in regular correspondence with the Leader. Over the last year the following issues have been discussed:

- Quarterly Performance & Budget Monitoring reports
- Fees & Charges
- Commercial Estates
- Corporate Plan
- Commissioning Reviews
- Welsh Language Annual Report
- Waste Management
- Reserves

The Leader is scheduled to attend the Panel's budget scrutiny meeting on 6 February to present and take questions on the draft budget.

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 no questions have been received.

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

Appendices:

Appendix 1: The Leader's Portfolio – Key Headlines

Appendix 2: Previous Correspondence