

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

At: Committee Room 1, Civic Centre, Swansea

On: Monday, 1 September 2014

Time: 4.30 pm

AGENDA

	Page No.
1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.	1 - 2
3 Minutes: To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 4 August 2014.	3 - 10
4 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.	
5 Cabinet Member Question Session - Citizen, Community Leadership & Democracy Portfolio. <i>(Councillor Christine Richards attending)</i>	11 - 25
6 Scrutiny Performance Panel Progress Report - Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel. <i>(convener: Councillor Mary Jones)</i>	26 - 29
7 Wales Audit Office Scrutiny Report: Good Scrutiny? Good Question! <i>(Tim Buckle, Wales Audit Office , attending)</i>	30 - 75
8 Scrutiny Work Programme 2014 - 15. 1) Committee Work Plan 2) Scrutiny Activity Timetable. 3) Progress of Panels / Working Groups 4) Lead Scrutiny Councillor/Officer Contacts. 5) Draft Terms of Reference – Child & Family Services Performance Panel 6) Forward Look (Cabinet Business)	76 - 108
9 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.	109 - 112

- 10 Scrutiny Letters: 113 - 145**
- a Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Service Improvement & Finance Panel Meeting –10 April 2014)
 - b Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Place & Letter from Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources(Committee Meeting – 9 June)
 - c Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Wellbeing (Wellbeing Performance Panel Meeting – 16 June)
 - d Letter to/from Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee (Wellbeing Performance Panel Meeting – 14 July)

11 Scrutiny Dispatches - September 2014. 146 - 149

12 Date and Time of Future Meetings for 2014/15 Municipal Year (all at 4.30p.m. except where noted);

29 September 2014	22 December 2014	16 March 2015
27 October 2014	19 January 2015	13 April 2015
24 November 2014	16 February 2015	



Patrick Arran
Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement
Tuesday 26 August 2014

Contact: Democratic Services 637292

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE (16)

Labour Councillors: 11

A M Cook	J E C Harris
D W Cole	T J Hennegan
J P Curtice	A J Jones
N J Davies	R V Smith
V M Evans	M Thomas
P Downing	

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 3

A M Day	P M Meara
J W Jones	

Independent Councillor: 1

E W Fitzgerald	
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Conservative Councillor: 1

A C S Colburn	
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Co-opted Members:

David Anderson-Thomas	
Sarah Joiner	
Councillor RA Clay (Gypsy & Traveller Site Meetings Only)	

Officers:

Dean Taylor	Director of Corporate Services
Lee Wenham	Head of Marketing, Communications & Scrutiny
Dave Mckenna	Overview & Scrutiny Manager
Brij Madahar	Overview & Scrutiny Coordinator
Democratic Services	
Nigel Havard	Legal
Archives	

Email:

Executive Board	
Cabinet Members	
Leaders of Opposition Groups	
Carl Billingsley	

Total Copies: 30

Disclosures of Interest

To receive Disclosures of Interest from Councillors and Officers

Councillors

Councillors Interests are made in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea. You must disclose orally to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest.

NOTE: You are requested to identify the Agenda Item / Minute No. / Planning Application No. and Subject Matter to which that interest relates and to enter all declared interests on the sheet provided for that purpose at the meeting.

1. If you have a **Personal Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 10** of the Code, you **MAY STAY, SPEAK AND VOTE** unless it is also a Prejudicial Interest.
2. If you have a Personal Interest which is also a **Prejudicial Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 12** of the Code, then subject to point 3 below, you **MUST WITHDRAW** from the meeting (unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Standards Committee)
3. Where you have a Prejudicial Interest you may attend the meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, **provided** that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise. In such a case, you **must withdraw from the meeting immediately after the period for making representations, answering questions, or giving evidence relating to the business has ended**, and in any event before further consideration of the business begins, whether or not the public are allowed to remain in attendance for such consideration (**Paragraph 14** of the Code).
4. Where you have agreement from the Monitoring Officer that the information relating to your Personal Interest is **sensitive information**, as set out in **Paragraph 16** of the Code of Conduct, your obligation to disclose such information is replaced with an obligation to disclose the existence of a personal interest and to confirm that the Monitoring Officer has agreed that the nature of such personal interest is sensitive information.
5. If you are relying on a **grant of a dispensation** by the Standards Committee, you must, before the matter is under consideration:
 - i) Disclose orally both the interest concerned and the existence of the dispensation; and
 - ii) Before or immediately after the close of the meeting give written notification to the Authority containing:

- a) Details of the prejudicial interest;
- b) Details of the business to which the prejudicial interest relates;
- c) Details of, and the date on which, the dispensation was granted; and
- d) Your signature

Officers

Financial Interests

1. If an Officer has a financial interest in any matter which arises for decision at any meeting to which the Officer is reporting or at which the Officer is in attendance involving any member of the Council and /or any third party the Officer shall declare an interest in that matter and take no part in the consideration or determination of the matter and shall withdraw from the meeting while that matter is considered. Any such declaration made in a meeting of a constitutional body shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting. No Officer shall make a report to a meeting for a decision to be made on any matter in which s/he has a financial interest.
2. A "financial interest" is defined as any interest affecting the financial position of the Officer, either to his/her benefit or to his/her detriment. It also includes an interest on the same basis for any member of the Officers family or a close friend and any company firm or business from which an Officer or a member of his/her family receives any remuneration. There is no financial interest for an Officer where a decision on a report affects all of the Officers of the Council or all of the officers in a Department or Service.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

HELD AT ON MONDAY, 4 AUGUST 2014 AT 4.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A M Day (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
A M Cook	E W Fitzgerald	J W Jones
D W Cole	J E C Harris	P M Meara
J P Curtice	T J Hennegan	R V Smith
N J Davies	A J Jones	M Thomas
P Downing		

Officers:

J Hooper	- Directorate Lawyer
D McKenna	- Overview and Scrutiny Manager
B Madahar	- Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator
S Woon	- Democratic Services Officer

31 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Anderson-Thomas and Mrs S Joiner.

32 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL & PREJUDICIAL INTEREST.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests was declared:

Councillor M Thomas - personal - Minute Nos. 35 and 36 – Cabinet Member Question Session – Wellbeing Portfolio and Scrutiny Panel Progress Report – Wellbeing Portfolio. My wife works for the Authority in Adult Social Services. My Mother uses Adult Social Services. Councillor M Thomas stated that he had dispensation from the Standards Committee.

33 **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.

34 **MINUTES:**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 7 July, 2014, be agreed as a correct record.

The Committee were updated on the following:

Minute no. 22 – WAO Report – Good Scrutiny? Good Question!

A Wales Audit Office representative was available to attend the next meeting on 1 September, 2014.

Minute no. 23 – Cabinet Member Question Session – Cabinet Member for Opportunities for Children and Young People

The Chair would write to the Cabinet Member following the presentation by the Director of People at today's meeting in order to include the committee's views about the draft Children and Young People's Rights Scheme.

Minute no. 28 – Forward Look (Cabinet Business) – Opportunities for Pre-Decision Scrutiny

The Cabinet Member for Citizen, Community Engagement and Democracy would attend the next meeting for the Cabinet Member Question Session and therefore issues surrounding forward look and opportunities for pre decision scrutiny would be discussed during that session.

35 **CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION - WELLBEING PORTFOLIO.**

The Committee took the opportunity to question Councillor M C Child on his work having responsibility and accountability as Cabinet Member for Wellbeing.

The Cabinet Member provided an update on work he had undertaken, providing details on supported housing; affordable housing; children and family services; adult services, western bay and healthy cities.

The Committee asked questions in relation to portfolio objectives and developments, focussing on key activities, achievements and impact.

Key issues arising from discussion included:

- With regard to Western Bay, issues in relation to political accountability were highlighted.
- Information on 'all Wales' new parameters are awaited along with Welsh Government guidance in relation to standardising social services outcomes.
- Performance data in respect of Community Connections need to be developed.
- The need to monitor timescales in relation to disabled facilities grants and concentrate on the issues that can be dealt with quickly.
- The need to examine deadlines in relation to external organisations providing information for Case Conference outcomes.
- Affordable housing and the need to resolve issues with developers and planning and explore new models.

- The next key milestones in relation to the Transformation of Adult Social Services.

RESOLVED that the Chair of the Committee writes a letter to the Cabinet Member reflecting on the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

36 **SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORT - WELLBEING PORTFOLIO.**

The Convenor of the Wellbeing Scrutiny Performance Panel presented the Panel Update and sought agreement to the recommendations contained in the letter dated 17 July, 2014 to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

He referred to the concerns raised by Members of the Wellbeing Panel regarding workload and the capacity of the panel to ensure that scrutiny of performance of both adult and child and family services was focussed and robust.

A discussion ensued regarding the lack of performance data in respect of adult social services; the implications of the transformation of adult social services and the need for clear terms of reference.

The committee considered recommendations from the Panel, presented by the convener, Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams, about improving the effectiveness of scrutiny of these areas. The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing also was present to contribute to the discussion. He stated that he welcomed a Panel that solely examined Child and Family Services as it is important that the focus remains.

A decision was taken to make changes to the Wellbeing Panel.

The Committee's response to other issues raised by the Wellbeing Panel were:

- Pre-decision scrutiny on cabinet business is a matter for the Scrutiny Programme Committee to agree. However, Panels can draw items to the Committee's attention and the Committee can delegate specific items to Performance Panels for deliberation.
- The Committee will give consideration to how scrutiny of the Western Bay Health & Social Care Regional Programme can be developed. It was noted that a presentation has been arranged for all councillors on 13 August on the Western Bay Health and Social Care Programme and why it has been established, who is involved and what it is aiming to achieve. The committee would await this meeting and then consider way forward in relation to scrutiny of the Western Bay arrangements.
- The issue raised about the consultation on changes to the services for people with learning disabilities was noted – the Cabinet Member clarified the purpose of the consultation and current position. The committee felt there was scope for this area (e.g. service options) to be subject of future discussion by the new TASS Panel, as at this point the Cabinet Member confirmed there were no immediate changes proposed.

- The Cabinet Member acknowledged shortcomings in information / consultation with regard to members on the TASS programme and accepted this needed to be improved.

The committee thanked Wellbeing Panel members for their work.

RESOLVED that the work of the existing Wellbeing Panel be split as follows:

1. a separate Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel be established;
2. creation of a separate Panel with a specific remit to focus on the Transforming Adult Social Services (TASS) agenda (looking at the change process and providing critical friend challenge to the proposed or anticipated improvements). This Panel will consider the outcome of the independent review into older people's services due to report in early September and how it will be used to progress the transformation of services, and inform budget discussions.
3. As the Inquiry work of this Panel comes to an end, it will be set up as an Adult Social Services Performance Panel, and Terms of Reference will be changed to reflect this change.

37 **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS SCHEME.**

The Director of People presented the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme for Swansea which set out arrangements to ensure compliance of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (UNCRC).

The report was considered by Cabinet on 29 July, 2014 and approval was given to commence the public consultation exercise.

Members noted the background of the Scheme and the work undertaken by Officers and external organisations. An operational decision had been made in relation to impact assessments within the existing equality impact assessments.

The Scheme was supported across the Council and a training programme was being devised.

Youth participation officers have commenced the consultation process with a group of young people and notification letters have been sent to all key partners (third sector organisations and statutory organisations).

The role of scrutiny was detailed to ensure compliance in addition to the work of Swansea University who would also be acting as a critical friend.

Members' questions focussed on the robustness of the Scheme; the impact on existing budgets; training; monitoring outcomes; engaging children and any possible conflicts of interest in future decisions.

In response to Member questions the Director of People confirmed that:

- the implementation of the Scheme which would be done within existing budgets, with individual champions from each department within the Council reprioritising workloads to ensure the development of the Scheme was achieved.
- Training had been provided by the Welsh Government free of charge.
- Feedback from Estyn had been positive. Children having more confidence and a greater understanding of welfare and child protection issues. Processes for measuring outcomes were being developed.
- In relation to engagement with children, Schools were working closely with the voluntary sector partners and this created a better variety of networks.

It was noted that a letter had been received from the Welsh Government praising work model for across Wales.

RESOLVED that the views of the committee be included in a letter to the Cabinet Member for Opportunities for Children & Young People.

38 **FINAL SCRUTINY INQUIRY REPORT**

Councillor Jeff Jones, convenor of the Inward Investment Scrutiny Inquiry, presented the final report and sought approval to agree the report for submission to Cabinet.

Councillor J W Jones detailed the aims of the inquiry, the evidence considered, and the conclusions and recommendations. He praised Panel Members and the Scrutiny Officer for their work.

The Committee debated the report and asked questions of Councillor J W Jones who responded accordingly.

Some issues discussed:

- importance of access to the council for potential investors (being able to speak to right people)
- the value of both big and small investment (e.g. micro-business, support to local graduates to keep skills / knowledge in Swansea)
- the importance of attracting the right kind of business
- geographical distance from large centres not significant – it's more about good communication networks
- selling what Swansea has to offer
- having a 'can do' approach

The Committee thanked the Panel for its work.

RESOLVED that the report proceed to Cabinet.

39 **SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 14.**

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Annual Report 2013-2014.

The committee agreed an addition to the foreword proposed by the chair in relation to issues about the consideration of Scrutiny Dispatches at Council:

'While Swansea's Scrutiny arrangements have been receiving recognition from outside the Council, the Committee has been concerned to provide for the opportunity for the profile of scrutiny to be raised at Council meetings and for important topics to be discussed. While the Scrutiny Dispatches continue to appear on each Council Summons, and despite clarification from the Chair of Council that questions can be raised, there is confusion about the report's status as it is marked 'For Information Only'. As Chair of the Scrutiny programme Committee, I recommend to Council that the profile of scrutiny can be raised by having a clear opportunity for discussion and debate at Council.'

RESOLVED that the report be **AGREED**.

40 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2014 - 15**

The Chair presented the Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15. The report explained the background and purpose of the Scrutiny Work Programme and the current position of all scrutiny activities. The Work Programme referred to the work currently active, showing progress with the established Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups. The Work Plan Timetable for future Committee meetings was also provided.

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager referred to the manner in which in-depth pieces of work are dealt. A discussion ensued regarding the impact and benefits of working groups as opposed to inquiry panels. Members felt that a clear focus for the meeting was important along with better research and information. It was agreed to adopt a new approach - every piece of scrutiny work starting off as a working group – with an in-depth inquiry only following if the group recommended it and were able to suggest appropriate terms of reference to the committee (including key question to be explored, evidence gathering that might be necessary and timescales). The 'working group' approach will involve a detailed presentation of the subject matter at the outset (with advice from relevant cabinet members / officers and provision of existing research & information) which will enable opinion and proposals to be submitted to cabinet member(s) if these can be clearly expressed at that point, with no further work needed, or help inform decisions about the focus of any inquiry that is necessary.

It was felt this would help to achieve more focused and potentially quicker pieces of scrutiny, and provide flexibility to deal with things in different ways rather than follow a rigid in-depth inquiry process, depending on the issue. It could also improve impact as the experience of recent working groups have shown more impact with a single hit than some of the in-depth pieces of work.

The Chair reported on a public request for scrutiny in relation to Welsh Medium primary school provision in Swansea West and in the light of the cabinet member providing a response to the member of the public suggested to the committee agreed that no action was necessary.

The Chair also acknowledged receipt of 2 requests from other councillors. One asked for scrutiny to look at the policy adopted by council regarding transport to faith schools and impact on budgets of schools facing possible increase in numbers. One related to the handing of corporate complaints and procedures. It was acknowledged that further information was necessary before the committee could consider whether and how to include these in the work programme.

A question was raised about the follow up to the Public Transport Inquiry and lack of date. It was agreed to contact the convener of the Panel to progress this.

RESOLVED that:

- 1 the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan Timetable and Plan for future Meetings ahead be accepted;
- 2 the progress of established Panels and Working Groups attached at Appendix 2 of the report be noted;
- 3 Revised working arrangements be put into place in relation to inquiries / working groups;
- 4 Corporate Culture (along with the suggested Panel brief) be taken forward as an inquiry topic adopting the new approach;
- 5 No action be taken in relation to the public request for scrutiny on Welsh medium education.

41 **MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY PANELS AND WORKING GROUPS.**

The Chair presented a report which advised of changes required to the membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

RESOLVED that the following membership changes be agreed:

1. **Car Parking Scrutiny Working Group**
REMOVE Councillor Cheryl Philpott
ADD Councillor David Cole

42 **SCRUTINY LETTERS:**

The Chair reported the updated Scrutiny Letters Log and referred to the recent correspondence between Scrutiny and Cabinet Members:

- a Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Anti Poverty (Committee Meeting – 14 April 2014)
- b Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Wellbeing (Wellbeing Performance Panel Meeting – 2 June 2014)
- c Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Place (Committee Meeting – 9 June 2014)

The committee noted receipt of amended letter from Cllr June Burtonshaw which confirmed that the issue of the Quality Bus Contract was still being considered and

that the outcome of discussions once a decision has been taken would be shared with the committee.

- d Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel – 11 June)
- e Letter to Cabinet Member for Learning & Skills (Schools Performance Panel Meeting – 3 July 2014)

A discussion ensued regarding the letter from Cabinet Member for Place in respect of developing partnerships with the Bus Company.

RESOLVED that the:

1. above letters and action log be noted;
2. the Chair correspond further with the Cabinet Member for Place on the issue of public transport.

43 **SCRUTINY DISPATCHES - AUGUST 2014**

The Chair reported the draft Scrutiny Dispatches for agreement.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be agreed and submitted to Council on 9 September 2014.

44 **DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS FOR 2014/15 MUNICIPAL YEAR (ALL AT 4.30PM EXCEPT WHERE NOTED):**

The dates and times of future meetings for 2014/15 Municipal Year were submitted for information.

The meeting ended at 6.59 pm

CHAIR

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION SESSION – CITIZEN, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DEMOCRACY PORTFOLIO

Purpose	To enable the committee to question Councillor Christine Richards on her work, having specific responsibility and accountability as the Cabinet Member for Citizen, Community Engagement and Democracy.
Content	Councillor Richards will attend to participate in a question and answer session. The committee's questions will broadly explore key activities and achievements as well as current developments, in relation to portfolio responsibilities.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question the Cabinet Member on relevant matters • Make comments and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the most important roles that scrutiny carries out is holding the council's cabinet to account. By acting as a 'critical friend' scrutiny has the opportunity to challenge the cabinet and individual cabinet members on their actions and monitor performance in relation to their areas of responsibilities. The Scrutiny Programme Committee has scheduled a session with all cabinet members over the course of the year in order to ask questions on their work.
- 1.2 Councillor Christine Richards has been requested to attend this meeting to enable the committee to explore the work she has done in his role as Cabinet Member for Citizen, Community Engagement and Democracy.

2. Citizen, Community Engagement and Democracy Portfolio

- 2.1 According to the Council Constitution this portfolio includes the following areas of responsibility:

- a. Developing Citizen Engagement Strategies, Consultation and The Promotion of Openness and Transparency
- b. Developing Local Partnerships for Service Improvement, including the Local Service Board
- c. Community Leadership
- d. Democratic Services
- e. Participation – Children & Young People
- f. Petitions
- g. Staff Co-operation and Development
- h. Business Manager

2.2 The Cabinet Member has provided a short report on the ‘headlines’ from her work to help the committee focus on priorities, actions, achievements and impact. (**Appendix 1**).

3. Approach to Questions

3.1 At the Cabinet Member Question Sessions the committee will generally ask cabinet members about:

- portfolio objectives
- specific activities and achievements, progress against policy commitments, key decisions taken, and impact / difference made
- headlines with regard to the performance of services within the portfolio
- key targets to measure improvement and success
- their engagement with service users / public and what influence this has had
- what they hope to achieve over the next 12 months (plans / priorities)
- challenges ahead (e.g. resources / budget)
- engagement with scrutiny on portfolio issues

3.2 The Cabinet Member will be invited to make introductory remarks before taking questions from the committee. Following the session the chair will write to the Cabinet Member in order to capture the main issues discussed, views expressed by the committee, and any actions for the Cabinet Member to consider.

3.3 If the committee wishes to conduct more detailed scrutiny of any of the issues raised during this item 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.

4. Previous Correspondence with Councillor Richards

4.1 The previous question session with Councillor Richards took place in September 2013. The resulting letters to / from the Cabinet Member are attached for background information to remind the committee of the

issues that were discussed then and the response provided. The committee may wish to use the previous meeting as a reference point and follow up accordingly. The letters are **appended** to this report.

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

19 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

**SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE 1 SEPTEMBER 2014
OVERVIEW FROM THE DEPUTY LEADER**

1 Areas of Responsibility

Portfolio: Citizen & Community engagement & Democracy

- Developing Citizen Engagement Strategies, Consultation and the Promotion of Openness and Transparency;
- Developing Local partnerships for Service Improvement, including the Local Service Board
- Community Leadership
- Democratic Services
- Participation – CYP
- Petitions
- Staff Co-operation and Development
- Business Manager

2 Priorities - Policy Commitments

COMMITMENT	COMMENT
<p>Adopt a “can do” attitude</p> <p>Create a “Team Swansea” approach – a commitment to work with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Programme is designed to deliver these Commitments • Members are now being engaged and we plan to run some focus groups on what this means • A scrutiny panel is proposed on the Council’s culture
<p>Implement a “Swansea Councillor” Charter...</p> <p>Introduce a “pledge on Standards”...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment has been delivered and the Charter and the Pledge are in place • However, the real outcome will take longer to achieve and to evidence • Evaluation to be undertaken after one year
<p>Consult the Standards Committee and agree best practice... to promote efficiency of resources and equality of representation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Political Group Leaders and the Chief Executive have individually met with the Standards Cttee and members of the Standards Cttee now routinely attend Cllr training sessions, so they are trying to be more active with Cllrs to promote two way communication

<p>Value Swansea's various communities... to create a positive and cohesive sense of community, social justice and respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of Strategic Equality Plan, Welsh Language Scheme and associated plans. Equality Impact Assessments. Continue to develop engagement mechanisms with groups, e.g., LGBT Forum. Embedding community cohesion within the Communities First programme, the development and delivery of the Community Cohesion Delivery and the development of a hate crime strategy.
<p>Follow the co-operative model and ensure the whole council work together to empower local communities, enabling their voices to be heard and allowing them to own local issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions are taking place about establishing Swansea as a co-operative council • There are close links here with the aims in Sustainable Swansea, including looking at alternative forms of service delivery and how we support residents and communities to help themselves
<p>Give a stronger voice to residents in the design of community based facilities....by ensuring there is full citizen engagement, including young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with schools and communities in identifying priorities for inclusion in area-based Safe Routes in Communities bids. • Public consultation is critical to progressing the Local Development Plan (LDP). The Preferred Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal has been produced and consultations have taken place. Deposit LDP now in preparation for consultation
<p>Promote citizenship in schools, seek to involve young people in a range of activities in our communities and initiate a county-wide youth leadership programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Big Conversation (the new Youth Forum for Swansea) being rolled out. • Within the last year the Young Peoples Service (YPS) have delivered two Level 2 Youth Leadership Award courses for 16 – 18 year olds, targeting 30 young people across Swansea. The programme is run in partnership with YPS, Participation Team, the Professional Youth Network (PYN) and Menter Iaith. Two programmes have been run, one through the medium of Welsh.

3 Action and Achievements

Customer Contact:

- The Council's first Customer Contact Strategy has been approved by Cabinet and is being rolled-out to improve customer access to services
- This also forms part of the *Sustainable Swansea – fit for the future* programme
- This year's priorities include:
 - A new public website making it easier for customer to access services online
 - A digital inclusion programme giving the economically-inactive, those living in social housing and older people the skills and confidence to use computers
 - A new automated telephone system to make it easier for customer to resolve benefits and council tax issues.

Consultation and Engagement:

- Supporting and implementing consultation and engagement on *Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future (2013/14)*
- Developing an new approach to Staff Engagement within the authority, including implementing the staff survey which is currently out now
- Supporting the LSB Engagement Group including developing a new approach to the group which focuses on making best use of existing resource with a focus on the population outcomes
- Reputation Audit – developing a new approach (including a re-look at how we use Swansea Voices) to measure how the public rate us on key issues
- Working with the WLGA (and participation Cymru) on effective public engagement in difficult situations. A Welsh-pilot established which includes training sessions for all Members, Directors and Heads of Service
- *Sustainable Swansea: Continuing the Conversation* – developing the approach for engagement on the next phase of *Sustainable Swansea*

Equality Impact Assessments:

- We have widened the process further to incorporate carers as well as an increased emphasis on poverty, community cohesion and Welsh language.
- Currently, work is under way on integrating the UNCRC into the process too – this work is currently being piloted.
- Developed a protocol with our Legal department to ensure that EIAs are tracked and monitored through the Council's reporting and decision making process.

LGBT Forum:

- Established in February 2012. The Forum is run by the Council in partnership with South Wales Police. Membership includes employees or volunteers from local and national organisations who represent the interests of LGBT citizens. The Forum has taken part and supported events such as Swansea Sparkle, IDAHO Day, LGBT History Month,

Swansea Pride and Bi-visibility Day marking each occasion by flying the Rainbow Flag outside the Civic Centre building.

- The Transgender flag was also flown for Transgender Remembrance Day and for Swansea Sparkle in 2013.

BME Forum:

- April 2013 – Swansea Bay BME Forum established. Quarterly meetings have been well supported by community members and voluntary/public sector organisations.
- March 2014 - Eliminate Race Hate! event delivered in partnership with SW Police and BME Forum membership to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and to raise awareness of hate crime reporting mechanisms.

Older People:

- May 2013 – Launch of Third Phase of Strategy for Older People in Wales. Members of Swansea's Network 50+ celebrated at the Grand Theatre having contributed to the consultation.
- October 2013 – UK Day of Older People – an annual celebration held at the Grand Theatre and featuring information stalls from local organisations, skill sharing and technology workshops and a performance from the U3A's ukulele band.

Stonewall:

- We have been members of Stonewall's Diversity Champions and Education programmes for the past two years. We have worked with Stonewall to establish ways in which we can address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all young people.
- Diversity Champions programme - helps employers to benchmark themselves in terms of providing a welcoming and productive environment for LGB employees. Both programmes require surveys to be completed which help us to know where we are in terms of achieving these goals.

Monitoring in schools:

- Work has begun between colleagues within Access to Services and Education on developing a monitoring protocol for schools to record identity-based bullying and harassment which incorporates all of the protected characteristics.

Other:

- May 2014 – Access to Services assisted with the creation of a Hate Crime Awareness E-Learning package which was formally launched by Jeff Cuthbert, Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty in June 2014.

Welsh and other languages:

- Implementing Yr1 of Mwy na Geiriau/More than just Words – the Welsh Government Strategic Framework for using the Welsh Language in Health and Social Care.

- Installation of the Sign Translate system in the Contact Centre to provide an on-the-spot BSL service.

Single Status:

- Actively involved in negotiations with TU's – JCC and attendance at Steering Group meetings
- Successfully implemented Single Status on 1st April 2014
- Settled first phase on equal pay claims
- Now focused on the implementation of Single Status and dealing with appeals

Democratic Services

- Constitution simplification and rationalisation underway
- European Election delivered
- Individual Elector Registration work still underway
- Support the Policy Commitments for the highest standards in the democratic process and the role of Members
- Head of Democratic Services to streamline the decision lifecycle



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To/
Councillor Christine Richards,
Cabinet Member for Citizen,
Community Engagement, and
Democracy**

BY EMAIL

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrchol:*

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*Our Ref
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Overview & Scrutiny

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SPC/2013-14/4

23 September 2013

Dear Councillor Richards,

Cabinet Member Question Session – 2 September

Thank you for your attendance at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 2 September 2013 and answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Citizen, Community Engagement, and Democracy.

Acting as a 'critical-friend' the committee was able to explore your portfolio responsibilities and key issues, what you have done as cabinet member, what you hope to achieve, as well as future challenges.

You emphasised that your portfolio title, although long, described your main role in a nutshell i.e. to engage both externally with citizens and communities and internally with staff and all councillors. Clearly your work spans across all areas of the council and involves joint working with cabinet members and departments to focus on how the council interfaces with and reaches out to the public.

I thought it would be useful to write to you in order to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, and share the views of the committee.

