



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 16 February 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
E W Fitzgerald
W G Lewis
T M White

Councillor(s)

J E Burtonshaw
D W Helliwell
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

M C Child
P K Jones
W G Thomas

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| C A Holley | S M Jones | J W Jones |
| P R Hood-Williams | L R Jones | |

Also Present:

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Councillor Mark Thomas | Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management |
| Councillor Mike Day | Sketty Ward |
| Councillor Myles Langstone | Oystermouth Ward |
| Councillor Linda Tyler-Lloyd | Mayals Ward |

Officer(s)

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Stuart Davies | Head of Highways & Transportation |
| David Hughes | Principal Engineer |
| Kate Jones | Democratic Services Officer |
| Chloe Lewis | Team Leader |
| Brij Madahar | Scrutiny Team Leader |
| Debbie Smith | Deputy Chief Legal Officer |
| Cath Swain | Integrated Transport Unit Manager |

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): T J Hennegan

34 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

Councillor Mike Day – Minute No. 40 – Lives opposite one of the active travel schemes discussed – Personal

Councillor Mark Child – Minute No. 40 – Ward member for West Cross, Fairwood Road was mentioned in discussions – Personal

35 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.

36 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on the 19 January 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

37 Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20.

The Scrutiny Team Leader presented the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20. The report highlights the work carried out by scrutiny and shows how scrutiny has made a difference whilst also supporting the continuous improvement of the scrutiny function. The report also mentions the COVID-19 pandemic and resources, which had an impact on delivery of the scrutiny work programme during 2019/20.

The importance of scrutiny was highlighted and the need to promote the work carried out specifically in areas where scrutiny had made an impact and made improvements.

The Chair thanked all those who had taken part in Scrutiny.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20 be approved and proceed to Council.

38 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Service Improvement & Finance. (Councillor Chris Holley, Convener)

Councillor Chris Holley, Convener, presented the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report, and reflected on Panel activities over the past year. He specifically highlighted that this year had been most unique and there had been spending on things that would not normally be expected e.g. building of the Bay Field hospital, spending on PPE equipment etc.

He stated that the Council had performed well during the pandemic and all staff should be commended. For example, the work of waste collection services had been outstanding during the pandemic as well the Officers who had administered numerous refunds and grants to help small business.

Many staff have had to deal with COVID-19 personally, whether they had been ill themselves, had family members poorly or suffered bereavement. It had been a very

stressful time for staff and it was felt that their efforts and excellent work carried out during this time should be recognised in whatever way possible in the future.

In view of the unprecedented year and impact of the pandemic, he added that it was difficult to say what the financial position would be in the future, but the Panel will be closely monitoring the budget.

The Chair noted that Covid-19 had, had an impact on the Council's income (rents, Council Tax, etc.) and that it would be worth monitoring going forward, to assess the income lost across all income streams, and see how well this has been recovered.

Resolved that the update be noted.

39 Public Question Time.

A number of questions had been received from members of the public.

Mr Anderson speaking on behalf of Blackpill, Derwen Fawr and Mayals Residents' Association asked the following question:-

Paragraph 3.1.3 of the Design Guidance states: 'Consultation should result in better design and better schemes. As such, it is best carried out at several stages: from the development of the network to individual schemes. (...) and gain greater community support.' Given the enormous public outcry at both schemes (Olchfa and Mayals) and the widespread belief that better alternatives are available for both, why was this aspect ignored?

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Council were operating under existing 2014 active travel guidance and all suggested alternatives had been looked into. They had been discounted as they were not viable. He stated that all requirements under current guidance were being met, and in addition the Council has engaged with anyone who has been in contact with views. Where possible, changes have been made to the routes approved by the Welsh Government.

There was a discussion about the design guidance in operation which was currently being revised by Welsh Government. The Cabinet Member stated that practice around consultation would be adapted if required in line with any new guidance issued in the future by the Welsh Government.

As a number of members of the public has submitted questions but were not present the Chair requested that the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management provide each with a written response. He added that some of the issues raised would be covered during the Committee's discussion with the Cabinet Member.

40 Active Travel Consultation Process - Discussion with Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management.

The Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, the Head of Highways and Transportation, the Integrated Transport Unit Manager,

the Principal Engineer Highways and Transportation and the Team Leader Highways and Transportation were present for the Committees consideration of the active travel consultation process.

