



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Future Generations

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 9 April 2018

### Key Headlines: for the Future Generations Portfolio

**Purpose:** This report outlines notable activities and achievements in terms of delivering the key priorities within the Future Generations portfolio. It also describes some of the improvements made and the impact of these activities in terms of delivering key priorities within this portfolio. The report also seeks to identify anticipated achievements in the near future, key challenges and key decisions which are anticipated for Cabinet over the next 12 months.

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#### **For Information**

### **1.0 The Portfolio for Future Generations**

1.1 The key responsibilities within the portfolio for Future Generations are:

- Future Generations Act compliance (MS)
- Equalities (Access to Services) (MS)
- Diversity (Both)
- Engagement (Both)
- Community Building & Asset Transfer opportunities (JB)
- Suburban Centres & Community regeneration initiatives (JB)
- Members Community Budget Scheme (JB)
- Member Champions (JB)
- Digital Inclusion (MS)
- Sustainable Development (MS)

- Biodiversity (MS)
- Poverty Reduction (Both)
- Lead Elements of Sustainable Swansea (Both)

1.2 The portfolio is shared, with the joint cabinet members dividing the items as listed. The Cabinet vote rotates every three months. During the months when one does not hold the vote, they count as a non-Executive Member in constituted meetings but maintain responsibility for work on their portfolio areas.

## 2.0 Future Generations Act Compliance

2.1 As part of the Planning and City Regeneration Commissioning Review (Spring 2017) the Sustainable Development Unit was disbanded. Corporate responsibility for the Well-being of Future Generations Act has transferred to the Strategic Delivery Unit.

2.2 Swansea Council has made good progress implementing the Act. The Council published its Well-being Objectives for 2017/22 in August 2017 in the Corporate Plan and overall the Council is showing progress on embedding the five ways of working:

- a *Prevention Strategy* has been adopted to continue the development of the Council's **preventative** approach.
- Foresighting workshops have been held to help develop **long-term** visioning
- **Involvement** is being enhanced through the development of further opportunities for local citizens to influence how policies are written and services, including a *Coproduction Strategy*.
- **integration** between internal services and with external partners is improving. Cross cutting *Commissioning Reviews* of services based on themes are aimed at making services more joined-up, integrated and sustainable providing better outcomes for citizens.
- **collaboration** between departments, with partners and with citizens is becoming more expected and business-as-usual. The Public Service Board has developed and published the Well-being Plan for Swansea, which will now be delivered in collaboration with partners.

2.3 The Future Generations Framework, offered by the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner as a tool for supporting a Future Generations approach to project or policy development, has been taken up in some areas. PDDCs are trialling it and senior officers have suggested contexts for its use.

2.4 The Council's risk management policy and framework have been revised to incorporate the Sustainable Development Principle and to help identify and respond to longer-term strategic risks. Loss of trees and other biodiversity has been identified as a gap in the risk register which is being addressed.

### **3.0 Sustainable Development**

- 3.1 A Sustainable Development Policy Officer has been retained within the Economic Regeneration and Planning Service to provide strategic support for the Service's operations on sustainability under the Well-being of Future Generations Act, Environment Act, and Biodiversity Action Plan and practical sustainability expertise (e.g. sustainable regeneration, green economy, climate change, green infrastructure and PSB Working with Nature objective).
- 3.2 A Sustainability Statement has been produced for the Swansea Central Redevelopment. This sets out the Council's aspirations / requirements regarding sustainable regeneration. The requirements of this will form part of the scoring process for selecting developers and designing and delivering the project.
- 3.3 The Kingsway and Castle Square phases of the City Centre Redevelopment benefit from the ongoing involvement of the Sustainable Development Policy Officer. Sustainability and community benefits have been included as part of the technical and qualitative weightings for the tendering process.
- 3.4 An Integrated Impact Assessment (adapted to reflect the requirements of the WFG Act, therefore assessing sustainability and other outcomes sought) was undertaken of the Deposit LDP.

