

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 meet with representatives from across different Council partnerships including for example Western Bay, ERW and City Deal on 2 and 16 February. The panel will then start to draw their inquiry to a close by reviewing the evidence they have gathered and discussing conclusions and possible recommendations.

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	tba
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 10 January focussed on the Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report, the Complaints Annual Report 16/17 and some aspects of the draft Budget Proposals. The next meeting on 14 February will consider the final Budget Proposals and receive feedback from other Panels on Budget Proposals relating to their areas of work.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Mo Sykes)

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

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

The next meeting on 27 February will look at the Early Years Work Stream including a presentation from Sian Bingham, Early Years and Family Support Manager. There will also be a discussion around the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and how the Panel can and do use it to inform and develop their scrutiny work.

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 12 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)

The Panel met on 16 January and discussed arrangements for charging for adult social care in Swansea and the quarterly performance report and received a presentation on the DEWIS information system. The Panel will meet again on 13 February to consider the budget proposals in relation to Adult Services before they go to Cabinet.

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

The Panel will formally meet again in April. In the meantime, there will be an informal briefing on work being undertaken around business cases linked with the City Deal. This should help inform the Panel of work taking place which underpins the development and regeneration projects and create a wider understanding of the current picture.

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 Cabinet Member for Environment Services has responded to the Panel recommendations (see Item 11 – Scrutiny Letters).

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 took place on 31 January to 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.

The Cabinet Member for Environment provided a written report and attended with relevant officer(s). The RSPCA and FOSH (Friends of Swansea Horses) also attending to provide an external perspective on developments.

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

This is an area of public concern and enabled 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 took place on 31 January.

e) **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Peter 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. **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.

2. Homelessness

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

(NB – Expressions of interest in participating in the above two Working Groups were invited from councillors and are reported under Item 9 for agreement)

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 Council's digital inclusion strategy. Councillors will be able to consider how well prepared both the Council itself and the public is to use and communicate via 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.

6. Archive Service

This would enable discussion about current service delivery, performance, and challenges. There is particular concern about accommodation issues and their effect on the service.