Opening up council decision making to the public:

You talked about improvements recently agreed by Cabinet to give the public better access to council meetings, both through physical improvements to the civic centre council chamber for public attendance and investment in technology to enable web-casting of meetings. It was clear that you were committed to bringing the council closer to the people it served, and you felt that the modernisation of the council chamber was important to this.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

CIVIC CENTRE, SWANSEA, SA1 3SN / CANOLFAN DDINESIG, ABERTAWE, SA1 3SN

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There has been some questions raised about the cost involved but you stressed that this had been carefully considered and apart from work of a specialist nature that was necessary all other improvements would be carried out by staff within the council.

Public petitions:

We learned that you have been working on improving the petitions process and how petitions can be dealt with more efficiently and effectively, particularly where requests are relatively straightforward. We were interested in whether you had statistics to support your view on the effectiveness of the current system. We agreed that a robust process will ensure that people have confidence in making requests to the council and feel that they will be listened to. We need to ensure that petitions are dealt with correctly, that the response of the authority is a considered one, and that people are happy with how they are treated, if not necessarily about the outcome. We must be open to petitioners.

The committee wondered whether there was a misconception amongst the public that petitions are the only way to raise issues and resolve problems with the council. Whilst petitions might appear to focus attention it should not be seen as the only option. We would suggest that you consider whether information needs to be circulated clarifying to citizens the various options available to raise an issue with the council – e.g. petitioning, contacting a local councillor, writing to a cabinet member / officer, engaging with scrutiny etc.

Public engagement:

You highlighted the importance of the forthcoming scrutiny inquiry into public engagement. You were frank in your admission that you needed help on this and welcomed scrutiny looking at this issue in-depth and suggesting ways to improve public engagement in council business / decision-making because this was a 'hard nut to crack'.

I am pleased to say the Inquiry Panel has been established and the first meeting to agreed terms of reference for the inquiry was held on 11 September. We envisage that the inquiry will review existing mechanisms and processes for public engagement and their effectiveness (usefulness / viability). It is vital that the authority maintains strong links with the people that we serve and represent and look at engagement as more than just giving out information.

One of the issues to be considered is that people need to be interested and motivated to engage and more often than not people engage on very local issues affecting their area as opposed to strategic matters. We look forward to presenting cabinet with the findings, conclusions and recommendations from this scrutiny inquiry, which should be completed around April 2014.

Local Service Board:

We were interested in your role in developing partnerships and the effectiveness of the Local Service Board (LSB). You explained that you were in the process of developing a plan to refocus the work of LSB and how it operates to ensure that is all about outcomes, and impact. We are in the process of developing scrutiny arrangements for the LSB.

Regionalisation / Collaboration:

Trying to engage the public in council business was difficult enough but engaging the people with regional collaborations will be much harder. It is important that regional collaboration takes place for the right reason and when such arrangements are established that scrutiny and public engagement is effective. You indicated that local councils have been under some pressure from the Welsh Government with regard to collaborative working and whilst we can see the benefits there are threats and risks that need to be managed. You agreed that scrutiny arrangements should be part of the overall package in changing arrangements and greater consideration given to the role of the elected member. We were already concerned at the apparent lack of member representation in the Western Bay Health & Social Care Programme and hope that this is one issue which you will look into.

Staff cooperation and development:

We were interested in what this responsibility meant in terms of your role as cabinet member. You talked about engaging with staff and stressing that they are the council's biggest resource and most valuable asset. We would like to know more about what you are doing in this area.

Customer service standards:

We noted that you have recently launched 'The Swansea Standard' which sets out how the City & County of Swansea will treat customers.

Democratic services:

You explained that your role also involved working with the Head of Democratic Services on issues such as establishing Member Champions for various issues / groups, Personal Development Reviews and training for Councillors.

The next 12 months:

Finally we asked about what you were hoping to achieve over the next 12 months. This would be something that the Committee would be interested to follow up at your next question session. You referred to the following:

- Local Service Board – restructuring and establishing a clear plan for tackling challenges and desired outcomes.
- Local Democracy Week – developing a structured programme of activities to engage young people (November / December 2013)
- Community and Town Council's Forum – reviewing and developing the Forum over the coming months
- Public Engagement – engaging with and acting upon the findings of the scrutiny inquiry to make improvements
- Pre-decision scrutiny – developing the relationship between executive and non-executive work plans, learning from experiences elsewhere. *(it was agreed that myself and the vice chair would have an ongoing discussion with you on this)*

Summary of issues for your attention:

- providing further information about how you have reviewed the effectiveness of the petitions process;*
- giving consideration to communication clarifying how the public can raise issues with the council, including petitions;*
- using your influence so that regional collaborative structures give consideration to member / public engagement and scrutiny at the outset;*
- providing further information about your role in 'staff cooperation and development'*

I look forward to your reply to our comments and response to issues raised. It would be helpful to receive your reply to this letter by 21 October so that it can be included in the agenda of the Committee meeting taking place on 28 October.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MIKE DAY

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ mike.day@swansea.gov.uk



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor A M Day
Chair of the Scrutiny Programme
Committee
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Direct Line: (01792) 637443
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:

Councillor Christine Richards

E-Mail / E-Bost: christine.richards@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref / Ein Cyf: CR/SH

Your Ref / Eich
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

18 October 2013

**If you require this or any other information in another format
e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me**

Dear Councillor Day

**Scrutiny Programme Committee – 2 September 2013 – Follow Up Questions to the
Deputy Leader**

Summary of issues for your attention:

- a) **providing further information about how you have reviewed the
effectiveness of the petitions process;**

The new Petitions Procedure was approved and adopted by Council on 26 July 2013. Thirteen petitions have been submitted since that time and the Petitions Panel has met once. Whilst the numbers are low; it is important to note that the expectations of the public are now being met. Prior to the new procedure, a regular flow of petitions were being presented to Council with the resolutions often simply being that they were noted or that they were added to a list. The public often believed that Council would agree to their petition and action it immediately, this new approach manages expectations and enables a dialogue between the petitioners and Officers to ensure clarity and timescales.

The evidence is that the public are increasingly aware as to how they should contact the Council. With the rise of e-mail and greater use of websites the number of petitions has fallen. The Complaints Team are currently rolling out a method of recording Stage 1 Complaints which will allow a greater level of understanding in relation to the level of contact received from the public.

**COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
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DEPUTY LEADER / DIRPRWY ARWEINYDD**

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The roll out of Modern.gov (software solution) will also make it easier for the public to contacts the Council. It will allow us to simplify methods of contacting Councillors and also in informing the public as to the positions held by Councillors.

I will ensure that the new arrangements are kept under review.

b) giving consideration to communication clarifying how the public can raise issues with the council, including petitions;

This can be done in variety of ways, for example, via press releases, the Swansea Leader, social media and the website as well as through the roll out of Modern.gov as outlined above. I will ensure that we include some information in the next edition of the Swansea Leader and ask Officers to review what is on the Website.

c) using your influence so that regional collaborative structures give consideration to member / public engagement and scrutiny at the outset;

This is an important point and I will use my influence and that of the Authority to ensure that regional collaborative structures give consideration to Councillor/public engagement and Scrutiny at the outset.

The Executive Board is currently reviewing our collaborative arrangements, including Governance, and I will ask that the topic of public engagement is included in this review.

d) providing further information about your role in 'staff cooperation and development'

I have been visiting public-facing areas to meet staff to discuss the kind of issues they face and found this to be most valuable.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
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In addition, the HR/OD Service of the Corporate Services Directorate has developed, in consultation, a new Employee Performance Management Policy and associated procedures. These will capture, assess and record employee performance and development issues across all levels of the organisation from executive leadership level downwards.

The information that is gathered will enable managers to performance manage their team members and align the personal work objectives of their colleagues with departmental, service level and wider Corporate Objectives. Managers will also be better placed to identify the development needs of individual team members in order that they are best equipped to complete the work objectives set.

The new Employee Performance Management Procedures have been designed to align with the behavioural competencies allocated to each Job Family and Role Profile. Corporate Development interventions will subsequently map to these competencies; employees will be able to easily identify which activities best suit their development requirements. Existing and aspiring managers and leaders will also have access to a Management Development Framework (encompassing a coaching network) to meet their general management development needs (ILM Level 5 in Management is currently ongoing).

The Employee Performance Management Policy, procedures and competency based development interventions will be rolled out (with associated training) when Single Status/JE is implemented.

Yours sincerely



**COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE RICHARDS
DEPUTY LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR
CITIZEN & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DEMOCRACY**

**COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
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Agenda Item 6

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

PROGRESS REPORT – SERVICE IMPROVEMENT & FINANCE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL

Purpose	The committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panel conveners will attend the committee on a regular basis to provide a progress report, updating the committee on headlines from their Panel's work and impact. This report focuses on the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel.
Content	Councillor Mary Jones, convener of the Performance Panel, will update the committee on the work of the Panel and progress.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the progress report• Make comments and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel is one of four Performance Panels that have been established by the committee. Whilst the work of Inquiry Panels leads to the production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations for cabinet based on evidence gathered on a specific issue, the work of Performance Panels represent regular monitoring of particular services.
- 1.2 Performance panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services. This correspondence is published within committee agendas to ensure awareness of Panel activities and enable the committee to comment on the matters raised and cabinet member responses, as well as to ensure visibility across the council and public.

- 1.3 The committee is responsible for managing the overall work of scrutiny and its effectiveness. Performance Panels Conveners will therefore attend the committee throughout the year to provide a progress report to enable a more detailed discussion on the work of each Panel, achievements, effectiveness and impact. The committee may also need to consider any issues arising from Panel activities which may have an impact on the overall scrutiny work programme.
- 1.4 This report focuses on the Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel. Councillor Mary Jones, convener of the Panel, will be present to provide a progress report. To focus the discussion, a short written report is attached as **Appendix 1**.

2. Legal Implications

- 2.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

Background Papers: None

19 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the panel is to ensure that the Council's budget, corporate and service improvement arrangements are effective and efficient.

2. Introduction

Scrutiny can make an important contribution to the budget process and annual improvement process by providing a critical friend for the Cabinet, engaging non executive councillors and helping to ensure accountability. This is particularly important when the Council is experiencing one of the most difficult budget settlements it has ever faced, with cuts to the Local Government Settlement increasing from an anticipated 1.5% to a potential 4.5% in 2015/16.

3. Progress so far

The Panel has held three meetings since the start of the municipal year and commenced a productive, on-going discussion with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, which has led to an increase in the Panel's involvement in the budget process for 2015/16. The Panel is continuing with its usual work of regularly scrutinising quarterly performance and budget monitoring reports, which also include the Policy Commitment Tracker and Budget Savings Tracker. The Panel has so far produced 3 Convener's letters to various Cabinet Members providing its views and comments on a range of performance and finance issues.

4. Future Work Programme

The Panel is currently meeting on a monthly basis. It has a full work programme for the year. Discussions with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources have identified key points for the Panel to be involved with the Budget process, including:

- Review of the Cabinet report and strategic programme – August 2014
- Review of budget engagement strategy – September 2014
- Consideration of the mid year budget statement – Oct/Nov 2014
- Consideration of public engagement outcomes – December 2014
- Review of budget proposals – February 2015

In addition to engaging with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources the Panel is also increasing its contact with other Cabinet Members. This is in line with the Scrutiny Programme Committee's previous instruction to the Panel to hold question sessions with a range of Cabinet Members to monitor the implementation and impact of budget decisions within their portfolios. The first Cabinet Member to attend the Panel to discuss these issues will be the Cabinet Member for Learning & Skills at the September meeting. The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People has also been invited to attend due to the overlaps between their portfolios (confirmation awaited).

The Panel has also identified the new ICT Contract as a key piece of work that would benefit from scrutiny involvement. Therefore this item will be added to the work plan. The Panel also feels that Flying Start performance would benefit from closer scrutiny and will work this into its timetable.

Finally, the Panel has also included some key service performance reports within its work plan, including Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Performance Report and the Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring.

5. Action required by the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.

Agenda Item 7

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

WALES AUDIT OFFICE SCRUTINY REPORT: GOOD SCRUTINY? GOOD QUESTION!

Purpose	The committee will have the opportunity to hear from the Wales Audit Office about the findings and recommendations of their audit report on scrutiny in Welsh local government, and implications.
Content	Tim Buckle from the Wales Audit Office will attend the committee to provide an overview of the report and take questions from the committee.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the audit report and agree next steps
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer & Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A report of the Auditor General for Wales called 'Good Scrutiny? Good Question!' was published on the 29 May 2014. This was the culmination of a national improvement study into scrutiny in Welsh local government which involved facilitation of self-evaluation and 'real time' peer review, learning and improvement in scrutiny over a period of just over a year. The committee will recall a visit from the Vale of Glamorgan Peer Learning and Evaluation Team, as part of this work, to observe a committee meeting in March 2013.
- 1.2 The report was shared with committee members soon after publication however it was agreed that time be set aside to consider the report in more detail, identify learning points and consider implications for scrutiny practice in Swansea.
- 1.3 Tim Buckle from the Wales Audit Office will attend the committee to talk about the main findings and recommendations of the report and implications.

2. Summary of Audit Report

- 2.1 The report concluded that 'Local government scrutiny in Wales is improving but councils need to do more to develop consistently rigorous scrutiny to increase public accountability in decision making.

Councils demonstrated a genuine commitment to learning and improvement throughout the course of the study, and in many councils scrutiny practice at committees has improved. However many challenges remain.

2.2 In summary the report found that:

- Scrutiny practice is improving, but the impact that scrutiny is having is not always clearly evident
- Whilst a majority of councils consider that there is a supportive environment for scrutiny, some lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities can limit the effectiveness with which scrutiny holds the executive to account
- Better planning, more effective chairing, and improvements to the range, quality and use of information are required to improve scrutiny across councils in Wales
- In general, council scrutiny is not always fully aligned with other council improvement processes, nor builds on external audit, inspection and review; and
- More effective engagement with the public and partners will improve scrutiny and increase public accountability.

2.3 The report makes nine recommendations, including:

- Further developing scrutiny forward work programmes
- Ensuring that scrutiny draws effectively on the work of audit, inspection and regulation
- Undertaking regular self-evaluation of scrutiny

2.4 The full report is provided at **Appendix 1**.

3. Next Steps

3.1 It is important to address the recommendations which the audit report makes. Following the discussion, it is proposed to bring a further report back to the committee on action(s) that will be appropriate / necessary for the improvement of scrutiny in Swansea, in response to the audit report.

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None
20 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru
Auditor General for Wales

Good Scrutiny? Good Question!

Auditor General for Wales improvement study:
Scrutiny in Local Government



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU



I have prepared and published this report in accordance with the
Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004

The team who delivered the work comprised Chris Bolton, Tim Buckle,
Louise Fleet, Non Jenkins, Helen Keatley, Ena Lloyd, Huw Rees, Martin Gibson
and Katherine Simmons under the direction of Alan Morris.

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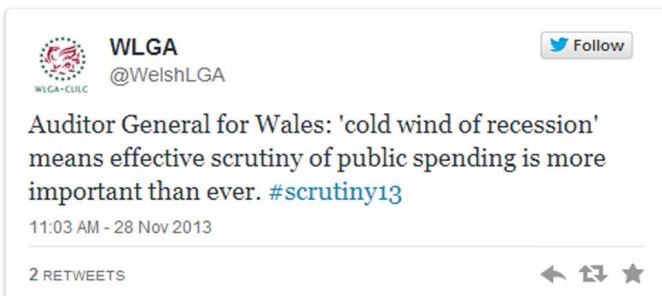
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Summary

'Effective scrutiny is vital in ensuring high quality public services which meet the needs of the public and in ensuring public services make best use of their money'

Local Government Minister, Lesley Griffiths, November 2013

- 1 The importance of effective scrutiny is magnified as public services respond to the challenge of the global financial situation whilst continuously seeking to improve services. Effective scrutiny can improve the evidence base for decisions on the allocation of resources as well as ensuring that decisions are transparent and in accordance with the needs of the local community. Scrutiny also has an important role to play in contributing to developing policy, undertaking specific reviews and in monitoring performance. The development of effective joint scrutiny arrangements for new and emerging collaborations is also likely to be a key focus for public services over the next few years. Scrutiny functions will also need to continue to respond to the changes introduced through the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. These changes include the requirement to take into account the views of the public, and the ability to form joint overview and scrutiny committees with one or more local authorities.
- 2 Weaknesses in council scrutiny arrangements have been identified in numerous reviews and audit and inspection reports since scrutiny arrangements were introduced into local government following the Local Government Act 2000. For example: the Welsh Government's Review of Local Service Delivery¹ in 2006; the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Chief Inspector's Annual Report 2010-11²; Estyn's Annual Report 2009-10³; and the Welsh Government's explanatory memorandum to the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011⁴.
- 3 The Auditor General for Wales recognises the need for improved scrutiny arrangements and the need to focus on issues of transparency and openness to challenge. These improvements are necessary to ensure that scrutiny plays a fully effective role in the good governance of local authorities in Wales. For these reasons, in 2012, the Auditor General committed to undertake an Improvement Study to explore how scrutiny could improve in councils in Wales.
- 4 Our approach to this study was innovative and differed from the traditional audit approach by involving facilitation of 'real-time' peer review, learning and improvement in scrutiny over a period of just over a year. The aim of the study was to help councils achieve lasting improvements in scrutiny. Wales Audit Office staff worked with councils to provide an opportunity for those involved in scrutiny to identify where improvements to their own arrangements may be required, and to share knowledge and experience with others to find solutions.



1 *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen Centred Local Services for Wales*. Review of Local Service Delivery: Report to the Welsh Assembly Government, Welsh Government, Crown Copyright, 2006.
2 *CSSIW Chief Inspector's Annual Report 2010-2011*, Crown Copyright, 2012.
3 *Estyn Annual Report 2009-2010*.
4 *Local Government (Wales) Measure – Explanatory Memorandum incorporating the Regulatory Impact Assessment and Delegated Powers Memorandum*, Welsh Assembly Government, July 2010.

- 5 The study enabled councils to evaluate their own performance, share knowledge, develop skills, build and strengthen relationships, and identify new opportunities for working together with other councils and partners. To support shared learning, we developed Peer Learning and Evaluation Teams at each council, comprising scrutiny members and officers. These teams were involved in observing and evaluating scrutiny at another council. Results of these peer evaluations are set out in [Appendix 1](#).
- 6 The study helped to shape the proposed Key Characteristics of Effective Overview and Scrutiny that the Welsh Local Government Association and partners had initially crafted from existing good practice guidance. Since the completion of the study an agreed set of 'outcomes and characteristics for effective local government overview and scrutiny' has been developed by the Wales Scrutiny Officers Network, supported by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS)⁵. These characteristics are listed in [Appendix 2](#).
- 7 On 28 November 2013 a national conference, *Scrutiny in the Spotlight: Investing to maximise its impact*, was organised and hosted jointly by Cardiff Business School, the CfPS, the Wales Audit Office, Welsh Government, and the Welsh Local Government Association. Part of the conference programme was developed to explore some common themes that emerged from the Wales Audit Office study and to seek ways of addressing the challenges ahead.
- 8 The national conference generated a lot of activity on social media, particularly via 'Twitter'. Participants and those engaged virtually, made useful contributions and observations that we have reproduced at various points throughout the report.
- 9 This report aims to highlight the challenges discussed at the conference and is based on: councils' self-evaluations; peer evaluations carried out by member and officer teams from other councils; and observations and existing accumulated knowledge of staff of the Wales Audit Office on councils' scrutiny functions and governance arrangements. It sets out what the Auditor General sees as the main challenges to more effective scrutiny and draws on various contributions to the national scrutiny conference in outlining potential solutions.
- 10 Overall we conclude that: local government scrutiny in Wales is improving but councils need to do more to develop consistently rigorous scrutiny to increase public accountability in decision-making. Councils demonstrated a genuine commitment to learning and improvement throughout the course of the study, and in many councils scrutiny practice at committees has improved. However many challenges remain. In summary we found that:
- a scrutiny practice is improving, but the impact that scrutiny is having is not always clearly evident;
 - b whilst a majority of councils consider that there is a supportive environment for scrutiny; some lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities can limit the effectiveness with which scrutiny holds the executive to account;
 - c better planning, more effective chairing, and improvements to the range, quality and use of information are required to improve scrutiny across councils in Wales;
 - d in general, council scrutiny is not always fully aligned with other council improvement

⁵ The Centre for Public Scrutiny is an independent charity, focused on ideas, thinking and the application and development of policy and practice for accountable public services.

processes, nor builds on external audit, inspection and review; and

- e more effective engagement with the public and partners will improve scrutiny and increase public accountability.

- 11 Subsequent to the study and national scrutiny conference, the 'Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery'⁶, established by the First Minister of Wales, published its findings in January 2014. The Commission's report identified scrutiny as an important lever to secure improvement, but highlighted that it needed development as, amongst other factors, the fundamental importance of scrutiny in driving improvement was not recognised. Amongst the Commission's recommendations were that:
- a The importance, status and value of scrutiny must be recognised, prioritised, continually sustained and reinforced.
 - b Organisations must regard scrutiny as an investment to deliver improvements and future savings. They must resource and support scrutiny accordingly.
- 12 Throughout this report we will refer to extracts and recommendations of the Commission's report where relevant.

⁶ Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery – January 2014.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Responsible partners
R1 Clarify the role of executive members and senior officers in contributing to scrutiny.	Councils, Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association
R2 Ensure that scrutiny members, and specifically scrutiny chairs, receive training and support to fully equip them with the skills required to undertake effective scrutiny.	Councils, Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association
R3 Further develop scrutiny forward work programming to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a clear rationale for topic selection; • be more outcome focussed; • ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired; and • align scrutiny programmes with the council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements. 	Councils
R4 Ensure that scrutiny draws effectively on the work of audit, inspection and regulation and that its activities are complementary with the work of external review bodies.	Councils, Staff of the Wales Audit Office, CSSIW, Estyn
R5 Ensure that external review bodies take account of scrutiny work programmes and the outputs of scrutiny activity, where appropriate, in planning and delivering their work.	Staff of the Wales Audit Office, CSSIW, Estyn
R6 Ensure that the impact of scrutiny is properly evaluated and acted upon to improve the function's effectiveness; including following up on proposed actions and examining outcomes.	Councils, Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association
R7 Undertake regular self-evaluation of scrutiny utilising the 'outcomes and characteristics of effective local government overview and scrutiny' developed by the Wales Scrutiny Officers' Network.	Councils
R8 Implement scrutiny improvement action plans developed from the Wales Audit Office improvement study.	Councils
R9 Adopt Participation Cymru's 10 Principles for Public Engagement in improving the way scrutiny engages with the public and stakeholders.	Councils

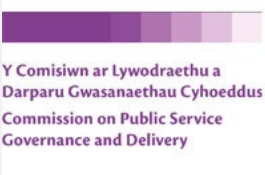
The responsible partners named above should co-operate in ascertaining how they will respectively and collectively address these recommendations and how others may be involved; for example the Wales Scrutiny Officers Network and the Welsh Government Scrutiny Reference Panel.

Detailed Report

- 13 The detailed report that follows explores the challenges set out in our conclusions in more detail, and points to potential solutions using ideas explored at the national conference as a springboard to improvement.

Scrutiny practice is improving, but the impact that scrutiny is having is not always clearly evident

- 14 This part of the report examines the extent of scrutiny activity taking place in councils across Wales and whether councils are able to demonstrate the contributions that the activity is making and the impact that it is having.



Y Comisiwn ar Lywodraethu a Darparu Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
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'As part of raising the status and profile of scrutiny, and engaging citizens, there must be increased visibility of the outputs and outcomes from local government scrutiny.' – recommendation 31.

- 15 During the autumn of 2012 and spring of 2013 all councils in Wales took an active part in our scrutiny improvement study, and engaged well with peer councils during peer evaluations and learning workshops. Peer Learning and Exchange Teams, consisting of both councillors and officers, were established at each council. The Peer Learning and Exchange Teams provided an external perspective to a peer council by evaluating its scrutiny function against criteria developed jointly by the Wales Audit Office, the Welsh Local Government Association, Welsh Government and the Wales Scrutiny Officers

Network. The Peer Learning and Exchange Teams also took part in regional learning workshops.

- 16 Staff of the Wales Audit Office who acted as co-ordinators throughout the study reported back that councils demonstrated a genuine commitment to learning and improvement throughout the course of the study, and many have continued to work with their peers to share information to improve practice. In many councils, Wales Audit Office staff have witnessed improved scrutiny practice at committees that they have attended since their involvement in the study.

- 17 In our national summary report *Local Improvement Planning and Reporting in Wales, September 2013*, we noted that many councils were providing scrutiny committees with a better range of relevant and up-to-date information than had previously been the case. This trend in relation to the range and timeliness of information being provided to scrutiny is encouraging, although the report also noted that there is scope for further improvement to ensure that information is consistently relevant, up-to-date and timely. Later in this report we will return to issues relating to the range and quality of information used by scrutiny committees to undertake their work.

- 18 Improvements to scrutiny practice need to be judged against the outcomes that result from its activities. Demonstrating the impact of scrutiny is important, not least in view of the considerable investment of time and resources in scrutiny functions across Wales, as well as the benefits that effective scrutiny can bring to governance, accountability and improvement. The Minister for Local Government and Government Business highlighted the importance of effective scrutiny in her keynote address to the national scrutiny conference, saying that: 'Scrutiny is at the heart and soul of effective governance and accountability. It is integral to demonstrating

local authorities are open and transparent.’ She supported the collective investment of time and resource in scrutiny activity, but stressed that it needs to add value and that scrutiny is ‘a classic ‘invest-to-save’ service for the public sector’.

- 19 Value, of course, must be seen in the context of the amount of time and money dedicated to the exercise of scrutiny, and the corresponding quality of outcomes generated. The Local Government Act 2000, which created separate Executive and Overview and Scrutiny functions within councils, requires that councils operating executive

arrangements create a minimum of one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which is composed of councillors who are not on the Executive Committee, or Cabinet, of that council. There is no national standard or prescription on the committee structure that councils adopt to satisfy these legislative requirements. A wide variety of designations and structures are in use, ranging from single committees to multiple committees with task and finish groups. The scale of local government scrutiny activity across Wales is significant as demonstrated in the table below.

Overview and scrutiny committees at the start of the 2013-14 civic⁷ year

	Wales total	Lowest/highest per council	Average per council
Number of overview and scrutiny committees	92	1 - 6	4.2
Number of overview and scrutiny committee positions	1221	16 - 92	55.5
Number of overview and scrutiny members	842	14 - 58	38.3

Scrutiny activity during the 2012-13 civic year

	Wales total	Lowest/highest per council	Average per council
Number of overview and scrutiny meetings	827	8 - 63	37.6
Number of task and finish groups	107	0 - 18	4.9
Number of task and finish group meetings	573	3 - 200	26.0
Number of executive decisions ‘called in’	27	0 - 6	1.2

⁷ The period between Annual Full Council meetings.

- 20 The amount of senior salary payable to an overview and scrutiny committee chair for 2013-14 is £21,910 (inclusive of a basic salary of £13,175 payable to all members of principal councils). Therefore, assuming that a senior salary is paid for the entire civic year 2013-14 for the chair of each of the 92 committees that were in existence at the start of the 2013-14 civic year, this would amount to approximately an additional £803,000.
- 21 In addition to the resources directly related to members' involvement in scrutiny, councils also expend resources on aspects of scrutiny support, including officer time and administrative support for meetings. The Welsh Government has also committed to spending £360,000 between 2012-13 and 2014-15 on supporting the Centre for Public Scrutiny to deliver a bespoke work programme in support of scrutiny in Wales. In addition, the Welsh Government has committed £300,000 over the same period in support of the third phase of the Scrutiny Development Fund in Wales. Also the Welsh Government, under the European Social Fund Local Service Board Development and Priority Delivery Project, funds the cost of an inward secondment to provide practical advice on the delivery of its programme of support for scrutiny, with a focus on Local Service Board scrutiny and developing collaborative scrutiny arrangements. Finally, the Welsh Government provides an improvement grant to the Welsh Local Government Association (£1.7 million in 2013-14), some of which is earmarked to support officers and members in delivering an effective scrutiny function.

- 22 Despite all this investment, and subsequent improvements in the quality of scrutiny practice, the impact of scrutiny activity is not always evident and is rarely captured. Of the 20 councils who responded to a study question on impact in their self-evaluations, a majority felt that scrutiny had a positive or significant impact. However, eight out of the 20 councils felt this was only partly the case. Peer evaluation teams were less positive about councils being able to demonstrate the impact of scrutiny. This resonates with the CfPS' Annual Survey of councils in England and Wales 2012-13, whereby in response to the question: 'How much difference do you think scrutiny makes to people's lives?' only three of 18 responses from Wales answered 'a lot', 10 'a little', four 'very little' and one 'none'⁸.



