



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Council Chamber - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 8 April 2019 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillors

C Anderson
L S Gibbard
E T Kirchner
G J Tanner

Councillors

M Durke
D W Helliwell
W G Lewis
W G Thomas

Councillors

E W Fitzgerald
P K Jones
S Pritchard

Statutory Co-opted Member

A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Members

P M Black
C A Holley

P R Hood-Williams
J W Jones

Also Present

Councillor June Burtonshaw
Councillor Mary Sherwood

Cabinet Member for Better Communities (Place)
Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People)

Officers

Amy Hawkins
Adam Hill
Kate Jones
Martin Jones
Joanna Maal
Brij Madahar
Debbie Smith
Jane Whitmore

Adult Prosperity and Well-being Manager
Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources
Democratic Services Officer
Chief Superintendent
Chief Superintendent
Scrutiny Team Leader
Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Partnership & Commissioning Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): T J Hennegan
Statutory Co-opted Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas

132 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

133 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.

134 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 11 March 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

135 Public Question Time.

There were no public questions.

136 Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Members for Better Communities (Councillors June Burtonshaw & Mary Sherwood).

The Cabinet Members for Better Communities presented a report on the key headlines of their portfolios.

Further to the written report provided the Cabinet Members outlined some amendments to their portfolios, with some areas moving between Better Communities (Place) and Better Communities (People).

They also highlighted activities relating to the following: -

- Leading on the Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Equalities & Diversity
- Allotments
- Localised Services / Community Hubs
- Community Asset Transfer
- Community Grass Cutting – Tend and Mend
- Libraries
- Litter / Community Cleansing
- Member Community Budget Scheme
- Weed Control

Questions and discussions with the Cabinet Members focussed on the following: -

- Communities First – Transition from this now ended programme and legacy; sustainability of the Legacy Fund projects and alternative sources of funding as funding is phased out
- Poverty – Poverty Partnership Forum meeting quarterly – opportunities to discuss issues with Housing Associations e.g. getting their support for projects like faith in families, and possible areas of co-working with Housing Associations e.g. working together on some initiatives such as Holiday Hunger
- Weed Spraying Programme – Concerns about the use of glyphosate-based herbicide for weed control and the need for a precautionary approach. A Number of Councils were looking for alternatives and possible phasing out –

argument for principle of leaving things alone i.e. not cutting / weeding to support biodiversity / ecosystem

- Welfare Rights – the work of the Welfare Rights Team and financial impact, and acknowledgement of Cabinet Member's suggestion for scrutiny to look at how well welfare rights support and advice, and commitment to tackling poverty was being delivered across the Council e.g. by staff working in Social Services, Housing and by others in direct contact with vulnerable people. There was a discussion around the effect of rising Council Tax on arrears – improved advice / assistance for vulnerable people including ensuring entitlements and benefits are taken up.
- Foodbanks – were not the responsibility of the Cabinet Member but independent organisations
- Human Rights City – a shared 'Statement of Intent' on respecting Human Rights in Swansea was being progressed with partners
- Allotments – need for communication on transfer of management of allotments – liaison with Community Councils
- Community Cohesion – whether there was an index on community cohesion. A Community Cohesion Co-ordinator had been recently appointed and there was a current public survey about people's views and experiences, but noted low response levels to date
- Community Engagement, Consultation and Co-production – ways of improving engagement across all areas
- Digital Inclusion Strategy – it was noted that the work on a Digital Inclusion Strategy and Implementation Plan was in progress – the aim was to integrate this with the Welsh Government Digital Inclusion Strategy. A draft framework was due to be ready by the end of April 2019

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

137 Crime & Disorder Scrutiny - Safer Swansea Partnership.

Chief Superintendent Martin Jones (South Wales Police) attended to provide a progress report on Safer Swansea Partnership and answer questions. The Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources, the Partnership and Commissioning Manager and the new Chief Superintendent, Jo Maal, were also present in support of the work of the Community Safety Partnership. The Chief Superintendent referred to changes in the leadership which would see Jo Maal and Adam Hill take on the responsibility to Co-Chair the Safer Swansea Partnership. He also talked about how the focus of Community Safety partnerships and policing had changed over the past ten years, with a far greater focus on victims of crime, and vulnerability, which required changes in approach and tactics from all partners.

A presentation was provided which included the following:-

- Safer Swansea Partnership:
 - Partnership Vision
 - Partnership Purpose
- Strategic Priorities

- Key Activities and Achievements in:
 - Safe, Confident and Resilient Communities
 - County Lines and Substance Misuse
 - Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
 - Evening & Night Time Economy
 - Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring
- Performance and Crime Statistics
- Existing and Emerging Challenges

The Chief Superintendent referred to recent negative press about High Street and acknowledged the challenges in that area. He discussed community safety activities and referred to the regeneration of High Street and improvement in the pipeline.

