

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 last meeting of the Panel will held on 25 May when they will look at and agree the final report for submission to SPC.

Projected End Date: 25 May 2018

b) **Natural Environment** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

Key Question: What should Swansea Council be doing to maintain, enhance and promote its natural environment and biodiversity?

Progress Bar:

Planning	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel had their second meeting on the 24 April. Cllr Mary Sherwood, Deb Hill (Nature Conservation Team Leader) and Paul Meller (Strategic Planning and Natural Environment Manager) attended with some of their team to give the Panel updates. The Panel heard about current work which is taking place and received a presentation on the current position relating to the Natural Environment and Biodiversity in Swansea. The session was very informative and the Panel decided that the natural environment and biodiversity will be the focal point of the inquiry. The will look to see how we meet the requirements under the relevant acts.

Projected End Date: October 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 July/ August 2018)
School Readiness	15 Jun 2017	9	0	0	27 Mar 2018 (complete – any outstanding issues being picked up Schools Panel)
Tackling Poverty	15 Jun 2017	12	1	2	May / June 2018

3. Performance Panels:

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

The last meeting on 28 March looked at the Quarter 3 Performance and Monitoring Report. The Panel made a number of observations in relation to this and a letter to the Leader has been sent. The Panel was also concerned about the high levels of staff sickness and requested a breakdown of this information from the relevant department.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Mo Sykes)

The Panel will next meet on the 17 May when they will speak to the Chief Education Officer about the issues facing education currently. They will then discuss their Work Programme for the coming year.

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

A progress report appears separately in the agenda as Item No. 7.

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

The Panel met on 30 April to monitor the performance of the Service. They also considered the Complaints Annual Report 2016/17 for Children's Services and undertook an end of year review of the Panel's work. The Panel will next meet on 25 June when they will discuss the impact of Prevention and Early Intervention on Child and Family Services. They will also agree their work programme for the coming year.

e) Adult Services (convener: Cllr Peter Black)

The Panel met last on 17 April to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the Outcomes of Residential Care and Day Services Commissioning Reviews. The Convener of the Panel then attended Cabinet on 19 April to feedback the views and recommendations of the Panel. The next meeting is due to take place on 16 May when they will look at the performance monitoring reports and receive an explanation of budget outputs for Adult Services. They will also undertake an end of year review.

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

The Panel met on the 26 February and the update for that was included in last meetings Panel Update. The next meeting is due to take place on the 15 May. The Panel will be receiving an overview on current regeneration projects in Swansea from Huw Mowbray and Ben Smith. There will also be a discussion item on the Swansea City & Waterfront Digital District Business Case with Huw Mowbray and Clare James.

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 9 March 2018 and was hosted by Carmarthenshire Council. The group discussed the Annual verified data for the region, the effects of poverty in rural wales and progress with the the recently established ERW review and reform programme board. They also met with Kirsty Williams Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Education about the future of regional working in this area. The next meeting will take place in September 2018 and will be hosted by Neath Port Talbot.

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 in six months to focus on Community Cohesion, as there was concern about the lack of an overarching direction, or strategy, for this aspect.

A second meeting to look in more detail at the Community Cohesion aspect has been arranged for the 20 June 2018.

b) Local Flood Risk Management (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

This is an annual recurring item in the work programme. The working group met 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 attended to update the group. A letter was sent to the Cabinet Member with the views and recommendations of the Working Group. A response has now been received from the Cabinet Member, and appears within this agenda under item 9 (Scrutiny Letters).

c) Renewable Energy (convener: Cllr Sam Pritchard)

The Working Group met on 26 March to discuss, receive information and put questions to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Energy on the Council's aims and objectives, development projects / initiatives, and progress in the promotion and use of renewable energy and the benefits. A letter with the views and recommendations of the Working Group will be sent to the Cabinet Member shortly.

d) Homelessness (convener: Cllr Peter Black)

This will enable information, questions and discussion on activities to manage homelessness, the current position, performance of relevant services, and challenges. This Working Group will consist of two meetings with the first meeting taking place on 14 May to receive information and question external organisations on what they think is working well in Swansea; where the gaps in provision are; and, what is not working so well.

Further Working Groups to be convened, in the order of priority shown (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

1. 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 / engage via digital technology.

2. 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.

3. Public Conveniences

This will enable information and discussion / questions on public convenience provision / access in Swansea, and relevant concerns.

4. 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.