### **4.0 Engagement**

- 4.1 Over the last 6 months the Council has undertaken a number of formal statutory consultations and more informal surveys to seek the views of staff and members of the public. Swansea's PSB Well-Being plan was developed with input from various engagement mechanisms including an online survey and some focus group discussions.
- 4.2 The need for surveys and engagement tools to be as accessible and "plain English" as possible - within the legal constraints that shape statutory consultation - is under discussion.
- 4.3 Various teams have provided advice and support to inform engagement activities within Departments across the Council such as Pupil Voice, Housing Tenant participation and engagements around regeneration projects. Councillor Champions have also been developing relationships with relevant groups of service users and residents to improve and support engagement.
- 4.4 Engagement is an area where there is a lot of activity taking place in often ad-hoc or piecemeal ways and a more strategic approach would be helpful. Clarity about ways for officers of all levels to engage with more senior decision makers is needed, as is a more comprehensive commitment to keeping ward members informed of activities in their

areas and recognition of their role as the elected interface between the organisation and the public. Officers have been tasked with developing strategies to support these areas.

## **5.0 Equality & Diversity**

- 5.1 Swansea Council has undertaken a range of activities to support Equality and Diversity over the last six months: a seminar on Gender Stereotyping aimed at those working in early years and young people's services settings; a similar seminar on International Women's Day focussing on more general workplace issues; a seminar on Hate Crime to raise awareness of issues and promote good practice; an Equality and Children's rights workshop for Governors. The Council has produced Transgender guidance for schools, aiming to provide advice and resources for schools to tackle discrimination. The Council has continued its support and close engagement with Equality Groups in the local area including the Disability Liaison Group, an LGBT forum and regional BME forum. An LGBT staff group has been established.
- 5.2 The Council seeks to ensure that all its plans, strategies and policies do not discriminate against any group or person and that they promote Equality and Diversity in the local area. The Council has continued to equality impact assess all of its decisions, including the recent Budget proposals, as required by law.
- 5.3 The Strategic Equality Plan Annual report and the Welsh Language Standards report help monitor and demonstrate progress.
- 5.4 The process of equality impact assessments has been revised to include Human Rights, which has contributed to the readiness of the Council and its partners to explore becoming a Human Rights City.
- 5.5 The Council is currently reviewing the ways in which it promotes Equality and Diversity to ensure that future models and mechanisms are sustainable and robust. It is anticipated that Departments will play a much bigger role in ensuring the Council meets its duties under the Equality Act. The responsibility for developing and reviewing the Council's Strategic Equality Plan will be transferred to the Strategic Delivery Unit and the work to support the Welsh Language will be undertaken by the Welsh Translation Unit. It is hoped that this approach will provide more resilience. Providing adequate resource to maintain the required levels of analysis and reporting while the workforce is being upskilled may be a challenge.
- 5.6 The Council has joined the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Network and recently hosted a visit from their team, receiving a report offering insights into how our goal of becoming more intercultural can be achieved. This is now being discussed with officers and proposals will be coming forward. This work sits mainly with Cllr Lloyd and we are pleased to support it.

- 5.7 The Council is working with local participation experts Dynamix, who have funding under the Home Office's "Building a Stronger Britain Together" fund, for work in schools to support multicultural awareness, sensitivity and tolerance. Schools participate voluntarily, therefore it is very pleasing to see that some particular schools whose very low level of diversity may make this sort of work more challenging, have taken up the offer.

## **6.0 Community Building & Asset Transfer opportunities**

- 6.1 Swansea Council has developed a Community Asset Transfer policy, which aims to sustain and develop a range of community resources for the future. This policy is an integral part of *Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future* – aiming to ensure that these assets are sustained for future generations in the midst of austerity and significant budget cuts by the UK government.
- 6.2 Following an audit of community buildings and assets, 4 sites have been successfully transferred from the Council to the community. These sites include; Forge Fach and Craigmelyn Hall, Clydach, the Indoor Bowls Hall in Landore and Southgate WCs. There are a further 41 assets currently under consideration for transfer to the community 7 are currently in the legal process of transfer. Please note that these assets were identified as transfer candidates, and work begun on their transfer, in the previous Council term and before the creation of this cabinet portfolio.
- 6.3 Following a significant consultation process, the proposal to transfer 14 allotment sites to the current plot holders has been approved by Cabinet and work is underway to complete the relevant lease agreements.

