

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			

The final report is now being drafted.

Projected End Date: January 2019

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			

Over the coming months they will be meeting with individual Directors to look in detail about equalities aspects within their remits. The Panel will also be attending a number of Forums to speak to a wide selection of people including, for example: young people via a Big Conversation workshop, the Disability Forum, and 50+ network Forum.

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 COMPLETE
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)

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

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

The panel will next meeting on the 17 January where they will be looking at the Annual Educational Performance Data, the educational outcomes of looked after children and school categorisation. The Panel will then have an extra meeting on the 11 February to discuss the Annual Budget proposals as they relate to education matters.

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

The next meeting on 6 February will look at progress with the Public Services Board as well as a focus on the Live Well, Age Well and Strong Communities Public Services Board objectives. The meeting will also include discussion regarding the role and involvement of the Council, as Statutory Member of the Public Services Board, with appropriate representatives.

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

The Panel met in December and received an update on the Corporate Parenting Board and discussed the Performance Monitoring Report for the Service for November 2018. The next meeting on 11 February will discuss the draft budget proposals for Child and Family Services and there will be a question and answer session with the Cabinet Members for Children's Services. The meeting on 25 February will receive an update on the impact of Prevention and Early Intervention on Child and Family Services; discuss Safeguarding in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation and receive an update on Child Disability.

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

The Panel met on 11 December to discuss the Social Work Practice Framework and Social Care Wales attended to discuss training they are delivering in relation to this. The next meeting on 15 January will be dedicated to a question and answer session with the Chief Executive and Chairman of ABMU Health Board.

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

The meeting on 9 January will include monitoring report which will update on project activity. The Panel has also planned a focused discussion on the development of student accommodation across the city.

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 Region**

The Committee, which will scrutinise the work of the Joint Committee responsible for delivering the City Deal Programme, is serviced by Neath Port Talbot Council. Swansea Councillor representatives are: Jan Curtice, Phil Downing & Jeff Jones (in place of Cllr Mary Jones - Council decision 20 December).

The first meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee, made up of Councillors for the four authorities involved, took place on 20 November in Carmarthen. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee were confirmed as: Councillor Arwyn Woolcock (Neath Port Talbot) and Councillor Rob James (Carmarthenshire) respectively, for a two year period. As well as receiving background documents and briefing on the

City Deal, discussion focused on the role and remit of the Committee, and possible work plan.

Since the meeting the Committee has written to the Chair of the City Deal Joint Committee, Cllr Rob Stewart. The letter, dated 12 December, registers concern over recent developments, including issues on one City Deal project, and the announcement by the UK and Welsh Governments of an independent review of the City Deal. The letter refers to the need for a review of the Joint Committee's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements, and to seek reassurance and consider if the City Deal is operating according to the Joint Working Agreement, its business plan, timetable and is being managed effectively. The Committee intends to hold an extra meeting on 31 January to consider the response of the Chair of the Joint Committee and for update on developments in light of recent events surrounding the Wellness Village / Delta Lakes project and impact on the overall City Deal Programme.

The next scheduled meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee are being held on 22 February 2019 and 16 May 2019, with meetings rotated around the four authorities. The meeting in February will enable the Committee to learn more about the City Deal Programme and regional projects.

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

This is an annual recurring item in the work programme. The next meeting will be held on 14 March to monitor progress on the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Plan.

b) 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.

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. The Citizens Advice Bureau will be participating in this Working Group.

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

A meeting of the Working Group has been arranged for 5 February and 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.