- 23 We observed some committees failing to arrive at clear conclusions and recommendations, along with a lack of 'summing up', or insufficient time being devoted to debating possible conclusions and recommendations. Some of the areas for improvement identified in councils' final self-evaluations included: the need for scrutiny committees to undertake better project planning and scoping of scrutiny activity with outcomes in mind; and the need for scrutiny committees to identify clear recommendations or outcomes from their work.

⁸ The options were 1. None. 2. Very little. 3. A little. 4. A lot.

An example of a positive outcome from scrutiny was given by Dave McKenna, Scrutiny Manager at **City and County of Swansea Council**, at the national scrutiny conference. The work done by Swansea's Overview and Scrutiny Child and Family Services Board led to a peer mentoring scheme being set up for young care leavers by people that had previously been care leavers. This scheme resulted in a positive outcome those being mentored but also for the mentors who received an accredited qualification. Dave wanted to illustrate that scrutiny is a process with a number of stages and if you get all of those stages right then that can lead to a really good outcome. A video clip of Dave explaining this example can be viewed using the following link.

Dave McKenna

Dave McKenna link - <http://vimeo.com/94525623>

- 24 There are some practical measures that councils can put in place to encourage scrutiny committees to have a clearer focus on outcomes. These could include:
- a clearly identifying anticipated outcomes at the topic selection stage;
 - b considering what method of scrutiny activity is likely to have the most impact;
 - c ensuring that reports submitted to scrutiny committees clearly outline the intended role for the scrutiny committee; and
 - d setting out the options available to the committee in drawing its conclusions.
- 25 The Centre for Public Scrutiny has developed practical advice and guidance to assist councils in focussing on outcomes and measuring the impact of scrutiny.



CfPS – 'Return on Investment' approach

Drawing on the concept of 'return on investment (ROI)', CfPS has developed models which can assist the development of work programmes that better demonstrate the value and impact of scrutiny activity. A more structured approach to choosing topics and appropriate methodologies can help ensure that the limited resources available to scrutiny are used to maximum benefit.

Action learning from practical application of ROI tools has shown scrutiny to have greater positive impact when outcomes are carefully considered at every stage of the process. Crucially this includes estimating and evaluating the measurable impact of scrutiny recommendations at the outset as a key part of developing the 'business case' for scrutiny. Furthermore, practitioners who have applied ROI methodologies in their area also found that identifying process and outcome measures builds a better understanding of local communities by triangulating local stories with data and national patterns and giving marginalised groups a voice in reviews.

The CfPS publication '[Tipping the Scales](#)' (2011) provides practical advice and guidance on ROI approaches as based on the experiences of five Scrutiny Development Areas. '[Valuing Inclusion](#)' (2012) provides a refinement on ROI and focusses on engagement as an essential component of the model enabling scrutiny members and officers to meet directly with members of local communities and listen to their experiences and expertise.

CfPS is currently in year three of its scrutiny support programme for local authorities in Wales aimed at strengthening capacity and capability for effective public service scrutiny in the context of public sector reform and continued financial austerity.

*Links - www.cfps.org.uk/publications?item=7137&offset=25
www.cfps.org.uk/publications?item=7303&offset=0*

- 26 It is also important that scrutiny members make clear the reasons why they have requested information and reports. Similarly, if officers suggest items to be considered by a scrutiny committee, they should ensure that there is a clear rationale for doing so. A more challenging task will be the development of more robust measures capable of demonstrating the impact of scrutiny. The agreement of a set of core characteristics and outcomes represents a good starting point for achieving this.
- 27 Robust self-evaluation of scrutiny functions could also help to ensure that scrutiny focuses sufficiently on outcomes. A number of councils referred to undertaking some form of self-evaluation of their scrutiny functions. Approaches to this included: the production of a scrutiny annual report; a chairs 'away day'; and committees undertaking an evaluation of their own performance after every meeting. Councils have welcomed the facilitation of self-evaluation through the Auditor General's study and recognise that this is an area that should be developed further and embedded within their work.



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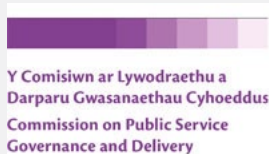
'Organisations must adopt a 'best practice' approach to scrutiny, not a 'least required'. The scrutiny outcomes and characteristics being prepared by the CfPS must be developed in discussion with other public sector organisations. Once agreed, they must be adopted by each organisation within 6 months.' - recommendation 32.

Key Characteristics of Effective Overview and Scrutiny

The Wales Scrutiny Officers Network, supported by the CfPS has developed a set of key characteristics that councils can subscribe to aimed at achieving 'better outcomes', 'better decisions' and 'better engagement'. Staff of the Wales Audit Office have been engaged at various times throughout the development of the outcomes and characteristics and view them as a very helpful description of effective scrutiny. These can be found in Appendix 2.

Whilst a majority of councils consider that there is a supportive environment for scrutiny, some lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities can limit the effectiveness with which scrutiny holds the executive to account

28 This part of the report examines the culture within which scrutiny operates, the value afforded to it, and the quality of the support, structures and processes in councils. It is based on a mixture of self-evaluations by councils themselves, observations of peer learning teams, and audit observations and accumulated knowledge.



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‘All elected members, independent health board members, non-executive directors, and officers must acknowledge the importance and value of scrutiny in improving services for people and organisations in Wales. The independence of scrutiny must be strongly asserted and protected, as must its essentially constructive and positive nature.’

‘Executive members, non-executive directors, and officers, must similarly acknowledge the value of scrutiny in helping them to deliver services better. They must publicise and explain their decisions clearly, and invite scrutiny of them, including pre-decision scrutiny, willingly and openly. They must also acknowledge and respond to scrutiny reports promptly and in good faith.’ – recommendation 31.

29 Council self-evaluations were relatively positive about how well the role of scrutiny was understood, valued and supported. Several councils reported a number of contributions that scrutiny has made to policy and decision making and the positive way in which scrutiny is regarded. A majority of councils believe the relationship between overview and scrutiny committees, the executive and senior officers is supporting effective scrutiny. Some of the positive aspects noted included:

- a the development of pre-decision scrutiny;
- b cabinet members and senior officers making direct referrals of issues and decisions to scrutiny committees;
- c cabinet members and senior officers taking part in work planning sessions for scrutiny committees; and
- d the existence of protocols/role descriptions setting out how scrutiny committees, cabinet members and senior officers should work together.

30 However, some councils and peer observers felt that the relationship between scrutiny committees and cabinet members could be improved. Also, through committee observations we found that the relationship between the executive and scrutiny is not always clear. In some councils, cabinet members were invited to attend some scrutiny committee meetings to answer questions or provide perspectives on key issues, and a clear demarcation of roles taken at these meetings was evident. In other councils, cabinet members were not present at scrutiny committee meetings, or where they were in attendance, they did not participate in meetings and seemed to have no clear role to play.

- 31 There may be confusion about the role of scrutiny committees in holding the executive to account in councils where those roles and responsibilities have not been adequately set out. Scrutiny committees are unlikely to effectively hold the executive to account if cabinet members are rarely invited to attend scrutiny committee meetings to answer questions or provide evidence. Councils should ensure there is clarity about the role of the cabinet member at scrutiny committee meetings to ensure that accountability is clear and that constructive challenge is facilitated without undermining the independence of scrutiny. Scrutiny committees should also ensure that they are clear on the reasons why they wish cabinet members to attend meetings before inviting them to attend.
- 32 Where there is a lack of clarity of role and function, it is likely that there is no full appreciation of the value of scrutiny in the democratic process and in holding the executive to account.

'Holding to account – implications and consequences'

A keynote speaker at the national scrutiny conference was Peter Watkin Jones, solicitor to the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust public inquiry. Peter gave a captivating address on the importance of a strong accountability culture and the need for non-executives and scrutiny members to check and challenge assurances given to them in order to properly hold to account.

[A link to conference outputs and Peter's thoughts can be found here.](#)

Link - <http://goodpracticeexchange.wordpress.com/2014/01/10/scrutiny-beyond-boundaries/>

- 33 Councils' self-evaluations showed mixed views regarding the support received from the officers across the Council, with just under half of councils believing that this was only partly supporting effective scrutiny. A few councils also recognised the need to increase understanding of the role of scrutiny amongst officers, and some areas for improvement identified in the self-evaluations related to officers' attendance at meetings. Through observations of scrutiny committees we found that the role of senior officers in scrutiny appears to be unclear in some councils. Some councils had clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of officers, with officers being asked to attend committee meetings to answer questions and present reports or evidence. There were also a number of observations from peer teams that found officers attending for the duration of committee meetings without any apparent reason. A concern also identified is the extent to which the expertise of officers is consistently drawn upon by scrutiny committees.
- 34 In view of these observations, it is important that councils reflect on the role of senior officers in the scrutiny process to ensure that officers' time is used most effectively. The expertise and knowledge of officers should be drawn upon sufficiently by committees in carrying out their scrutiny role, whilst ensuring that scrutiny processes remain led by scrutiny committee members. We found that councils where officers were invited to attend for specific items as 'witnesses' to answer questions, rather than attending whole meetings almost as an ex-officio member of the committee, helped to encourage more effective and targeted questioning and to reinforce the distinct roles of scrutiny committee members, senior officers and executive members. Dedicated scrutiny support officers have a key role to play in helping scrutiny committees to plan for officer contributions and to liaise with those officers to ensure that the committees maximise the resources available to them.

Clarifying respective roles in overview and scrutiny

Clearly setting out the roles of scrutiny chairs, scrutiny committees, cabinet members and officers in the process of overview and scrutiny means that there should be no ambiguity, no overlap and that appropriate and timely contributions can be made. Making an 'Overview and Scrutiny Guide' available on council websites is an effective way of councils communicating clearly defined roles to the public. Currently nine Welsh councils have publicly accessible guides available through their websites, whilst a further five have broken or out-dated web links. Guides produced by Cardiff Council, Torfaen County Borough Council, and the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council set out respective scrutiny roles well. Examples outside of Wales, such as that developed by the London Borough of Merton ([scrutiny_handbook_2011-3.pdf](#)) and Leicestershire County Council ([overviewandscrutinyguide.pdf](#)), are also worthy of consideration.

Links - www.merton.gov.uk/council/decision-making/scrutiny_handbook_oct_2011-3.pdf
www.leics.gov.uk/overviewandscrutinyguide.pdf

Service Governance and Delivery recognised that the capacity and capability of scrutiny to drive improvement must be strengthened, and that scrutiny must be well resourced with sufficient support at officer level.



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'Local authorities must make appropriate support available, at officer level, to develop co-ordinated scrutiny plans, identify gaps in expertise on the committees and provide proportionate and understandable information to committee members.'

'Mandatory training must be provided to all members and chairs of local government scrutiny committees.' – recommendation 32.

35 The number of officers directly supporting scrutiny varies between councils, and some officers also have additional roles in addition to scrutiny support. Some comments in councils' final self-evaluations recognised that resources were limited. Only one comment specifically referred to a recent reduction in the level of resources for scrutiny support whilst a few councils implied that teams had recently been, or were about to be, strengthened. Some councils identified several ways in which officers could provide more effective support, including assisting with the development of lines of enquiry and improving the quality of information and research provided to scrutiny committees. Evidence from CfPS annual surveys shows a clear linkage between the level of dedicated scrutiny support and the effectiveness with which scrutiny is able to perform its role. The Commission on Public

36 Ensuring that individuals involved in the scrutiny process have the right skills and competencies is a key element of preparing for effective scrutiny. This is not limited to those involved in supporting and providing information to scrutiny committees, but also applies to scrutineers. Many councils consider that access to training for scrutiny members that was focused on need positively supports effective scrutiny and referred to a range of training having been provided. Whilst local audit teams observed evidence of some strong scrutiny skills such as in chairing and questioning skills, there were also examples where these skills were less evident and needed to be improved. In their final self-evaluations some councils identified training as key to improving scrutiny, and a number of councils recognised the need to develop more tailored training based

on the needs of individuals. Some of the lack of clarity highlighted earlier in relation to the role of the scrutiny function within councils governance arrangements, and the respective roles of senior officers and cabinet members also suggests a need for further training and development in some councils.

- 37 During the study it was recognised by peer learning and evaluation teams that, to support the development of effective scrutiny, councils need to ensure that training and development are based on identifying individual training needs. These training needs include the development of scrutiny skills such as questioning, analysing and chairing, as well as supporting scrutiny members to develop their knowledge of the subject/ service areas they are scrutinising. It was also recognised that development activity is not limited to 'training', and that this could be broadened out to focus on wider learning and development. For example, some potential areas of development could benefit from 'on-the-job' member/officer interaction and collaboration rather than formal 'skills' training. These could include, for example, working together on scoping a review or observing directorate team meetings relating to performance reviews.

- 38 The Welsh Government Scrutiny Development Fund is currently supporting a project to identify the training and skills needs of Scrutiny Officers and then to deliver bespoke accredited training solutions. Training is being developed and delivered by the University of South Wales. The programme commenced in October 2013 and completes in June 2014. It covers three modules:

- a Political Awareness;
- b Scrutiny and Review/Understanding and Challenging public Service performance;
- c and Governance and Scrutiny.

Better planning, more effective chairing and improvements to the range, quality and use of information are required to improve scrutiny across councils in Wales

- 39 This part of the report considers the quality of scrutiny committees' activities. In particular it considers forward work programming and identifying topics for scrutiny and the important role of pre-meetings and the chair in effective scrutiny.

Selecting appropriate topics and the right method is vital to effective scrutiny

- 40 The selection of appropriate topics for scrutiny, led by scrutiny members with support from officers and informed by clear selection criteria, is a key element of preparing for effective scrutiny. Selecting the right approach to scrutiny activity is equally important, for example determining whether or not topics should be examined through a task and finish group or by a full committee.



- 41 Nearly all councils felt their work planning processes were effective, with many councils stating that members' choice of topics was appropriate. However, councils were less positive regarding the extent to which work programmes were balanced and focused appropriately, or were developed following consultation with the public and partners and in discussion with senior officers and executive members.
- 42 Councils should ensure that the contents of forward work programmes are based on sound criteria with a clear rationale for topic selection and that sufficient consideration is given to the method of scrutiny, rather than just the selection of topics. A key criterion for the selection of topics and the method of scrutiny should be the extent to which scrutiny committees are likely to have an impact in the area they have selected. A variety of sources of information can help to inform the selection of scrutiny work programmes. Information sources include: the views of senior officers, cabinet members and citizens; major policy changes; performance issues; risks; and inspectors' and regulators' concerns. Another key consideration for scrutiny committees should be the time available, including members' time, to undertake the scrutiny activity. Items should be programmed in a timely manner, for example, to encourage pre-decision scrutiny where this would add value. To help ensure that scrutiny has an impact, scrutiny committees may have to balance a desire to examine a large number of topics with the likelihood of securing greater impact through focusing on a small number of items in more detail.
- 43 Councils identified some common shortcomings related to forward work programming. These included:
- a the extent to which work programmes were focused on outcomes;
 - b that work planning processes were too 'officer driven';
 - c that some committee meeting agendas contained too many items;
 - d the extent to which the public were engaged in the selection of topics; and
 - e aligning with cabinet forward work programmes so that scrutiny could contribute to improving proposed or existing policies.
- 44 Task and finish groups, or their equivalent, often involving a smaller group of scrutiny members tasked with examining a particular topic in detail, are used in many councils to conduct in-depth reviews. A key theme for improvement identified in several council self-evaluations is the need to strengthen the evidence base for these reviews, including greater use of data, benchmarking information or broadening evidence bases to gather wider perspectives.
- 45 Effective topic selection and planning at the project selection stage can help to identify the evidence required and how it can be gathered, including a consideration of available information sources and the most appropriate way of gathering a range of perspectives. Due to potential resource implications it is important that careful consideration is given to the selection of topics and the approach taken to in-depth reviews, including timeliness and likely impact.



The CfPS has published a short guide, *A Cunning Plan*, that explains the basic principles behind good work programming and cites some examples of notable practice from English local authorities ([acunningplan](#)).

Link - www.cfps.org.uk/publications?item=113&offset=0

The information provided to scrutiny committees is not always sufficiently robust, clear or timely

- 46 The range, timeliness, presentation and relevance of information available to committees all have an impact on the effectiveness of scrutiny. Councils were mixed in their views on the extent to which information received by scrutiny committees supported improvement.
- 47 Councils identified a number of ways in which information to support scrutiny could be strengthened. These included a need for less irrelevant detail in reports, a broader range of information to give a more rounded picture, as well as better quality and more timely information. The need to strengthen scoping and/or forward work programming to ensure that the correct information was requested by scrutiny committees was also identified by some councils.
- 48 So that the information needs of scrutiny committees are clear, and that the information provided is relevant, timely and in an appropriate format, councils need to ensure that clear communication channels are in place between scrutiny committees and those responsible for providing information to them. This could include senior managers, scrutiny officers, cabinet members and any external witnesses or partners that the committee has requested information

from. Scrutiny members have an important role in shaping the content and format of information that is presented to them and, where appropriate, in challenging the way in which information is presented if it does not enable them to perform their role effectively. Scrutiny members also need to ensure that the information needs of committees and the availability of information are considered at topic selection and project planning stages. Members also need to be clear as to the purpose of requesting specific information and the outcome they are hoping to achieve as a consequence of examining it.

- 49 As well as being presented with appropriate information, reports to scrutiny committees need to be suitably analytical and to arrive at an evaluation. Often self-evaluation reports merely present data without identifying unsatisfactory performance or progress. Reports are often too descriptive and do not focus enough on evaluating the impact of services.
- 50 Councils should also have regard to the report by the Auditor General entitled *Local Improvement Planning and Reporting in Wales*⁹. The report identified 'In a small number of authorities, information presented to scrutiny committees is not sufficiently consistent or impartial' and that 'councillors, who have a key role in driving improvement through effective scrutiny, are not being informed by comprehensive data and information'.



9 *Local Improvement Planning and Reporting in Wales*, Wales Audit Office, September 2013.

The quality of advance preparation for scrutiny committees varies considerably between councils

- 51 Pre-meetings, whereby scrutiny committees meet in advance of formal committee meetings, can assist with the planning and preparation of scrutiny activity in a number of ways. Pre-meetings that take place well in advance of formal committee meetings can enable committees to discuss and determine: the information required; key lines of enquiry; the choice and order of witnesses; and the committee's objectives for the items it is due to consider. Committees could also use a pre-meeting to allocate provisional timings for items to enable witnesses to only attend for relevant item(s).
- 52 Planning ahead in this way also enables 'witnesses' to be briefed in advance on the subject matter the committee would like to discuss, and any information it would like to be contained in reports presented to it. These discussions do not have to take place as a separate meeting, but could form part of the discussions of the previous formal meeting of the committee. Pre-meetings that take place immediately prior to the formal committee meeting can provide an opportunity for members to discuss and agree the intended outcome to be gained from the meeting, key lines of enquiry for questioning and the approach to questioning the committee intends to take. Pre-meetings can also encourage committees to work as a team in jointly planning their activity.

A good example of preparing for effective scrutiny was given by Alison Ward, Chief Executive of **Torfaen County Borough Council**, at the national scrutiny conference. Alison spoke about how she saw scrutiny as the most challenging bit of democracy but the most important. After the 2012 elections Torfaen CBC started working with Members to improve scrutiny. They commissioned the Welsh Local Government Association to do an appraisal of their scrutiny function, and as a result they have significantly changed the way they approach scrutiny. One major change that they have made is to run Annual visioning sessions using information from the public and staff to form a picture of what issues that they'd like to explore through the scrutiny process. This has resulted in stronger scrutiny sessions with improved questioning and improved recommendations being made. A video clip of this example can be viewed using the following link.

Alison Ward

Link - <http://vimeo.com/94525623>

- 53 Not all scrutiny committees hold pre-meetings and, of those that do, we found a variety of approaches. Approaches range from those that typically take place a number of days or weeks prior to a full committee meeting, to those which are held immediately prior to or at the beginning of the formal committee meeting prior to witnesses arriving. We have also observed some confusion about the role of pre-meetings. There were some concerns that the use of pre-meetings could undermine the formal committee meeting leading to 'staged' questions with little spontaneity or follow-up questions.
- 54 However, we are of the view that scrutiny committees could make more effective use of pre-meetings. This could be achieved through ensuring that pre-meetings have a clear and agreed purpose and that they follow an agreed format for preparing for the formal committee meeting without undermining it. Whichever method of planning is employed, it is important that committees have the opportunity to discuss

and plan their scrutiny activity to ensure that: the purpose of each item is clear; the information needs and required witnesses are agreed; and that the committee has an effective mechanism for developing lines of enquiry. These would not be considered formal meetings of committees as they would be for planning purposes only, and as such they would not be required to be open to the public.

There are some examples of good challenging questioning by scrutiny committees but in some cases questioning is ineffective

55 Successful scrutiny relies on effective questioning that: follows lines of enquiry; probes for further information; is prepared to challenge where necessary; and is clearly linked to the role of the committee. The quality of questioning is partly a result of the skills and knowledge of scrutiny committee members and the contributions of those answering questions. However, it also depends on effective preparation including selecting the right topics, planning scrutiny activity and ensuring that members and officers understand their role in the challenge process.

56 Councils were generally positive about the extent to which scrutiny committees challenged through effective questioning skills. A number referred to having been provided with questioning skills training; with some noting that the standard of questioning was improving. A few councils recognised that questioning skills needed to improve further. From our own observations of scrutiny committee meetings, we found members' questioning to be of variable quality. We noted some good examples of challenging and probing questions; however, there were also examples of ineffectual questioning, such as:

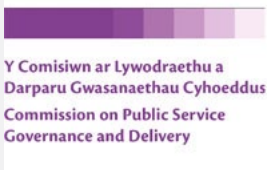
- a parochial and personal-agenda driven questioning;
- b committees not following any particular lines of enquiry;
- c a lack of cohesion to members' questioning;
- d members making statements instead of questioning witnesses;
- e meetings appearing 'over scripted' with a lack of spontaneity in questioning; and
- f committees being insufficiently probing in their questioning.

57 Our study highlighted the importance of the role of the chair in facilitating and leading scrutiny committees. We observed examples of effective chairing of meetings, where the chairs summarised discussions, ensured that questions and discussions remained focused and set an appropriate tone for meetings thereby allowing members and witnesses to contribute constructively. However, we also observed some instances where the chairs were less effective, for example, in allowing discussions to end without the agreement of any clear conclusion or recommendation. It is particularly important that councils ensure that scrutiny chairs receive the necessary level of training and support in order to develop the range of skills required to undertake the role effectively.

In general, council scrutiny is not always fully aligned with other council improvement processes, nor builds on external audit, inspection and review

58 This part of the report examines how scrutiny interacts with and utilises the work audit, inspection and review bodies to help inform and shape their work.

In general, scrutiny does not build on the learning highlighted in the work of external audit, inspection and review



Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery

‘Scrutiny, audit, inspection and regulation must become complementary, clearly aligned and mutually reinforcing - recommendation 4.

‘Auditors, inspectors and regulators who report on individual organisations must do so directly to the appropriate scrutiny or audit committee. Where appropriate, they should assist the committee in its consideration and holding the executive to account.’ – recommendation 34.

59 There are opportunities for scrutiny committees to use the reports of external review bodies to inform its own work planning, and to provide evidence to inform the findings of scrutiny reviews. These external review bodies may also look to take assurance from the work undertaken by the Council’s scrutiny function. Statutory guidance for the Local Government (Wales) Measure

2009 also states that: ‘If an authority’s scrutiny processes are sufficiently developed to discharge the above, and there is clear evidence that this is the case, then this scrutiny activity can be drawn upon by the Auditor General and relevant regulators in the course of their dealings with the authority.’



60 Our study found that the majority of councils believe that communication between scrutiny committees, and the council’s auditors, regulators and inspectors could be improved. Some of the councils’ self-evaluations referred to examples of external auditors, regulators or inspectors being invited to attend scrutiny committees, and a few councils also recognised the role of Audit Committees in liaising with auditors, regulators or inspectors.

61 Councils also recognised that the sharing of work programmes between external review bodies and scrutiny functions could be improved. Only one council thought that this was an area of strength, whilst three thought that the lack of sharing was actually hindering improvement. Several councils referred to its scrutiny work programmes being available on council websites, but there was no evidence of councils actively sharing scrutiny work programmes with external review bodies.

62 To build on the work of auditors, inspectors and regulators, councils and external review bodies should explore practical ways in which communication regarding future work plans and findings from their respective work could be improved. The Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery cited that the way that the Wales Audit Office reports to the Assembly's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) as strengthening the evidence base for the PAC's inquiries and gives its own findings and recommendations greater impact. It also helps to ensure that the accountability of the Welsh Government to the Wales Audit Office and to the Assembly are better aligned and thus less burdensome and more effective.

In general, scrutiny is not well aligned with wider council improvement processes

63 The role of scrutiny in the improvement agenda for local government is recognised in statutory guidance. The Guidance on Part 1 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 states: 'There is a clear role for an authority's scrutiny function in its improvement processes: as part of its role in holding local decision makers and policy makers to account, and in its policy development role.' The guidance suggests that the role of scrutiny should extend to 'scrutiny of the fitness of the organisation to discharge the general duty to improve', as well as its role in policy development and scrutinising performance and improvement. Our experience is that scrutiny rarely examines capacity and fitness for purpose, and that scrutiny programmes would benefit from including such activity. In practice this may include scrutiny enquiries that examine capability and deliverability, rather than the apparent quality of policies and plans.

64 Two-thirds of councils believed that the extent to which scrutiny has had a clearly defined and valued role in the council's self-evaluation, performance management and improvement arrangements, was either positively or significantly supporting improvement. However, for seven councils this was only partly the case. A few councils also identified a need to improve or clarify the role of scrutiny in corporate self-evaluation arrangements. Other areas for improvement that were identified included: training for elected members; the need to change the format of data presented to scrutiny committees; and the timing of when scrutiny committees received performance information. The need to improve the alignment of internal processes, including with executive work programmes, and improve internal communication was also identified as an area for improvement.

65 Only just over half of councils consider that scrutiny committees challenge poor performance effectively. We found that most council scrutiny committees have a role in performance management arrangements and that regular reporting of performance information occurs. However, where reporting does occur we found that the level of understanding of the data provided varies amongst scrutiny members, questioning of performance is not always effective, and there is limited connection between performance data provided to committees and the outcomes that it purports to relate to. This means that, in these cases, scrutiny committees are not equipped to effectively contribute to performance evaluation and management.

More effective engagement with the public and partners will improve scrutiny and increase public accountability

66 This part of the report examines the extent to which council scrutiny functions engage and involve partners, stakeholders, community groups and members of the public in their work.

67 Engaging the public can help to ensure that the selection of topics for scrutiny takes into account the views of local communities, improves the evidence base for scrutiny recommendations and demonstrates accountability for decisions, policies and performance. As community leaders, elected members are ideally placed to facilitate the engagement of the public and partners in scrutiny through their links to the community and local partners. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires scrutiny committees to take into account the views of the public. The role of scrutiny in holding local partners to account is also emphasised in statutory guidance covering the integration of plans and partnerships – *'local authorities should have in place effective scrutiny processes to ensure local democratic accountability for partnership actions'*.¹⁰



68 Most councils recognise that the extent to which scrutiny committees ensure that the voice of local people is heard as part of local decision-making is an area that needs to improve. During the study some councils referred to the need to develop a public engagement strategy for scrutiny, as well as the need to improve engagement of the public in the planning of scrutiny work. Broadening and improving engagement with partners was also recognised by councils as an area for development.



¹⁰ Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery Guidance on integrating Partnerships and Plans – Welsh Government, Version 2, Crown Copyright, December 2012.

69 During the scrutiny study councils also provided examples in their self-evaluations of the way in which they have attempted to improve external engagement, which included the use of social media, co-option onto committees and making use of citizens' panels. Several councils also referred to the opportunity for the public to complete a form requesting a topic for scrutiny. One council referred to a form being available for the public to provide comments on any topic being considered by a scrutiny committee.

At the national scrutiny conference Councillor Peter Farley of **Monmouthshire County Council** spoke of the importance of public engagement in the work of scrutiny. He explored the way public engagement can be a means of enhancing the work of scrutiny and also the value of public involvement at scrutiny committees.

