



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 15 June 2021 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

C Anderson  
P K Jones  
W G Thomas

**Councillor(s)**

E W Fitzgerald  
W G Lewis  
T M White

**Councillor(s)**

D W Helliwell  
S Pritchard

**Statutory Co-opted Member(s)**

D Anderson-Thomas      A Roberts

**Councillor Co-opted Member(s)**

P R Hood-Williams      L R Jones      J W Jones

**Other Co-opted Member(s)**

C Bija (Public Services Board Scrutiny)

**Also Present**

Roger Thomas	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service / Vice Chair of Swansea Public Services Board
Steve Davies	Group Manager, Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service / operational lead on Swansea Public Services Board well-being objective 'Strong Communities'
Phil McDonnell	Coordinator, Swansea Environmental Forum / operational lead on Swansea Public Services Board well-being objective 'Working with Nature'
Hamish Osbourne	Swansea Environment Team Leader, Natural Resources Wales
Councillor Lesley Walton	Convener, Scrutiny Working Group – Digital Inclusion

**Officer(s)**

Adam Hill	Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources
Kate Jones	Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): C E Lloyd and G J Tanner

Councillor Co-opted Members: C A Holley and S M Jones

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**4 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 Peter Jones – Minute No. 9 – Member of the Swansea Public Services Board 'Working with Nature' task group

Councillor Sam Pritchard – Minute No. 9 – Member of Swansea Public Services Board – Partnership Group

**5 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.

**6 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committees held on 18 May 2021 and 20 May 2021 be approved and signed correct records.

**7 Public Question Time.**

There were no public questions.

**8 Role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee.**

As the first meeting of the 2021/22 municipal year, the Scrutiny Team Leader presented the report on the 'Role of the Scrutiny Programme Committee'. The report also invited the Committee to renew the appointment of Committee co-optees.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) The co-option of Scrutiny Performance Panels conveners to the Committee be renewed.
- 2) The co-option of partnership organisations to enable representatives to participate in the Committee's scrutiny of the Public Service Board be renewed.

**9 Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board.**

Representatives from Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service, Natural Resources Wales, Swansea Environmental Forum and Swansea Council attended for Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board (PSB).

The Committee is carrying out scrutiny of the performance of the PSB and the difference it is making. The session focussed on understanding the role of the Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales, as Statutory Members of Swansea Public Services Board, and progress in delivery of well-being objectives which they lead on.

Further to the written report provided, questions and discussions focussed on:-

- Impact / added value of the PSB – heard about networks / contacts built, work of Safer Swansea Partnership on High Street, safeguarding, radicalisation, racism and funding achieved from Natural Resources Wales to support improvement of the green environment
- Take up of partner / joint working on key issues – examples of partner working were provided around criminality, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse
- Success of partner working on deliberate grass fires
- Issues around PSB governance, lack of resources, lack of funding and lessons learned.
- Comparison with Regional Planning Boards – differing financial positions
- Substance Misuse – was being looked at by the Regional Planning Board and Area Planning Board - the Area Planning Board was leading on the development of the Integrated Public Health Model and was reporting back to the PSB
- Development of Performance Indicators for the PSB and sight of action plans to assist with monitoring and measuring progress – noted that not all aspects of work would be measurable, e.g. those issues that focus on long term change
- Lobbying for additional resources and funding
- Regional PSBs and strain on those organisations attending numerous PSBs – it appeared that the Welsh Government intended to maintain the local PSBs at present
- Communication between PSB the Working Groups and Joint Committee
- Impact of the Covid -19 pandemic on the work of the PSB and funding
- The PSB was scheduled to review their focus at the next meeting following the Covid-19 pandemic

The Chair thanked all those present. He looked forward to the next session on the PSB and development of better performance information around the work of the PSB including showing the delivery of specific well-being objectives through action plans.

## **10 Scrutiny Dispatches - Impact Report.**

The Chair / Scrutiny Team Leader presented the 'Scrutiny Dispatches – Impact Report', highlighting scrutiny achievements during 2020/21.

**Resolved** that the report proceed to Council

## **11 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.**

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

The Committee noted the appointment of Performance Panel Conveners by respective Panels for the 2021/22 municipal year so far as follows:

- Child & Family Services - Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams re-appointed
- Adult Services - Councillor Susan Jones re-appointed
- Service Improvement & Finance – Councillor Chris Holley re-appointed

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) Councillor Mark Child be removed from any panels / working groups, as he had become an executive member.
- 2) Councillor Oliver James and Councillor Hannah Lawson be added to the Natural Environment Performance Panel

**12 Scrutiny Work Programme.**

The Chair presented a report on Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21.

The next Scrutiny Programme Committee was scheduled for 13 July 2021. The main item scheduled was a discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities for Highways & Engineering and Infrastructure Repairs & Maintenance with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Enhancement & infrastructure Management.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

**13 Scrutiny Letters.**

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

The Convener of the Scrutiny Working Group for Digital Inclusion, Councillor Lesley Walton, was present to summarise the findings. She highlighted the work carried out by Officers in spite of the Covid-19 pandemic who, for example, continued to deliver a new initiative 'Chatbot'. The Working Group would continue to support staff with the huge advances and continuing changes in technology and look at the Digital Inclusion Strategy as well as the revamp of the Council Website. The Working Group felt that further oversight of work on Digital Inclusion was necessary as things develop, perhaps annually.

The Convener of the Scrutiny Working Group for Workforce, Councillor Cyril Anderson, referred to the Working Group's letter to Cabinet Members and response, following the Working Group meeting. He highlighted the work of staff during the Covid-19 pandemic. Following the first lockdown staff had adapted better during the second lockdown, with improvements to support from the Council. It was noted that there would be a further staff survey circulated in the next 6 months to ask staff about working from home now they were more experienced / had more exposure to it. The Working Group were looking to meet again when the results of the survey were known.

Both Conveners thanked staff for all their hard work, helping the Council through a very difficult period.

The Chair touched on some issues around the use of agency workers, recently discussed at the Governance & Audit Committee, and he would be discussing with the Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee a way forward around future discussion avoiding any duplication between respective Committees.

**Resolved** that the scrutiny letters log be noted.

**14 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 5.15 pm

**Chair**