

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 Action Plan and Cabinet Member Response are with the Cabinet Member and Officers and a response is due to Cabinet in June.

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			

Councillors met in April to look at their findings and will now begin to draw conclusions and recommendations resulting from this inquiry. The final report will be reported to the Scrutiny Programme Committee in July.

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	16 Oct 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 April meeting was cancelled and the items moved into the next meeting. The Panel will next meet in May to look at the Commissioning Review Overview Item, the Q3 Performance Monitoring Report and a Wales Audit Office report on the Local Government use of Data. The Panel will also review the year's work and discuss potential items for next year's work plan.

b) **Schools Performance** (convener: tbc)

The Panel will next meet jointly with the Child and Family Services Scrutiny Panel to look at the educational performance and support for Looked After Children in Swansea. The Panel will then meet in June to look at the key issues affecting education and agree its work plan for 2019/20.

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

The Public Services Board Panel last met with the Chair of the Public Services Board, Andrew Davies, for a Q & A and had an update on the Early Years Objective from the team. The Governance Review of the Public Services Board is currently underway and the Panel will have updates in due course. The Panel Convener will meet with relevant officers to discuss future work plan, taking into account the Governance Review.

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

The Panel met on 29 April and discussed the monthly Performance Monitoring Report. It also received a presentation to update on Welsh Government's Looked After Children Reduction Expectation. The next meeting on 2 May is a joint meeting with the Schools Scrutiny Panel to look at educational performance and support for Looked After Children in Swansea. The Panel will then meet on 26 June for a Q & A session

with the Cabinet Members for Children Services and to agree its work plan for 2019/20.

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

The Panel met on 16 April for a discussion on the Adult Services Improvement Plan. It also received a follow up on progress with recommendations following the Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on Commissioning of Accommodation Services for People with Learning Difficulties. The Panel will next meet on 20 June to discuss Performance Monitoring, the WAO report on Housing Adaptations and agree a work plan for 2019/20.

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

The meeting on 11 April had the regular performance update via the Dashboard and an in depth discussion on the City Deal Business Case. The Business Case has not yet been signed off and the Panel continues to monitor this closely.

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**

The Scrutiny Councillor Group met on the 25 March 2019 to look at:

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

At this meeting the Group also agreed to move to four meetings per year from the previous two. They plan to align their work much more closely to the work of the ERW Joint Committee and feel that meeting termly prior to each Joint Committee will be most beneficial.

The ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group will next meet on the 3 June, which will be hosted by Pembrokeshire Council.

b) **Swansea Bay City Region**

The Committee held an extra meeting in Carmarthen on 30 April to discuss the conclusions of the various reviews that have been carried out on the City Deal, and to consider the response from the Joint Committee to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee also discussed meeting arrangements for the 2019/20 municipal year. The meeting originally scheduled for 16 May has been cancelled – future dates to be confirmed.

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 Working Group met on 4 April and received an update on progress on recommendations from the previous meeting in October 2018. A letter has been sent to the Cabinet Member.

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

A meeting of the Working Group was held on 15 April. The Panel had an update on the steps involved in the process, and how collaborative working is helping with prevention and early intervention in Anti-Social Behaviour cases. A letter has been sent to the Cabinet Member for Better Communities (People) and is included in the agenda papers (see Item 8 – Scrutiny Letters).

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

The Working Group met on 1 May for an update on the marketing and development of tourism in Swansea, including eco/sustainable tourism. A letter will follow to the Cabinet Member.

d) **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. Arrangements for this meeting are to be arranged.

e) **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 would enable relevant information to be discussed and questions to be asked.

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.