

**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 was presented to the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 11 February and approved for submission to cabinet for decision. The report will be presented to cabinet meeting on 21 March. A decision on the inquiry recommendations can then be expected within two months.

**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 inquiry’s evidence gathering is moving at a pace, with discussion being had with a wide variety of people including 50+ Network, young people, LGBT Forum, Disability Liaison Group, carers, BME Forum and veterans group. The Panel will meet in March with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to discuss their role. A staff survey will also take place in March. Councillors are aiming to complete the inquiry evidence gathering aspect by the end of March, with conclusions being discussed at their meeting in April.

Projected End Date: May 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	June 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 scrutinised the Annual Budget for 2019/20. Each performance panel was given the opportunity to undertake scrutiny on the budget in relation to issues which impact the work they look at. Each Panel then submit their comments to the Service Improvement and Finance Panel where the Leader and Chief Finance Officer answered questions. Feedback was given at Cabinet on 14 February by Panel Convener Cllr Chris Holley. The next meeting will be looking at Community Groups and Centres and the Annual Corporate Complaints Report 2017/18.

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

A progress report appears separately in the agenda as Item No. 7.

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

The meeting on 6 February had a Q&A with the statutory member for Swansea Council. The Deputy Leader, Cllr. Clive Lloyd, attended to answer questions. The meeting then focused on the Live Well, Age Well objective. The Cabinet Member, Cllr. Mark Child, attended with officers to update the Panel on progress and future work. There was also the standing governance update item. The next meeting on 3 April will have a Q&A from the statutory member for ABMU and an update on the Early Years objective from the relevant leads. It will also have the governance update. There are plans to request the governance

update to come the scrutiny for feedback before it is officially signed off.

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

The Panel met on 25 February and received a presentation to update on the impact of Prevention and Early Intervention on Child and Family Service; discuss Safeguarding in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation and receive an update on Child Disability. The next meeting on 29 April will discuss Performance Monitoring and receive a report on the Looked After Children Audit.

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

The Panel met on 19 February and discussed the Adult Services Complaints Annual Report 2017-18, received an update on how the Council's policy commitments translate to adult services and looked at the latest Performance Monitoring reports. The next meeting on 19 March will discuss Safeguarding arrangements including a briefing on Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking and receive an update on the Commissioning Review – Domiciliary Care and Procurement.

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

The Panel met on 11 February to discuss the budget and how it impacts the work they scrutinise. The next meeting on 19 March will have the usual dashboard report and an in depth look at Swansea Central Phase 1 (The Arena).

#### **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 ERW scrutiny councillor group had an extra meeting in January 2019 to look at progress being made with the ERW Reform Programme. They met with the Chair of the ERW Joint Committee, Cllr Ellen ap Gwynn, and the Lead Director, Phil Roberts, to discuss concerns they had about timeliness of progress being made.

The Scrutiny Councillor Group will next meet on 25 March 2019 to look at:

- Update on progress with reform programme

- ERW budget and budget allocations
- School categorisation and supporting data
- On the Money, targeted funding to improve education outcomes

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.

The next scheduled meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee are being held on 1 March 2019 and 16 May 2019, with meetings rotated around the four authorities. The meeting in March 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, to allow time for information required to be provided. The focus is on concerns that have been raised about the new electronic permit issuing process and will enable relevant information to be discussed and questions to be asked.

#### c) **Welfare Reform** (convener: Cllr Louise Gibbard)

A meeting of the Working Group was held on 14 January 2019 which enabled 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 participated in this Working Group. A letter has been sent to the

Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People) with the views and recommendations of the Working Group.

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

A meeting of the Working Group was held on 5 February and enabled 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 and branches and undergrowth overhanging public footpaths and highways etc., concerns about which seem to be regularly raised by the public. A letter will now be sent to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure Management with the views and recommendations of the Working Group.

e) **Tourism** (convener: Cllr Peter Jones)

A meeting of the Working Group will be held on 11 April. An informal meeting of Working Group members only will be held on 26 February to discuss what issues should be considered at the meeting on 11 April.

f) **Anti-Social Behaviour** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

A meeting of the Working Group will be held on 15 April. This will enable information, questions and discussion on current approaches to tackle anti-social behaviour in our communities and their effectiveness.

g) **Digital Inclusion** (convener: Cllr Lesley Walton)

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.

Further Working Groups to be convened (membership / convener to be appointed in due course):

- **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.