



Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy

Cabinet – 16 August 2018

Response to the Report of the Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry

Purpose:	To outline a response to the scrutiny recommendations and to present an action plan for agreement.
Policy Framework:	None
Consultation:	Legal Services, Financial Services, Access to Services
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The response as outlined in the report and related action plan be agreed.
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Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Catherine Window

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry report was submitted to Cabinet on the 21 June 2018 after the Regional Working Scrutiny Inquiry Panel completed a detailed inquiry. The scrutiny report is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 1.2 This report contains the Cabinet response to recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry Report into Regional Working', which is set out in more detail in the action plan attached at **Appendix B**

2.0 Response to Scrutiny Recommendations

Recommendation 1
We continue to be ahead of the game by looking at positive ways forward for Swansea in Regional Working collaborations by being involved, where possible, in pilots/trials that may ease and prepare the way forward for us.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>The Council is playing a leading and proactive role in major regional collaborations. The Chief Executive takes the lead role for ERW and Western Bay as well as being an executive member of the City Deal Joint Committee and the Leader of the Council is the City Region Joint Committee Chair.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>The senior management restructure approved by Council on 21st June strengthens the Council's management capacity to ensure that the regional collaboration agenda can be taken forward proactively by Swansea whilst also allowing the Council to manage its ambitious programmes based around the corporate priorities.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>Continue to influence the collaboration agenda and decision-making at Welsh Government.</i>
Recommendation is AGREED
Recommendation 2
Address or mitigate the barriers found in existing regional partnerships and use the lessons learnt to inform our new collaboration activities.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>The City Deal has a Joint Working Agreement in place, which was approved at Council on 26th July 2018. ERW has fully formed governance arrangements. A review of progress has been undertaken by IPC on the Western Bay Health & Social Care collaboration.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Undertake a lessons learnt exercise (including learning points identified by the panel) across the three main regional collaborations and develop an action plan/s with resource implications to address any specific and remaining barriers.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED
Recommendation 3

Ensure that we learn particularly from previous large collaborations both positive and negative aspects to help ease our way into new partnership arrangements.
Relevant Policy Commitments: : <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>The Council meets up regionally with 5 other local authorities to discuss collaboration projects. The Council has a clear rationale in place when collaborating and it is clear on the anticipated benefits and costs.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Undertake a lessons learnt exercise (including learning points identified by the panel) across the three main regional collaborations and develop an action plan/s with resource implications to address any specific and remaining barriers.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED

Recommendation 4
Ensure all partnerships have an effective governance structure that has a suitable amount of elected member challenge built in, particularly scrutiny in those larger most impactful partnerships like Swansea Bay City Region, Western Bay and ERW.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>ERW has fully formed Governance Arrangements, which includes a Joint committee, an ERW Service Committee and a joint scrutiny mechanism. A Joint Committee Agreement and joint scrutiny arrangements were agreed for the City Deal at Council on 26th July 2018. Western Bay has a Joint Committee in place. There are scrutiny arrangements in place for all three partnerships.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Review governance arrangements of the 3 main partnerships – ERW, Western bay and City Deal - to ensure they remain fit for purpose.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED

Recommendation 5
That each partnership has one clear structured lead that can facilitate communication between the partnership and scrutiny.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>The Council is playing a leading and proactive role in major regional collaborations. The Chief Executive takes the lead role for ERW and Western Bay as well as being an</i>

executive member of the City Deal Joint Committee and the Leader of the Council is the City Region Joint Committee Chair.

New actions following from the recommendation: *The new senior management structure agreed at Council on 21st June 2018 has director leads in place for each partnership.*

Cabinet Member Comments: *None*

Recommendation is **AGREED**

Recommendation 6

That we ensure that the current financial and resource implications for Swansea (including quantifying officer time) are clearly and continually understood.

Relevant Policy Commitments: *All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working*

Action already being undertaken: *The Council has a clear rationale in place when collaborating and it is clear on the anticipated benefits and costs. The Council understands what it currently contributes directly to ERW, Western Bay and City Region and how much it contributes to all other partnerships. The Council is able to estimate how much officer time is committed to partnership working.*

New actions following from the recommendation: *Continue to assess the value to the Council from being involved in existing or new partnerships, including an analysis of costs and benefits.*

Cabinet Member Comments: *None*

Recommendation is **AGREED**

Recommendation 7

That a review is undertaken of the regional bodies that we work with, to see if any can be rationalised or amalgamated. We must be SMART about the partnerships which we are involved in to ensure we are adding value for time spent.

Relevant Policy Commitments: *All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working*

Action already being undertaken: *A mapping exercise has been undertaken that identified the key local, regional and national partnerships. The Council has a clear rationale in place when collaborating and it is clear on the anticipated benefits and costs.*

New actions following from the recommendation: *Continue to assess the value to the Council from being involved in existing or new partnerships, including an analysis of costs and benefits.*

Cabinet Member Comments: *None*

Recommendation is **AGREED**

Recommendation 8

That modern technology is used for meetings to reduce travel time, including, for example skype, video conferencing. Ensuring the right facilities are available for Councillors and staff and that they are encouraged and trained to use them.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>Rolling out and promoting the use of Skype as part of the wider roll out of Office 365 resulting from the Council's Digital Strategy and modernisation agenda.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Review how Skype could be used amongst partners to reduce travelling and officer and Councillor time and further encourage participation in partnership working.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED

Recommendation 9
Make more use of the third and private sector bodies in our collaboration activities.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>The delivery of the City Deal will not be possible without the involvement of the private sector. The Western Bay Programme supports collaborative working between four statutory partner organisations, together with the third and independent sectors. ERW has independent members involved in the Executive Board.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Continue to engage the third sector in existing partnerships.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED

Recommendation 10
Make representations to Welsh Government through our different working partnerships about streamlining and simplifying the business case and grant application process.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>Representations made to Welsh Government on reforming the grant regime; for example through the Council's response to the recent Green Paper on Local Government Reorganisation.</i>

New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Continue to press Welsh Government for a more streamlined grant process.</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED

Recommendation 11
Partnerships regularly review their governance, membership and impact. This should include the publishing of an annual report.
Relevant Policy Commitments: <i>All policy commitments that relate to regional collaborations and partnership working</i>
Action already being undertaken: <i>ERW produces audited and published accounts and are inspected by Estyn and has produced a document called Democratic Accountability and Scrutiny, which recognises the role of scrutiny in, amongst other things, monitoring performance and budgets. The City Deal is in the development stages of practical formation and detailed agreement; it is envisaged that the governance structure will be similar to that of ERW.</i>
New actions following from the recommendation: <i>Produce an annual report to Council on the progress made across the main regional collaborations; ERW, Western Bay and City Deal</i>
Cabinet Member Comments: <i>None</i>
Recommendation is AGREED

2.1 An action plan for the agreed recommendations is attached as **Appendix B.**

3.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

3.1 There are no direct Equality and Engagement implications with this report although the implications from implementing each recommendation will need to be considered and may be subject to screening for an Equality Impact Assessment.

4.0 Legal Implications

4.1 There are no direct legal implications with this report although the implications from implementing each recommendation will need to be considered

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications with this report although the financial and resource implications from implementing each recommendation will need to be considered.

Background Papers: *None*

Appendices

Appendix A – Original Scrutiny Report

Appendix B – Proposed Cabinet Action Plan