

**Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups**

**1. Inquiry Panels:**

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis, and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers).

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

Key Question: What should Swansea Council be doing to maintain, enhance and promote its natural environment and biodiversity, and in doing so promote the resilience of eco-systems?

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

Formal evidence gathering has been completed. A meeting to review findings took place on 4 October. The final report is now being drafted. A meeting with the Leader has been arranged for 27 November to discuss the emerging conclusions and possible recommendations.

Projected End Date: November 2018

b) **Equalities** (convener: Cllr Louise Gibbard)

Key Question: ‘How effectively is the Council meeting and embedding the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Duty for Wales)’.

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The Panel on the 11 October agreed their Terms of Reference (**attached**) and programme of work of the inquiry. They started their evidence gathering by taking a close look at the Equality Impact Assessment process and the Swansea Equalities Review on 24 October. Over the next month they will be meeting with individual Directors to look in detail about equalities aspects within their remits including how they are progressing with their Equalities Objectives, embedding of duties, staff knowledge and training etc.

Projected End Date: March 2019

## 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	
Tackling Poverty	15 Jun 2017	12	1	2	15 Oct 2018 COMPLETE
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services	16 Feb 2017	13	1	1	(i) 15 Nov 2017 (ii) 21 Nov 2018
Regional Working	16 Aug 2018	11	0	0	May 2019

## 3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

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

The Panel recently considered the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report 18/19 and the Equality Performance Report 17/18. The next meeting on the 4 November will focus on finance, reviewing a range of financial monitoring reports.

### b) **Schools Performance** (convener: Cllr Mo Sykes)

The next meet will take place on 19 November where they will speak to the Cabinet Member and the Director of Education about progress with Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) services and changes, along with the new wellbeing and behaviour strategy.

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

The Panel had a session on the 3 October with the Future Generations Commissioner (Sophie Howe) and Jacob Ellis (Public Affairs Advisor). They spoke to the Panel about the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Public Services Boards in general. The Panel asked questions around effective working, the power which the act has and ways in which funding has impacted performance. The next meeting on 5 December will look at the Working with Nature PSB objective.

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

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

e) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Peter Black)

The Panel met on 25 September to receive a briefing on Western Bay and discuss the Supporting People Programme Grant. The meeting on 29 October looked at the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. The item on the Council's policy commitments in relation to Adult Services was deferred until the meeting in December 2018, when the official update on progress should be available. The next meeting on 20 November will look at performance monitoring, the Wales Audit Office report on Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for People with Learning Difficulties and receive a briefing on Social Services annual review of charges.

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

The Panel met on 12 September to discuss the dashboard performance report which had been shared with the Panel. The meeting was informative and the dashboard report will now be a standing item in every meeting. The next meeting on 7 November will also include an overview of the Penderyn project and progress. Each meeting will now have a specific regeneration project update.

#### 4. **Regional Scrutiny:**

This is collaborative scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

a) **Education Through Regional Working**

A regional scrutiny councillors group meets 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 have agreed to an extra meeting on the 10 January 2019 where they have invited the Chair of the ERW Joint Committee and the Lead Director to discuss the ERW review and reform programme. This meeting will be hosted in Swansea. The next scheduled meeting is 25 March 2019.

Swansea's Scrutiny Team is providing the support for this group as the Council's contribution to ERW.

b) **Swansea Bay City Deal**

The first meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee, made up of Councillors for the four authorities involved, is taking place on 20 November in Carmarthen. The Committee, which will scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal

Programme, will be serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Councillor representatives are: Jan Curtice, Phil Downing & Mary Jones.

## **5. Working Groups:**

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting primarily involving discussion with relevant cabinet member(s) / officer(s) (and any other persons called) to gather information, ask questions, and raise any concerns.

a) **Community Cohesion & Hate Crime** (convener: Meeting 1 Cllr Elliot King and Meeting 2 Cllr Louise Gibbard)

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.

A second meeting to look in more detail at the Community Cohesion aspect took place on the 20 June 2018 which looked at concerns concern raised about the lack of an overarching direction, or strategy, for this aspect. Correspondence between the Working Group and Cabinet Member is included in this agenda under item 15 (Scrutiny Letters).

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

This is an annual recurring item in the work programme. The Working Group held an additional meeting on 8 October to monitor progress on the recommendations made by the Group following its meeting on 20 February 2018. The annual recurring meeting will be held in 4 to 6 months to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan.

c) **Residents Parking** (convener: Cllr Peter May)

This meeting was scheduled for 8 November but has been delayed due to resource issues within the department, and will allow time for information required to be provided. The meeting will be rearranged early in the new calendar year. It will focus on concerns that have been raised about the new electronic permit issuing process and enable relevant information to be discussed and questions to be asked.

d) **Air & Noise Pollution** (convener: Cllr Joe Hale)

A meeting of the Working Group has been arranged for the 6 November 2018 which will enable information, questions and discussion on the situation in Swansea and effects, how pollution is measured / monitored, and efforts to tackle problems and reduce.

e) **Welfare Reform** (convener: Cllr Louise Gibbard)

A meeting of the Working Group has been arranged for 14 January 2019 which will enable information, questions and discussion on the impact of welfare reform in Swansea, e.g. Universal Credit, and work / measures in place to support citizens and mitigate problems.

f) **Environmental Enforcement** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

This will enable information, questions and discussion about what is being done in relation to the enforcement / prevention of environmental issues such as fly tipping, dog fouling, litter, pavement parking etc., concerns about which seem to be regularly raised by the public.

Further Working Groups to be convened in the second half of 2018/19 (membership / conveners to be appointed in due course):

- **Tourism**

This will enable assessment of current activities taking into account previous scrutiny inquiry, and include discussion on issue raised about the maintenance / development of coastal path.

- **Anti-Social Behaviour**

This will enable information, questions and discussion on current approaches to tackle anti-social behaviour in our communities and their effectiveness.

- **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.

- **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.