The Chair highlighted that, because of public concerns being raised, this item was to ask about the Council's active travel consultation process and consider possible improvements for the future. He stressed that it was not about looking at the detail of specific schemes already agreed, or site-specific queries, but overall experience regarding consultation.

The Cabinet Member provided an outline of active travel consultation followed by the Team Leader, Highways and Transportation who provided an overview of the process and the Principal Engineer, Highways and Transportation who followed with an overview on the delivery process. They highlighted the following:

- Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 – places a statutory responsibility on Council's to map, plan and make improvements to its active travel networks
- Wellbeing & Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 – imposes duty on public bodies to apply the sustainable development principle in everything that the it does – 5 ways of working
- All active travel schemes are taken through the Future Generations Framework Process and all schemes are assessed by Welsh Government using the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance.
- In 2016 Swansea Council created 2 Maps as required by the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 – 1 map was the Existing Route Map (ERM) and the other was the Integrated Network Map (INM) for walking and cycling routes
- The draft INM was published for consultation in 2017, it was subsequently forwarded to Welsh Government for approval
- Grant bids are made yearly based on the map
- Grant application process - Welsh Government allocate grant funding yearly – grant applications are invited around December / January time, giving about 4-6 weeks to put together the grant applications. The outcomes of those application are generally announced in May/June and the schemes have to be delivered by the end of March in that financial year
- This year following allocation of grant funding, ward members in areas where schemes had been granted were notified by Councillor Mark Thomas
- There was a short window to develop the detailed programme once grant funding had been approved
- There had been letter drops on certain schemes to residents directly affected as well as MS Teams sessions on the Mayals and Sketty schemes
- Once schemes were agreed any suggestions for improvement / amendments would have be kept within the agreed scheme

Questions and discussions focussed on the following:

- Querying what specific details about schemes were included in the FPR7's Cabinet report of July 2020 – officers stated that maps were referenced as background papers
- Notification of schemes to the relevant Ward Members

- Consultation on the development of the network / route maps - Ideas for enhancing or adding to schemes
- Whether feasibility studies were carried out before applying to the Welsh Government for grant funding – it was stated that all guidelines were followed
- Whether the Council had received any concerns from the Welsh Government about Swansea Council's approach to active travel – it was stated that there had not been
- Scope for consultation / amendments to schemes after they have been agreed. The Committee asked for sight of any papers arising from virtual meetings held regarding the Mayals scheme as well as clarity around the extent of letters being sent to residents
- Whether the statutory guidance provides for sufficient consultation – given the experience of residents feeling that they haven't been consulted with
- Road safety audits carried out on all schemes and conditions for shared path compared to segregated path
- Consistency in approaches – mention of Walters Road Scheme as a large scheme which has required a different approach, which is not possible to do on all schemes if they are to progress
- Managing the many competing factors and views of all
- People feeling unaware and not consulted on these schemes leading to more work for the Council to address / respond to this
- Lessons learnt from recent experience
- Practical difficulties including time constraints on active travel schemes once funding confirmed.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Members and Officers.

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

41 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

The Chair presented a report on the Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups. There were no amendments to report.

Resolved that the report be noted.

42 Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22.

The Chair presented a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22.

The next Scrutiny Programme Committee was scheduled for 16 March 2021. The main items scheduled were Children & Young People's Rights Scheme Annual Progress Report 2019 and Pre-decision scrutiny the Cabinet report on 'Business Case for the Relocation of the Civic Centre'.

It was noted that the Cabinet report may be postponed, so scrutiny would move accordingly.

The Chair felt that the Committee should revisit the Council's COVID-19 Recovery Plan and the Committee agreed that it should ask for a progress report to also come to the March meeting.

Councillor Chris Holley reported that he had been requested to look at the Council's Bylaws and has had some initial informal discussion with officers about scrutiny. He stated that this would be explored at a future meeting of the Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel.

Resolved that the report be noted.

43 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair presented a report on 'Scrutiny Letters' for information.

The Committee noted the outcome of the Equalities Inquiry follow up meeting on 28 January, which looked at progress with implementation of scrutiny recommendations and impact of the inquiry. Although some good progress was acknowledged by the Panel, which was convened by Councillor Lyndon Jones, it was felt necessary to convene a further follow up meeting, around November 2021, which will allow the Panel to better consider and assess progress made and the impact of the inquiry, before formal monitoring is concluded.

Resolved that the scrutiny letters log be noted.

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

The dates and times of the upcoming Panel / Working Group meeting were **noted**.

The meeting ended at 6.02 pm

Chair