



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 17 August 2021

### Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

<b>Purpose:</b>	To enable the Committee to question Cabinet Members on their work. The Committee's questions will broadly explore Cabinet Members' priorities, actions, achievements and impact in relation to specific areas of responsibility.
<b>Content:</b>	<p>The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:</p> <p>a) Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</p> <p>The specific areas of responsibility being discussed are:</p> <p>a) Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing b) Business &amp; City Promotion</p>
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question the Cabinet Member on the specific portfolio responsibilities</li><li>• Make comments and recommendations as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith, Chief Legal Officer
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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the Council's Cabinet to account. The Cabinet (also known as the Executive) is made up of the Leader and other councillors, appointed by the Leader, who are allocated specific portfolio responsibilities.

1.2 There are 10 Cabinet portfolios:

	<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
1	Economy, Finance & Strategy (Leader of the Council)	Cllr Rob Stewart
2	Delivery & Operations (Joint Deputy Leader)	Cllr David Hopkins
3	Climate Change & Service Transformation (Joint Deputy Leader)	Cllr Andrea Lewis
4	Adult Social Care & Community Health Services	Cllr Mark Child
5	Business Improvement & Performance	Cllr Andrew Stevens
6	Children Services	Cllr Elliott King
7	Education Improvement, Learning & Skills	Cllr Robert Smith
8	Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management	Cllr Mark Thomas
9	Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
10	Supporting Communities	Cllr Alyson Pugh Cllr Louise Gibbard

NOTE:

- All Cabinet Members have responsibility for Poverty Reduction
- Supporting Communities Portfolios operate under a job share system with two named Councillors sharing the responsibility, rotated on a regular basis; however, formally they remain as one cabinet portfolio.
- Detailed Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility listing is **attached** to this report.

1.3 By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the Cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities.

1.4 The Committee has moved away from general Cabinet Member Question Sessions, looking at overall responsibilities, in favour of focusing on specific areas of interest / concern, taking into account any gaps in the overall scrutiny work programme and ensuring good coverage of scrutiny across all cabinet portfolios.

1.5 The Committee should be mindful to avoid duplication of any issue(s) which are being examined elsewhere in the scrutiny work programme e.g. within Performance Panels.

## 2. Discussion on Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities

- 2.1 The following Cabinet Member will appear before the Committee:
- a) Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
- 2.2 The Cabinet portfolio responsibilities that the Committee will focus on are:
- a) Tourism, Destination Management, and Marketing
  - b) Business & City Promotion
- 2.3 The Cabinet Member, will attend, along with lead officers who can assist the Committee, to report on aims / objectives, plans, and the delivery of work related to these portfolio objectives. Cabinet Members will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the Committee.
- 2.4 The Cabinet Member has provided a report on the portfolio responsibilities under discussion to help the Committee focus the discussion and questions - see **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2**.
- 2.5.1 The session also provides opportunity for the Committee to follow up on action following recommendations made by the Tourism Scrutiny Working Group, convened by Councillor Peter Jones. The Working Group, which focused on the marketing and development of tourism in Swansea, including eco/sustainable tourism, reported to Cabinet and received Cabinet response in November 2019. Of the 12 recommendations considered by Cabinet: 8 were agreed, 1 agreed in part, and 3 were not agreed. As a result of this scrutiny the Cabinet response indicated the action(s) that would be taken, including the following:
- Considering the possibility of a Gower off-road cycle route that would develop and promote a network of bridleways as a way of enjoying the countryside by bike and enable visitors to explore large areas of Gower AONB by bicycle, and investigate grant funding to deliver this.
  - Giving consideration to making more use of volunteers to help maintain our environmental assets such as footpaths, steps etc.
  - Improvement to signage, especially in Gower, subject to findings of the 2019 visitor and trade surveys, and budget constraints.
  - Work to identify future grant funding possibilities, post-Brexit, including exploration of potential partnership funding models for future projects.
  - Looking at good practice elsewhere regarding the marketing of accommodation in Swansea.

