



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Council Chamber - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 8 October 2018 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
L S Gibbard
P K Jones
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

M Durke
D W Helliwell
W G Lewis

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
S Pritchard

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

P M Black P R Hood-Williams
C A Holley J W Jones

Also Present

Councillor Mark Child Cabinet Member for Care, Health & Ageing Well
Councillor Jennifer Raynor Cabinet Member for Education Improvement,
Learning & Skills

Officer(s)

David Howes Director of Social Services
Kate Jones Democratic Services Officer
Simon Jones Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement
Officer
Brij Madahar Scrutiny Team Leader
Debbie Smith Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Nick Williams Director of Education

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): E T Kirchner and G J Tanner

56 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests was declared:

D Anderson-Thomas – personal – Minute No 60 – Governor at Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr.

Councillor P M Black – personal – Minute No 60 – Governor at Pentrehafod School.

Councillor C A Holley – personal – Minute No 60 – Governor at Pentrehafod School.

Councillor P R Hood-Williams – personal – Minute No 60 – Governor at Crwys Primary School and Cila Primary School.

Councillor J W Jones - personal - Minute Nos 60 and 65 – Governor at Olchfa School and family member a Governor at Hendrefoilan Primary School.

Councillor M H Jones – personal – Minute Nos 60 & 65 – Chair of Governors at Olchfa School and Governor at Hendrefoilan Primary School.

Councillor P K Jones – personal – Minute No 60 – Governor at Bishop Gore School.

A Roberts – personal – Minute No 60 – Chair of Governors at Bishopston Primary School.

57 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

58 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 10 September 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

59 Public Question Time.

The Deputy Chief Legal Officer provided advice to the Committee regarding responses to issues currently under Consultation.

The Committee heard from several members of the Public who raised questions on Item 6 (Minute 60) which focused on the following: -

- Concern was raised regarding increased airbourne pollutants around school premises especially if the proposed closure of Craigeffnparc Primary School, currently out for public consultation, proceeds with children having to travel further to school, resulting in increased traffic movements in the area.

The Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills confirmed that the proposed school closures were out for consultation, and concerns would be considered as part of the consultation process. She stated that Cabinet will be receiving a report on the consultation response before making any decisions, and encouraged members of the public to submit responses to the Education Department whilst the consultation was still open.

- A question was raised on the scrutiny of the school closures and consultation and whether there would be opportunity to see the Cabinet decision report before the Cabinet meeting.

The Cabinet Member stated that the Cabinet report would be published at least five working days in advance of the Cabinet meeting. It was also noted that all responses and comments raised as part of the consultation would be published. She stated that the cabinet report would be available for pre-decision scrutiny.

The Chair confirmed that any pre-decision scrutiny would not take place until the report had been published. She stated that arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny would be publicised on the Council website.

- It was questioned whether Cabinet would undertake a full site visit of the proposed school closures to assess the full impact and to ensure fully-informed and robust decision-making.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that whilst she could not confirm that a site visit was scheduled for the proposed school closures, site visits were often a part of the decision making process.

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee pass on the comments / concerns raised to the Cabinet Member / Education Department to ensure that they are considered as part of the consultation process.

60 Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills (Councillor Jennifer Raynor).

The Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills presented a report on the key headlines for the Education Improvement, Learning & Skills portfolio.

Questions and Discussions with the Cabinet Member focused on the following: -

- Air Pollution / Emissions from vehicles travelling and parking outside schools – Contractors (buses/taxis) have been informed but more work was needed to inform parents / carers e.g. through governing bodies
- Safer Routes to Schools – there had been a disappointing take up
- Catchment Areas – Children attending schools out of catchment could cause more vehicular traffic to schools. It was also noted that there were certain housing estates where it was not possible to walk to the catchment school
- Local Development Plan work and Statutory Consultations for sustainable schools (right size in the right location)
- 21st Century Schools Programme / Funding – availability, scope and responsibility of condition surveys, and decision-making on allocation of funding – discussed visibility of surveys to schools / governing bodies
- Rational behind possible school closures and current consultation process
- School funding / delegated budgets – current pressures
- Procedures regarding Disclosure Barring Service, and position in respect of School Governors
- Division of maintenance responsibilities between Schools and the Council
- Pupil Development Grant – allocation and monitoring

- Schools admissions / policy and out of county placements

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Cabinet Member, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

61 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report.