He gave three examples of how this has been approached in Monmouthshire and how involving stakeholders, individuals, communities and interest groups has significantly improved the scrutiny function in Monmouthshire. A video clip of Councillor Farley can be viewed using the following link.

Councillor Peter Farley

Link - <http://vimeo.com/94525623>

70 However, in observing scrutiny committees, we witnessed a number of practices that may deter the public and councils' partners from engaging with scrutiny committee meetings. Such practices included poor acoustics, no spare copies of agendas being available, and the use of unsuitable meeting rooms that helped to create an overly formal environment or had limited seating for external observers.

71 There are clearly opportunities for scrutiny functions to broaden their engagement activity and for some to learn from a range of approaches that have already been implemented. Some councils are more proactive than others in their attempts to engage the public at each stage of scrutiny activity including: topic selection; planning and scoping; gathering evidence; and reporting findings. Effective engagement may require changing the venue, format, and layout of meetings and the content of work programmes to encourage more interest and engagement. Councils can also draw on the numerous approaches to engaging the public that have already been implemented across Wales and England. The recognition by many councils that engagement with partners is an area that could be improved suggests that scrutiny committees are often failing to make use of partners' knowledge, expertise and perspectives to inform their work.

72 The national scrutiny conference included sessions exploring ways that scrutiny could better engage with the public and partners. Details and links are contained in the boxes below.



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

National Assembly for Wales – Public Engagement Toolkit

This workshop examined the principle of participation in scrutiny and outlined the use of an engagement tool. The National Assembly as an organisation has prioritised broadening participation in scrutiny. To 'engage with the people of Wales' is a corporate priority.

A link to the Public Engagement Toolkit can be found here.

Link - www.assemblywales.org/public_engagement_toolkit_2014.pdf

The Role of the Networked Councillor in Scrutiny

Catherine Howe of Public-i Group Ltd outlined why scrutiny is a perfect place to start developing the relationship between the networked councillor and the public.

For more information visit www.public-i.info

- 73 Engaging the public in council business is difficult and requires careful consideration of who to engage, on what, and for what purpose. Once this is established the method and style of engagement is important to be able to maximise potential contributions and the impact that they can have. There are no simple answers, and what worked for one council on a particular issue may not necessarily work for another. Often, however, the shift towards more effective engagement is a cultural one needed across the whole of a council, rather than just for the scrutiny function.
- 74 Councils may wish to consider using the 10 'National Principles for Public Engagement' developed by Participation Cymru in considering how best to engage and involve the public. Their guidance note on the National Principles provides a useful way of working through some of these issues (www.participationcymru.org.uk/media/288784/national_principles_for_public_engagement_aug1_.pdf).
- 75 In summary, the need to engage more effectively with the public and stakeholders is acknowledged as an on-going challenge for scrutiny functions, as it is for councils generally. However with more proactive planning of scrutiny activity, some dedicated effort and resources, and the support of organisations such as Participation Cymru and CfPS the voice of local people can play an important part in scrutiny and in local decision-making.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Self-evaluations and peer team evaluations

Appendix 2 - Outcomes and characteristics for effective local government overview and scrutiny



Appendix 1

Self-evaluations and peer team evaluations

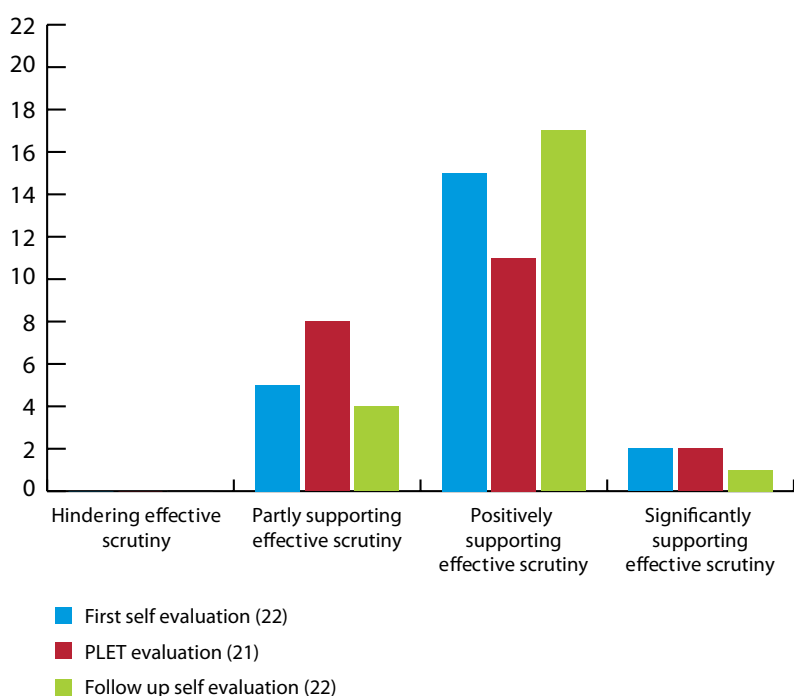
Auditor General for Wales Improvement Study – Scrutiny in Local Government

This improvement study differed from the traditional audit approach by involving real time shared working activity, self-evaluation and peer learning exchange opportunities. These peer learning exchanges meant councils undertaking their own self evaluations of scrutiny arrangements with partner councils and observing and sharing views on each other’s’ scrutiny committees. This process enabled councils to build relationships with other councils, developing a better understanding, awareness and appreciation of themselves and others, as well as identifying opportunities for joint working and joint scrutiny in the future.

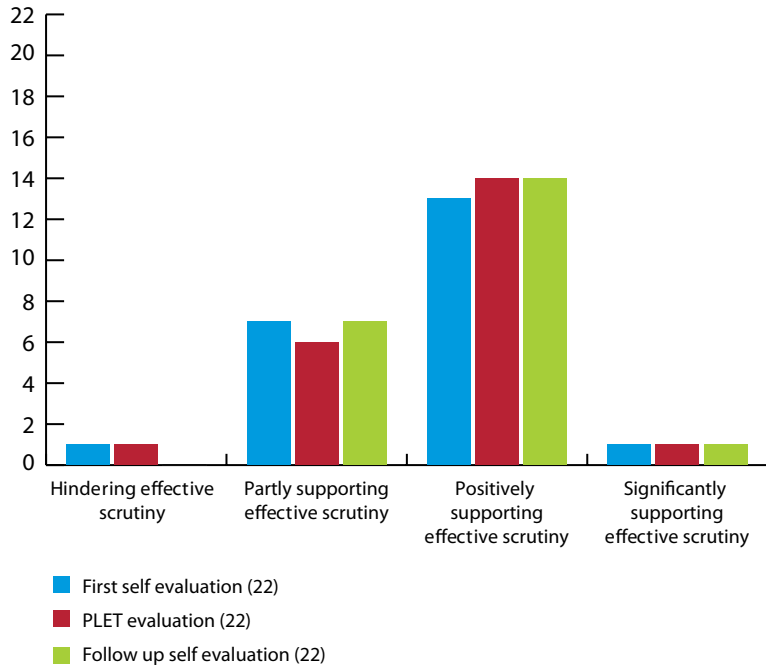
At the end of the study each council had an up to date baseline of its own and other councils’ scrutiny arrangements. This baseline was informed by real time observations, regional workshops, feedback from partner councils, a final self-evaluation relevant to each council and a local report from the Wales Audit Office. This enabled the councils to present their final self-evaluation to their own members and decide on an action plan for improvement.

Self-evaluations and peer team evaluations

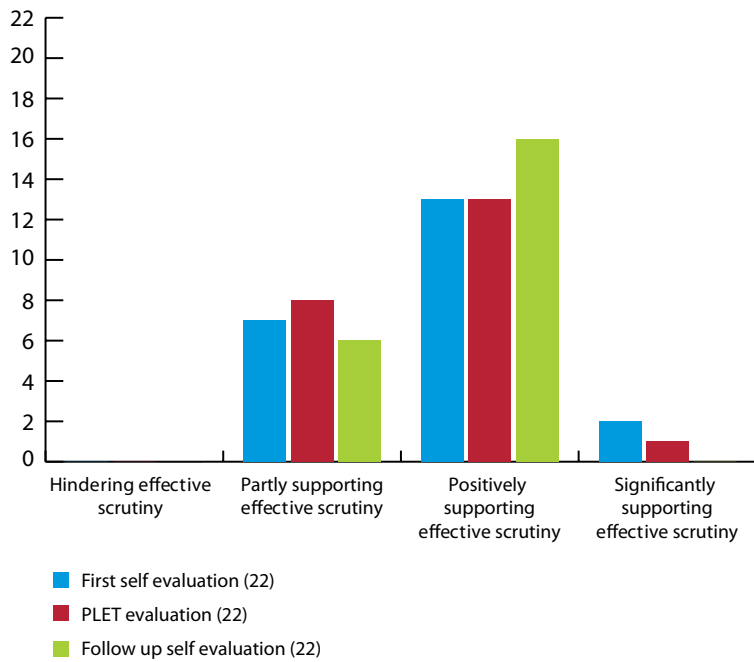
Q1. Is there a clear and shared understanding and application of the role and purpose of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) amongst executive and non-executive members, senior officers, scrutiny officers and key local partners?



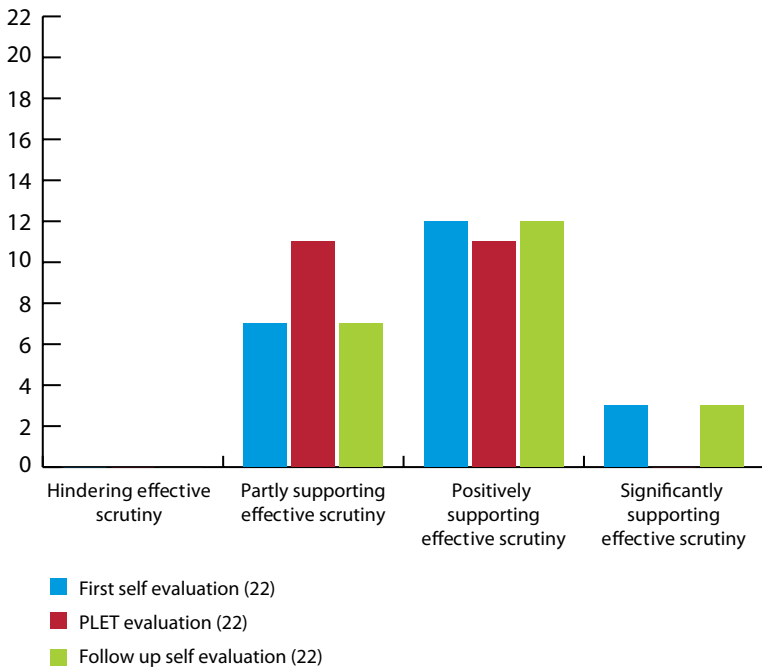
Q2. Does O&S enjoy a high status and is it held in high esteem, trusted and respected both within and outside the Authority?



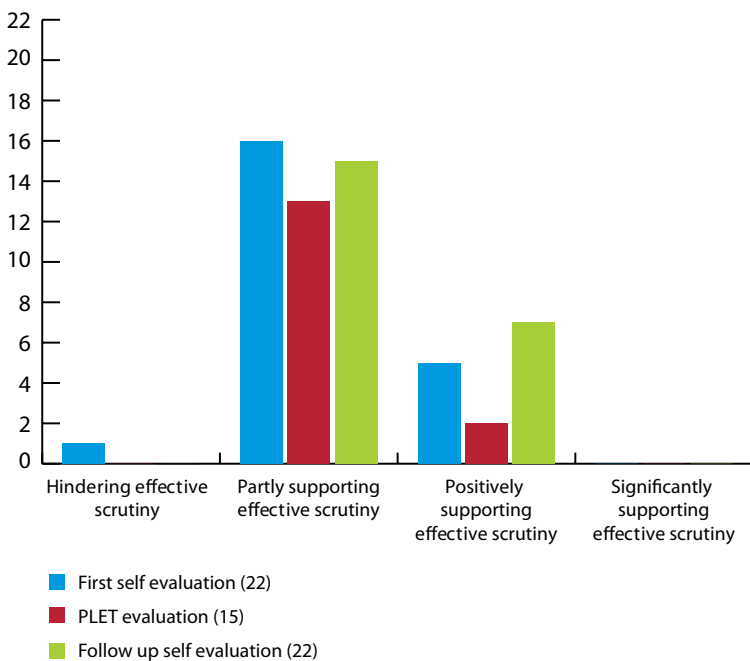
Q3. Is there a well-defined and constructive relationship between O&S, the executive and senior officers?



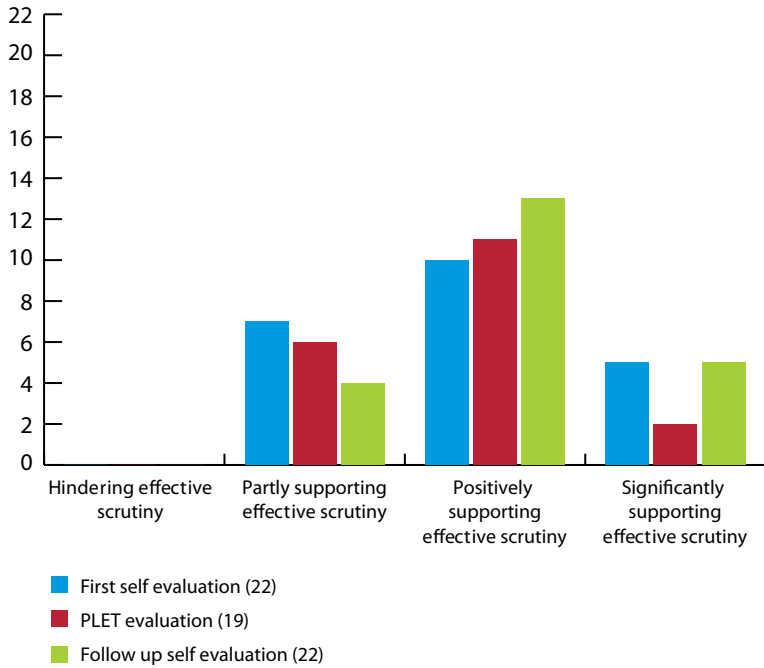
Q4. Does O&S have a clearly defined and valued role in the council's self-evaluation, performance management and improvement arrangements?



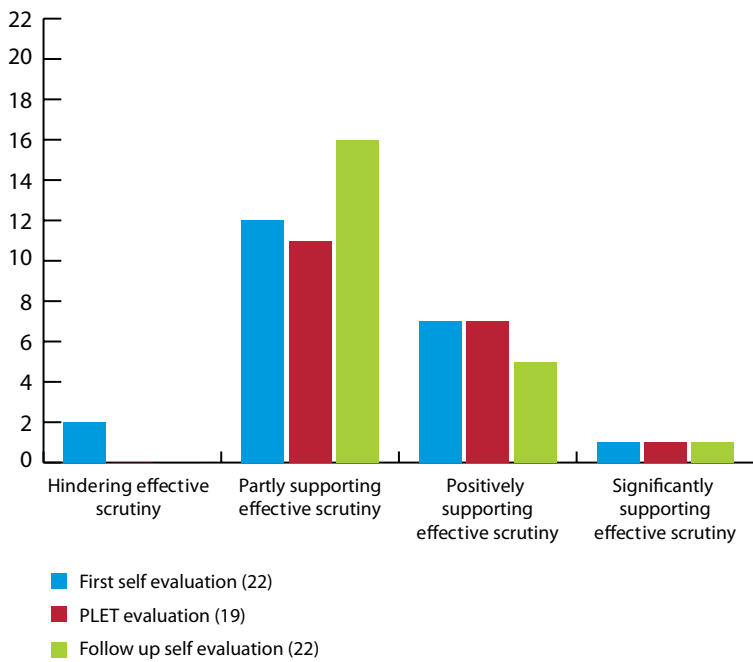
Q5. Is there regular and effective two-way communication between O&S and external/internal auditors, regulators and inspectors?



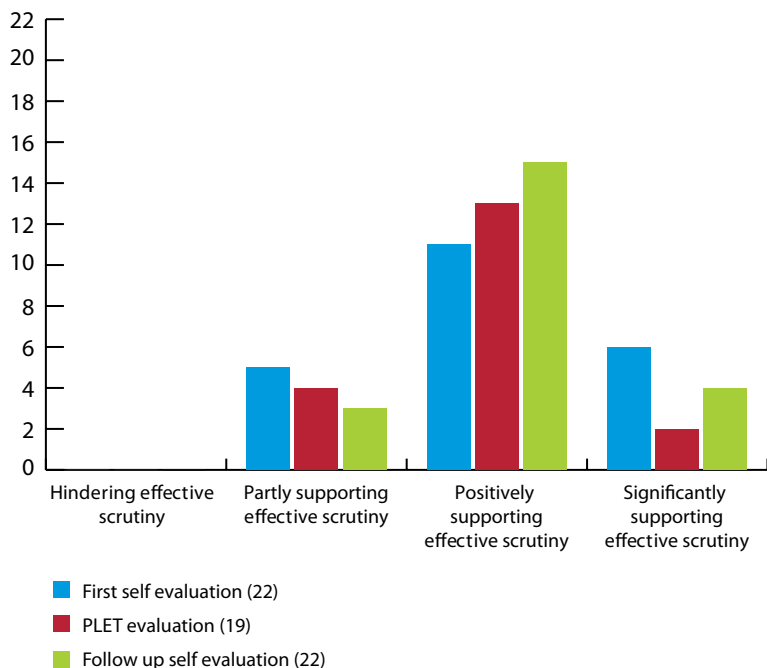
Q6. Does O&S have clear governance arrangements that are understood and applied effectively?



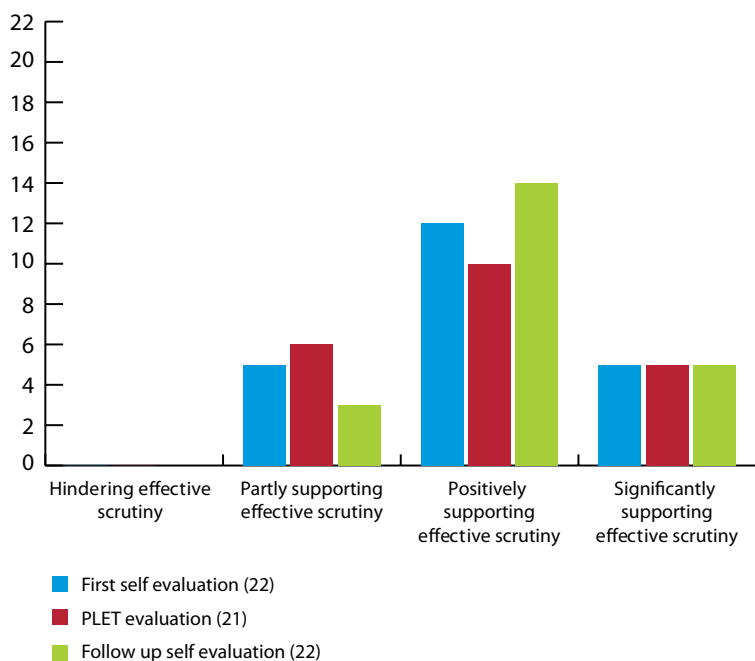
Q7. Are O&S chairs and executive members actively promoting the role and value of the scrutiny function to a variety of internal and external stakeholders?



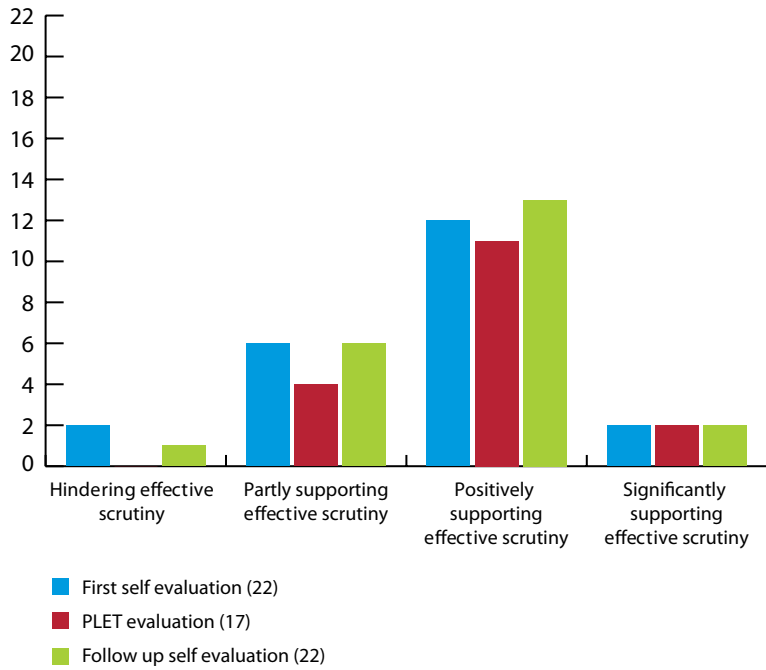
Q8. Do O&S members have access to development and training opportunities focused on need, as part of the council's wider commitment to member support and development?



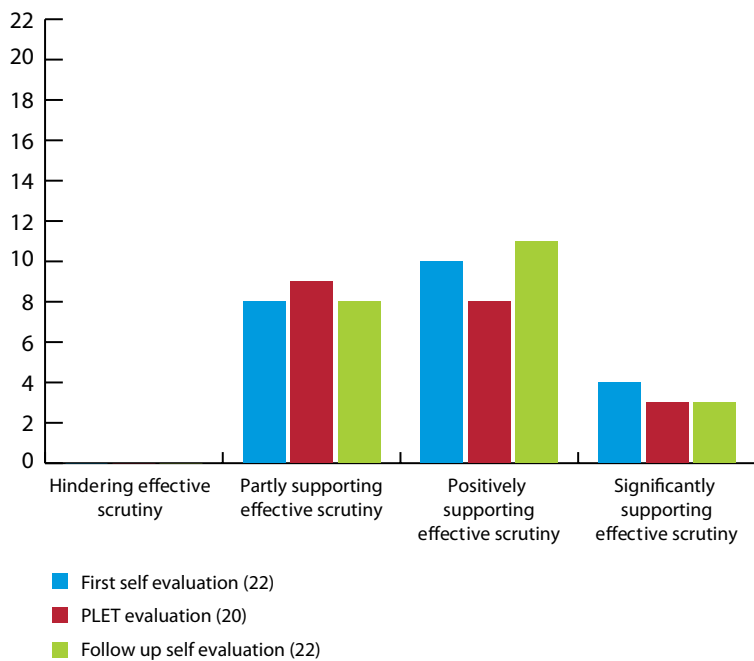
Q9. Does O&S have a sufficient level of dedicated support from officers who are able to research independently and are able to provide O&S members with high-quality, objective analysis and support?



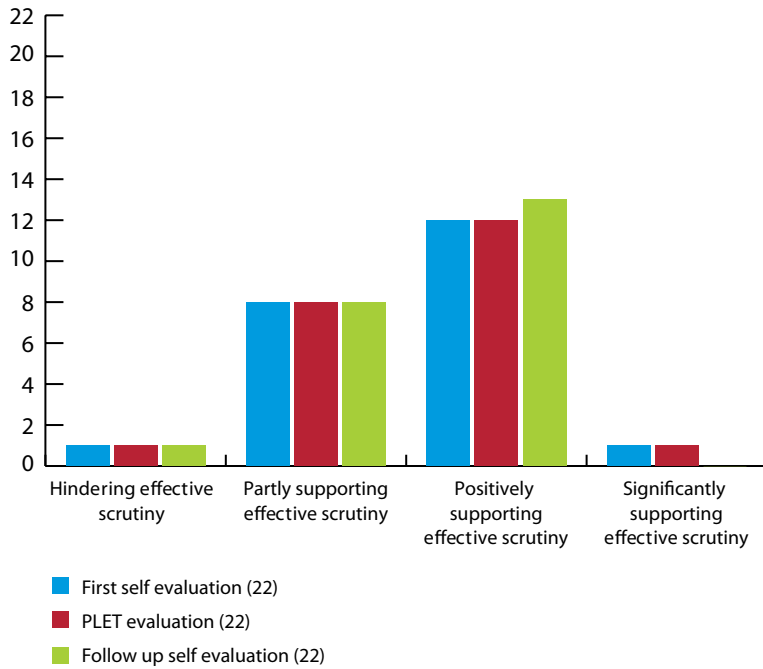
Q10. Is the role of officers directly supporting scrutiny activity well-understood and valued within the organisation?



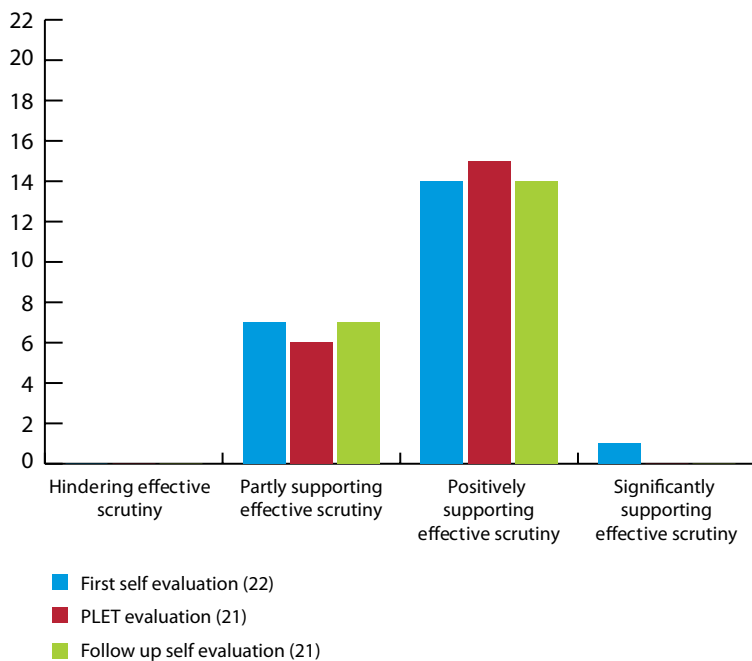
Q11. Does the O&S process receive effective support from the council's wider officer corp as and when required?



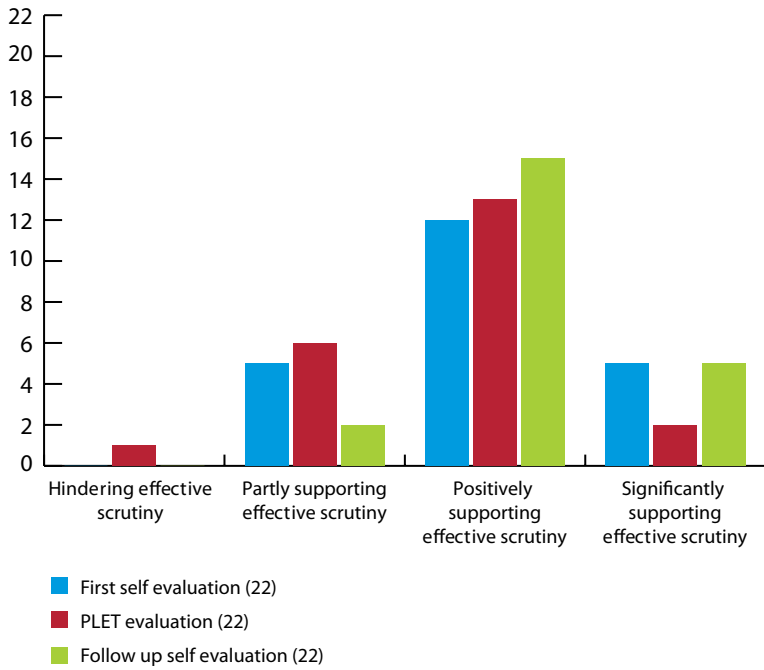
Q12. Is information provided to O&S relevant, robust, balanced, meaningful, responsive to requests, of high quality and provided in a timely and consistent manner?