## **7.0 Suburban Centres & Community regeneration initiatives**

- 7.1 A co-productive approach is being taken to the development of community hubs in certain areas. This will see the co-location of various public, third sector and community-led services. Workshops have been held with various stakeholders, to vision both the products and the process and ensure a Future Generations approach is taken.
- 7.2 The transition from Communities First to "Legacy Fund" projects and the Communities For Work programme is underway; some of these new services will be delivered out of the new community hubs.

## **8.0 Members Community Budget Scheme**

- 8.1 The policy on the Members Community Budget Scheme has been revised and adopted. This scheme supports delivery of small local measures that are a priority for individual Members and their local community but are not funded by other Council budgets.

- 8.2 Members can allocate funding to any scheme (providing it is legal, complies with the Council's constitution and the Council's policies and procedures) and can be used to: initiate or support community projects to improve health and wellbeing, improve Council owned land and/or public rights of way, improve community services or facilities, address safety issues, contribute towards the Council's costs in facilitating local events or markets, produce leaflets and information promoting the local area (but not promoting individual businesses and/or organisations), provide grants totalling up to £3,000 per year, per Councillor (maximum £15,000 over the five-year term) to community groups, contribute towards the Minor Works Budget, create or enhance an asset or provide match funding to support or extend projects.
- 8.3 Discussions with officers are underway about how to streamline the process and make communications more effective.

## **9.0 Member Champions**

- 9.1 Councillor Champions exist to provide a voice for traditionally underrepresented groups, or issues which should be kept at the forefront of Council business.
- 9.2 The key role of Member Champions is to make sure that the issue or group they are championing is taken into account when Council policy is being developed and decisions are made. This is achieved by asking questions about performance and resourcing for the area, raising the profile of the area and making the authority aware of good practice, engaging with external bodies who work in the area, engaging with other officers and Members in relation to the role and engaging with community groups with an interest / stake in the area.
- 9.3 The current list of Member Champions is as follows;

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Councillor</b>
Animal Rights	Gloria Tanner
Armed Forces	June Burtonshaw
Carers	Paulette Smith
Children & Family Services	Mark Child
Councillors' Support & Development	Wendy Lewis
Disability & Access to Services	Paul Lloyd
Diversity	Erika Kirchner
Domestic Abuse	Erika Kirchner
Health & Wellbeing	Alyson Pugh
Healthy Cities & Sport	Terry Hennegan
Homelessness	Mo Sykes
Language (including Welsh)	Robert Smith
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender)	Elliott King

Natural Environment & Biodiversity	Peter Jones
Poverty Reduction	Rob Stewart (Leader)
Public Transport	Nick Davies
Rural Economy	Andrew Stevens
Safeguarding	Mark Child
Sanctuary & Inclusion	Yvonne Jardine
(UNCRC) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	Christine Richards & Sam Pritchard
Vulnerable & Older People	Jan Curtice
Women	Louise Gibbard
Young Carers	Sam Pritchard
Religion & Heritage	Sam Pritchard

## 10.0 Digital Inclusion

- 10.1 Swansea Council continues to roll out its successful Get Swansea Online programme. During 2017/18 492 people attended the course and there were 469 new beneficiaries (who completed both PC and tablet courses), exceeding that target by 13%.
- 10.2 The majority of participants stated that they were likely, or very likely to use the internet to: access council services (97%), keep in touch with friends and family (95%), find information and support, for hobbies and interests (99%) and take part in further training (94%). Encouragingly, for a predominately older demographic, many of whom were new to and previously wary of the internet, (61%) said they were likely or very likely to use the internet to find and take advantage of savings online (80% of beneficiaries were over 55).
- 10.3 During 2017, Swansea achieved a “low likelihood of digital exclusion” rating, (improved from medium risk in 2015<sup>1</sup>). The team has worked with other services and Departments within the Council such as Poverty and Prevention, Benefits, Libraries and the contact centre to provide drop in sessions for those affected by introduction of Universal Credit.
- 10.4 Swansea Council aims to continue to: promote Digital Inclusion by continuing the Get Swansea Online programme (target 450 new beneficiaries for 2018/19), work closely with Poverty and Prevention teams to provide courses to those at risk of digital exclusion and aid residents to upskill and find employment. Work will continue with partners towards a shared digital inclusion strategy and we will investigate the use of voice-activated devices and other new technologies that may help to reduce digital exclusion and explore the viability of running follow-on courses.