In the absence of the Convener of the Panel, Councillor Mo Sykes, the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel Update was noted.

The future work plan of the Panel was discussed and in light of earlier discussion with the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills it was recommended that the Schools Performance Panel carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the upcoming Cabinet reports on the possible closure of Craigcefnparc and Felindre Primary Schools.

62 Annual Report 2017/18 - Corporate Safeguarding.

The Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well, the Director of Social Services and the Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer were present for the Annual Report on Corporate Safeguarding 2017/2018.

The Cabinet Member provided a background to the Annual Report. Some of the work areas highlighted were: -

- Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children was a corporate priority and was "everyone's business"
- Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy had been updated to cover a wider range of potential concerns
- Safeguarding roles and responsibilities / commitment to safeguarding are expected to be reflected in all Job Descriptions
- Work still to be done but more people have completed safeguarding training
- Providing a safe voice for people in all aspects of safeguarding work

Questions and Discussions with the Cabinet Member and Officers focussed on the following: -

- Take up of Child Protection & Safeguarding Training amongst School Governors
- Efforts to improve upon staff survey results – in 2017 86.4% stated they had completed the Council's Safeguarding training either online or face-to-face
- Continued difficulties in recording keeping on training (due to different IT systems) particularly with face to face training
- The need to ensure training for temporary staff – the Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group should consider how the authority is dealing with service areas which may have a transient workforce, as well as building safeguarding awareness across contractors and providers
- The number of safeguarding concerns or enquiries that are reported and the threshold for referrals / taking forward concerns – it was noted that figures for

Child & Family Services for the previous year were missing from the report and would be confirmed.

- All concerns were properly assessed by Social Workers who could consider whether intervention was necessary. Advice was also provided to support prevention. Those who raised concerns were always made aware of the outcome
- Effectiveness of Regional Safeguarding Boards
- Governance arrangements for corporate safeguarding
- Engagement of partners / third parties in safeguarding responsibilities – role of the Public Protection Executive Board in multi-agency strategic working
- Bullying in Schools – embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in schools, training and tackling issues with Social Media (Cyber Bullying), increasing parental awareness, responsibility on social media providers to protect people, issues of vulnerable children experiencing isolation and reaching out to / trusting people on-line, peer to peer support for children
- The percentage of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS) assessments completed in 21 days or less – there was a small decrease in performance (59.6% in the last year) and efforts to improve. It was noted that a new dedicated team was in place to deal with DoLS, which should make a difference.
- Monitoring of pupil absence by Schools
- Process for Disclosure and Barring Service Checks – can be too complicated / slow. Need to check on processing times and look at what can be done to improve the process if necessary. It was felt that all school governors should have the minimum of a DBS clearance.

Resolved that the views of the Committee on the report be considered by the Cabinet Member and Director of Social Services

63 Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18.

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18.

Resolved that the report be noted and presented to Council.

64 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

The Chair presented a report on the Membership of Scrutiny Panel and Working Groups.

Resolved that the following be agreed: -

- 1) Residents Parking Working Group – Add Councillor Irene Mann
- 2) Development & Regeneration Performance Panel - Add Councillor Susan Jones

65 Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19.

The Chair presented the agreed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2018/19.

The Scrutiny Team Leader highlighted that: -

- The next Cabinet Member Question Session would be on Children Services. Both Councillors Will Evans and Elliott King would be attending to answer questions.
- The Annual Progress Report on the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme would also be presented at the next Scrutiny Programme Committee on 12 November 2018.
- The first City Deal Joint Scrutiny Committee would be taking place on 20 November 2018.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19 be noted.

66 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair presented a report on "Scrutiny Letters" for information.

It was noted that no response had been received from the relevant Cabinet Member to the letter sent on 2 July 2018 regarding Community Cohesion.

Resolved that: -

- 1) the Scrutiny Letters Log be noted; and
- 2) a response be chased to the letter sent to the Cabinet Member for Better Communities – People on 2 July 2018 regarding Community Cohesion.

67 Audit Committee Work Plan (For Information).

The Audit Committee Work Plan was **noted**.

68 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.

The dates and times of upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings were **noted**.

The meeting ended at 6.05 pm

Chair