



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 17 October 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
W G Lewis
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P N May
T M White

Councillor(s)

M Jones
F D O'Brien

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

Beth Allender Elizabeth Lee

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley P R Hood-Williams L R Jones

Public Services Board Scrutiny Co-opted Member(s)

C Bija

Officer(s)

Leanne Ahern	Public Services Board Support Officer
Steve King	Information, Research & GIS Team Leader
Sarah Lackenby	Head of Digital and Customer Services
Brij Madahar	Scrutiny Team Leader
Richard Rowlands	Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager
Ben Smith	Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer
Ness Young	Director of Corporate Services

Also present

H Grey	Natural Resources Wales (Public Services Board Operational Lead) –
A S Lewis	Chair of Swansea Public Services Board / Deputy Leader, Swansea Council
J Richmond	Swansea Council (Public Services Board Operational Lead)
R Stewart	Leader, Swansea Council
R Thomas	Vice-Chair of Swansea Public Services Board / Chief Fire Officer, Chief Fire Officer, Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): V A Holland

Councillor Co-opted Members: S M Jones and S E Keeton

25 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:

Councillors L R Jones and S Pritchard declared a Personal Interest in Minute 29 "Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board".

26 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.

27 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 19 September 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

28 Public Question Time.

None.

29 Scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of Swansea PSB, accompanied by the PSB representatives and lead officers, were present for Scrutiny of the Swansea Public Services Board (PSB).

Provided to the Committee in support of the session, for questions, were:

- An update report on the efforts by the PSB to review the development of the performance framework to help show the work being undertaken by the PSB, following on from the agreement of a new PSB Well-being Plan 2023-28.
- PSB Performance Framework / Action Plan 2023/24, including progress / status at Quarter 2 (Appendix A).
- Draft Population Measures (Appendix B).

Committee questioning and discussion regarding the performance of the PSB focussed on the following:

- The positive progress in developing a PSB Action Plan and challenges with the new performance framework;
- Action Plan progress
- Developments in partnership / collaborative working;

- Significant areas of work and challenges within the PSB Action Plan – noted as associated with Early Years and Climate Change Strategy activities;
- Well-being Step 4 – Making Swansea Safer, more cohesive and prosperous – the success of the pop up Community Village held on 3 June and the future development of this initiative across Swansea, including utilisation of community buildings;
- Efforts to increase community engagement.

The Chair thanked all concerned for the developments of the PSB performance framework and Action Plan, which the Committee can monitor in measuring the performance of the PSB and difference being made.

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Chair of the Public Services Board, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

30 Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operating Model.

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Service Transformation assisted by the Head of Digital and Customer Services, were present for pre-decision scrutiny of the Cabinet report on Oracle Project Closure Process and Transition to New Operating Model. The report was being presented to Cabinet on 19 October for decision, asking Cabinet to approve the £500,000 contingency budget for the project remaining in the earmarked Oracle Reserve to be used for the pending change requests from services and any additional in-year licence costs following review.

It was reported that the new Oracle System went live, as planned, on 1 April 2023, with major Council systems, such as Payroll, stable and operating smoothly. The new system was resilient and secure helping to mitigate cyber and ICT Disaster recovery risks on the corporate risk register. Examples were provided on delivery of Project objectives and benefits / improvements that have been realised and staff feedback had been positive. Some teething issues had emerged but had been worked through, mostly around integration with other systems. However, to date there is only one outstanding issue relating to integration with pensions system, but this has not affected the payment of pensions, and is close to resolution. The Project will then close and move into the new permanent operating model, as 'business as usual'.

The previous project board would be replaced by a Fusion Change Board going forward, comprising of service leads from across the Council. This new Board would oversee and approve any changes or new developments to the system as well as the quarterly patch releases from Oracle.

Oracle would develop and evolve the system, some based on recommendations directly from the public sector user group. In addition, the Council would work to maximise the new functionality within Fusion to improve business processes and operational efficiency.

The new Oracle Fusion Cloud system represented a major upgrade and would have regular updates with the potential to serve the Council for the next 20+ years.

Committee questions focussed on:

- the significant increase of the project cost;
- the contingency budget and future consideration of additional costs and funding options needing to form part of budget setting for 2024-2025 onwards;
- ongoing costs which would need to be built into base revenue budgets; and
- monitoring the on-going risk associated with the new operating model of managing capacity across the Council to deal with transformation and improving business processes and operational efficiency whilst dealing with 'business as usual'.

The Chair thanked Members and Officers.

Resolved that the Chair write to Cabinet Members outlining the view of the Committee ahead of Cabinet on 19 October 2023.

31 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report: Education (Councillor Lyndon Jones, Convener).

Councillor Lyndon Jones provided the Committee with a progress report on the work / activities of the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel. He referred to various issues that have been discussed over recent meetings, including the practice of visiting a number of Schools over the course of the Panel's comprehensive annual work plan to help the Panel experience things 'on the ground', engaging with Chairs of School Governing Bodies, Teachers and Pupils, for example around school development and the new curriculum. He thanked all Panel members for their participation and 'teamwork' in carrying out this Scrutiny.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress report in respect of Education be noted.

32 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

Resolved that the membership of the Panels and Working Groups as reported, be agreed.

33 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Chair presented the a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24 which the Committee is responsible for monitoring.

The main items for the Committee on 14 November comprised:

- Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report.
- Children & Young People's Rights Scheme (annual report)
- Follow Up on Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group

- Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry Final Report

Members noted that the Scrutiny Training & Development Programme for Swansea Scrutiny Councillors was underway, which was being facilitated by the Improvement Team at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The following Sessions were recently held:

- Introduction to Scrutiny
- Scrutiny Charing Skills

Upcoming Sessions:

- Questioning Skills for Scrutiny – to be held on 31 October / 1 November
- Scrutiny of Performance – to be held on 4 December / 6 December
- Self-Assessment of Scrutiny (two parts) – to be held on 17 January / 23 January

The Chair encouraged all to attend. All Sessions were being held online via MS Teams, with the exception of the final 'Self-Assessment' part 2 session which will be in-person only. As well as benefitting individual Councillors, the Programme will help to inform Scrutiny Improvement Objectives and actions going forward.

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

The Chair referred upcoming Panel/Working Group/Regional Scrutiny meetings, for awareness.

The meeting ended at 5.11 pm

Chair