



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre, Swansea

Tuesday, 10 July 2018 at 11.00 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
P K Jones
D W W Thomas

Councillor(s)

L James
J W Jones

Councillor(s)

M H Jones
I E Mann

Clive Lloyd

Cabinet Member - Business Transformation & Performance (Deputy Leader)

Officer(s)

Bethan Hopkins
Julie Nicholas-Humphreys
Chris Williams

Scrutiny Officer
Customer Services and Complaints Manager

Head of Commercial Services

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): B J Rowlands

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Public Questions

None

3 Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2017/18

- The Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 17/18 has already been to Cabinet
- The standards were introduced for the public sector to comply with
- There are variations between how Councils adhere to the rules
- Swansea Council work within cost parameters to implement the standards the best they can
- It should be day to day business for all services
- Staff are far more aware of promoting the Welsh language now

- There is a page on the intranet where staff can get common phrases and words
- There will be a relaunch of the standards and the Welsh Translation Unit
- Want to improve links with the Welsh Language Commissioner
- Perhaps the word interpretation should be used rather than translation
- The translation unit in Swansea has 12 people employed there which is a joint project with Neath Port Talbot Council as a 60/40 split
- Around £42,000 of translation work is sent externally at the moment due to capacity issues but this is being reviewed
- Welsh and English options should be completely equitable
- Potential to commercialise the work of the Welsh Translation Unit going forward
- There could also be wider opportunities with regional working
- There will be a review of the Welsh Language Champion role
- Need to ensure there are basic language skills e.g. phone greetings be bilingual to meet standards obligations

4 Charges

- This is a repeat exercise – an item on charges came to the Panel last year
- This item covers the whole of the Councils fees and charges
- This item can be used as the start of the review process and enables the Panel to focus on any specific areas they want to
- It is an aggregate set of data harmonised for review – each service area populates their own data
- It is difficult to compare charges between local authorities as it is packaged differently between local authorities
- Swansea Council seeks to be fair and transparent with charges
- Charging is considered as part of the budget process
- Swansea Council tries to ensure increases are not excessive in comparison to other Councils
- There are areas where Swansea don't charge and other Councils do such as garden waste
- A question was raised over the charging policy for boats at Southend Pier – department will respond
- There is a fair, reasonable and measured approach to charging
- Potential new powers for Wales called 'General Power of Competence' will allow Councils to act in a more commercial way to generate income
- Rather than the whole report – the charges item going forward can be limited to those which rise above inflation for any reason or any which are new or being changed substantially

5 Exclusion of Public

6 Charges

- Discussed exempt items

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm

Chair