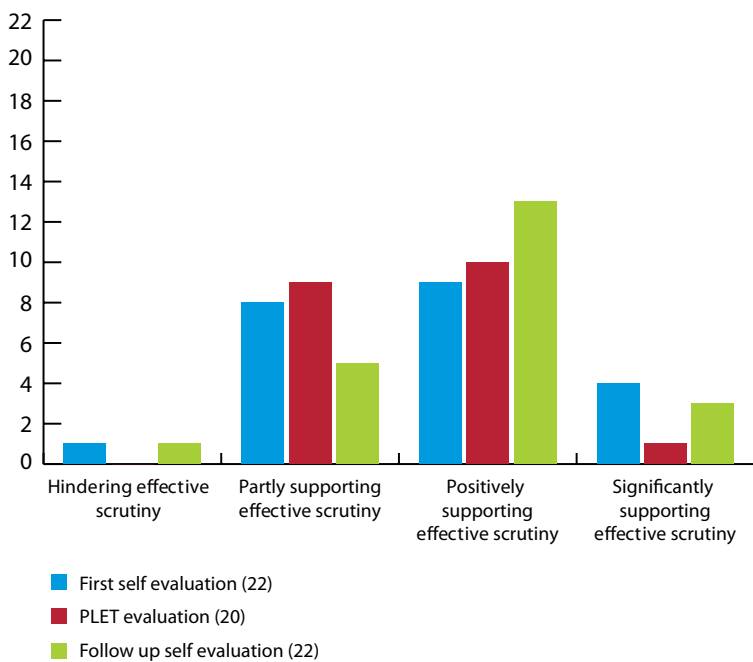
Q13. Section One, Scrutiny Environment: Does the environment that O&S operate in support improvement?



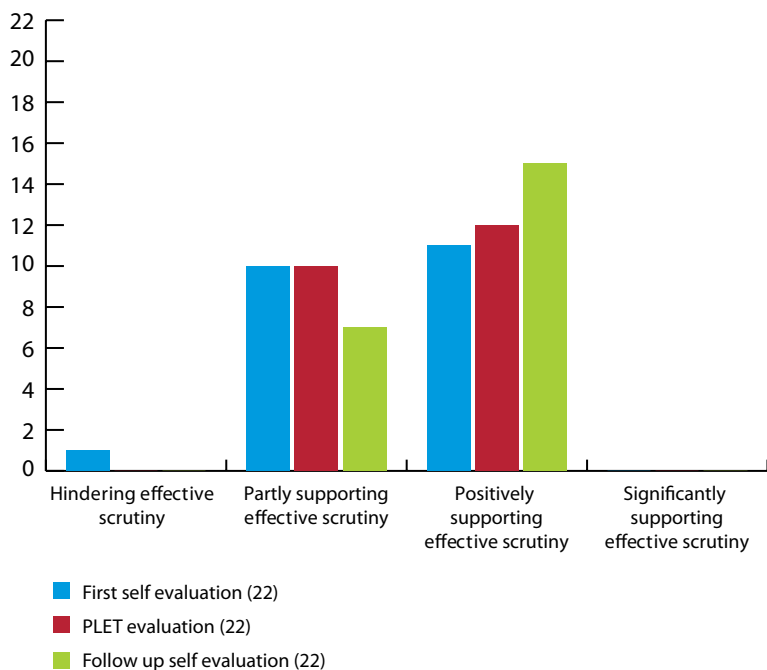
Q14. Does O&S provide evidence-based, constructive challenge; operate objectively, apolitically and with independence from executive decision-makers?



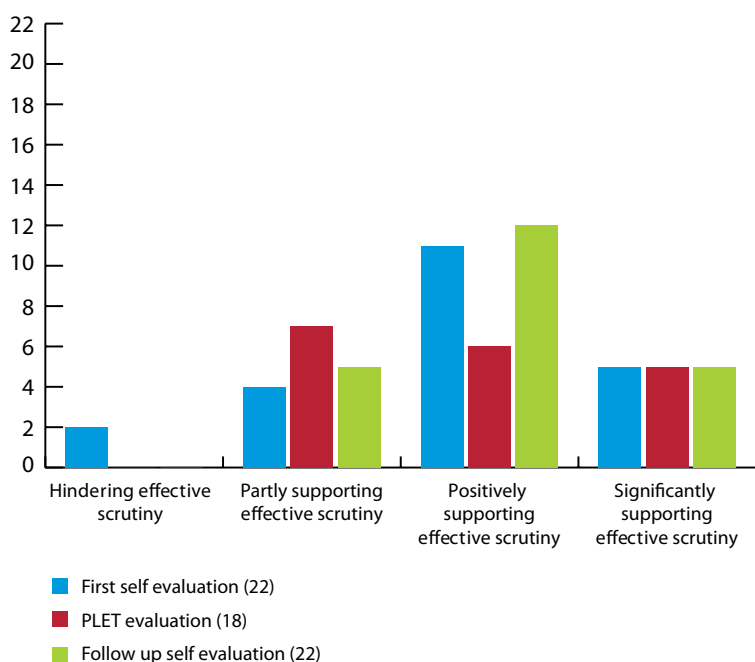
Q15. Do O&S members identify appropriate topics for challenge or policy review/development and develop outcome-focused forward work programmes?



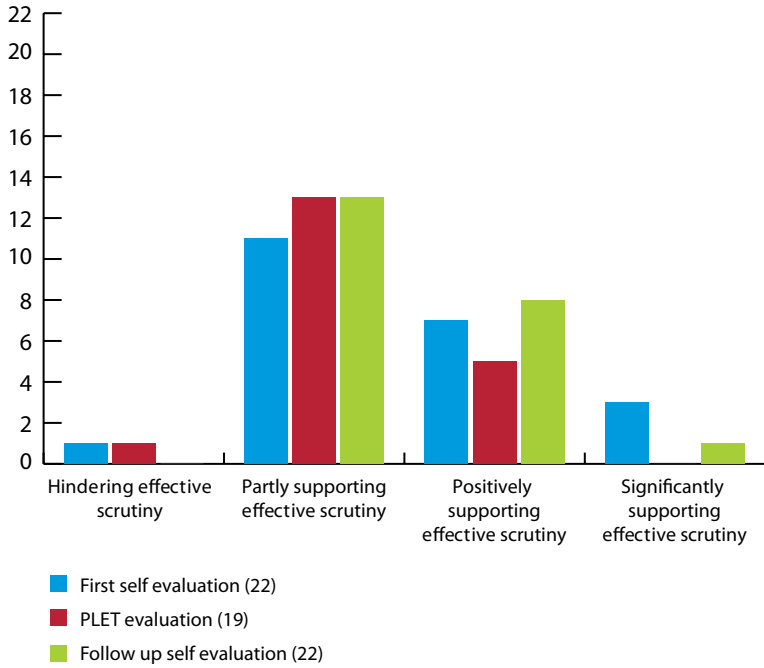
Q16. Do O&S members constructively yet robustly challenge policy and decision-makers and implementers (including partners etc) through effective questioning, listening and analysis, and develop a good understanding and knowledge of the subject under scrutiny?



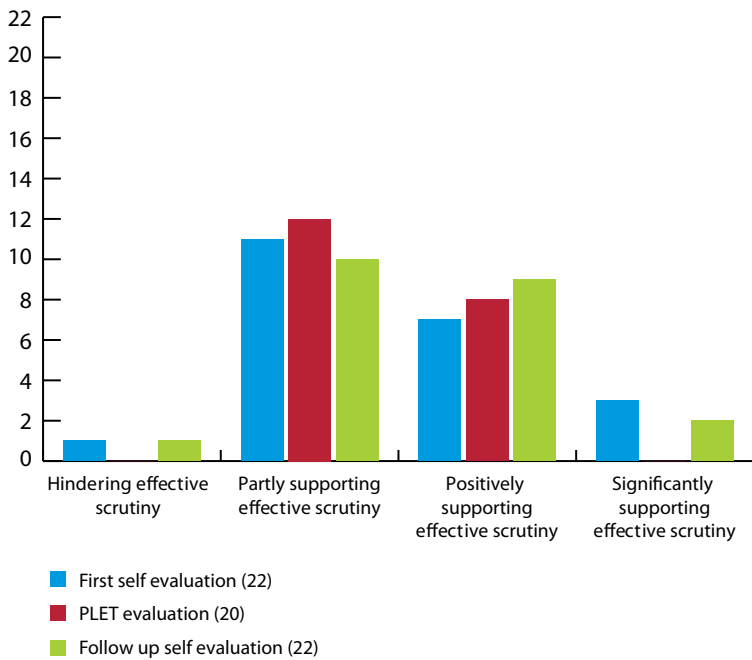
Q17. Are O&S inquiries/reviews in-depth, rigorous and draw upon independent and objective perspectives from a wide range of sources (including making use of benchmarking information) within and outside the council?



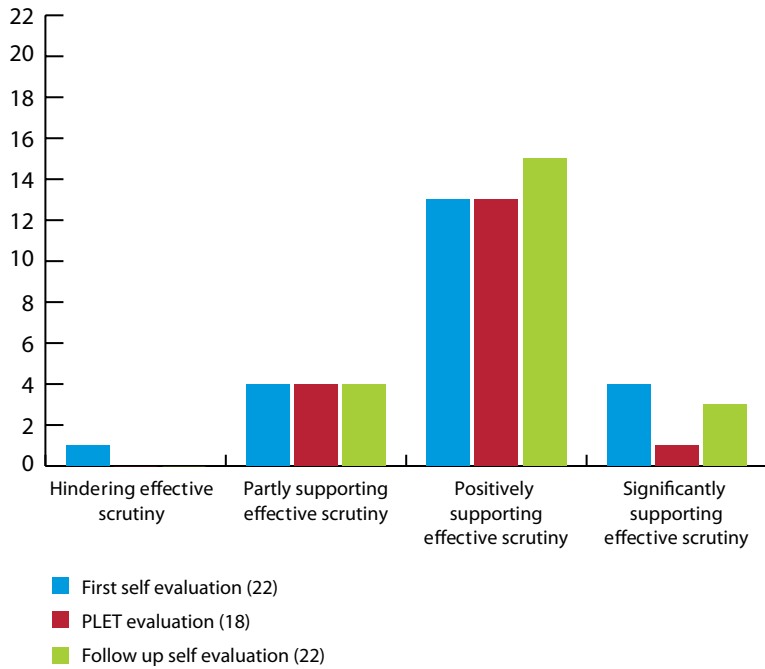
Q18. Does O&S regularly engage with members, officers, the public and other external stakeholders in planning and conducting its work?



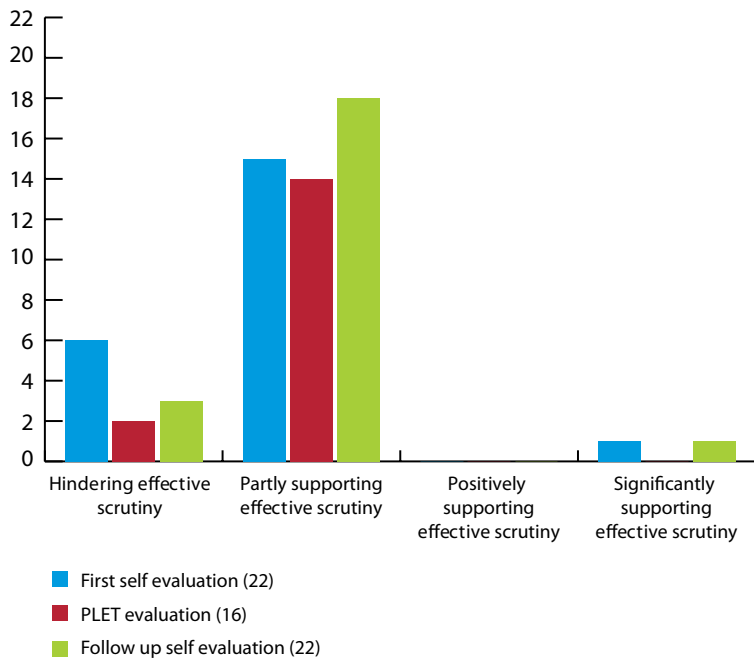
Q19. Does O&S have a balanced and focused work programme that is developed by O&S members, following consultation with the public and partners and discussions with executive members and senior officers?



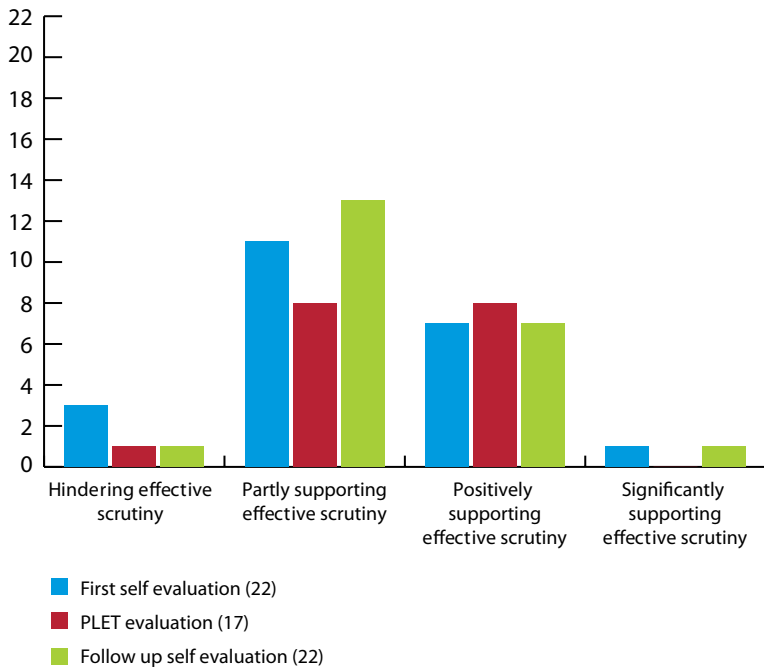
Q20. Do O&S members plan their work considering the appropriateness of a range of scrutiny methods/methodologies, use of clear terms of reference and realistic project plans?



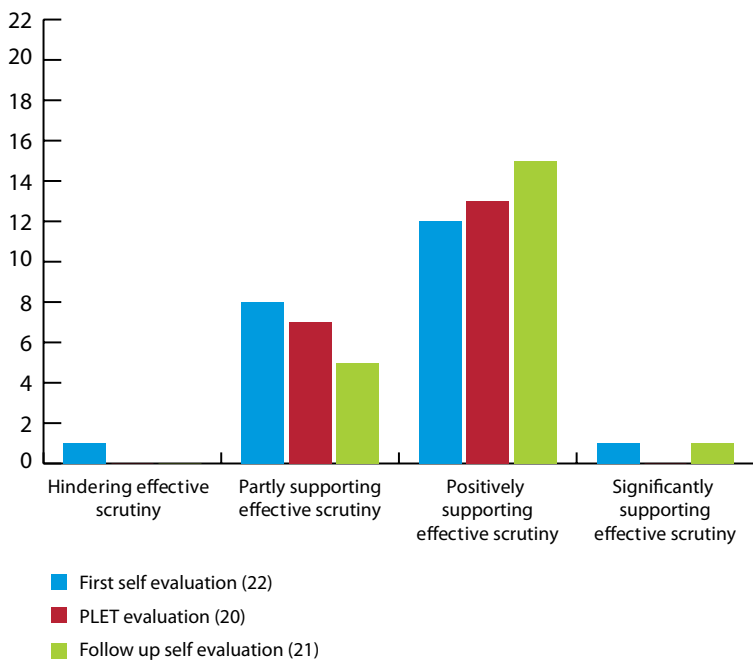
Q21. Are scrutiny forward work programmes routinely shared with auditors, inspectors and regulators to influence planning of improvement activity?



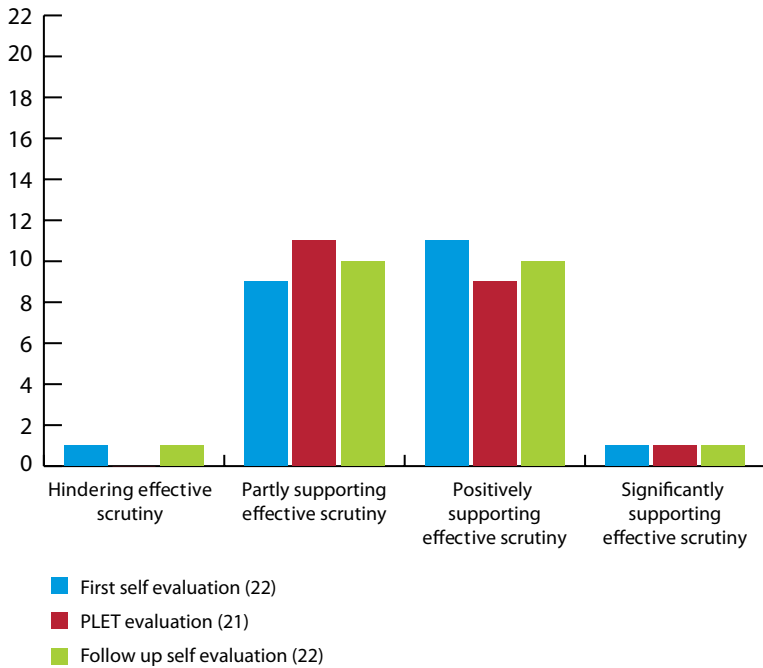
Q22. Does O&S play a key role in the council's self-evaluation and assessment arrangements and regularly evaluate itself to ensure that it continues to learn and improve how it adds value and impact?



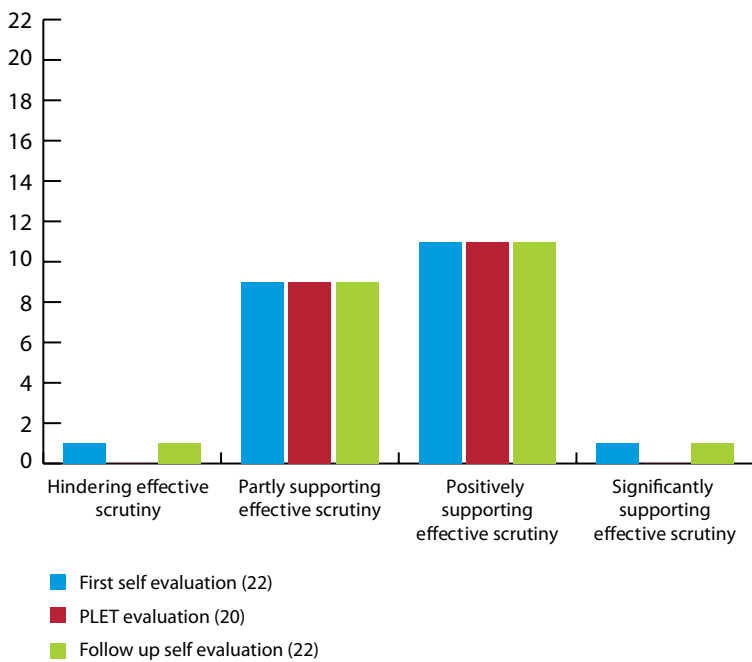
Q23. Section Two, Scrutiny Practice: Is O&S practice effective?



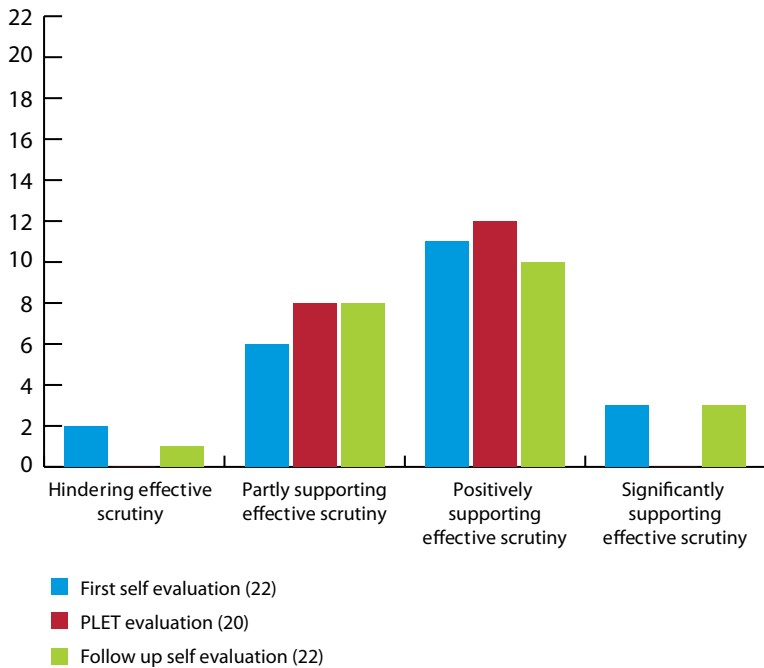
Q24. Does O&S regularly contribute to the improvement of proposed/existing policies for the benefit of the area and its local communities?



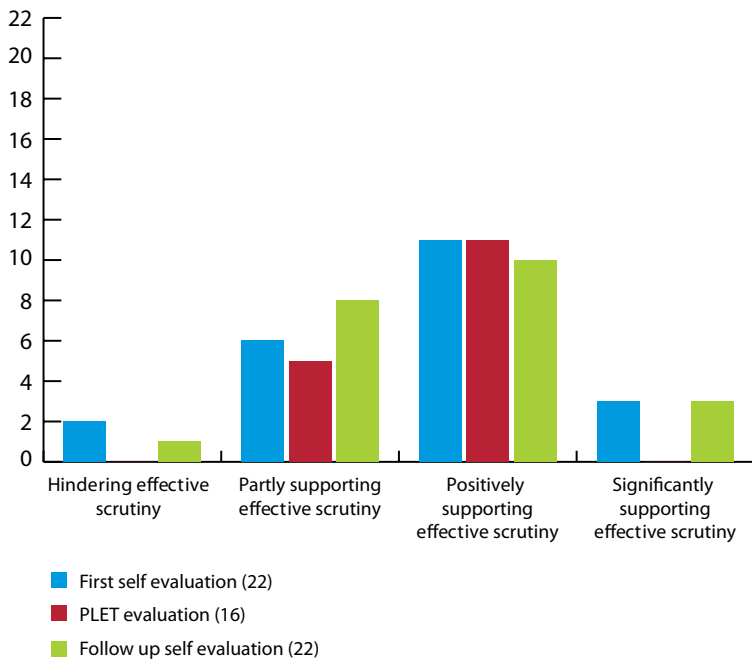
Q25. Does O&S identify instances where agreed policies are not being implemented effectively and recommend appropriate remedial action to whomever is responsible within or outside the Council?



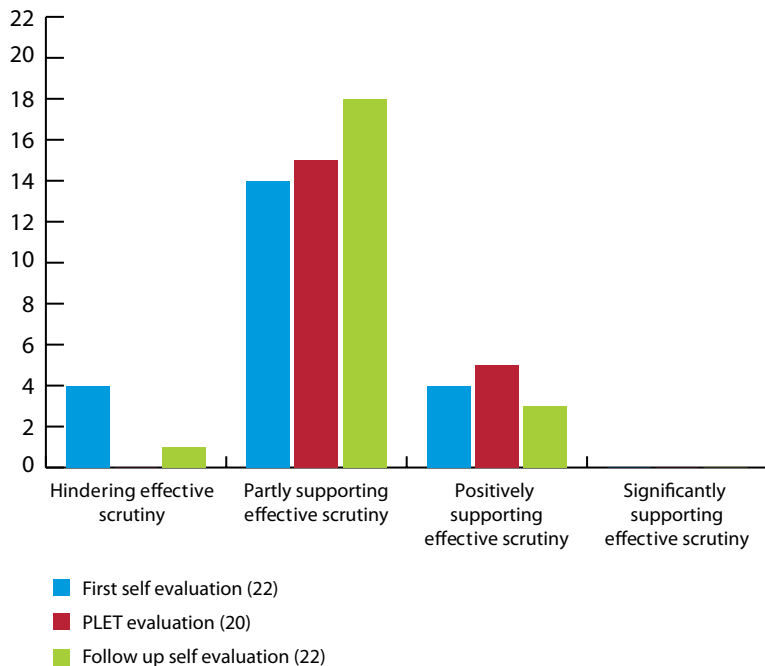
Q26. Does O&S challenge poor performance and its causes and alert senior officers, the executive, full council or partners to instigate remedial action as appropriate whilst continuing to monitor progress to remedy this?



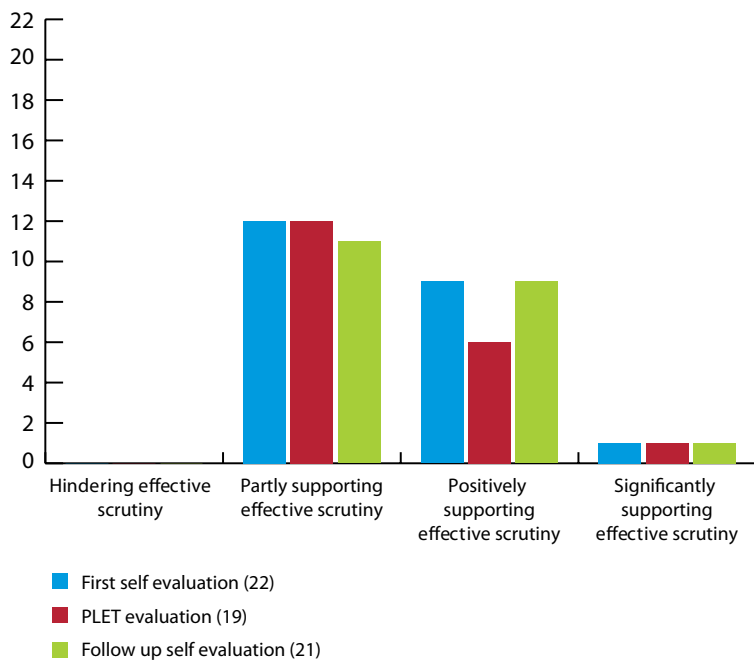
Q27. When conducting in-depth inquiries/reviews into areas of poor performance, does O&S help shape responses to improve performance and the performance of other public sector providers?



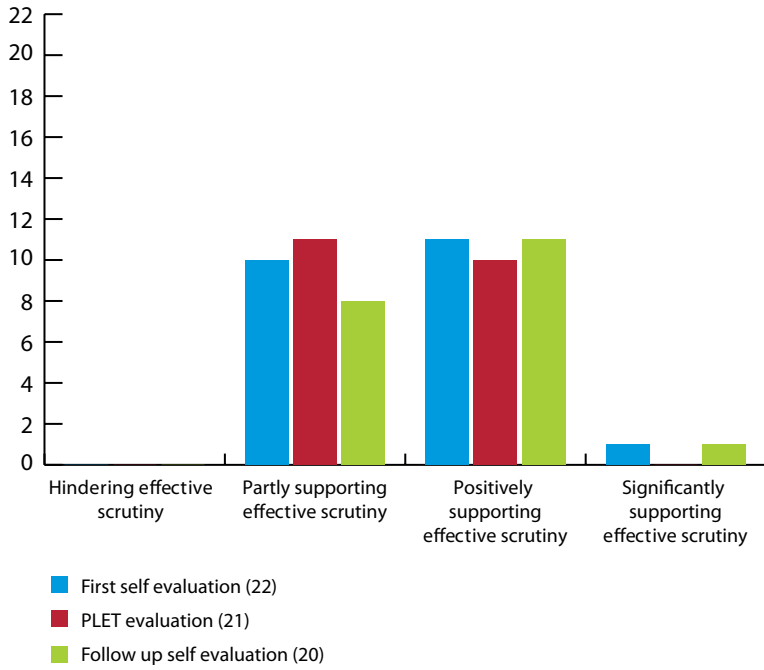
Q28. Does O&S ensure that the 'voice' of local people and communities across the area is heard as part of local decision and policy-making processes?



Q29. Does O&S enhance democratic accountability through regular, robust, constructive and public challenge of local decision-makers/deliverers of services in the local area (including other public service providers/providers of 'shared'?



Q30. Section Three, Impact of Scrutiny: Does the O&S activity have impact?



Appendix 2

Outcomes and characteristics for effective local government overview and scrutiny

Wales Scrutiny Officers Network

Outcomes and characteristics for effective local government overview and scrutiny

Outcome <i>What does good scrutiny seek to achieve?</i>	Characteristics <i>What would it look like? How could we recognise it?</i>
<p>1 Democratic accountability drives improvement in public services.</p> <p><i>'Better Outcomes'</i></p>	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Overview and scrutiny has a clearly defined and valued role in the council's improvement and governance arrangements. ii) Overview and scrutiny has the dedicated officer support it needs from officers who are able to undertake independent research effectively, and provides councillors with high-quality analysis, advice and training. <p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii) Overview and scrutiny inquiries are non-political, methodologically sound and incorporate a wide range of evidence and perspectives. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv) Overview and scrutiny regularly engages in evidence based challenge of decision makers and service providers. v) Overview and scrutiny provides viable and well evidenced solutions to recognised problems.
<p>2 Democratic decision making is accountable, inclusive and robust.</p> <p><i>'Better decisions'</i></p>	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Overview and scrutiny councillors have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their role effectively. ii) The process receives effective support from the council's corporate management team who ensures that information provided to overview & scrutiny is of high quality and is provided in a timely and consistent manner. <p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii) Overview and scrutiny is councillor-led, takes into account the views of the public, partners and regulators, and balances the prioritisation of community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance. iv) Overview and scrutiny meetings and activities are well-planned, chaired effectively and make best use of the resources available to it. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v) Decision makers give public account for themselves at overview and scrutiny committees for their portfolio responsibilities.

