



To:  
**Councillor Andrea Lewis**  
**Cabinet Member for Service Transformation**

*Please ask for:*  
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Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation. The letter concerns the meeting held on 9 May 2023 and the update on the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan. A response is not required.

Dear Councillor Lewis,

On the 9 May, the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel met to discuss the Local Government Use of Data Action Plan. The Panel are grateful to you and officers for attending to discuss and answer our questions.

We were reminded that this action plan resulted from the All Wales study by the Welsh Audit Office into how councils were making use of data in a report originally published in December 2018. The pandemic had a profound impact on this work and delayed an update. We noted the significant progress in all the 11 specific recommendations which are now considered closed and the new digital strategy 2023-28 was approved by Cabinet in April.

We noted the work on continuous projects including the promotion and use of the Local and National Land and Property Gazetteer and the Information Asset Register. The Swansea Account for customers has also been launched and significantly developed during the pandemic and work will continue in coming years to add additional services. We heard that the Council uses the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information, (WASPI) framework and protocols for sharing data with partners.

Work force planning happens annually with appraisals and role profiles used to identify skills and capacity to analyse and manage data within the workforce. This has potential to be enhanced further with new tools in Oracle Fusion. Ongoing development will continue with existing established systems in place to work with services to review and improve data reporting standards.

We discussed staff training and were informed that mandatory training on data protection and cyber security is available online. We feel that although Councillors do

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not need the same level of training as staff there is a need for more training for Councillors on understanding what data is available and how data is used. This would support the Councillors carrying out performance related scrutiny but also in other areas of the Councillor role. The officer noted this request.

We also noted that for Councillors it can be time consuming looking for data or for who the right person may be to ask for data. We appreciate that the Council is a vast organisation and there is no one solution to this issue and any queries may need to be dealt with individually.

We asked about the benefits for residents in sharing information with partners and were informed further about the limits to what can be shared within the WASPI protocols with agreement from residents. Anonymised data can be shared if it is open/not sensitive data and doesn't relate to individuals but may provide insight which would then help the Council and its operations.

### **Your Response**

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter but in this instance, we require no formal written response.

Yours sincerely,



**Councillor Chris Holley**

Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

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