

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels / Working Groups / Regional Scrutiny

1. Inquiry Panels:

These will undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis and will be expected to take around six months to complete to enable wide-ranging evidence gathering, and production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers).

a) **Anti-Social Behaviour** (convener: Cllr Terry Hennegan)

Key Question: *How can the Council ensure that it is working with its partners to appropriately and effectively tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Swansea?*

Progress Bar:

Planning				Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The final report was presented to Cabinet on the 21 December 2023. Cabinet will now consider the recommendations and provide a response, usually within two months.

(NB - Inquiries may take up to six months to complete, as they will call for wide ranging evidence, and will lead to a report with conclusions and recommendations that will be presented to Cabinet)

2. Follow Up on Completed Inquiries:

Follow-ups of inquiries will consider both the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and wider impact / difference made. Inquiry Panels are reconvened between 6-12 months after cabinet decision on Inquiry reports.

Inquiry	Cabinet Decision	Recommendations			Follow Up Panel Meeting
		Agreed	Partly	Rejected	
Procurement	20 Oct 2022	14	0	0	24 Oct 2023 (MONITORING COMPLETE)

3. Performance Panels:

Performance Panels enable regular and structured in-depth monitoring of performance and challenge within these key areas:

a) **Service Improvement, Regeneration & Finance** (convener: Cllr Chris Holley)

This Panel meets every month. At their meeting on 12 December they will look at the Mid Term Budget Statement 2023/24, Review of Revenue Reserves, Recycling and Landfill - Annual Performance Monitoring Report and the Councils response to an Audit Wales Report on the Digital Strategy Review.

On 16 January the Panel will look at the Budget Proposals 2024/25 – 2027/28, Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24, Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24 and receive and update on the Tourism Destination Management Plan.

b) **Education** (convener: Cllr Lyndon Jones)

This Panel meets every month. The Panel met on the 14 December where they look at the Annual Education Performance against identified priorities, progress with the Estyn recommendations and as part of this had a Cabinet Member Q&A.

On the 18 January the Panel will meet with the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors from the Gowerton Comprehensive school cluster, to discuss progress with the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales across their school cluster.

c) **Adult Services** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. At its last meeting on 12 December the Panel discussed the Performance Monitoring Report for October 2023 and received a briefing on Dementia.

At its next meeting on 30 January 2024 the Panel will receive an update on the Adult Services Transformation and Improvement Programme and an update on Local Area Coordination. The Panel will also receive an update on progress with the Wales Audit Office report 'A Missed Opportunity' Social Enterprises.

d) **Child & Family Services** (convener: Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams)

This Panel meets every 6 weeks. A progress report appears in the agenda under Item 8.

e) **Climate Change & Nature** (convener: Cllr Sara Keeton)

This Panel meets every two months. At its next meeting on 30 January the Panel will discuss Public Electric Vehicle Charging Provision.

4. **Regional Scrutiny:**

This is collaborative Scrutiny with other Local Authorities for topics / issues of shared interest or concern, and models of regional working.

a) **Partneriaeth - Regional Education Partnership**

Partneriaeth Scrutiny is expected to take place every school term, mirroring meetings of the Partneriaeth Joint Committee.

The Councillor Group met on the 23 October, where they looked at progress with the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales, the Risk Assessment Profile and received an update on the performance of Partneriaeth Priority 2 – Embed principles and processes which underpin educational equity in all schools and educational settings. This included an example of practice happening on the ground from the Headteacher from Birchgrove Comprehensive School.

They will next meet on the 26 February 2024 where they have scheduled to discuss the Partneriaeth financial affairs, risk management and governance arrangements. They will all look at progress with Partneriaeth Priority 3 – Support schools and educational settings to develop of research and enquiry schools as a key part of their own professional learning. This will include looking at an example of a National and Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP).

b) **Swansea Bay City Region City Deal**

The Joint Scrutiny Committee usually meets every two months. As well as overall programme / project monitoring including the latest financial position, the meeting on 24 October focussed on specific regional Project(s), with updates on 'Skills & Talent' and 'Digital Infrastructure'. The Committee was also informed of the findings and actions of the 2022-23 Internal Audit review into the Swansea Bay City Deal Portfolio.

The next meeting takes place on 13 February 2024 and is expected to include a report on the Carbon Reduction Assessment of the Swansea Bay City Deal Portfolio.

The Joint Scrutiny Committee is supported by Scrutiny Officers in Neath Port Talbot Council and agendas / minutes of meetings can be found on-line:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=417>

c) **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee**

The CJC Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee will meet at least quarterly. The last meeting held on 2 November focussed on the Audit Wales' findings follow their review of Corporate Joint Committees. The purpose of the review was to gain early assurance about the CJsCs' progress as newly established bodies, and provide some early feedback to help CJsCs as they continue to develop. The Committee was also updated on the Regional Transport Plan Implementation Plan which is to be submitted to Welsh Government.

The next meeting is due to take place on 16 January 2024, expected to include budget monitoring.

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<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=499>

5. **Working Groups:**

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups. These enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern and will be planned as a one-off meeting (in the order shown below) primarily involving discussion with relevant Cabinet Member(s) / officer(s), and any other persons called, to gather information, ask questions, and give views / raise any concerns.

a) **Public Rights of Way** (convener: Councillor Mike White)

This Working Group was held on 22 November receiving an overview on Public Rights of Way across Swansea (mapping / numbers) and issues; impact on Public Rights of Way from developments; effect on communities, etc. The Working Group has sent a letter to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure with its view and recommendations for a response due in January. This will be reported to the Committee in due course for awareness.

b) **Customer Contact** (convener: Councillor Joe Hale)

This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion on the user experience when contacting the Council / accessing services whether by telephone or on-line / though digital means; provision for offline and on-line contact; effectiveness of Council Contact Centre; on-going actions to improve digital inclusion / access; quality of website, etc. This Working Group had been arranged for 26 January 2024, but this date is no longer suitable and a new date is being arranged.

This Working Group was carried forward from 2022/23.

c) **Community Growing** (convener: TBC)

This will enable information, focussed questioning & discussion around Council activity / support to Community Growing, with examples (e.g., allotments) and experience; benefits / success; including focus on schools / children & young people; and its contribution to health & well-being, etc.