Outcome <i>What does good scrutiny seek to achieve?</i>	Characteristics <i>What would it look like? How could we recognise it?</i>
<p>3 The public is engaged in democratic debate about the current and future delivery of public services.</p> <p><i>'Better engagement'</i></p>	<p>Environment</p> <p>i) Overview and scrutiny is recognised by the executive and corporate management team as an important council mechanism for community engagement, and facilitates greater citizen involvement in governance.</p> <p>Practice</p> <p>ii) Overview and scrutiny is characterised by effective communication to raise awareness of, and encourage participation in democratic accountability.</p> <p>iii) Overview and scrutiny operates non-politically and deals effectively with sensitive political issues, tension and conflict.</p> <p>iv) Overview and scrutiny builds trust and good relationships with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>Impact</p> <p>v) Overview and scrutiny enables the 'voice' of local people and communities across the area to be heard as part of decision and policy-making processes.</p>

Agenda Item 8

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2014-15

Purpose	This report explains the background and purpose of the scrutiny work programme, and current position of all scrutiny activities. The report helps the committee to manage the work of scrutiny to ensure that the work programme is as effective as possible. The report also presents some proposals for agreement.
Content	The scrutiny work programme is attached which refers to work currently active, showing progress with the established Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups. A work plan timetable for future committee meetings is also included. A draft Inquiry Panel brief is also attached for agreement.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• accept or make changes to the committee's work plan timetable, and plan for the meetings ahead (<i>Appendix 1</i>)• review progress of established Panels and Working Groups (<i>Appendix 2 & 3</i>)• approve the draft Performance Panel brief (<i>Appendix 5</i>)• consider response to public / councillors requests for scrutiny• consider the information about future cabinet business and any opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny (<i>Appendix 6</i>)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for developing the Council's scrutiny work programme, and managing the overall work of scrutiny to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- 1.2 The broad aims of the scrutiny function are to carry out a significant and constructive programme of activities that will:

- help improve services
 - provide an effective challenge to the executive
 - engage members in the development of policies, strategies and plans
 - engage the public
- 1.3 At the same time the committee must ensure that the work of scrutiny is:
- manageable, realistic and achievable given resources available to support activities
 - relevant to corporate priorities and focused on significant areas
 - adding value and having maximum impact
 - coordinated and avoids duplication
- 1.4 The scrutiny work programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of scrutiny time and resources.

2. **Methods of Working**

- 2.1 The work of scrutiny is undertaken primarily in three ways – through the committee itself and by establishing informal panels (for in-depth activities) or one-off working groups:
- **Formal committee meetings** – as well as managing the overall work programme, the committee will focus on holding Cabinet Members to account by holding formal questioning sessions, and provide challenge on specific themes over the course of the year - this may cover a broad range of policy and service issues. Matters considered at committee meetings will typically be ‘one-off’ opportunities for questions, which will result in the committee communicating findings, views and recommendations for improvement through chairs letters to cabinet members, and where appropriate by producing reports.
 - **Informal panels** – Scrutiny panels are established, with conveners appointed by the committee, to carry out in-depth inquiries (sometimes referred to as reviews) or undertake in-depth monitoring of particular services. The use of panels helps to ensure that scrutiny can be flexible and responsive to issues of concern:
 - a) Inquiry Panels: to undertake discrete in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis. These would be significant topics where scrutiny can make a real difference. Inquiry panels will produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations, informed by the evidence gathered.

The committee has agreed to adopt a new approach in that every piece of scrutiny work suggested for inquiry, will start off as a 'working group' – with an in-depth inquiry only following if the group agreed it was necessary and could suggest appropriate terms of reference to the committee (including key question that is to be explored, evidence gathering that might be necessary, and timescales). The 'working group' approach will involve a detailed presentation of the subject matter at the outset (with advice from relevant cabinet members / officers and provision of existing research & information) which will enable opinion and proposals to be submitted to cabinet member(s) if these can be clearly expressed at that point, with no further work needed, or help inform decisions about the focus of any inquiry that is necessary.

b) Performance Panels: to provide in-depth monitoring and challenge for clearly defined service areas. Performance panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services.

- **Informal working groups** – Although the majority of scrutiny work is carried out through the committee and panels, the committee can also establish informal working groups of councillors. This supports flexible working where it has been agreed that a matter should be carried out outside of the committee but does not necessitate the establishment of a Panel. This method of working is intended to be light-touch – effectively a one-off meeting to consider a specific report or information, resulting in a letter to relevant Cabinet Member(s) with views and recommendations.

2.2 The new approach outlined above should help to achieve more focused and potentially quicker pieces of scrutiny, and provide flexibility to deal with things in different ways rather than follow a rigid in-depth inquiry process, depending on the issue. It could also improve impact as the experience of recent working groups have shown more impact with a single hit than some of the in-depth pieces of work.

2.3 Non executive councillors who are not members of the committee have the opportunity to participate in panels and other informal task and finish groups. New panel / working group topics, once agreed, are advertised to all non executive councillors and expressions of interest sought. The membership of panels and working groups is then determined by the committee. More than one political group should be represented on each panel / working groups. These bodies also need to be of a manageable size in terms of team working and effective questioning. A minimum of 3 members should be present at all meetings.

3. The Committee Work Plan

- 3.1 An up-to-date work plan timetable for committee meetings, based on the agreed work plan, is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 The committee's own work plan will remain under constant review to ensure it is robust and effective. An updated work plan timetable will assist forward planning and help the committee to manage workloads and review progress made.
- 3.3 Members should always review and confirm items for the next and future meetings giving specific consideration to who should attend and confirm expectations so that meetings are always well planned and prepared for, e.g. information required and key questions that the committee wishes to ask.
- 3.4 The committee will have the opportunity to introduce issues of concern and review priorities, as and when they arise.

4. Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

- 4.1 To facilitate monitoring of the overall scrutiny work programme **Appendix 2** provides a snapshot of the informal Panels and Working Groups that have been established by the committee.
- 4.2 **Appendix 3** provides a summary of progress with these current scrutiny activities.
- 4.3 For further information about the work of specific panels / groups a contact list of lead scrutiny members and officers is contained in **Appendix 4**.

5. New Panels / Working Groups

- 5.1 At the last meeting the committee agreed a number of changes to the work programme:
 - 5.1.1 To split the work of the current Wellbeing Performance Panel as follows:
 - a) a separate **Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel** be established. The Panel will monitor and challenge assessments on service performance on an ongoing basis. Although improvements have been reported continued monitoring of this critical area is necessary. However, it is suggested that this Panel would only be required to meet between 4-6 times a year. Draft Terms of Reference are attached at **Appendix 5** for agreement.

- b) creation of a separate Panel with a specific remit to focus on the **Transforming Adult Social Services** (TASS) agenda (looking at the change process and providing critical friend challenge to the proposed or anticipated improvements). This Panel will consider the outcome of the independent review into older people's services due to report in early September and how it will be used to progress the transformation of services, and inform budget discussions. This will start off as a 'working group' to gain a greater understanding of the background and develop the scope and terms of reference to determine how the Panel should operate. As the inquiry work of this Panel comes to an end, it will be set up as an Adult Social Services Performance Panel, and Terms of Reference will be changed to reflect this change.

NB – we have been alerted by the Centre for Public Scrutiny to a project they are doing on transformation and commissioning and they are inviting bids that will involve receiving their support, which could benefit this Panel's work. This could be a good opportunity to bring in some external help and guidance for this scrutiny to ensure that it can add some value to what is obviously a challenging and critical agenda. We are in discussion with the Centre for Public Scrutiny about this project and the committee will be updated on any possible bid. Legal advice will be sought as necessary e.g. potential conflicts of interest.

- 5.1.2 To establish a pre-inquiry working group on **Corporate Culture**. A possible inquiry could look at the culture of the organisation and influences, and explore how changes can help tackle the challenges being faced, e.g. demand management, reduced resources and rising expectations. This could involve looking at innovative approaches / models implemented elsewhere and drawing lessons that could be applied in Swansea. If the group agrees an inquiry is necessary terms of reference will need to be put to the committee for agreement before the Panel can proceed.
- 5.2 Pre-inquiry working groups will need to consider issues around access to appropriate documentation and evidence that will inform deliberations and how quality is monitored in the area under scrutiny.
- 5.3 Expressions of interest to participate in these activities, as well as the Working Groups previously agreed were invited from all scrutiny councillors. The membership and conveners of these various bodies will need to be confirmed by the committee and are reported separately under Item 9.

6. Monitoring the Work Programme

- 6.1 A report is provided to each meeting to enable the committee to maintain an overview of all scrutiny activities to ensure that the work programme is co-ordinated and effective. In particular the committee will monitor progress of work undertaken by the informal Panels and Working Groups and findings to ensure that this work is effective and has the required visibility. Performance Panel conveners will be asked to attend the committee on a regular basis to provide updates and enable discussion on key activities and impact.

7. Public / Councillor Requests for Scrutiny

- 7.1 At the last meeting the committee was informed of correspondence received from 2 councillors with suggestions for scrutiny.

a) to look at the policy adopted by council regarding transport to faith schools and impact on budgets of schools facing possible increase in numbers.

b) relating to the handling of corporate complaints and procedures

- 7.2 The committee needs to consider whether and how to include the above in the work programme.
- 7.3 Further information is being sought and a proposal will be brought to the committee.

8. Pre-Decision Scrutiny

- 8.1 To facilitate the ability to undertake pre-decision scrutiny a forward look document showing future cabinet business is made available to scrutiny. An internal 'Forward Look' document is maintained by Democratic Services and covers reports to both Cabinet and Council. Attached as **Appendix 6** is an extract from this document showing upcoming cabinet decision reports.
- 8.2 This information is already made available to all scrutiny councillors on a weekly basis and any councillor can make a request for pre-decision scrutiny.
- 8.3 If further information is sought about the content that would help inform whether pre-decision scrutiny should be formally requested on a particular matter then this should be identified as soon as possible and will be referred to the relevant Cabinet Member for response.
- 8.4 If the committee identifies any particular matter for pre-decision scrutiny a discussion with the Cabinet Member will be necessary in order to consider timescales and window of opportunity for scrutiny involvement. This may necessitate a special committee meeting.

8.5 To ensure the best use of time and resources it is assumed that pre-decision scrutiny will take place on an exceptional basis - decisions that may have big significance, thinking about things like:

- strategic impact
- public interest
- significant financial implications

9. Financial Implications

9.1 Any costs that arise out of work plan activities, for example expenses for witnesses or transport costs, are not envisaged to be significant and will be contained within the existing Scrutiny Budget.

10. Legal Implications

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

Background papers: None

Date: 21 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: The Committee Work Plan 2013/14
- Appendix 2: Scrutiny Activity Timetable
- Appendix 3: Progress of Panels and Working Groups
- Appendix 4: Scrutiny Councillor / Officer Leads
- Appendix 5: Draft Performance Panel Brief
- Appendix 6: Forward Look (Cabinet Business)

Scrutiny Programme Committee – Work Plan

Standing Agenda Items:

Scrutiny Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain overview on scrutiny work, monitor progress, and coordinate as necessary To plan for future committee meetings including key expectations e.g. key questions to explore, witnesses / information required To review future cabinet business and consider opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny To consider any councillor / public requests for scrutiny and/or Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA)
Scrutiny Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review scrutiny letters and Cabinet Member responses arising from all scrutiny activities
Scrutiny Dispatches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve content of Dispatches prior to reporting to Council, ensuring visibility and awareness of key issues, findings and outcomes from scrutiny activities
Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups (including appointment of conveners) and subsequent changes

Items for Specific Meetings:

Meeting	Reports	Purpose
7 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Mitch Theaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Opportunities for Children & Young People, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Local Service Board Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Mike Day, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
4 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Mark Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report – Wellbeing Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Inquiry Reports: § Inward Investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swansea Children’s Rights Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give views and make recommendations as necessary on draft Scheme
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the annual report of the work of overview & scrutiny for the municipal year 2013/14, as required by the constitution

1 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Christine Richards (Deputy Leader) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Citizen, Community Engagement & Democracy, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Mary Jones, Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAO Scrutiny Report: Good Scrutiny? Good Question! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hear from Wales Audit Office about the findings and recommendations of the audit report and implications
29 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Ryland Doyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Target Areas, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Inquiry Reports: § Public Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Communication and Public Engagement with Scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report will include a communications plan / checklist along with actions arising from proposed adoption of the national principles for public engagement (referenced in WAO Report – Good Scrutiny? Good Question!)
27 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Sybil Crouch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Sustainability, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Wellbeing Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
24 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr David Phillips (Leader) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with the Leader of the Council, on relevant responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Mary Jones, Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.

22 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Will Evans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Learning & Skills, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
19 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Rob Stewart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Wellbeing Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams, Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
16 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr June Burtonshaw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Place, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Mary Jones, Convener attending to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
16 Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr Nick Bradley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Regeneration, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Schools Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener attending to update headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements.
13 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session – Cllr David Phillips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question and answer session with Cabinet Member for Anti-Poverty, on relevant portfolio responsibilities and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Report – Local Service Board Performance Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Mike Day, Convener, to update on headlines from the Panel’s work and achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Work Plan Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reflect on the year’s work, achievements, experiences, issues, ideas for future scrutiny

To be scheduled:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Inquiry Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Social Care at Home § Streetscene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the final report (including conclusions and recommendations) of the Inquiry Panel prior to submission to Cabinet for decision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back on follow ups to previous scrutiny inquiries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services for Looked After Children - Public Transport - Affordable Housing - Tourism - Economic Inactivity - Attainment & Wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime & Disorder Scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on Safer Swansea Partnership Performance with Co-Chairs - questioning on plans, performance, challenges • Examining the Draft Safer Swansea Partnership 3 Year Strategy • Engagement with the Police and Crime Commissioner

Other:

- Further special meetings re. Gypsy & Traveller Site Provision – Review of Process
- Reports on relevant regional / national scrutiny development & improvement Issues (incl. report back from WLGA / CfPS network meetings)
- Referrals from other council bodies, such as cabinet

Scrutiny Work Programme 2014-15

Appendix 2

ACTIVITY	May	June	July	August	September	October
Scrutiny Programme Committee	27*	9	7 8*	4	1 29	27
Inquiry Panels						
Current:						
Inward Investment (started Sep 2013)	13 20	3	2	26		
Public Engagement (started Sep 2013)		2				21
Streetscene (started Oct 2013)		5 11	14		14	
Social Care at Home (started Jan 2014)	15	17	8 15	5 7	2	
Education Inclusion (started Feb 2014)	work currently suspended pending outcome of departmental review					
Follow Up:						
Services for LAC (Cabinet 17/9/13)			15			
Public Transport (Cabinet 12/11/13)						
Affordable Housing (Cabinet 3/12/13)						
Tourism (Cabinet 14/1/14)						1
Economic Inactivity (Cabinet 3/6/14)				30		
Attainment & Wellbeing (Cabinet 1/7/14)						
	Key for Inquiries:					
	Scoping	Evidence Gathering		Final Report		Cabinet
						Follow Up
Performance Panels						
Wellbeing	12	2 16 30	14	11		
Service Improvement & Finance	14	11	16	20	17	15
Schools Performance		5	3	21	18	16
Local Service Board (multi-agency panel)	12		21		22	
Working Groups						
Planning Service		10				
Car Parking					22	
Local Flood Risk Management						

* special meetings

Scrutiny Work Programme 2014-15

Appendix 2

ACTIVITY	November	December	January	February	March	April
Scrutiny Programme Committee	24	22	19	16	16	13
Inquiry Panels						
Current:						
Inward Investment (started Sep 2013)						
Public Engagement (started Sep 2013)						
Streetscene (started Oct 2013)						
Social Care at Home (started Jan 2014)						
Education Inclusion (started Feb 2014)	work currently suspended pending outcome of departmental review					
Follow Up:						
Services for LAC (Cabinet 17/9/13)						
Public Transport (Cabinet 12/11/13)						
Affordable Housing (Cabinet 3/12/13)						
Tourism (Cabinet 14/1/14)						
Economic Inactivity (Cabinet 3/6/14)						
Attainment & Wellbeing (1/7/14)						
	Key for Inquiries:					
	Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Final Report	Cabinet	Follow Up	
Performance Panels						
Child & Family Services						
Service Improvement & Finance						
Schools Performance	13	11	22	19	19	16
Local Service Board (multi-agency panel)						
Working Groups						
Planning Service						
Car Parking						
Local Flood Risk Management						

* special meetings

Progress Report – Current Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups

1. Inquiry Panels:

a) **Inward Investment** (convener: Cllr Jeff Jones)

Key Question: What can the Council do to influence inward investment into Swansea and the South West Wales region?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

Inquiry completed. Final Report was considered by the Committee on 4 August 2014 and is being presented to Cabinet on 26 August 2014.

b) **Public Engagement** (convenor: Cllr Joe Hale)

Key Question: How can the Council improve its engagement practices with the public, staff and external stakeholders?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The panel has agreed its final report. It is scheduled for the next Scrutiny Programme Committee on 29 September

c) **Streetscene** (convenor: Cllr John Bayliss)

Key Question: How well does the Council maintain and keep clean the roads, footways and verges in Swansea, and what changes should it make?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel has drafted its conclusions and recommendations and the final report is being prepared.

d) **Social Care at Home** (convenor: Cllr Jane Harris)

Key Question: How can Swansea Council and its partners support elderly people to enable them to remain in their own homes?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering	Draft Final Report

The Panel has completed its evidence gathering and is due to meet on 2 September to discuss emerging conclusions. Following this, a Findings Report will be produced further meetings held to develop the Panel's final conclusions and recommendations.

e) **Education Inclusion** (convenor: Cllr Cheryl Philpott)

Key Question: How can the Council improve education for those children who are other than at school?

Progress Bar:

Scoping	Evidence Gathering				Draft Final Report			

The committee had agreed to suspend the work of the Panel earlier this year to allow a departmental review to be concluded. The Education Inclusion Inquiry Panel is expected to reconvene in September to consider the findings and outcomes of the departmental review, which will then inform whether / what further scrutiny activity is required. The Panel will report back to the committee on the headlines and any need for scrutiny.

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	
Services for Looked After Children	17 Sep 2013	14	1	0	(1) 15 Jul 2014 (2) tba
Public Transport	12 Nov 2013	13	1	0	tba
Affordable Housing	3 Dec 2013	7	2	4	tba – September/October
Tourism	14 Jan 2014	14	0	0	1 Oct 2014
Economic Inactivity	3 Jun 2014	7	0	0	tba
Attainment & Wellbeing	1 Jul 2014	11	0	0	tba

3. Performance Panels:

a) Service Improvement & Finance (convener: Cllr Mary Jones)

The Panel met on 20 August and held a session with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources to discuss the Sustainable Swansea Strategy & Delivery Programme. The Panel also received the End of Year Performance Monitoring Report.

The Panel's next meeting will take place on 15 October where the Panel will hold a Q & A session with the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills in order to explore the impact of budget savings on services within his portfolio. The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources is also scheduled to attend to discuss the Budget Consultation Strategy. The Panel will also receive several financial monitoring reports.

b) Schools Performance (convener: Cllr Fiona Gordon)

The Panel will meet with the Chief Education Officer and the New Head of School Improvement on the 18 September to look at how we are ensuring consistency in the support given to schools by the School Improvement Service.

c) Local Service Board (convener: Cllr Mike Day)

The Panel's next meeting is on 22 September where they will meet with members of the LSB Executive Group, including South Wales Police, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services and the Welsh Government. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- develop an understanding of the role of each organisation in delivering the LSB priorities
- learn about key successes
- learn about key challenges
- seek ideas for possible items to include in the Panel's work plan

d) Wellbeing (convener: Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams)

The Panel met on 11 August to consider the monitoring and performance outcomes for disability services for adults.

As reported elsewhere, the Scrutiny Programme Committee has agreed to split the work of the Panel into two areas, with Child & Family Services being the first focus. Work on the Adult Services area will begin with an Inquiry Panel looking at the transformation agenda, before consideration is then given to establishing an Adult Social Services Performance Panel. Reports will be made to the Scrutiny Programme Committee in future.

4. Working Groups:

A number of topics have been identified which will be dealt with through one-off Working Groups.

a) **Planning Services** (convener: Cllr Mark Thomas)

A response is awaited from the Cabinet Member for Place to the Convener's letter sent on 2 July following the Working Group meeting on 10 June. Further to the Group's discussion at the meeting the convener is giving thought to the most appropriate arrangement for any further scrutiny of performance in relation to planning enforcement, which the Scrutiny Programme Committee will need to agree upon.

b) the following Working Groups have been given priority and will be convened in the next few months:

- **Car Parks** (convener: Cllr Tony Colburn) – this has been arranged for 22 September with the purpose of discussing provision across Swansea, service performance, and plans for improvement.
- **Local Flood Risk Management** (convener: Cllr Susan Jones) – this will be a further meeting, following initial meeting in January 2013, to discuss Environment Agency flood risk and flood hazard maps and specific areas of risk. The Council has not yet received the maps in a format which can be used. It is likely that information will be ready to be presented to scrutiny by the early autumn.
- **Corporate Building and Property Services** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a service briefing (what we do, why we do this, budget, performance, risk and challenges, assessment etc.) to enable questions about the effectiveness of the whole service, and follow up specific issues already raised including cost of services / charges relating to schools and community centres.
- **Sustainability** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide an assessment on current plans, priorities, activities and impact. This will enable questions on how this work is impacting on policies, service delivery and planning, and whether the authority is planning longer term / being preventative / considering future generations. The Working Group may wish to focus on specific future risks e.g. food security, climate change, energy supply.

c) the following Working Groups have also been identified and will be convened in the future as time and resources allow:

- **Target Areas** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide an assessment on progress with target areas work. This will enable questions about achievements and the impact of the new approach.
- **Roads / Highway Maintenance** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report covering service practices and procedures (e.g. dealing with pot holes), use of resources, prospects for improvement. This will enable questions about the quality and effectiveness of highway maintenance and repair, and also issues relating to the relationship with utilities and strategic planning / co-ordination of works to minimise disruption to major access roads
- **Young Carers** (convener / membership tbc) – the relevant cabinet member / officer will be requested to provide a report on young carers. This will enable questions about the support available to young carers to minimise the impact on their personal development, education, employment and training.

Appendix 4

Lead Scrutiny Councillor / Officer Contacts:

Activity	Lead Councillor	Lead Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Programme Committee	Mike Day mike.day@swansea.gov.uk	Brij Madahar (01792 637257) brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk
<u>Inquiry Panels:</u>		
Inward Investment What can the Council do to influence inward investment into Swansea and the South West Wales region?	Jeff Jones jeff.w.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Streetscene How well does the Council maintain and keep clean the roads, footways and verges in Swansea, and what changes should it make?	John Bayliss john.bayliss@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Public Engagement How can the Council improve its engagement practices with the public, staff and external stakeholders?	Joe Hale joe.hale@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Social Care at Home How can Swansea Council and its partners support people to enable them to remain in their own homes?	Jane Harris jane.harris@swansea.gov.uk	Dave Mckenna (01792 636090) dave.mckenna@swansea.gov.uk
<u>Inquiry Panels (follow up)</u>		
Tourism	John Newbury john.newbury@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

Services for Looked After Children	Ceinwen Thomas ceinwen.thomas@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Affordable Housing	Terry Hennegan terry.hennegan@swansea.gov.uk	Rosie Jackson (01792 636292) rosie.jackson@swansea.gov.uk
Public Transport	John Newbury john.newbury@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Attainment & Wellbeing	Fiona Gordon fiona.gordon@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Economic Inactivity	Chris Holley chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk	Rosie Jackson (01792 636292) rosie.jackson@swansea.gov.uk
<u>Performance Panels:</u>		
Wellbeing	Paxton Hood-Williams paxton.hood-williams@swansea.gov.uk	Delyth Davies (01792 637491) delyth.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Service Improvement & Finance	Mary Jones mary.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Rosie Jackson (01792 636292) rosie.jackson@swansea.gov.uk
Schools	Fiona Gordon fiona.gordon@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Local Service Board (multi-agency)	Mike Day mike.day@sswansea.gov.uk	Rosie Jackson (01792 636292) rosie.jackson@swansea.gov.uk
<u>Working Groups:</u>		

Planning Services	Mark Thomas mark.thomas2@swansea.gov.uk	Rosie Jackson (01792 636292) rosie.jackson@swansea.gov.uk
Local Flood Risk Management	Susan Jones susan.m.jones@swansea.gov.uk	Rosie Jackson (01792 636292) rosie.jackson@swansea.gov.uk
Car Parking	Tony Colburn tony.colburn@swansea.gov.uk	Michelle Roberts (01792 637256) michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk

Draft Terms of Reference

Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel

1. Name:

Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel

2. Why this topic is important?

- Given the importance of, and past focus on Child & Family Services and, as it is potentially still an area of high risk, this warrants attention
- The service has made good progress but it is vital this is maintained and that further improvements are made across all areas of the service
- Continues to be an area of high demand and high spend - there are significant financial pressures in this service area
- Corporate Priority Area – Improvement Objective to ensure that people are safe, well and supported to live independently (Child & Family Services)

3. What is the purpose of the panel?

The Panel will receive relevant performance reports to monitor and challenge assessments on service performance and quality in respect of children's social services

4. Meetings:

The Panel will be expected to meet on an ongoing basis, 4-6 times a year.

The Panel will report periodically on progress to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

On behalf of the Panel, the convener will write to the relevant Cabinet Member raising issues of concern, comments and recommendations as appropriate following Panel meetings.

