



Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 12 November 2018

Cabinet Member Question Session

Purpose:	To enable the Committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to areas of responsibility.
Content:	The following Cabinet Members will appear before the Committee to participate in a question and answer session: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Elliot King, Cabinet Member for Children Services (Early Years)• Councillor Will Evans, Cabinet Member for Children Services (Young People)
Councillors are being asked to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question the Cabinet Members on relevant matters• Make comments and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer:	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
Report Author:	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Finance Officer:	Paul Cridland

1. Introduction

1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the Council's Cabinet to account. The Cabinet (also known as the Executive) is made up of the Leader and other councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific portfolio responsibilities:

Cllr Rob Stewart	- Economy & Strategy (Leader)
Cllr Clive Lloyd	- Business Transformation & Performance (Deputy Leader)
Cllr Mary Sherwood & Cllr June Burtonshaw	- Better Communities - People
	- Better Communities - Place

Cllr Mark Child	- Care, Health & Ageing Well
Cllr Elliot King	- Children Services - Early Years
Cllr Will Evans	- Children Services - Young People
Cllr David Hopkins	- Delivery
Cllr Jennifer Raynor	- Education Improvement, Learning & Skills
Cllr Mark Thomas	- Environment & Infrastructure Management
Cllr Andrea Lewis	- Homes & Energy
Cllr Robert Francis-Davies	- Investment, Regeneration & Tourism

1.2 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the Cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.

1.3 Cabinet Member Question Sessions have become a main feature of Committee meetings. At least one cabinet member is scheduled to appear at each monthly Committee meeting, ensuring all Cabinet Members appear before the Committee over the course of a year, in order to ask questions on their work. Questions will focus on their priorities, actions, achievements and impact.

2. Cabinet Member Question Session

2.1 The following Cabinet Members will appear before the Committee:

- a) Councillor Elliot King, Cabinet Member for Children Services (Early Years)
- b) Councillor Will Evans, Cabinet Member for Children Services (Young People)

This Cabinet Portfolio is split between the two Cabinet Members as follows:

Early Years (Cllr Elliot King)	Young People (Cllr Will Evans)
Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Start in Life • Child & Family Services • Children & Young People (CYP) • Communities First (CF1 legacy) • Continuum of Care • Corporate Parenting lead • Families First • Flying Start • Play Opportunities • Poverty Reduction 	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships • Apprenticeships Support • Children & Young People (CYP) Board lead • Corporate Parenting Lead • NEETS reduction support • Opportunities for Young People • Poverty Reduction • Promoting Youth Inclusion & Youth Citzenships • Readiness for work (support)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Adoption Service • Safe Looking After Children (LAC) Reduction • Strategy • Safeguarding • Lead elements of Sustainable Swansea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Looking After Children (LAC) Reduction • Strategy • Safeguarding • Youth Offending Service (Y.O.S.) • Youth Services • UNCRC • Lead elements of Sustainable Swansea
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

3. Approach to Questions

3.1 At the Cabinet Member Question Sessions the Committee will generally ask cabinet members about:

- relevant priorities / objectives, notable activities and achievements, improvement / impact made, and service user / public engagement.
- what they hope to achieve over the coming months and challenges, including any key decisions they plan take to Cabinet over the next year.
- reflections on their engagement with scrutiny and whether there is any issue relevant to their portfolio that they would suggest for scrutiny, not otherwise covered in the work programme – to ensure scrutiny activity is aligned to priorities and focussed on the right things.

3.2 In terms of themes that cut across all cabinet portfolios, the Committee is interested in asking Cabinet Members about:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act – impact on their work / decisions e.g. what they are doing to achieve the well-being goals and ways of working, e.g. focus on long-term thinking, collaboration / involvement etc.
- Public Services Board (PSB) – their relationship with the work of the PSB; how the PSB impacts on their portfolio and how it is making a difference etc.

3.3 Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee. The Cabinet Members have provided a report on 'headlines' in relation to the portfolio to help the Committee focus on priorities, actions, achievements and impact - see **Appendix 1**.

3.4 Amongst questions from the Committee is the intention to ask about progress with the transition from Communities First.

- 3.5 Following each session the chair will write to the Cabinet Members in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for them to consider.
- 3.6 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during this item then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

4. Previous Correspondence

- 4.1 Changes were announced by the Leader to cabinet portfolios at the Council Annual General Meeting in May. Councillor Elliot King is a new Cabinet Member. Councillor Will Evans was previously portfolio holder for Stronger Communities, therefore had different responsibilities last year.
- 4.2 Members may wish to follow up, as necessary, on the Cabinet Member's engagement with relevant Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups over the past year.

Scrutiny involving the Cabinet Members over the past year:

- Child & Family Services Performance Panel:
There is regular contact / correspondence with Councillor Elliot King who was written to over the past year about the following issues:
 - Impact of Prevention and Early Intervention on Child & Family Services (June 2018)
 - The Adoption Service and Advocacy and Bright Spots Survey (August 2018)
 - There has been no specific engagement with Councillor Will Evans since May 2018.
- 4.3 The Committee should note that the Cabinet Members will also be engaged in the following planned / future activity:
 - Children & Young People's Rights Scheme – Compliance and Progress – Councillor Will Evans is attending this Committee meeting in support of the annual report about progress with the implementation of Children & Young People's Rights Scheme, and impact (agenda item 7). This has been an annual report to the Committee since the Rights Scheme was adopted by Cabinet in 2014.
 - Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services – as lead Cabinet Member, Councillor Elliot King will be attending the Inquiry follow up meeting taking place on 21 November and report on progress with implementation of inquiry recommendations.
 - Child & Family Services Performance Panel:

- Councillor Elliot King will continue to be involved as the Panel monitors and challenges children's social services.
- Youth Justice and Performance of BAYS (Leaving Care Services) – these matters were discussed by the Panel on 29 October and the Panel is writing to Councillor Will Evans on these.
- Both Cabinet Members will be attending the Panel on 11 February to discuss and question draft budget proposals and for a Q & A session.

5. Other Questions

- 5.1 For each Cabinet Member Q & A Session the Committee invites members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions.
- 5.2 On this occasion no questions have been received.

6. Next Session

- 6.1 The next Cabinet Member Question Session on 10 December will be with Councillor Mark Child to focus on the Care, Health & Ageing Well cabinet portfolio.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Key Headlines: Cabinet Members for Children's Services