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<sup>1</sup> This can be seen on the Get Digital Heatmap, which shows the likelihood of digital exclusion across the UK at Local Authority level. It was developed with the Local Government Association and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), in association with Lloyds Banking Group

## **11.0 Biodiversity**

- 11.1 There have been a number of projects completed to protect, enhance and avoid the loss of biodiversity in Swansea. Sand dunes have been created on Swansea Bay to control windblown sand, reduce erosion and flooding and create wildlife habitat. New ponds and wetland habitat at Llys Nini (commercial contract) have been established.
- 11.2 A Volunteer Co-ordinator has been appointed to assist with management of Local Nature Reserves and other Council owned land.
- 11.3 An Environmental Events Programme has been produced along with an Accessible Greenspace Green Map and Community Growing Green Map to encourage people to engage with and learn about the environment and nature. This is supported with outdoor learning activities, e.g. at Bishops Wood Local Nature Reserve, Community Greening and Biodiversity initiatives.
- 11.4 Over the coming months, there will be a Scrutiny Inquiry into how effectively the Council has been managing natural resources, including its delivery of the Biodiversity Duty. This will allow the Council to take stock and to learn lessons on how it can improve further.
- 11.5 The Council will seek to secure external grant funding for delivery of Biodiversity initiatives and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources.
- 11.6 Work will take place to prepare a Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan and draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning guidance for the protection, management, enhancement and promotion of Swansea's outstanding natural environment and biodiversity.
- 11.7 Work will commence on a draft Green Infrastructure Strategy to help develop a range of ecosystem services, which will be mapped, and to help create sustainable communities, tackle climate change, promote healthy living and nurture biodiversity.
- 11.8 Work to develop and deliver Biodiversity training for staff and Councillors will take place and the Council will continue to support partnership initiatives and community engagement, for example the joint Pollinator project with Bug Life to help pollinators to survive and thrive.

## **12. Poverty Reduction**

- 12.1 The goal of A More Equal Wales, which specifically refers to socioeconomic inequalities, is being addressed through the inclusion of particular goals in the PSB's Well-Being Plan, including the aim for households to achieve the Minimum Income Standard, and for the Poverty Premium to be reduced.



- 12.2 The need for a Future Generations approach (involving, collaborative, integrated, long-term and preventative) to Welfare Reform is being discussed. Support with financial inclusion, digital inclusion, budgeting and skill development for employability should ideally be designed and delivered in a cohesive, future generations way. The FG Framework may be a helpful tool here.
- 12.3 We have supported work to promote credit union membership and to ensure Council staff receive information about the benefits of joining
- 12.4 It is important to note that the creation of Passivhaus council housing and other initiatives which will reduce carbon emissions also have implications for poverty reduction. Fuel is one of the top areas of “poverty premium” for Swansea households, and reduced fuel spend can therefore significantly impact on this area of economic inequality.
- 12.5 As the PSB develops action steps behind the new Well-Being Plan, we aim to ensure that opportunities to maximise disposable household income (by minimising spend on household essentials) are explored creatively. Also, many elements of health inequality are currently associated with income – such as access to green space for recreation, reduced blood pressure and clean air. The Well-Being plan is an opportunity to address these inequalities in an integrated way.

### **13.0 Lead Elements of Sustainable Swansea**

- 13.1 The particular areas relevant to this portfolio are: the creation of multi-service community hubs; the embedding of equalities awareness and work; the transfer of assets to the community and supporting a culture shift from “service deliverer” to “outcome enabler”. The WFG Act supports this shift, therefore embedding a “future generations approach” will help achieve a Sustainable Swansea.

### **14.0 Equality Implications.**

- 14.1 While there are no direct equality or engagement implications associated with this report, any individual projects of work undertaken within this portfolio are subject to the corporate Equality Impact Assessment process in their own right.

### **15.0 Legal Implications**

- 15.1 There are no specific legal implications contained in this report.

### **16.0 Financial Implications**

- 16.1 There are no financial implications.