FORWARD PLAN
Internal Plan 2014 - 2015

Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
<p>Discretionary Rate Relief - Temporary Rate Relief Schemes (Wales).</p>	<p>This report will provide details of two new rate relief schemes and a recommendation on whether to accept grant funding from Welsh Government to support the expenditure incurred in providing relief relating to the schemes, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988</p>	<p>Mike Hawes</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>16 Sep 2014</p>
<p>FPR 7: Waterfront City Programme - Infrastructure Works</p>	<p>To advise Cabinet of revised Infrastructure funding allocations within the Waterfront City Programme, and to seek Cabinet approval of the allocations to commit the budget to the capital programme</p>	<p>Gareth Hughes</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>23 Sep 2014</p>

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
<p>Permission to Apply for Planning Consent at Bailing Plant Waste Recycling Centres.</p>	<p>To seek Cabinet approval to apply for planning permission for the following improvement works in order to assist in meeting the Welsh Government recycling targets.</p> <p>To provide a purpose built facility for the storage, testing, repair and sale of discarded Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) and other general waste for the purpose of reuse.</p> <p>To extend both the Garngoch and Penlan Household Waste Recycling Centres in order to provide improved recycling facilities for residents in order to improve recycling performance.</p>	<p>Chris Howell</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Place</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>23 Sep 2014</p>

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
<p>Proposed Amalgamation of Brynhyfryd Infant and Junior Schools.</p>	<p>Proposal to amalgamate Swansea's last remaining infant and junior schools into an all-through primary school using the existing school sites at Brynhyfryd from September 2015. There is a statutory process to follow. Cabinet had already given approval for consultation to take place. Cabinet now needs to consider the views expressed during the consultation period and decide if the proposal should move to the next stage i.e. the publication of a Statutory Notice for a period of 28 days.</p>	<p>Arwyn Thomas</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Learning Skills</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>23 Sep 2014</p>

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Disposal Of Surplus Land On School Sites	To consider responses to the consultation carried out with schools, regarding the proposed disposal of surplus land at the first phase of sites under consideration, and decide which of those disposals should be proceeded with.	Brian Roles	Cabinet Member for Learning Skills	Cabinet	23 Sep 2014
Proposed Appropriation of the Recreation Ground, Oystermouth Road, Swansea	Proposed appropriation of the Recreation Ground was advertised as required by S122 of the Local Government Act 1972 and objections received must be considered prior to a decision being made.	Lee Wenham Wendy Parkin	Cabinet Member for Place	Cabinet	23 Sep 2014

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Vibrant and Viable Places - Creating Homes from Vacant Floorspace	To advise Cabinet of the award of Vibrant and Viable Places funding to support grants to create new residential units from vacant commercial floorspace in the City Centre. To seek Cabinet approval of the scheme and to commit the budget to the capital programme.	Neil Ranft	Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Cabinet	23 Sep 2014
Procurement of a Waste Partner Contract Award and Capital Budget for Tir John.	Recommends award of the final contract. A previous Capital Budget was approved in principle for Tir John; however the details were not approved. A requirement for further capital provision has been identified which has not been approved. The report will seek approval of the revised Capital Budget.	Matthew Perkins	Cabinet Member for Place.	Cabinet Cabinet	23 Sep 2014 21 Oct 2014

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Reform of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System and Rent Setting Policy.	To set out the planned reforms to housing finance in Wales by the Welsh Government, their implications and the key actions required by the Council to implement the changes.	David Evans	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Cabinet Member for Place.	Cabinet	21 Oct 2014
Lease Arrangements for the Swansea Indoor Bowls Centre.	The temporary arrangements for the tenancy at the Bowls centre needs to be formalised under a full lease arrangement to ensure the tenant can operate the facility effectively and the Council achieve the financial targets set within the Medium Term Financial Plan	Wayne Evans	Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Cabinet	21 Oct 2014

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Independent Review of Older People Services in City & County of Swansea	<p>The aim of this strategic, independent review is to engage with the range of stakeholders to agree on the best configuration, whether internally or externally provided, as well as the range and quality of services, older people can access. The report is expected to contain a clear set of proposals and timescales for a recommended way forward.</p>	<p>Carol Rea</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Wellbeing.</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>21 Oct 2014</p>

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Adoption of a revised Social Services Complaints Policy	<p>New legislation has been enacted to bring the Social Services Complaints mechanism into line with other Public Sector complaints mechanisms, in accordance with the WG Model Complaints Policy.</p> <p>The report introduces a newly drafted Social Services Complaints Policy (at Appendix 1) which addresses the new legislative changes and recommends that the new policy be adopted.</p>	Andrew Taylor	Cabinet Member for Citizen, Community Engagement & Democracy (Deputy Leader)	Cabinet	21 Oct 2014

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Proposed lease of Underhill Park to Mumbles Community Association.	Mumbles Community Association wish to lease parts of Underhill Park to enable them to apply for grant funding to improve community sports facilities and opportunities.	Phil Roberts	Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Cabinet	21 Oct 2014

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
<p>Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) Local Commissioning Plan</p>	<p>The appendix document the “Supporting People Commissioning Plan” will outline how the Local Authority uses the Welsh Government Supporting People Programme Grant to commission housing related support services to prevent homelessness and supports a range of groups of people to continue live independently in the community.</p> <p>The Cabinet report will summaries key strategic priorities for spending the grant and activity in relation to administrating the grant.</p>	<p>Deborah Driffield</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Wellbeing</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>18 Nov 2014</p>

Details of the Decision to be taken	Report Summary	Report Author	Portfolio	Decision to be taken by	Date of Expected Decision
Local Transport Plan 2015- 2020	To seek Council approval for the Local Transport Plan prior to submission to the Welsh Government	Cath Swain	Cabinet Member for Place	Council	6 Jan 2015

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY PANELS AND WORKING GROUPS

Purpose	The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various scrutiny panels / working groups that are established. This report advises of matters that need to be agreed.
Content	The report relates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel • Transforming Adult Social Services Inquiry (<i>new</i>) • Corporate Culture Inquiry (<i>new</i>) • Child & Family Services Performance Panel (<i>new</i>) • Corporate Building & Property Services Working Group (<i>new</i>)
Councillors are being asked to	approve the membership / changes detailed in the report
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer & Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for appointing members and conveners to the various scrutiny panels / working groups that are established.

2. Changes to Membership

- 2.1 The committee is asked to agree the following changes:

- a) **Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel:**
REMOVE Councillor Mark Thomas

Following this change the revised Panel membership will be 12 councillors as follows:

Labour Councillor: 5

Phillip Downing	Jennifer Raynor
Joe Hale	Des Thomas
Jane Harris	

Liberal Democrat Councillor: 4

Chris Holley	Mary Jones (CONVENER)
Jeff Jones	Cheryl Philpott

Independent Councillor: 1

Lynda James	
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Conservative Councillor: 2

Anthony Colburn	Paxton Hood-Williams
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3. New Panels / Working Groups

- 3.1 Following agreement at the last meeting to establish new Panels / Working Groups expressions of interest were invited from all scrutiny councillors. The membership and conveners of these various bodies (detailed at **Appendix 1**) will need to be confirmed by the committee. (Note – nominations for the Sustainability Working Group are awaited)

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

Background Papers: None

Date: 19 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Panel / Working Group Membership - Expressions of Interest

TRANSFORMING ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY INQUIRY (13)

Councillors:

Labour Councillors: 9

Ann Cook	Hazel Morris
Uta Clay*	Jennifer Raynor*
Jane Harris	Gloria Tanner
Yvonne Jardine	Ceinwen Thomas
Erika Kirchner	

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 2

Chris Holley	Jeff Jones
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Independent Councillor: 1

Susan Jones	
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Conservative Councillor: 1

Paxton Hood-Williams	
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NOTE:

*Convener to be appointed – interest received from Cllr Uta Clay and Cllr Jennifer Raynor

CORPORATE CULTURE SCRUTINY INQUIRY (8)

Councillors:

Labour Councillors: 8

David Cole	Terry Hennegan
Nick Davies	Andrew Jones
Mandy Evans	Erika Kirchner
Joe Hale	Mike White

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 0

Independent Councillor: 0

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Conservative Councillor: 0

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NOTE:

- Representation from another party required
- Convener to be appointed

**CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES
SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL (7)**

Councillors:

Labour Councillors: 6

Uta Clay	Hazel Morris
Jane Harris*	Jennifer Raynor
Yvonne Jardine	Ceinwen Thomas

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 0

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Independent Councillor: 0

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Conservative Councillor: 1

Paxton Hood-Williams*	
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NOTE:

*Convener to be appointed – interest received from Cllr Jane Harris and Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams

**CORPORATE BUILDING & PROPERTY SERVICES
SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP (7)**

Councillors:

Labour Councillors: 6

Ann Cook	Hazel Morris
Jane Harris	Jennifer Raynor
Terry Hennegan*	Mike White

Liberal Democrat Councillors: 0

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Independent Councillor: 1

Wendy Fitzgerald	
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Conservative Councillor: 0

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NOTE:

*Convener to be appointed – interest received from Cllr Terry Hennegan

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

SCRUTINY LETTERS

Purpose	To ensure the committee is aware of the scrutiny letters produced following various scrutiny activities, and responses to date.
Content	The report will include a log of scrutiny letters that are produced this year and provide a copy of recent correspondence for discussion.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the scrutiny letters and responses • Make comments, observations and recommendations as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The production of scrutiny letters has become an established part of the way scrutiny operates in Swansea. Letters from the chair (or conveners) allow scrutiny to communicate directly and quickly with relevant cabinet members.
- 1.2 These letters are used to convey views and conclusions about particular issues discussed and provide the opportunity to raise concerns, ask for further information, and make recommendations. This enables scrutiny to engage with Cabinet Members on a regular and structured basis.
- 1.3 Scrutiny letters, whether they are written by the Programme Committee or conveners of panels / working groups, are published in the committee agenda to ensure awareness and enable the committee to comment on the response to the matters raised, as well as to ensure visibility across the council and public.

- 1.4 As the current municipal year progresses this report will contain a log of scrutiny letters produced to enable the committee to maintain an overview of this activity over the year – see **Appendix 1**. It also provides for discussion a copy of full correspondence of recent letters where cabinet member responses were awaited and have now been received or where a scrutiny letter did not require a response:
- a) Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Service Improvement & Finance Panel Meeting – 10 April 2014)
 - b) Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Place & Letter from Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Committee Meeting – 9 June)
 - c) Letter to/from Cabinet Member for Wellbeing (Wellbeing Performance Panel Meeting – 16 June)
 - d) Letter to/from Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee (Wellbeing Performance Panel Meeting – 14 July)
- 1.5 Where requested, Cabinet Members are expected to respond in writing to scrutiny letters within one month. The response should indicate what action (if any) they intend to take as a result of the views and recommendations made.

2. Legal Implications

- 2.1 There are no legal implications.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

19 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Scrutiny Letters Log (May 2014 – April 2015):Letters since 8 May 2014:

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received	Reported to Committee
14/15-1	Wellbeing Performance Panel (12 May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare & Community Alarm Service 	Wellbeing	13 May	N/A	9 Jun
14/15-2	Committee (14 Apr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member Question Session 	Anti-Poverty	11 Jun	3 Jul	4 Aug
14/15-3	Wellbeing Performance Panel (2 June)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child & Family Services Performance Monitoring • Factors that influence which schools looked after children are placed in 	Wellbeing	17 Jun	14 Jul	4 Aug
14/15-4	Committee (9 Jun)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further letter following Cabinet Member for Place response re: Public Transport, Blue Badge Scheme and Waste Management. 	Place Finance & Resources Place	2 Jul	28 Jul 31 Jul 5 Aug	4 Aug 1 Sep 1 Sep

No.	Committee / Panel / Working Group	Main Issue(s)	Cabinet Portfolio	Letter Sent	Response Received	Reported to Committee
14/15-5	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel (11 June)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saving targets/staffing issues • Council tax • ICT contract • Budget scrutiny • HRA changes 	Finance & Resources	2 Jul	18 Jul	4 Aug
14/15/6	Wellbeing Performance Panel (16 June)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare • Transforming Adult Social Services • Adult Services quarterly monitoring 	Wellbeing	28 June	5 August	1 Sep
14/15-7	Wellbeing Performance Panel (30 June)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unallocated cases in Chid & Family Services 	Wellbeing	8 July		
14/15-8	Schools Performance Panel (3 Jul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling poor performing teachers and recruitment of senior staff in schools 	Learning and Skills	21 Jul	Not required	4 Aug
14/15-9	Wellbeing Performance Panel (14 July)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Chair of Scrutiny on operation of the Panel 	N/A	17 Jul	11 Aug	1 Sep
14/15-10	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel (16 July)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations on Corporate Improvement Plan 	Finance & Resources	6 Aug		
14/15-11	Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel (16 July)	<p>Questions relating to Corporate Improvement Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing • Welfare rights training for staff • Sustaining Council tenancies 	Wellbeing Place	6 Aug		

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Mary Jones
Convenor, Service Improvement & Finance
Performance Panel

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:

Councillor Rob Stewart
(01792) 637440
rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
RS/SH

Date / Dyddiad:

5th Aug, 2014

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Jones

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND FINANCE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL 10TH APRIL 2014

Thank you for your letter dated 6th May 2014 regarding the above, and apologies for the delay in responding.

I set out below detail as requested in relation to your specific information requests:

Performance Monitoring – 3rd Quarter - We noted that performance in relation to indicator CHR/002 (number of working days lost to sickness absence) has declined somewhat and would like to be provided with a breakdown of sickness absence figures for each Department.

Please see attached information showing a breakdown of sickness absence figures for each Department.

In relation to the specific queries on the Policy Commitments Tracker please see below:

Policy Commitment 2: Give a stronger voice to residents in the design of community-based facilities, such as the development of suburban shopping centres, transport and other neighbourhood schemes, by ensuring there is full citizen engagement, including young people.

What areas are covered by the Safe Routes in Community Bids and will this funding be on-going?

The Townhill area was covered by a grant of £550,000 during 2014/15. The Morryston area was covered in 2013/14 and the Penlan area during 2012/13. The scheme is part of a Welsh Government grant and WG determine which individual schemes are funded. The continuation of the funding will be determined by Welsh Government.

How much funding has been allocated from the District Regeneration Assistance Grant and what has been funded?

A figure of £150,000 was made available from the Council's revenue budget for a grant scheme entitled 'Regeneration Area Grant'. The purpose of the grant was to wide ranging – to support jobs and regeneration, tackle poverty, support suburban centres and the City Centre, and addressing problem buildings.

An offer of grant assistance (£75k) has also been made to the owner of the Palace Theatre for works in connection with safeguarding the future of the building. Whilst the grant offer has been accepted, no works have commenced to date and officers are currently in discussion with the owner regarding the timescales and the deteriorating condition of the building.”

The other half of the District Regeneration Area Grant' (£75,000) was allocated to providing small grants to businesses in Swansea seeking a contribution to enable improvements to be made to their operations either through the purchase of new equipment and technology or tools with which they could promote themselves better. Applications were invited via established local business networks and originated from businesses and entrepreneurs who were mainly, already receiving business advice from Welsh Government's 'Business Wales' support providers. There were two categories, one for new business starts and the other for those that have been trading for over two years. Applicants provided information on their new business idea or operations to date along with a proposal on what they would need in terms of support and how it would enable their business to grow.

In business support terms this was small scale funding and for those successful applicants already trading the grant funded 50% of the agreed project cost retrospectively and on receipt of evidence that the applicant's half had already been paid. New business start approved applications received a grant of up to £500 towards their start-up costs. In total, forty one new businesses were offered support but only thirty one took it up to a total of £15, 544 and sixteen existing businesses received an average of £2500 in funding for a total of £35,444. Not all of the applications received were successful, but £50,989 of the available funding was awarded.

Policy Commitment 3: Tackle poverty and unemployment, especially amongst young people and within the most deprived communities. Draw up and implement an anti-poverty action plan for the city.

□□ How are delivery plans and outcomes for Communities First improving the lives of people living in the areas?

The new programme is improving the quality of life for individuals, families and groups in our most deprived communities by building confidence, resilience and aspiration through engagement, involvement and progression.

Cluster projects are helping people to:

- Save money, claim entitlements, borrow responsibly and develop their financial management skills, improving the quality of their lives and their dependants.
- Access learning and develop skills that increase life opportunities.
- Improve their eating and cooking habits and skills.
- Increase digital awareness, access and skills.
- Move closer and into employment.
- Remove or reduce barriers to community involvement and self development.
- Prepare and negotiate the changes in Welfare Reform.
- Develop the confidence and knowledge to help themselves.

Clusters are actively collecting case studies of individuals who are benefitting from the Communities First programme and telling the individual stories of the difference we are making to their lives.

The focus and priorities of the Communities First programme in Swansea are as follows:

Prosperous Communities

Focus:

- Debt and Money Management
- Welfare
- Employability / Employment
- Advice and Support
- Volunteering

Priorities:

- Helping people to develop employment skills and work (ages 25+)
- Reducing youth unemployment and disengagement (ages 16 – 24)
- Promoting digital inclusion
- Financial inclusion – Improving financial capability, managing debt and raising income
- Supporting enterprise and timebanking, building social capital

Healthier Communities

Focus:

- Food, Nutrition and Growing
- Physical Activity
- Health Information

Priorities:

- Encouraging Healthy Eating
- Promoting Physical Well Being (ages 7 and above)
- Reducing Risks

Learning Communities

Focus:

- Early Years
- Adult Learning
- Family Learning

Priorities:

- Promoting Family Learning in the Early Years
- Supporting Young People to do Well as School
- Supporting Families to be Engaged in their Children's Education
- Lifelong Learning in Communities “

Has the Poverty Forum met and what are its plans?

Yes the Poverty Forum meets once every two months. It is chaired by Chris Sivers – Director of People, and a number of work plans have been implemented over the last 2 years

covering the following themes: Income & debt, Employment, Health, Education, and Family Support.

The Poverty Forum in an internal co-ordination group for the Poverty & Prevention Service to take forward the tackling poverty agenda across the whole Council, and with colleagues in Health.

A new Swansea Partnership Poverty Forum has met recently to work across the city and county with partners on this agenda, which reports into the LSB.

□□ *What progress has been made in implementing the Council's strategy for target areas, particularly in relation to young people?*

Swansea Young People Services has now realigned its core funded service provision to ensure that provision is appropriately proportioned to the Target Areas. This realignment included careful analysis of Lower Super Output Area Data, NEET Data and the Vulnerability Assessment Profile data as well as current core and externally funded provision.

- 3 out of the 5 Young People Hubs (including Info-nation) are located within the Target Areas.
- 50% of Full Time Core Funded Staff are located within the Target Areas.
- 33% of Part Time Staff Provision and Projects are located within Target Areas.
- All secondary schools that have catchment areas within the Target Areas have an attached Youth Worker.

In addition the work of Infonation has been focussed on working more closely with schools that support vulnerable young people from the Target Areas, ensuring that they are prioritised in terms of capacity for workshops and Information sessions.

There are very close working relationships with the Communities First Programme with all Communities First Cluster Areas having a small Communities First funded Youth Work Team. With three of the Cluster Areas lying in the Target Areas, this significantly increases our youth work capacity for the areas and ensures increased partnership work with both the Community and Partner Organisations.

The Families First Funded Ohana and Promoting Inclusion Projects also prioritise referrals from the target areas, working mainly with schools that share that catchment area.

Policy Commitment 15: Improve facilities in the city centre for pedestrians, cyclists and visitors, and develop and promote 'green corridors' - environmentally friendly links to the city centre from the suburbs.

□□ *What plans are in place to improve cycle links from the city centre to the suburbs, and what areas will be included?*

The Council is currently committed to establishing a formal off-road cycle network for the City Centre; this is likely to be delivered in phases over the next three years as budgets allow. I have attached a plan of the proposed City Centre routes for information.

Beyond the City Centre proposals, the Council has a network of proposed cycle links which have been prepared by the Council's former walking and cycling officer. Whilst these would provide a good basis for investigating links to communities and residential areas, they have

not been subject to any form of appraisal. An early assessment has been undertaken to consider how links to the 'Target Areas' might be serviced by walking and cycling routes.



130530 Target Areas Cycle Routes Assesr 140206 City Centre Cycle Routes - Consu

On conclusion of the works to establish the City Centre Cycle Network, an assessment will be undertaken to consider routes to connect the residential areas of Swansea into the excellent strategic national cycle network routes which bound the city on three sides. This will need to take into account preferred alignments, access to services, communities and places of work. Scrutiny Panel should be aware that this work has not yet begun and will likely take some time to complete, notwithstanding the drastic reductions in transport infrastructure funding which would be required to deliver new routes. I would however wish to emphasise that cycling continues to increase at a healthy rate year-on-year of at least 10%.

Policy Commitment 63: Seek wider and imaginative community use of public assets.

The Panel noted that a report on community asset transfer proposals was due to be considered by Cabinet in February and would like to know if the report has been completed.

A draft report has been produced and has been discussed on a number of occasions, but it has not yet gone to cabinet. However, arrangements have been made for us to meet with all political groups and these are now set up during August and also the community council forum is also arranged for September.

I trust that this response provides the information that you requested, but if you require any further detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

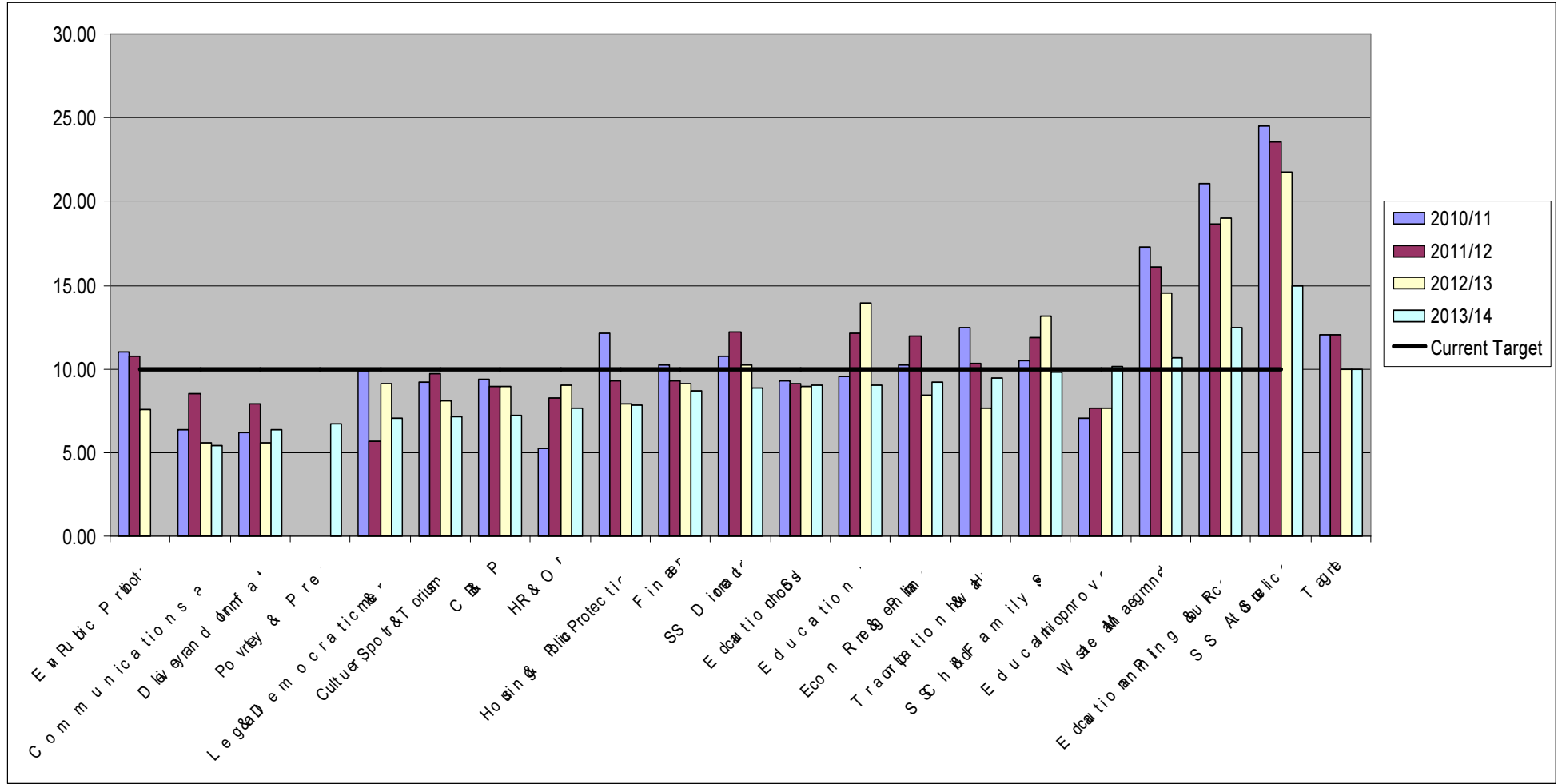
Yours sincerely

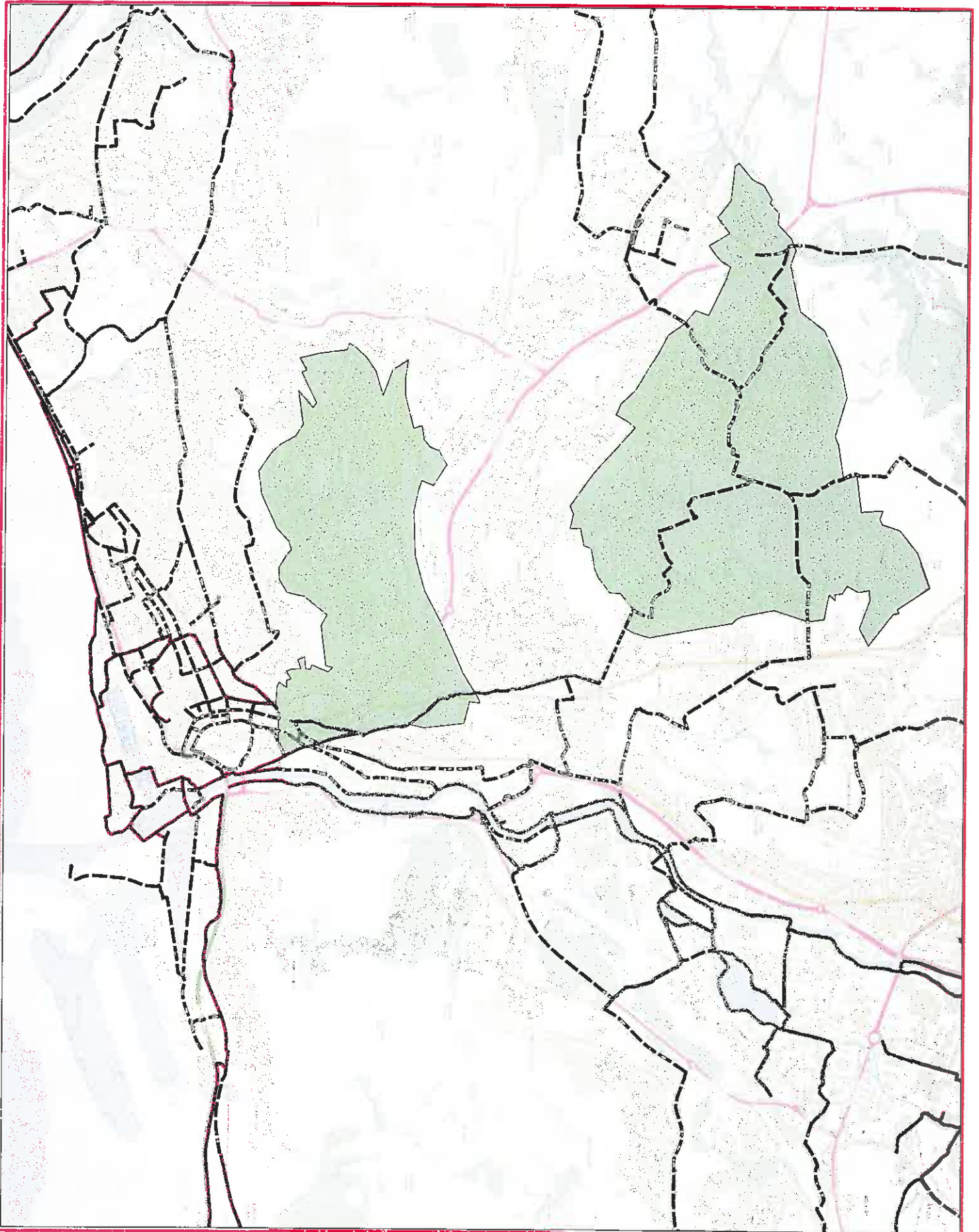
**COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & RESOURCES**

**Sickness Comparison by Service Unit
Mar 11 to Mar 14**








Service Unit	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Current Target
Env Public Protection	10.99	10.75	7.57	0.00	10.00
Communications and Consultation	6.35	8.52	5.62	5.44	10.00
Delivery and Information	6.18	7.94	5.62	6.32	10.00
Poverty & Prevention	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.71	10.00
Legal & Democratic & Procurement	9.87	5.67	9.12	7.06	10.00
Culture, Sport & Tourism	9.22	9.68	8.11	7.11	10.00
CB & PS	9.33	8.97	8.95	7.18	10.00
HR & OD	5.22	8.21	9.04	7.68	10.00
Housing & Public Protection	12.10	9.29	7.91	7.82	10.00
Finance	10.22	9.25	9.13	8.65	10.00
SS Directorate	10.72	12.20	10.23	8.88	10.00
Education Schools	9.30	9.10	8.95	8.99	10.00
Education Inclusion	9.58	12.14	13.91	9.02	10.00
Econ Regen & Planning	10.26	11.94	8.40	9.23	10.00
Transportation & Highways	12.45	10.31	7.66	9.48	10.00
SS Child & Family Services	10.48	11.90	13.18	9.76	10.00
Education Improvement	7.03	7.61	7.63	10.17	10.00
Waste Management	17.27	16.04	14.49	10.69	10.00
Education Planning & Resources	21.10	18.67	19.01	12.46	10.00
SS Adult Services	24.50	23.53	21.76	15.00	10.00
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	10.00	
Actual	11.17	11.14	10.33	8.82	

8.00 Proposed target for 2014/2015





**Target Area - Castle
Existing Cycle
Routes**

Legend	
	Existing Cycle Routes
	Proposed Cycle Routes
	ta_penderyn_outline
	ta_penderyn_area
	ta_castle_townhill_outline
	ta_castle_townhill_area
	vector map district

Scale - 1:6000



Economic Regeneration and Planning

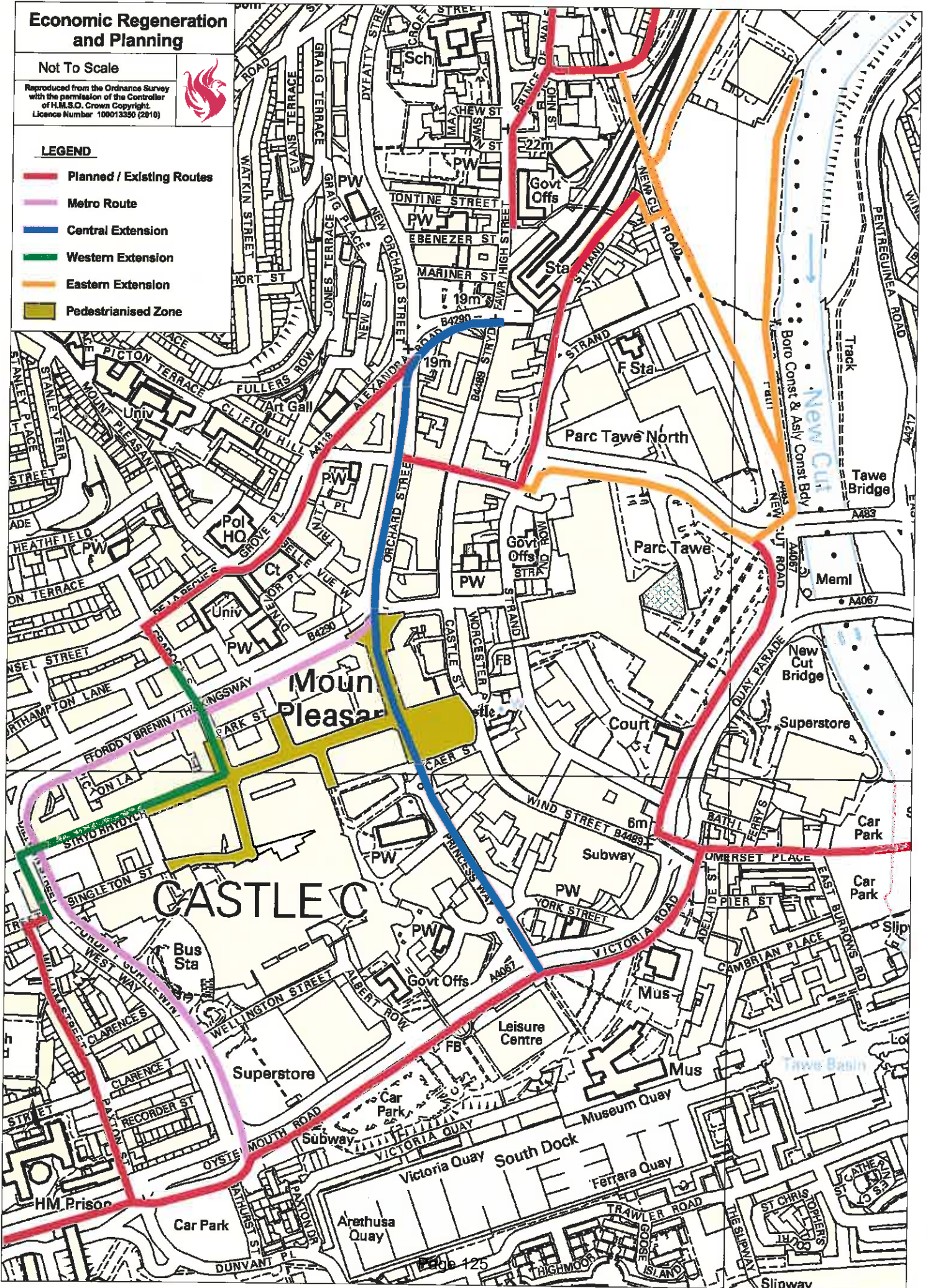
Not To Scale

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LEGEND

-  Planned / Existing Routes
-  Metro Route
-  Central Extension
-  Western Extension
-  Eastern Extension
-  Pedestrianised Zone





CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

To/
Councillor June Burtonshaw,
Cabinet Member for Place

BY EMAIL

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Our Ref SPC/2014-15/2
Ein Cyf:
Your Ref
Eich Cyf:
Date 2 July 2014
Dyddiad:

Dear Councillor Burtonshaw,

Re: Cabinet Member Question Session

Thank you for your response (dated 29 April) to the committee's letter on your work as Cabinet Member for Place. Your letter was discussed by the committee at our meeting on 9 June. Your response gave rise to further questions and it was agreed that I should write a further letter to you.