- Ensuring a ‘whole council’ approach to supporting big events in Swansea, e.g. Refuse and Street Cleansing working effectively with the Tourism team to ensure events run smoothly and everything is cleaned up afterwards.
- More use of social media for advertising, and marketing videos / digital content to show more of what people can do and see if they visit Swansea. Councillors were told that new videos are already planned for 2020 ‘Year of the Great Outdoors’.
- Facilitating all Councillors to help promote Swansea as a tourist destination e.g. ensuring awareness of the various platforms / digital channels used by the Council that they can follow and share more widely.

2.5.2 The Committee last met with Councillor Francis-Davies in March 2020, which included discussion on the Working Group recommendations. Amongst the issues picked up by the Committee then, were around:

- The maintenance and cleanliness of key tourist destinations such as the City Centre and Marina, Mumbles, Langland, Caswell, parks etc. – whilst budgets were stretched the Committee felt it was important to focus on the small number of key sites to raise standards, including the basics like litter bins, toilets, and fencing. The Cabinet Member had expressed frustration at the lack of funding to be able to do more to improve sites. He highlighted the fact that Swansea has many sites within its tourism offer and it was difficult to keep on top of maintenance in time of austerity, when other priorities took precedent.
- Eco-tourism and possibility of extending cycle ways throughout Gower – the Cabinet Member had committed to investigating grant funding to see how we can boost opportunities for people to enjoy the area by bike, making use of bridleways etc. He pointed out that the provision of cycle ways was a matter for the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management to consider, however would raise this with Cllr Mark Thomas to see what can be done.
- The Committee praised the improvements to walkway between Limeslade and Langland, a very popular route, making it more accessible.

2.5.3 The Cabinet Member’s report, which is appended, includes an update on delivery of the action plan produced in response to the Tourism Scrutiny Working Group.

### **3. Approach to Questions**

3.1 The session should provide Committee members with a greater understanding of what these specific responsibilities entail, resources, priorities / objectives / commitments, key activities / headlines / achievements, performance measures, and overall assessment of service health (including, for example, how we compare with others, challenges / risks) and improvement / impact / difference made. This

will give the Committee the chance to ask focused questions and provide challenge on actions and performance in relation to these areas of responsibility, as well as future thinking.

3.2 In terms of themes that cut across all cabinet portfolios, the Committee can ask Cabinet Members about:

- Well-being of Future Generations Act – impact on their work / decisions e.g. what they are doing to achieve the well-being goals and ways of working, e.g. focus on long-term thinking, collaboration / involvement etc (including regional / collaborative working, service user / public engagement)
- Links to Poverty Reduction
- Reducing inequalities, including socio-economic disadvantage
- Links to the Council's Recovery and Transformation Plan
- Links to the Public Services Board (PSB)

3.3 The Committee has also invited members of the public and other scrutiny councillors (not on the Committee) to suggest questions that the Committee should ask. It is up to the Committee how to deal with any suggested questions within the session.

3.4 Following each session the Chair will write to Cabinet Members in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the Committee, and any actions for them to consider.

3.5 If the Committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during the session then this should be agreed through the normal work planning process and planned for a future meeting. This will also allow proper time for preparation.

3.6 The Committee should note that Councillor Robert Francis-Davies has already been engaged in scrutiny, or is planned, of the following:

- Ongoing Scrutiny of various Development & Regeneration matters including Swansea Central (Arena etc.) (Development & Regeneration Performance Panel)
- Commercial Opportunities in Rural Areas (Development & Regeneration Performance Panel)
- Welsh Public Library Standards – Annual Performance Report (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel)
- Healthy City (planned Working Group)

#### **4. Next Session**

4.1 The next scheduled Scrutiny of Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities, on 14 September, is with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Service Transformation, Councillor Andrea Lewis, and Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, Councillor Mark Thomas.

4.2 Councillor Andrea Lewis has been asked to specifically report on:

- Energy Policy (inc. Generation, Supply & District Heating)

4.3 Councillor Mark Thomas has been asked to specifically report on:

- Litter & Community Cleansing

## **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Cabinet Member Report – Tourism

Appendix 2: Cabinet Member Report – Business & City Promotion

Appendix 3: Cabinet Portfolio Responsibility Listing