The Chief Superintendent reported that vulnerability was a key issue and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) had now been established for street vulnerability and sex workers. This approach was working well and had seen some people turn their lives around. They had also been looking at good practice from other regions.

There had been better co-ordination and awareness on County Lines as well as some successful work on better information flow between partners, leading to quicker action. The challenge was to focus on the demand base for drugs and focus on users. The Substance Misuse Area Planning Board were meeting regularly and focussing on more outreach based efforts and getting more people into treatment. There was discussion around the efforts to raise issues about County Lines into the education system, so pupils, parents and teachers were aware of the threat / risks.

Achievements in relation to tackling Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence were shared – with the focus on problem solving at the earliest opportunity of intervention. Close links between the Partnership and Safeguarding Boards were highlighted.

Excellent work had been carried out in respect of the evening & night time economy and this needed to be replicated in Uplands, whose night time economy was growing.

Race was still the highest reported hate crime and work still needed to be done to encourage the reporting of these crimes. Restorative justice had been quite successful in this area. The Partnership were also aware of tension around Brexit across the UK and this was being monitored locally.

With reference to Crime Statistics, it was noted that there had been an increase in robberies, drug trafficking and rapes.

Amongst challenges outlined to the Committee was organised crime, as Swansea had seen a spate of dwelling burglaries. Operations carried out have seen the number of cases drop and a lot of work had been done with the victims. The challenge of doing more with less resources was also stressed by the Chief Superintendent, challenging partners to share responsibility and do things differently.

The Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People) noted that Diverted Giving was being reviewed and the outcome of the review would be available soon. She also thanked the Chief Superintendent for all his work on the partnership, and spoke positively about its development and effectiveness, with good links to the Public Services Board.

The Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources highlighted the good work ongoing with transformation of High Street and Wind Street and noted that Students brought a lot to the City and had significantly contributed to the Purple Flag Award. It was essential that they felt safe in Swansea. He also commented on the positive energy and passion within the Partnership to tackle problems. He acknowledged the need to provide more reassurance to the public and work on making Swansea a safe place to live, work and visit.

The Partnership and Commissioning Manager highlighted the focus on early intervention.

Chief Superintendent, Jo Maal, stated that she would be continuing the good work of the Chief Superintendent, Martin Jones, on his departure and was looking forward to working with the Council in the coming years.

Members asked a variety of questions which centred around the following topics:

- Effectiveness of PACT meetings and other ways of engagement and information sharing with local Councillors
- Concerns over the 101 reporting system and public confidence in it
- Limited powers of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) – need to review/increase
- Training / Information on County Lines and training provided to schools – also consider how the effectiveness of the training could be monitored
- High Street – the need to resolve problems given it is a key gateway to the City

The Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources and the Chair thanked Chief Superintendent, Martin Jones, for all his work and commitment, and wished the new Chief Superintendent, Jo Maal, well in taking over the roll. The Partnership and Commissioning Manager was also thanked for her work particularly work done on domestic violence.

138 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report.

The Chair and Convenor of the Public Services Board Performance Panel, presented an update report.

The contents of the report were noted.

139 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

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

Resolved that: -

- 1) Councillor Mary Jones be removed from the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group.
- 2) Councillors Susan Jones and Irene Mann be added to the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group.

140 Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19.

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2018/19. She highlighted that the following items were scheduled for the next, and final scheduled Committee meeting of this municipal year: -

- Cabinet Member Question Session: Cabinet Member for Delivery – Councillor David Hopkins
- Cabinet Member Questions Session: Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism – Councillor Robert Francis-Davies (Re-arranged from 11 March)

The Chair requested that the Committee give thought to questions ahead of the meeting.

The Chair also stated that an informal meeting would be arranged ahead of the final Committee meeting in order for members to reflect on the year's work and scrutiny experience. It would also be an opportunity to discuss issues relating to scrutiny practice, improvement and development.

141 Scrutiny Letters.

The Scrutiny Letters Report was noted.

142 Audit Committee Work Plan (For Information).

The Work Plan for the Audit Committee was provided for information.

The Chair advised that the Chair of Audit Committee would be invited to attend the Scrutiny Programme Committee in July and the Work Planning Conference in June.

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

The dates and times of upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were provided for information.

Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee (08.04.2019) Cont'd

The Chair noted some amendments to the meetings:

- Cancellation of the Service Improvement & Finance Panel arranged for 9 April.
- An extra Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee on 30 April.

The meeting ended at 6.30 pm

Chair