The following issues were discussed:

Waste Management

Having gone live with the three black bag limit the committee wanted to know more information about:

- Your evaluation of compliance / success?
- How many 'advice warnings' have had to be issued to residents?
- Whether there have been any specific problem areas?
- Whether there has been an increase in fly tipping cases?
- How many extra calls have there been to pick up black bags which have been found dumped?
- Impact on recycling performance?

Public Transport

The committee noted with some surprise and concern that since our session with you in February there has been a decision not to progress with the Quality Bus Contract approach. This has been one of the council's policy

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commitments and the recent Public Transport Scrutiny Inquiry Panel also supported this as a way forward. Can you confirm the rationale behind dropping this approach? What was the nature of the advice sought, the advice received and the advice acted on?

Please note that the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel will be reconvened shortly in order to follow up on the inquiry recommendations and impact and will no doubt pick this up with you then.

Blue Badge Scheme

It appears that your letter omitted to address the issue we raised about changes to the Blue Badge Scheme and impact. Members have been made aware of issues following the introduction of new regulations and changes to the eligibility criteria across Wales. You stated that you were aware of problems and had already fed back to the Welsh Government but were awaiting their response. Can you confirm whether you have had received further guidance from the Welsh Government in response to the issues raised?

We would be a grateful for your response to this letter. It would be helpful to receive your reply to this letter by 25 July so that it can be included in the agenda of a future committee meeting at the earliest opportunity.

We also look forward to our next meeting with you to follow up on portfolio developments and achievements.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR MIKE DAY

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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Councillor Mike Day
Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee

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4 August 2014

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Mike
Dear Councillor Day

Further to your letter dated the 2 July, please find below my response to your questions in regards to the Keep it to 3 campaign.

On the whole, Swansea residents have been complying with the black bag restriction but ongoing communications are being implemented to ensure that all residents comply with the restriction. Figures show that 1,300 tonnes less black bag waste was disposed of at landfill in April and May compared to the same period in 2013.

There have been no warnings issued either in writing or verbally to any residents. However, there is an ongoing education and engagement programme which has resulted in approximately 800 properties being visited with leaflets and advice letters since April 7th 2014.

The Enforcement Team is not aware of any 'specific' problem areas. As previously anticipated HMOs continue to be a challenge in regard to waste collections but intensive door knocking campaign is planned within the next couple of months to target areas with a high density of HMOs.

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- 2 -

There has been an increase in recorded fly tipping of black bags. The following information is as reported via Flycapture. These are reported calls where waste has been removed.

	April to 30 th June 2014	April to 30 th June 2013	April to 30 th June 2012
Black bag	April 2014 – 160 May 2014 – 163 June 2014 - 181	April 2013 – 95 May 2013 – 95 June 2013 - 117	April 2012 – 61 May 2012 – 97 June 2012 - 192
Totals	504	307	350

Please note that there has been a great deal of work carried out to improve recording of fly tipping across the authority hence the increase in numbers this year. There does not appear to be a link with this increase and the Campaign.

Latest figures show that 1,000 tonnes extra recycling was collected in April and May 2014 compared to the same period the previous year. This includes 450 tonnes more of food waste, 170 tonnes of plastic and 380 tonnes of paper, cans and glass. The increase in recycling has been put down to a prolonged door-knocking campaign in the city by council recycling officers, along with the introduction of a 3 black bag limit.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely


COUNCILLOR JUNE BURTONSHAW
CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE

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31 July 2014

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Dear Councillor Day

Blue Badge Scheme

I write further to your letter of 2 July regarding follow up questions on the Blue Badge Scheme.

May I firstly apologise for slightly missing your requested timeline for a reply.

I can confirm the City and County of Swansea has fed back a number of issues on the operational matters relating to the Blue Badge Scheme.

We have not received any further formal guidance to date, but all local authorities had an update on 24 June which began:

“Firstly, thank you for your continued patience in waiting for the rollout of the regulations to extend eligibility for a badge, decision toolkit and **updated guidance**. The delays are the result of further investigations to fully understand the practicalities and implications that local authorities will face in delivering the proposals.”

For completeness I am attaching the full update we received as it sets out more fully some of the planned changes and implications moving forward and in the intervening period whilst we await updated regulations.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
ROB STEWART

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I feel it may also be helpful to contextualise and remind you of the position with regard to the range and mix of applications for Blue Badges in recent years.

Year	No of App	Discretionary Applications	% Discretionary	Overall Issued	Discretionary cases Issued	Refusals	Expiry Date
2010	6,809	3,780	56	6,487	3,458	322	
2011	6,733	3,646	54	6,331	3,244	402	
2012	6,329	3,249	51	5,758	2,678	571	
2013	6,243	2,983	48	5,564	2,304	679	
2014							6,686
2015							5,440
2016							5,240

From the table it can be seen that:-

- There has been a steady decline in the overall number of applications year on year from 2010 onwards.
- Of the applications received in any one year roughly 50% are in respect of discretionary applications although the volume of discretionary applications has fallen as a percentage of overall applications over the past four years.
- The number of Discretionary cases refused has risen over the past four years both as a real number and as a percentage of discretionary applications received.
- Notwithstanding this in 2013/14 **77% of discretionary applications were accepted.**

I trust this additional information is of use to the Committee.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
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- 3 -

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
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28 June 2014

Dear Councillor Child

Well Being Performance Panel on 16 June 2014

The Panel met on 16 June 2014 to consider the latest Adult Services performance monitoring report (Quarter 1 to 16th May 2014) and further information on the Telecare and Community Alarm Service. We would like to thank you for attending the meeting and we welcomed the opportunity to discuss the performance report and the telecare and community alarm service.

Telecare and Community Alarm Service

The panel had the following concerns:

- **The new charging regime:** Last year the Adult Services provided £236k to support the community alarm service. Cabinet agreed to begin charging for this service. The annual charge was set at £110; the reduced rate would no longer be available; these steps would enable the service, along with recharged income, to become self-funding. The panel's concerns were manifold:
 - the cost could be prohibitive for people on pensions, pension credits, benefits and low incomes.
 - it could lead to a decrease in uptake and therefore affect the projected revenue and the ability of the service to self fund.
 - the charging regime appeared to be at odds with the strategic direction of adult services which is to provide support services in homes to prevent older people from needing residential care.
 - No accurate figure was available on the number of people who paid the £110 charge.
- **Transforming adult social services**

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- the number of people connected to the community alarm has reduced but the panel would expect to see an increase in uptake as more and more people stay in their own homes.
- the panel felt that there needed to be a fuller understanding of how the telecare and community alarm service fits with the transformation agenda .

The panel requested the following additional information:

- The number of services users connected to the community alarm.
- The number of services users in receipt of other telecare services.
- A list of charges for each separate telecare device.
- A briefing to be produced on the cost of the installation and maintenance of the community alarm and telecare devices, the cost effectiveness and the benefits of the service and the sustainability of the service over the next 5 years and 10 years assuming no further grants and same level of decline in financial support from central government.

Adult Services Quarterly Performance Monitoring

The panel had the following concerns:

- **Homecare:**
 - Staff turnover was high in provider agencies which the panel felt made important aspects of delivery like training, standards of care and quality control difficult
 - The authority could use its purchasing power along with other local authorities to insist that provider agencies take part in training to improve standards and quality of care. The panel felt that this had not happened, but that it was a good idea.
 - There were not enough providers of homecare in the local market and that work should be done to encourage the set of alternative providers such as mutuals, social enterprises, cooperatives and other not for profit organisations.
 - That staff employed in the provider agencies pay for their own transport between scheduled visits. This was felt to be a real problem as many of the care workers earned just the minimum wage. More thought needed to be given to area based working to improve this aspect of care work.
 - The panel felt strongly that the local authority needed to develop its own homecare services, improve area working to be more efficient and to do this at a smarter pace.
 - The Unison ethical charter needed to be implemented and the panel looked forward to progress on this.
- **Reviews:**
 - The panel highlighted the dip in performance in reviews and understood that staffing difficulties accounted for this, but it will return to this in the following quarter.
- **Avoiding delays in discharge:**

- The panel would like to understand in more detail the delays that occur because a care plan is not in place. It was agreed that further information would be provided on this (see below)
- **Care Management Data**
 - The panel felt that the presentation of the figures in the care management data tables made it difficult to determine how many adult services users accessed support and for how long. The Convenor agreed to meet with performance and information officers to improve how the data is presented so that the panel has clear information which will help it ask the right questions.
- **Appendix C – Length of Stay by Quarter of Admission: All Residential & Nursing Care**
 - The panel noted that less people were being admitted to residential provision and the average length of stays in residential and nursing homes had dropped. This could be down to factors such as the re-ablement service and more people supported to remain in their own homes. This is something the panel will return to as the amount of data on this grows trends begin to form.

The panel requested the following additional information:

- Information on time taken to develop a care plan and package of care, who is involved and what contributes to the delays.
- Information on how adult services will develop its in-house homecare service and how it will influence training and standards in the independent market.
- In future performance reports the panel requested that text which relates to a graph be placed underneath it.
- The cost of community connectors.

The panel recommends that:

- In relation to the concerns around work carried out to develop and encourage the establishment of not for profit home care providers Cllr Andrew Jones is approached and that his expertise and experience in this area is drawn on by you and your department.

I hope you find this letter useful and informative and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

JENIFER RAYNOR
MEMBER OF THE WELL BEING PERFORMANCE PANEL

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
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Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams
City & County of Swansea

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5 August 2014

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Dear Cllr Hood-Williams

In reply to your letter of 28th June 2014.

Telecare – I do not think that the cost of the Community Alarm, at £110 will be prohibitive for people; it represents an increase of less than 70p a week from the previously reduced level, and still remains good value for the service provided.

There may be individuals who decide not to have the service because of the increase in charge; we do not as yet know how many that will be as peoples date for paying the new rates vary across the year. However, everyone who decides to have the equipment removed is visited to discuss this and is offered a safe home inspection at the same time.

We will be monitoring the scheme to check that the income is enough to enable the Authority to expand the variety of Telecare to meet the needs of people in Swansea. Of course it is hoped that with an expanded range of Telecare available, there may be more people who choose to take up these facilities.

Telecare can assist greatly in reducing levels of concern, and in understanding individual's needs. Primarily it can help people remain safely within their own homes, which is a key to Transforming services.

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DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

- 2 -

I was under the impression that most of the information requested on Telecare has already been provided to your Panel, but will arrange for it to be forwarded.

Clearly it is difficult exactly to say how long having a movement sensor, or a door alarm or a fall detector extends the period an individual can remain independent, but as the cost of these items rarely goes beyond a couple of hundred pounds, any delay in moving to a care home would not have to be long before there was a cost benefit in their provision.

There are no grants currently available to the Authority for Telecare, but in aiming to make the service self-funding it removes it from the problems facing local government finance over the next few years, which will make it more sustainable.

Adult Performance – You are correct to point out that staff turnover for domiciliary care means training is an issue, and I welcome your suggestion about approaching providers with other authorities. I think the suitable vehicle for this would be Western Bays, and will raise it there.

I am hoping the Scrutiny Review of the Home Care market in Swansea will come up with some suggestions on how to change your analysis of the current provision, which I share. With the Deputy Leader of the council I have met the Unions regarding the Ethical Care Charter, which I understand a number of council's in England and Scotland have been awarded. Initially it has been agreed to benchmark ourselves against the charter, with an aim of working towards attaining it, and I have asked that this be carried out.

I agree that the length of stay by quarter of admission is a very interesting and important figure, and one I too will be watching.

Time taken to develop a care plan will vary with the service area, the needs being met and the outcomes being sought. This does not mean however that there is any delay in the provision of services that are immediately required to meet need. Someone may receive a reablement service immediately on discharge from hospital and after a 6 week period a care plan drawn up detailing the care to be delivered on a longer term basis by a domiciliary care provider.

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- 3 -

Delays in the provision of care happen to a very small number of people compared to the overall number receiving services, but it is important we do understand why it has happened when it does, and try and improve on that

The in-house home care service is currently being remodelled to reflect the requirements of the WG to integrate health and social care services for older people and to build on the success of the Integrated Gower Team. The integrated services will deliver short term reablement support and longer terms support to people with complex care needs including where appropriate end of life care. Training is delivered to the external sector through the authority's responsibilities as part of the Social Care Development Partnership arrangements and the funding attached to this. In addition where specific training will support increased capacity and competence in the independent sector this has been provided on a bespoke basis e.g. medications training for providers.

I am informed that the budget for Community Connectors is £185,000.

I have spoken with the Wales Co-operative centre in recent weeks (Cllr Andrew Jones' employer) and will make arrangements for officers of to meet and explore the chances of co-operatives adding to the diversity of provision in Swansea. Obviously Cllr Jones will not be involved in this due to a conflict of interest.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING

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CFS/06

17 July 2014

Dear Councillor Day

Well Being Performance Panel on 14 July 2014

The Panel met on 14 July 2014 to consider the effectiveness of how it operates and manages its workload, which since November 2013 has included the scrutiny of performance in Adult Social Services. The panel would like to thank you for attending and contributing to the discussions.

For a number of months the panel has had concerns about its workload and the capacity of the panel to ensure that scrutiny of performance of both adult and child & family services was focused and robust. In addition to this, and because of the panel's concerns about changes to services in adult social services, the panel often found itself straying beyond its performance remit.

On the basis of these concerns the panel recommends to the Scrutiny Programme Committee that:

- Two performance panels be established, one to scrutinise the performance of Child & Family Services and one to scrutinise the performance of Adult Social Services.
- The Transformation of Adult Social Services programme and process be the subject of an in-depth inquiry.
- The performance panels are given consent by the Scrutiny Programme Committee to undertake pre-decision scrutiny.
- Effective scrutiny needs to take place of the operation and governance arrangements of the regional Western Bay as it relates to Child & Family Services and Adult Services.

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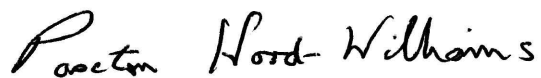
- Immediate scrutiny involvement in the consultation on changes to services for adults with learning disabilities (members have expressed a desire to scrutinise) and a delay in the consultation until such time

The panel also agreed to:

- Invite Chris Sivers and Jack Straw to a future meeting
- Request the cabinet member provide details of costings of existing services and proposed cuts
- Visit learning disability day centres

I hope you find this letter useful and informative and look forward to your response. A copy will be sent to the Cabinet Member for information.

Yours sincerely



CLLR PAXTON HOOD-WILLIAMS
MEMBER OF THE WELL BEING PERFORMANCE PANEL
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CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
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**To/
Councillor Paxton Hood-
Williams,
Convener of the Wellbeing
Scrutiny Panel**

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11 August 2013

Dear Paxton,

Thank you for your letter of 17 July 2014 and for attending the meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 4 August where we discussed the response to the Wellbeing Performance Panel's recommendations. I thought it would be useful to summarise the response of the Committee and confirm its decisions and I am sure you will share this with members of the Panel. In view of the importance of the issues involved, I have also copied this to Councillor Mark Child, the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, for his information.

Firstly, though, I want to express on behalf of the Scrutiny Programme Committee our thanks for the work you have all been putting in to this very important area of service delivery for the people of Swansea, many of whom are the most vulnerable and in need of the Council's support and help. We appreciate that the workload has been very heavy and have treated your comments most seriously, as we wish to ensure that the scrutiny of these services continue at the highest level possible.

In response to your Panel's recommendations, the Scrutiny Programme Committee therefore agreed to split the work of the current Panel as follows:

- a. a separate Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel be established;
- b. we will also create a separate Panel with a specific remit to focus on the Transforming Adult Social Services (TASS) agenda (looking at the change process and providing critical friend challenge to the proposed or anticipated improvements). This Panel will consider the outcome of the independent review into older people's services due to report in early September and how it will be used to progress the transformation of services, and inform budget discussions. As agreed by the Scrutiny Programme Committee elsewhere on our agenda on 4 August, this will start off as a Working Group to gain a greater understanding of the background to and the scope and terms of reference of the Panel.

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- c. As the Inquiry work of this Panel comes to an end, we will set it up as an Adult Social Services Performance Panel, and change the Terms of Reference so it reflects this change.

As you may recall from the discussions, it was clear to the Committee that it was not possible for discussions about performance of Adult Social Services to be detached from the current transformation programme. Committee also noted some weaknesses in terms of the provision of timely information / communication about the TASS agenda and developments to Councillors outside of the executive, and concern by those Councillors about the possible outcomes from changes. The Terms of Reference will be drawn up and reported to next committee to ensure these Panels have clear focus, that their workload is manageable and impactful.

The Committee's response to other issues raised by the Wellbeing Panel are:

- Pre-decision scrutiny on cabinet business is a matter for the Scrutiny Programme Committee to agree. However, we welcome Panel's drawing items to the Committee's attention and we confirmed that the Committee can delegate specific items to Performance Panels for deliberation.
- The Committee will give consideration to how scrutiny of the Western Bay Health & Social Care Regional Programme can be developed. It was noted that a presentation has been arranged for all councillors on 13 August on the Western Bay Health and Social Care Programme and why it has been established, who is involved and what it is aiming to achieve. The committee will await this meeting and then consider way forward in relation to scrutiny of the Western Bay arrangements.
- The issue raised about the consultation on changes to the Services for people with learning disabilities was noted – the Cabinet Member clarified the purpose of the consultation and current position. The committee felt there was scope for this area (e.g. service options) to be subject of future discussion by the new TASS Panel, as at this point the Cabinet Member confirmed there were no immediate changes proposed.
- The Cabinet Member acknowledged shortcomings in information / consultation with regard to members and accepted this needed to be improved.

I trust that the Panel will see that their concerns have been addressed and that the changes to the arrangements will take effect as soon as the new Panels have been established. We hope that existing Panel members will put themselves forward to serve on these new arrangements, which will be notified to all non-Executive Councillors separately.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR MIKE DAY
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee
mike.day@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 11

Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 September 2014

SCRUTINY DISPATCHES

Purpose	To provide draft dispatches report for agreement and submission to council which will provide headlines from recent scrutiny activity.
Content	The report appends the latest 'Scrutiny Dispatches', which is presented to each council meeting, to ensure visibility and awareness of key issues, findings and outcomes
Councillors are being asked to	approve content of the 'Scrutiny Dispatches'
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mike Day, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
Lead Officer(s)	Dean Taylor, Director – Corporate Services
Report Author	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee is responsible for the various informal scrutiny activities and monitoring progress to ensure that the work is effective. The committee also wants to ensure that findings from performance panels and working groups have the required visibility.
- 1.2 'Scrutiny Dispatches' is meant to be a short but informative summary of the headlines from the work of scrutiny. It is reported to each council meeting. Rather than provide a detailed progress report across all activities it aims to provide headlines, for example, key outcomes, findings, and events, typically with one major story each time.
- 1.3. Content from the dispatches is also posted on the Swansea Scrutiny blog so that it can be shared across social media platforms to develop public engagement in scrutiny.

2. Scrutiny Dispatches

- 2.1 The latest 'Scrutiny Dispatches' report is attached as **Appendix 1**.

2.2 The dispatches report will be included in the agenda of the council meeting on 30 September.

2.3 The committee is invited to comment on the content and propose changes to ensure coverage of the significant issues.

3. Legal Implications

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

4. Financial Implications

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

Background Papers: None

19 August 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard

Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

Scrutiny Dispatches

City & County of Swansea – September 2014

Scrutiny enables councillors who are not in the cabinet to examine the quality and effectiveness of services and policies, hold decision makers to account and make recommendations for improvement

How can we increase inward investment to Swansea and the City Region?

(Lead: Councillor Jeff Jones)

The Inward Investment Scrutiny Inquiry Panel completed its look at investment into Swansea and the City Region and presented its final report to Cabinet on 26 August. The Scrutiny Inquiry found that Swansea has many assets that could potentially encourage investment to the area, for example its natural beauty, superfast broadband, good transport links, relatively low property and rental costs, a ready labour force, and facilities for training, research and development through our Universities and colleges locally. However, it highlighted that work needs to be done to pro actively encourage investment and currently the resources to do so are limited, recognising that this could potentially be addressed through the new City Regions Strategy. The Panel believed that we need to do more work with other organisations and local business to increase our resource and skills base in order to have a wider reach.

The inquiry took place over a six month period and took evidence from a wide selection of interested parties, including a survey of staff, local business, other public sector organisations and councillors. The Panel spoke to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and officers from the council, Swansea Bay Futures, Business Support Wales, South West Wales Chamber of Commerce, Swansea University and the General Manager from Sony UK.

The Panel has made a number of recommendations to Cabinet including:

- putting a clear mechanism in place with the new city regions strategy that will make it accountable to local politicians
- introducing a single point of contact for business / investment queries
- developing (via the city region) an effective support network including allocating resources to do pro active work around seeking inward investment (these 'resources' must be commercially aware)

The Panel's main expectations of the impact of this report is improvement in relation to:

- organisations working together
- developing a brand and selling Swansea and the region on a global stage.
- investment in the region from organisations that are going to bring the maximum benefit to Swansea

You can find a copy of this report in the scrutiny reports library on our website:

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=37047>

Improving public engagement

(Lead: Councillor Joe Hale)

The Public Engagement Scrutiny Inquiry Panel is about to conclude its work. Its final report is expected to come before the Scrutiny Programme Committee at the end of September. The inquiry has been looking at how the council could improve the way it engages with the public, staff and external stakeholders. The report will detail key findings from evidence gathered and conclusions from this work, and recommendations for Cabinet. Following a presentation of the final report by the convener, Cllr Joe Hale, the Scrutiny Programme Committee will be asked to agree its submission to Cabinet for decision. More on this to follow!

Scrutiny Annual Report for 2013/14 and looking forward

(Lead: Councillor Mike Day)

Every year Council requires that an annual report is produced for the work of scrutiny for the previous municipal year. The Scrutiny Annual Report for 2013/14 will be presented to Council on 30 September. The report highlights the work carried out by scrutiny, shows how scrutiny has made a difference, and supports continuous improvement for the scrutiny function. You can find a copy in the reports library on our website.

Over the last 12 months scrutiny has gained greater national significance. Both the Welsh Government and the Wales Audit Office have pointed to a greater role for scrutiny if it can demonstrate effectiveness. The last year has been a year of bedding in for scrutiny in Swansea. The new system has now become established. While Scrutiny Performance Panels have been getting to grips with their work, and working groups have been dealing with one-off issues, the first in depth Scrutiny Inquiry Panels have been making their recommendations to Cabinet. Swansea's Scrutiny arrangements have also been receiving recognition from outside the Council. Looking forward our key theme for the year ahead is impact!

Working with Audit, Inspectors and Regulators

The recent Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement report makes a number of references to scrutiny. It recognised that the Council's scrutiny arrangements are becoming more established but one issue highlighted was about the public information available in advance of panel meetings. We have responded by publishing a monthly meetings list for scrutiny, including all panel and working group meetings. In addition, individual posts seeking public involvement are published on the scrutiny blog for specific meetings. Members of the public are invited to contact us to observe meetings or to receive more information on any of this informal work.

We look forward to the upcoming in-depth corporate governance review which will look further at the impact of the Council's scrutiny arrangements. The committee is also taking steps to consider the Auditor General for Wales' report called 'Good Scrutiny? Good Question!'. This national study makes a number of recommendations. The committee is meeting with Tim Buckle, from the Wales Audit Office, to consider the report in more detail, identify learning points and consider implications for scrutiny practice in Swansea. Amongst improvements identified the report calls for scrutiny to be aligned more closely with external audit, inspection and review.

Scrutiny Work Programme

The committee has adopted a new approach: with every piece of scrutiny work suggested for inquiry starting off as a 'working group' – an in-depth inquiry will only follow if the group agreed it was necessary and could suggest appropriate terms of reference to the committee. The 'working group' approach will involve a detailed presentation of the subject matter at the outset which will enable opinion and proposals to be submitted to cabinet member(s) at that point, with no further work needed, or help inform the focus of any inquiry. This should enable more focused and potentially quicker pieces of scrutiny. It will provide flexibility to deal with things in different ways rather than follow a rigid in-depth inquiry process, depending on the issue. It could also improve impact as the experience of recent working groups have shown more impact with a single hit than some of the in-depth pieces of work. The first 2 pieces of work that will follow this approach will be potential inquiries into: Transforming Adult Social Services; and Corporate Culture.

Connect with Scrutiny:

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